

Chapter 6: Refined Concept Plan

6.A Plan Summary

The Refined Concept Plan (see Figure 12) emerged from the discussions and evaluations of the three original alternatives. The Plan is primarily a modified version of Alternative 3 but includes some specific elements from Alternative 2 that are considered more desirable. Careful consideration has been given, through technical review, to the plan's ability to meet market demands, create balanced growth, and provide adequate financing of major public facilities such as the Little Blue Parkway. The main highlights of the Plan are:

6.A.1 Little Blue Parkway: The alignment for the LBP is a slightly modified version of the alignment from Alternative 3. In the southern segment (south of Truman Road), the proposed road generally runs to the west of the Little Blue River. This alignment increases the area of parkland along the roadways eastern edge, creates more open space, and supplies additional buffer along the Little Blue Trace. North of Truman Road/M-78 the proposed parkway swings northwest and away from the Little Blue and generally parallels existing Powell Road as it moves northward toward US-24 Highway.

This alignment is preferred for a number of reasons:

- It stays further away from the existing developed areas.
- It will create a stronger visual experience especially in the southern segment that will serve as a gateway to the Little Blue Valley from the I-70 corridor.
- It eliminates severe environmental impacts in the northern segment.
- It will be easier to acquire highway right-of-way due to fewer property owners
- It will perhaps be easier to reclaim flood plain lands to the west of the roadway in the southern segment.



Vistas looking south (above) and north (below) of the Little Blue Parkway alignment just north of 39th Street



Looking east along the new Truman Boulevard alignment

6.A.2 Truman Boulevard: Truman Boulevard (Truman Road) is the main east/west link connecting the development in the Little Blue Valley with the existing City and the Historic Square. Upgrading Truman Road to a boulevard would incorporate wide sidewalks and alternate forms of transportation such as bicycle trails, future transit and landscaping.

6.A.3 Other Roads: The secondary roadway network generally follows the alignments recommended in Concept Alternative 3.

6.A.4 Town Center: The focal point of the Town Center is located in the vicinity of the proposed alignment of the Little Blue Parkway and Truman Road intersection as shown on the attached Comprehensive Plan and Thoroughfare Plan map, as amended. As the Town Center concept is detailed in subsequent development plans, its boundaries may extend beyond the limits described. The focal point of the Town Center is placed in this location because:

- Centrally located in the Little Blue Valley
- Provides a strong terminus and focal point at the eastern end of Truman Road
- Adequately distanced from non-compatible uses, such as the power plant and nearby industrial land use activities
- Takes advantage of significant beauty in the area and provides opportunities for attractive and desirable view sheds (vistas) for citizens and visitors.

Due to the unique character of the area, the Town Center should incorporate the following attributes:

Location and Form:

The core of the Town Center should be concentrated around a focal point and a higher density core with strong pedestrian and visual linkages to adjacent areas.

The Town Center should promote and be designed to foster sharing of common facilities such as parking, open space and other infrastructure.

Access/Transportation/Parking:

The Town Center should be linked with surrounding neighborhoods and the rest of the City by sidewalks, trails, and street connections, as appropriate.

While the Town Center should be served by arterial streets, such streets should be given special design treatment and be subject to speed and other restrictions as appropriate, to ensure that they are conducive to a strong pedestrian network throughout the Town Center and beyond.

Large expanses of surface parking should be broken up into smaller pods by streets, landscaping, sidewalks, walls, or other treatments. Parking lots should be heavily screened or separated from adjacent residential uses.

Design:

The Town Center should be a unique destination; Town Center buildings, including residential, civic, office, retail and commercial uses should be dramatic without conflicting with adjacent land uses.

Town Center buildings should be designed to enhance the character of streets, using features such as build-to-lines, display windows, etc.

Town Center buildings should be used to terminate some streets to create interesting and dramatic views.

Building heights, design, and operational attributes (hours of operation, lighting, etc.) should be compatible with residential uses within and nearby the Town Center as well as surrounding neighborhoods.

Service areas (loading, trash, utilities) should be incorporated into the overall design of buildings where possible or alternatively screened so that visual and acoustic impacts are minimized.

6.A.5 *Non-Residential Development:* Several areas are designated for Business/Industrial Parks and for General Mixed Use. These areas are along the major arterial and collector roads and will be the primary economic development areas of the Little Blue Valley. The Lake City Army Ammunition Plan is the area most ideally suited for heavier industrial uses. The area adjacent to and north of Lake City along M-7 Highway has been shown as business/Industrial Park in accord with the present zoning in this area.

6.A.6 *Flood Plain:* A special designation is given to the 100-year flood plain areas¹ along the Little Blue Trace. This designation primarily affects the plan's General Mixed-use areas. More detailed future studies are necessary to examine how these areas may be developed under special regulations that protect sensitive environmental features.

¹ It should be noted that studies are presently being done to update FEMA maps. This may affect the delineation of the 100-year flood plain limits.

6.A.7 Village Centers: Four Village Centers are proposed to serve the more intensively developed portions of the study area. These Village Centers are the focal points of the various residential villages and would contain a mixture of uses including neighborhood commercial, some employment uses and civic uses such as libraries, churches and schools. The higher density residential areas should surround these Village Centers.



Large lot rural development in north eastern Independence

6.A.8 Residential Development: The overall residential development strategy is to place the highest densities around the Town Center, around the Business/ Industrial Parks, around the Village Centers and within the General Mixed-Use areas.

The area in the southeast quadrant along R.D. Mize Road, Eureka Road and Strode Road corridors is designated Estate Residential.

The area in the northeast quadrant east of the Little Blue Trace and north of Lake City is to remain in Agriculture/Rural Residential as in Alternative 2. The Village Center designation has been eliminated from this area.

6.A.9 Open Space: The Plan retains the extensive open space and park system envisioned for the Valley. By setting aside significant open space and adding it to the Little Blue Trace, this section of the City will set a precedent for future development within the region. In addition to the major “spine” open space network, the Plan also calls for specific open space dedications within the development areas.

6.B. Balanced Development

The Refined Concept Plan represents a balanced mixture of uses including industrial/employment, residential, support retail, and open space. By the year 2020, 5,000 jobs are expected to be created resulting \$140 million in direct wages. To support the employment base, 7,000 residential units are anticipated. (See Table 9)

Preliminary estimate by Development Strategies suggest that balanced development, as contemplated in the Refined Concept Plan, is likely to generate City revenues will in excess of the cost to provide City services for the area.

TABLE 9: ESTIMATED REVENUES/EXPENSES - Concept Plan		2020 Refined
For 7,100 residential units and 3,050,000 square feet of employment/commercial		
Summary Annual Revenues:		
Real Estate Taxes		\$1,951,026
Sales Taxes		\$1,738,500
Utility Taxes		\$1,271,654
	TOTAL	\$4,961,180
Summary Annual Expenses		
Public Safety		\$2,400,510
General Government		\$391,920
Public Works		\$440,910
Other		\$767,510
	TOTAL	\$4,000,850*
\$960,330 Net Annual Revenue Excess		

Source: Development Strategies, August 1998

*Does not include the 39th Street or Selsa Road corridors



Vista of Future Town Center Location North of Truman Road

Figure 12

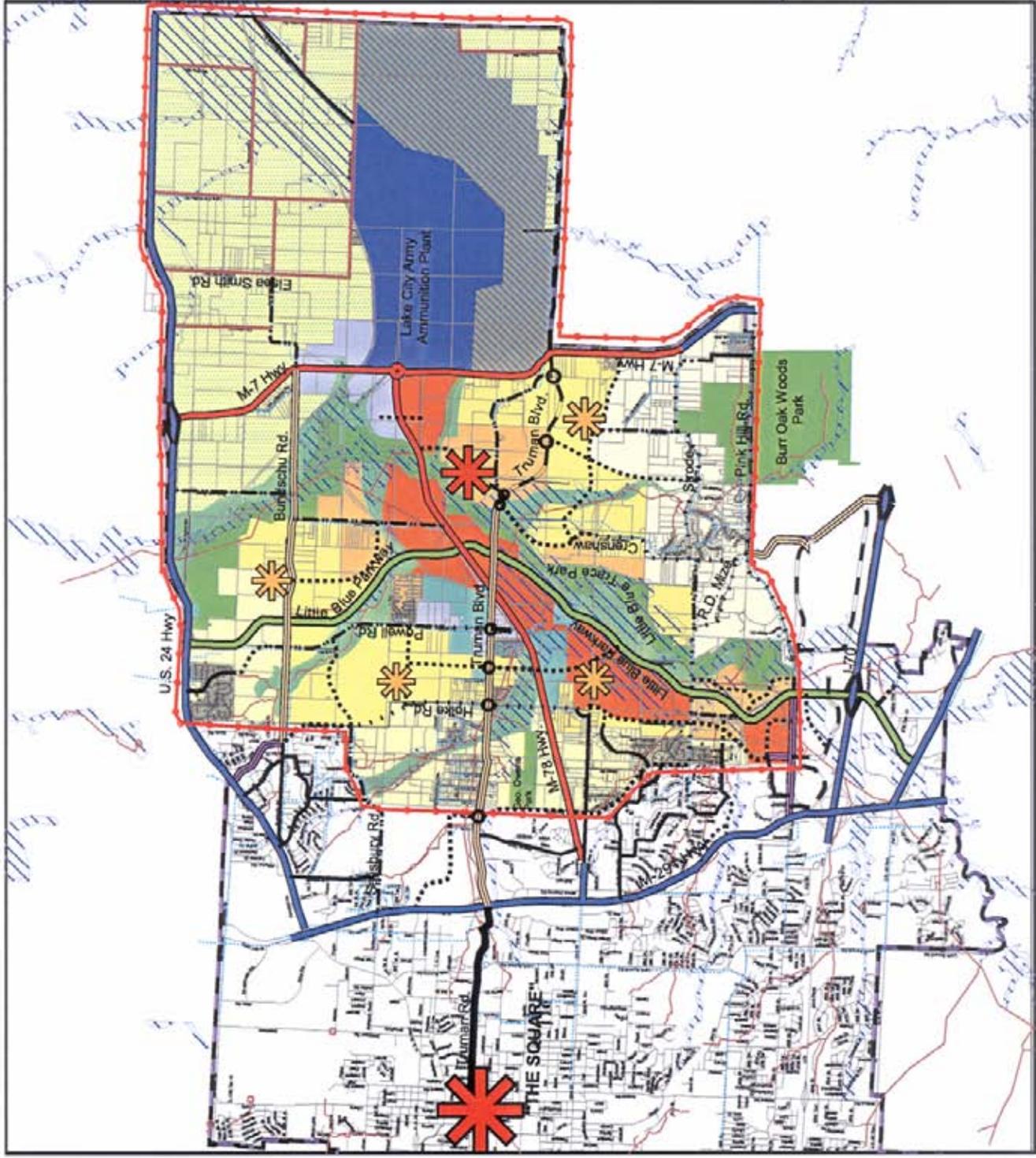
Little Blue Valley Land Use And Major Street Plan

- LEGEND:**
- Major Street Plan
 - Highway
 - Highway to be Upgraded
 - Little Blue Parkway
 - Arterial to be Upgraded
 - Arterial
 - Minor Arterial
 - Minor Arterial to be Upgraded
 - Collector
 - Collector to be Upgraded
 - Local Government Street
 - Water Main
 - Storm
 - Shade
 - Leak
 - Flood
 - 100 Year Flood Plain
 - Recreational
 - General Residential
 - Extra Density Residential
 - Low Density Residential
 - Low Medium Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Mixed Use
 - Low Density Commercial
 - Medium Density Commercial
 - Local Commercial
 - Regional Commercial
 - Office
 - Office Park
 - Private Recreation/Office
 - Business/Industrial Park
 - Business Park
 - Industrial Park
 - Light Industrial
 - Open Space/Industrial Reserve
 - Open Space/Underground
 - Public Parks
 - Private Recreation
 - Public Street Public Facilities

- Town Center Note: Location of Town and Village Centers are conceptual
 - Village Center
 - Boundary of Study Area
 - Proposed Round About / Circles
- Notes:**
1. Proposed Streets are shown in general locations.
 2. New Streets should follow topography.
 3. * Indicates Changes of Street Name Necessary
 4. Street Classification subject to change based on area-wide traffic model
 5. Chamblane Rd. may have design constraints.



Adopted: May 24, 1999
 Community Development Dept.
 City of Independence, MO.
 Geographic Information System, (GIS)



**Table 10:
REFINED CONCEPT PLAN HOLDING CAPACITY
Little Blue Valley Study Area**

Designation	Vacant Gross Acres (A)	% of Total	Holding Capacity (B)			
			Dwelling Units	Square Footage	Assumed Net Density/FAR	Assumed Gross Density/FAR
Ag/Rural Residential	5,707	29%	913		0.2du/ac	0.25du/ac
Estate Residential	1,455	7%	1,164		1.0du/ac	1.25/du/ac
Low Residential	1,534	8%	3,068-3,681		2.5-3.0du/ac	3.125-3.75du/ac
Low/Medium Residential	2,575	13%	8,240-10,300		4.0-5.0du/ac	5.0-6.25du/ac
Medium Residential	960	5%	6,144-7,680		8.0-10.0du/ac	10-12.5du/ac
Town Center	50	-		463,000		.25far
Village Centers (4@40 acres)	160	1%		500,000		
General Mixed Use	1,060	5%	1,017-2,380	2,829,424-5,771,700	15-20 du/ac .25far	18.75-25du/ac .25far
Business/Industrial Park	427	2%		3162456		.20far
Institutional/Public Facilities	214	1%				
Public/Quasi-Public parks	1,618	8%				
Open Space (community-wide)	1,505	8%				
Subtotal	17,265	87%	20,546-26,118	6,952,500-9,897,156		
Industrial-Lake City	600	3%		4,443,120		.20far
Industrial-Lake City Existing Bldgs. Available for Lease				1,300,000		
Open space-Industrial Reserve Lake City	1,952	10%		0		
Lake City Subtotal	2,552	13%		5,743,120		
TOTAL	19,817	100%	20,546-26,118	12,695,120 - 16-640,276		

(A) Vacant Cross Acres are approximate and are based on existing land use coverage supplied by the City of Independence but refined and adjusted by LDR International, Inc.

(B)Holding Capacity: These calculations assume the following net development areas:
 Residential = 80%
 Employment = 85%
 Mixed Use = 100%

(C) Mixed Use: Development program for nixed use areas =
 25% minimum open space
 30%-60% maximum employment
 15% -45% maximum residential

Percentages are for example only and may vary with implementation.

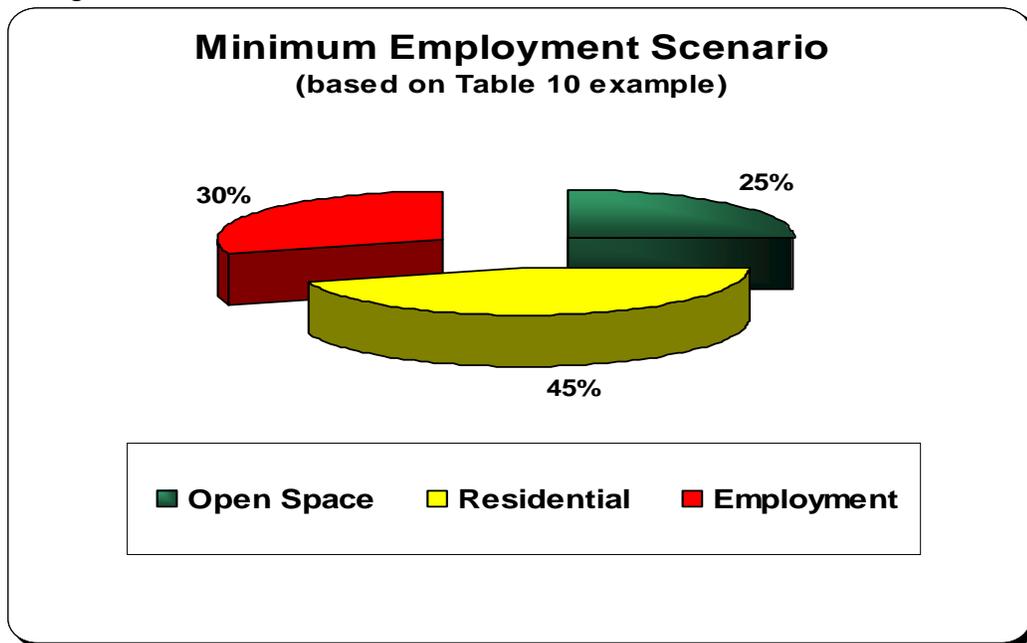
6.C Mixed Use Development

The yields for the mixed use development area included in the refined alternative require additional calculations beyond the simple holding capacity approach cited previously in this report.

The goal of development is to encourage a mix of employment, residential and open space within an area or on a specific site. In the Little Blue Valley, mixed use areas will help promote the balanced and orderly growth goals developed through the public involvement process. A wise mix of uses at key sites within the Little Blue Valley will also help set the tone of high quality efficient growth that will make this area an attractive regional growth center.

Mixed use regulations give a developer a great deal of leeway regarding the specific proportions of land uses that must result. This desire to not over specify is secured by setting minimum and maximum percentages for broad categories such as employment, residential and open space in the zoning code. This allows the developer to respond better to specific market and site conditions. Thus a mixed use development could be predominantly employment on one site; while another mixed use area could be have a more residential character.

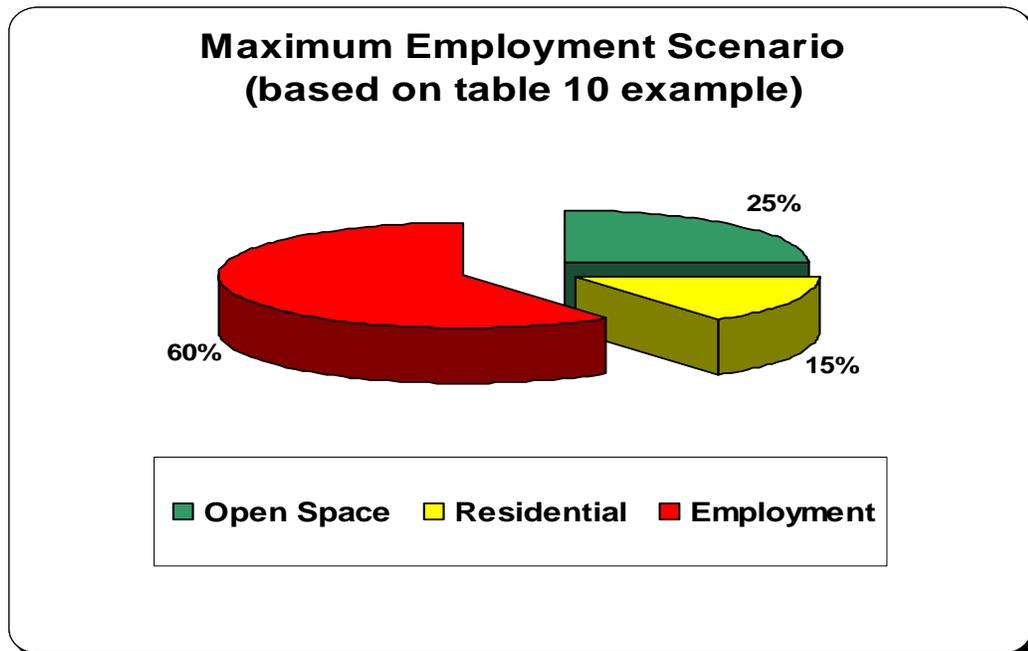
Figure 13



Mixed use regulations usually require that a project includes both residential and employment uses in each phase. The specific proportions are typically set in an approved development master plan adopted into the comprehensive plan and build out may proceed in phases until these targets are achieved. The development master plan should be for a minimum of 50 acres. To insure the employment component does not become a surrogate retail center, mixed use regulations usually limit retail uses to a definite upper square foot limit. We are recommending that the retail portion be limited to no more than 2.5% of the total employment square footage. Additionally, most employment land should relate, as much as possible, to the cluster of a village or Town Center.

In the Little Blue Valley the proportions of different land use categories (based on net developable land) within a mixed use zoning district (MXD) could be a minimum of 25% open space plus a 15% minimum to a 45% maximum for residential and from a 30% minimum to a 60% maximum used for employment, although these figures could vary based on implementation tools and market forces (see Figures 13, 14, and Table 10). In a 100-acre mixed use site, for example, at least 25 acres must be open space, 15-45 acres can be residential, and 30-60 acres can

Figure 14



be employment. An MXD program emphasizing employment might be 25% open space, 50% employment and 25% residential. An MXD emphasizing housing could have 30% employment and 45% housing in addition to the required 25% open space. The employment minimum percentage could be reduced within a Planned Community District (PCD –A PCD is a very large scale mixed use development) based on current market conditions and the success of other key employment areas such as the Lake City Ammunition Plant.



Future industrial development

Because of the high proportion of open space in a mixed use area, the holding capacity of the employment and residential sections of the area are assumed to be 100%. Because of the wide range of possibilities allowed by MXD or PCD flexibility, the yield calculation shown on Table present ranges for employment and housing. To avoid overestimating the total amount of potential development within mixed use areas, it must be understood that as one category approaches the maximum, the other will approach the minimum. It should also be noted that lower assumed applied densities are used for mixed use areas affected by potential flood plain areas.

6.D Phasing Strategy

The implementation of the development in the Little Blue Valley will extend through the next 40 to 50 years with market conditions determining a faster or slower pace. Development should proceed in an orderly way in conjunction with an incremental extension or expansion of infrastructure, schools, and other municipal services. Although a market-driven pace is sensible, the City should strongly resist any tendencies toward a piecemeal or hopscotch development pattern in the Little Blue Valley at public expense. The Capital Improvement Plan can encourage proper phasing through planned annual expenses. The City should make efforts to encourage development only in those areas that are the most consistent with the overall planning strategy. The planning strategy is generally intended to be for the orderly and efficient provision of infrastructure and public services.

Development should generally proceed from south to north based on current development patterns. This progression will relate strongly to the probable phasing of the Little Blue Parkway beginning at the Little Blue Parkway/I-70 interchange and proceeding northward as the road is completed. New development should also generally proceed from the eastern edge of the more intensely developed area of the City and move toward the Little Blue River as new roads are constructed and as infrastructure is extended. This does not preclude other development, however, all developments will be required to provide adequate public facilities prior to or in conjunction with development.

6.E Impact on School Districts

The following Tables 11, 12 and 13 show how the various residential, employment and mixed-use land use designations of the Refined Concept Plan are distributed within each of the three school districts in the Little Blue Valley.

If the recommended phasing strategy is followed, the timing of new development will affect the Independence and Blue Springs school districts the most over the next several years.



Fort Osage High School

**TABLE 11:
APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION
RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT USES BY SCHOOL DISTRICT
INDEPENDENCE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

<i>Designation</i>	Vacant Gross Acres (A)	Holding Capacity (B)		
		Dwelling Units	Square Footage	Assumed Density/FAR
Ag/Rural Residential	-			0.2du/ac
Estate Residential	-			1.0du/ac
Low Residential	824	1,648 – 1,978		2.5 - 3.0du/ac
Low/Medium Residential	596	1,907 – 2,384		4.0 - 5.0du/ac
Medium Residential	184	1,178 - 1,472		8.0 - 10.0du/ac
Town Center				.25far
Village Centers (4 @ 40 acres)	80		250,000	
General Mixed Use (C)	356	445 - 801	1,163,052 – 1,938,420	5.0du/ac .25far
General Mixed Use-Flood Plain (C)	356	204 - 734	639,025 – 1,775,070	2.5-5.0 du/ac .15far-.25far
Business/Industrial Park	148		1,289,376	.20far
Subtotal		5,382 – 7,369	3,341,453 – 5,252,866	
Industrial-Lake City	-			.20far
Industrial-Lake City (Exist. Bldgs. Available for Lease)	-			
Open Space-Industrial Reserve Lake City	-			
Lake City Subtotal	-	-	-	
TOTAL		5,382 – 7,369	3,341,453 – 5,252,866	

(K) Vacant Gross Acres are approximate.

(L) See notes to Table 10 for land use net development assumptions.

(M) See notes to Table 10 for mixed-use distributions and densities.

**TABLE 12:
APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION
RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT USES BY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BLUE SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT**

<i>Designation</i>	Vacant Gross Acres (A)	Holding Capacity (B)		
		Dwelling Units	Square Footage	Assumed Density/FAR
Ag/Rural Residential	-			0.2du/ac
Estate Residential	1,454	1163		1.0du/ac
Low Residential	-			2.5 - 3.0du/ac
Low/Medium Residential	1,111	3,552 – 4,444		4.0 - 5.0du/ac
Medium Residential	345	3,488 – 4,360		8.0 - 10.0du/ac
Town Center	50		463,000	.25far
Village Centers (4 @ 40 acres)	40		125,000	
General Mixed Use (C)	160	200 - 360	522,720 – 871,200	5.0du/ac .25far
General Mixed Use-Flood Plain (C)	160	100 - 360	313,632 – 871,200	2.5-5.0 du/ac .15far-.25far
Business/Industrial Park				.20far
Subtotal		8,503 – 10,687	1,424,352 – 2,330,400	
Industrial-Lake City				.20far
Industrial-Lake City (Exist. Bldgs. Available for Lease)				
Open Space-Industrial Reserve Lake City	282			
Lake City Subtotal				
TOTAL		8,503 – 10,687	1,424,352 – 2,330,400	

- (A) Vacant Gross Acres are approximate.
- (B) See notes to Table 10 for land use net development assumptions.
- (C) See notes to Table 10 for mixed-use distributions and densities.

**TABLE 13:
APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION
RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT USES BY SCHOOL DISTRICT
FORT OSAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

<i>Designation</i>	Vacant Gross acres (A)	Holding Capacity (B)		
		Dwelling Units	Square Footage	Assumed Density/FAR
Ag/Rural Residential	5,707	913		0.2du/ac
Estate Residential	-			1.0du/ac
Low Residential	693	1,386 – 1,663		2.5 - 3.0du/ac
Low/Medium Residential	748	2,394 – 2,992		4.0 - 5.0du/ac
Medium Residential	230	1,472 – 1,840		8.0 - 10.0du/ac
Town Center	-			.25far
Village Centers (4 @ 40 acres)	40		125,000	
General Mixed Use (C)	-			5.0du/ac .25far
General Mixed Use-Flood Plain (C)	-			2.5-5.0 du/ac .15far-.25far
Business/Industrial Park	275		2,043,835	.20far
Subtotal		6,165 – 7,408	2,168,835	
Industrial-Lake City	600		4,443,120	.20far
Industrial-Lake City (Exist. Bldgs. Available for Lease)			1,300,000	
Open Space-Industrial Reserve Lake City	1670			.
Lake City Subtotal	2270		5,743,000	
TOTAL		6,165 – 7,408	7,911,835	

- (A) Vacant Gross Acres are approximate.
 (B) See notes to Table 10 for land use net development assumptions.
 (C) See notes to Table 10 for mixed-use distributions and densities.

Chapter 7: Implementation Strategy

A well-defined implementation strategy must be part of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the Little Blue Valley. This chapter presents a coordinated series of complementary regulations, incentives and innovative short-term and long-term planning strategies to carry out the land use and phasing goals of the Little Blue Valley plan.

In construing the projections for employment in this plan and in applying the goals for minimum and maximum percentages of land use types, implementation tools should be adopted to achieve those goals. However, in so doing, the overriding factor governing implementation will be market forces. The absorption estimates shown in Table 9 should be updated at least every five years. The implementation tools chosen to achieve the employment goals of this plan should create a balance between demand for both residential and non-residential land. Failure to maintain that balance could result in the stagnation of economic development in the plan area.

The ratio of uses in an area shown as mixed use on the refined concept plan should be determined by the individual physical characteristics of each parcel and the current market demand. Certain parcels and economic conditions may necessitate higher or lower percentages of either residential or non-residential uses.

7.A General Concepts for Implementation

7.A.1 Comprehensive Zoning for all or a part of the study area: Comprehensive Zoning is a process by which all land is zoned to meet the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan soon after the Plan's adoption.

The City of Independence presently does not use "comprehensive" zoning as part of its long-term planning. In the Little Blue Valley, however, comprehensive zoning could be a very effective way to attain the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive

"...the overriding factor governing implementation will be market forces."



The current zoning of this land is industrial. The Little Blue Valley Plan calls for the land to be developed as mixed use

Plan Amendment. Comprehensive zoning would be a sharp departure from reliance on incremental, piecemeal rezoning initiated by property owners.

By fixing the location of the main land use patterns set out in the comprehensive plan, comprehensive zoning can establish a high degree of predictability for the City, local landowners and potential developers. This predictability is especially desirable regarding the ultimate location of the Village Centers and Town Center and the mixed use centers to which other developments should directly relate (streets connections, paths, open space links, etc.).



The Little Blue Valley Plan calls for mixed use developments, not the segregated land use patterns shown in this aerial view of Noland Road.

Adopting a comprehensive zoning map also increases the probable compatibility of adjacent land uses and enables the City to plan long-term capital improvements in a more rational and confident way. Comprehensive zoning would also be a means to guarantee adequate land for all housing types and densities to achieve the balanced growth goals of the plan.

Comprehensive zoning enables the City to take a strong lead role in implementing the plan, but it can still allow market timing to drive the actual development of any given parcel. (Other measures can be adopted if the City also wishes to influence phasing.)

7.A.2 Consistency of comprehensive zoning and subsequent piecemeal rezoning approvals with the Comprehensive Plan land use goals and designations.

The City Zoning Ordinance should have a stronger “consistency” clause. Consistency with the comprehensive plan would become a more legally defensible standard for evaluating any future rezoning requests. This consistency requirement can be applied to comprehensive as well as individual rezoning proposals. This does not mean there must be a direct one-to-one correlation between the zoning and the comprehensive plan. Nevertheless, a consistency requirement does help prevent glaring “errors” and check “spot” zoning or totally inconsistent rezoning petitions.

In the absence of comprehensive zoning, a consistency requirement can reassure landowners and developers that the Little Blue Valley Plan Amendment will be carried out in an orderly way and thus foster a long-term perspective among all stakeholders and citizens.

7.A.3 Special zoning designations to guarantee orderly phasing and buildout of the larger land holdings in the Little Blue Valley.

Conventional single purpose zoning is not flexible enough to carry out fully the Little Blue Valley Plan. The City should adopt several new zoning districts and add more development options to its existing zoning districts to facilitate its successful implementation. The Zoning Ordinance must also include a sufficient range of housing choices to help meet the balanced growth goals of the plan.

The City development code should also be revised to include other development techniques such as performance zoning requirements and adequate public facilities requirements.

7.A.3.1 Benefits of a Large-Scale Planned Community: The City of Independence is aware of the intention of the RLDS church to develop a public planned community on 3,500 acres of land in the Little Blue Valley. This is a once in a life time opportunity to plan and implement a high-quality, trend setting, planned community of regional significance.

The development of a large-scale planned community is a long-term venture and requires the development and maintenance of long-term relationships. In Columbia, Maryland (the Columbia New Town), Jim Rouse and other Rouse Company executives realized that success depends on the relationship of three entities – the Land Owner/Developer, the Municipal Government, and the citizens. This relationship is like a three-legged stool; each leg is necessary to fulfill (support) the mission. It is a true partnership; two of the three entities cannot achieve the goal without the third. Such a relationship is built on a



A potential Village Center location

shared vision, trust, public relations, good will, and fulfilling promises.

The following are essential ingredients for such success:

- The owners/developers must realize that they are in the venture for the long haul. Commitment to quality and continual maintenance is essential. "Patient money" is also critical.
- Carefully phase the community; don't install infrastructures too far ahead of building construction. Develop small sections; try to make each segment as complete and finished as possible, then move on to another section. Create a total community environment.
- Carefully match the amenities to the markets and make sure to include multiple markets.
- Although the physical environment is important, a successful community must also fulfill definite social, emotional, and cultural needs as well.

Keys for successful large scale planned community development:

1. Ownership in for the long haul with "patient money"
2. Carefully phased infrastructure
3. Match the amenities to multiple market desires
4. Fulfill physical, social, emotional and cultural needs of future residents

7.A.3.2 Adopt Planned Community Zoning: A Planned Community District (PCD), a very large scale mixed use development, would relate specifically to the land holdings of the RLDS church but could also apply to other large land assemblies. This PCD zone would be the best means for carrying out the orderly development potential of these holdings.

Planned Community Zoning would require a minimum size such as 1,000 acres under single ownership or under a single managing entity such as a development partnership. However, to have the ability to plan and develop a Town Center a much larger acreage may be required. To guide development over several decades, the City would consider approval of a comprehensive Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) for the entire Planned Community District (PCD).

The PDP would also contain language specifying the allowed uses, design and acreage requirements for the Town Center. To simplify this process, the allowed uses for specific sections of the Planned Community can be derived (and modified) from the existing zoning ordinance, e.g., “All uses allowed in the C-P-2 District, except for ...”

All future development in the Planned Community would have to be consistent with the PDP. Although the PDP determines basic requirements such as allowed land uses and density, the PDP gives the developer great flexibility in implementing these targets. Subsequent plan submission and approval will specify such development requirements as lot layout, minimum setbacks, parking and landscape design as each section of the Planned Community district is phased. These specifications should generally follow the zoning applied to similar uses in other parts of the City.

The requirement to adhere to an approved PDP provides needed predictability and efficiency in implementing the Comprehensive Plan goals. For example, such an approved PDP enables the City to plan better for needed capital improvements. The Capital Improvement Plan can be an important tool for phasing Little Blue Valley development in a more orderly and cost-effective way and for preventing premature or haphazard growth (also see discussions in Chapter 5 Section A.3 and Chapter 6 Section C).

7.A.3.3 Village Centers and Town Center:

Four Village Centers are proposed to serve the more intensively developed portions of the study area. These Village Centers are the focal points of the various residential villages and would contain a mixture of uses including neighborhood commercial, some employment uses and civic uses such as libraries, churches and schools. The higher density residential areas should surround these Village Centers.



The Independence Memorial Airport is slated for future mixed use development

The Town Center is relocated to the area east of the Little Blue Trace as shown in Alternative 2. The reasons for this relocation are:

- It is very close to the geographic center of the Little Blue Valley study area.
- It becomes a strong terminus and focal point at the eastern end of the improved Truman Boulevard.
- It moves the Town Center further away from the existing City Power Plant and adjacent industrial development and provides better buffering.
- It locates the Town Center in an area of significant natural beauty enabling the creation of a unique new center of development for the Valley.

7.A.3.4 Mixed Use Zoning (MXD): Another important new zoning initiative is to allow mixing of residential and employment uses at key locations in the Little Blue Valley. The MXD would not necessarily apply to the Planned Community District. The PCD will have its own development requirements. MXD would not necessarily apply to areas within a PCD that are shown in the mixed use land use category of the refined concept plan. This MXD district would apply to smaller tracts of land (50 acres and up) and specify which uses are compatible with each other and not allow those uses which are not (e.g., heavy manufacturing and housing are not compatible). The MXD regulations would also specify minimum and maximum proportions of employment, residential and open space (gross acres) to guarantee that a true mixed-use center results. For the Little Blue Valley, a possible mix of uses might be 25% minimum open space, 25% to 45% residential, and 30% to 50% employment (see Table 10). Commercial retail would be accommodated by specifying a limited amount of commercial square footage. (Such a square foot limit insures that the Mixed-Use employment areas do not simply become suburban shopping centers rather than regional employment centers. Such shopping centers would be more appropriate



Future Town Center location as viewed from Truman Road

as part of other Little Blue Valley developments such as the Town Center or Village Centers.)

The MXD zone may also require a Preliminary Development Plan (PDP). In any case, zoning regulations will have to specify how mixed use projects can be phased and require that each phase contain a relative balance of uses, not allowing all employment or all housing.

7.A.3.5 Industrial Zones: The current M-2 zoning district seems appropriate for the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant site. While this site remains under the control of the Federal government, the City has no direct zoning control over how the site can be used. One assumption of the plan, however, is that the future of the Lake City site is likely to focus on M-2 style activities. Consequently, the designated land uses adjacent to Lake City should be similar and compatible with this assumption.

To attract high-quality economic development, the zoning for the Little Blue Valley should include a new Business/Industrial-Park Zone that narrows the allowed uses to those most compatible with high end office development and require certain site amenities such as open space and landscape buffers. Such a zone, for example, should not allow business and employment sites to build out as conventional strip development environments.

This new business zone should also limit such uses as warehousing and distribution to ancillary roles within the main economic development centers. Such uses consume large amounts of valuable land and create few jobs. This type of use is not as revenue enhancing as the more intensive concentrated office developments.

7.A.3.6 Performance Zoning: Performance zoning techniques base zoning approvals on a project's impact to the community. Impacts that are regularly measured include traffic, noise, vibration, pollution, utility consumption and open space among others. Performance zoning



Village Centers could incorporate community facilities similar to the Sermon Center

Performance zoning measures a developments impact on the community to determine if the development is appropriate.

techniques should be considered when (re)developing nonresidential zoning districts.

7.A.3.7 Adequate Public Facilities (APF) development requirements: APF requirements prevent development without the infrastructure needed to accommodate it. New building permits are only issued when there is a guarantee that roads, schools and other infrastructure will be built in time to support the homes or businesses that are proposed. Supply of such infrastructure can be through the public sector or through developer construction or dedication. (If comprehensive zoning were adopted, an APF system could be the vehicle for obtaining impact fees or other exactions.) APF requirements help the City plan its capital programming in an orderly way and can provide local citizens with reassurance that growth will not degrade their quality of life.

7.A.4 Designate measures to guide development in efficient patterns.

The control of leapfrog development is crucial for orderly phasing. One means may be to limit development approvals, public sector improvements or incentives (e.g., tax relief) for urbanizing uses to specified areas to accelerate (or defer) development in accord with the adopted utility(s) phasing plan. These measures are designed to guide public infrastructure development. This does not preclude development that is able to meet adequate public facilities requirements without relying on public investment or public assistance.

7.A.5 Adopt a balanced, multi-modal transportation plan that also accommodates pedestrian needs to increase the appeal of the Little Blue Valley.

The Little Blue Valley Comprehensive Plan Amendment affords the perfect opportunity to create a unique multi-modal community with emphasis on transit, pedestrian and bicycle usage as well as new roads. Current federal funding regulations mandate that transportation planning be multi-modal and more open to urban design input. Current best planning

practices recognize that creating better communities requires rewriting the old rules of the “highways-only” game. Several mutually supportive land use and transportation principles have been incorporated into the Little Blue Valley plan.

- Mixed use concepts
- Jobs to housing balance to reduce commute distances
- Inter-connections between nearby developments and between Little Blue Valley and the rest of Independence
- Traffic-calming techniques
- Pedestrian and bicycling networks
- Landscaping and edge treatments to complement engineering measures.

Adequate public facility requirements assure that a new development does not exceed the capacity of existing infrastructures. This prevents unpleasant situations such as traffic delays, sewer back-ups, or water shortages.

The City’s current transit system (inter and intra-city) extends to the boundaries of the Little Blue Valley. This service allows commuters to travel to key destinations within Independence and to downtown Kansas City. Currently, the service extends east on 24 Highway to Susquehanna, and east along 39th Street to Independence Center. As the eastern part of the City develops, service should be extended to key destinations within the Little Blue Valley.

In addition to bus service, other forms of transit are being discussed for the metro area. The Little Blue Valley should be a key service area for future transit services. One key to the viability of future transit services will be accessibility to a compact development pattern.

7.A.6 Major Roadway Network.

7.A.6.1 Little Blue Parkway (LBP) and Other Roads: Crucial to the future success of the Little Blue Valley plan are issues regarding the placement and design of the LBP. The proposed plan reflects these concerns in its recommended location of the LBP and its relation to proposed land uses. Much effort is made to minimize the impacts of the roadway on natural and open space features such as parks, The Little Blue Trace, flood plains and alluvial soils. Identification of design

criteria, funding, and final alignment are critical to the success of this plan.

In addition to the LBP, several additional arterial, minor arterial and collector streets will be built, upgraded or realigned within the Little Blue Valley.

Jackson Drive. The new proposal for Jackson Drive is to build two arterial street segments:

- From 37th Terrace North east to R.D. Mize (between Selsa Rd. and the Meadow Hills subdivision.
- From 24 Highway south to approximately Salisbury Road. The remainder of Jackson Drive will be divided between two collector streets. One will run along the current alignment of Jackson Drive ending at R.D. Mize Road. The second will extend from the point Jackson Drive intersects with R.D. Mize Road east of the Meadow Hills subdivision north connecting the existing segment of the Little Blue Parkway, Necessary Road and Jones Road (see Figure 15).



New alignment of Jackson Drive south of R.D.Mize Road

7.A.7 Better local road and street design and road frontage treatments. Revising current right-of-way and design requirements for local streets and cul-de-sacs is important to give Little Blue Valley the quality and image the City wants. The design and appearance of roads and streets are one of the most crucial aspects of the overall public environment of a new development. To set the Little Blue Valley apart from its suburban rivals, a variety of planning requirements and options should allow developers to scale down the visual impact and cost of local roads and require they implement high quality frontage and parking lot treatments to create a more appealing environment.

Typically, the standards for suburban streets and cul-de-sacs result in an excess of paved area and a system of local streets over designed for the actual needs of the development. Less intensive and less land consuming standards should replace such current

Figure 15

Major Street Plan

Thoroughfare Legend

Thoroughfare Legend

- Highway
- Highway to be Upgraded
- Little Blue Parkway
- Arterial
- Arterial to be Upgraded
- Planned Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Minor Arterial to be Upgraded
- Planned Arterial
- Collector
- Collector to be Upgraded
- Planned Collector
- Safety Improvement Street
- City Limits
- Parcel

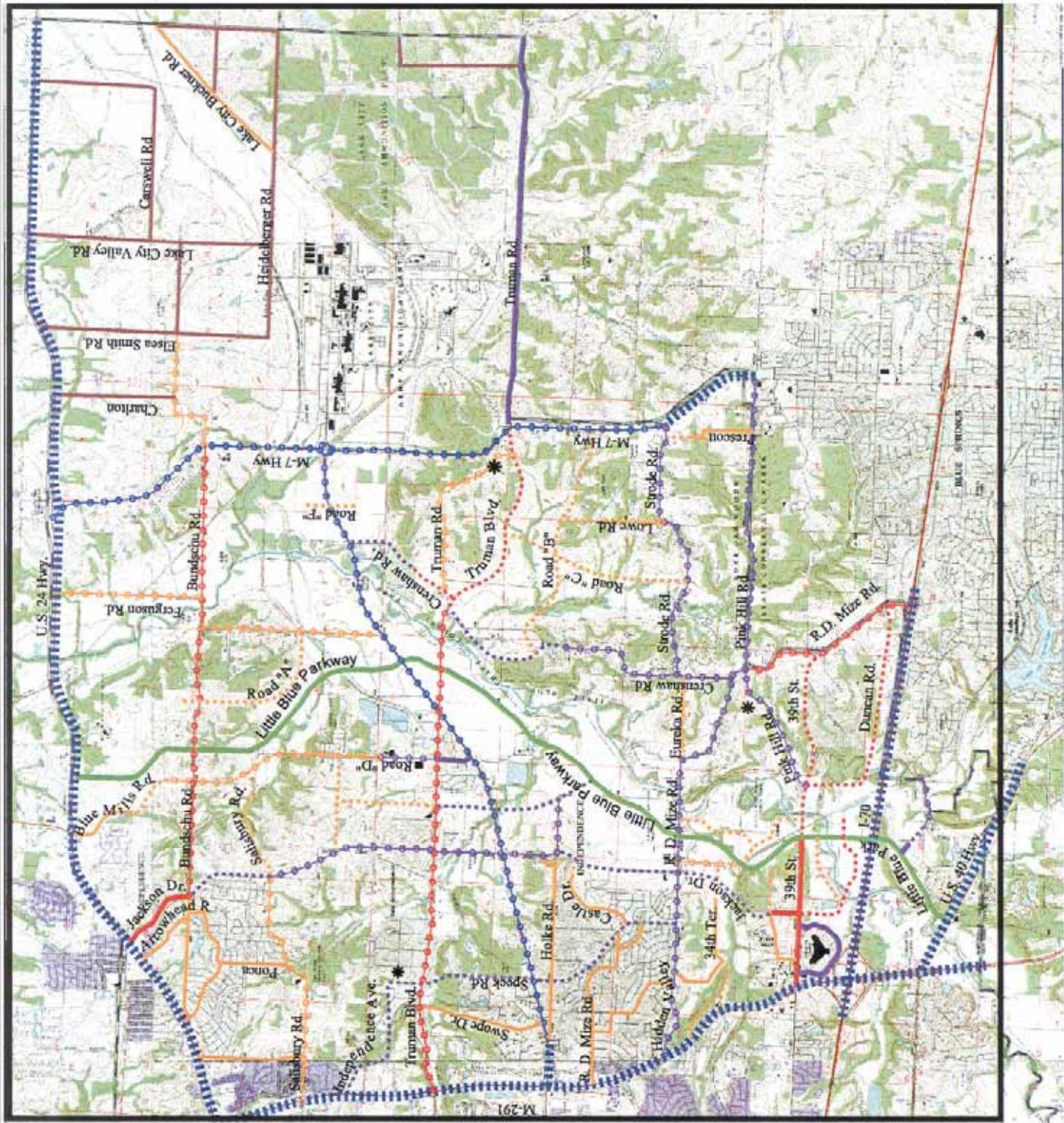
- Notes:
1. Planned Streets are shown in general locations.
 2. New Streets should follow topography.
 3. * Indicates Change of Street Name Necessary.
 4. Street Classification subject to change based on area wide traffic model.
 5. Cranshaw Rd. may have design constraints.



Adopted: May 24, 1999

Community Development Dept.
City of Independence, MO.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)



requirements as those calling for 50-foot right of way and 28 feet of paving for minor streets.

Parking lot location and design are also an important part of a successful suburban development. The need for good parking lot design is especially critical in the Town Center, Village Centers and Mixed Use Districts. The zoning regulations should be amended to encourage shared parking to reduce the size of parking areas. Parking areas should not dominate the public environment by being located in front of buildings or along the right of way of main roads. Smaller parking areas carefully located to serve individual buildings are preferable to massive lots serving a variety of users.

Boulevard, street and public open space enhancements installed by the City can complement requirements that private developments include similar or complementary enhancements – landscaped frontages, parking lot plantings, and buffers between land uses, etc. The public investment in a more appealing (and marketable) development environment will play a large part in securing the high quality of life goals of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

7.A.8 Importance of tree planting. Because much of the Little Blue Valley has been farmed, it is void of tree cover. An essential component of all new development in the Little Blue Valley should be an aggressive tree-planting program. Special emphasis should be placed on street trees as well as on planting publicly visible portions of private properties.

Street tree planting requirements should include minimum tree spacing and size requirements. Planting design guidelines should also be required as part of Planned Community Development, Mixed Use Development and Business Park zones.

7.A.9 Increased open space requirements for residential and nonresidential developments; guarantee that public open space is usable, high quality.



Mature trees are much of the allure to older neighborhoods. Tree planting at the time of construction will enhance a neighborhood as it matures



Flood plains and other sensitive natural areas can become valuable development amenities if preserved and enhanced properly

All zoning districts – residential and non-residential – in the Little Blue Valley should include minimum open space requirements within and adjacent to new development. Such open space should not merely be leftover fragments of unusable land but should help secure the high quality goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The zoning and other development codes must therefore specify minimum sizes, and what proportion needs to be usable for active or passive recreation.

In the Town Center and Village Centers there should be urban design “equivalents” -, e.g., paved civic plazas – that will count toward meeting a project’s open space requirements. Guidelines should also specify how such civic space could be coordinated with the landscape enhancements and buffering requirements required of developers. (See open space and buffering examples.)

To encourage generous open space planning, the zoning regulations for residential areas should include a cluster option that reduces lots sizes in return for provision of open space beyond the required minimums. No additional units are allowed above the maximum set by the base zoning, but these units are sited on less land than normal. The City recently adopted new residential design standards to provide for cluster development. (See cluster example page 48)

Tighter clustering enables the developer to save on site preparation and infrastructure costs. In return, the overall open space system is enlarged, more sensitive environmental and landscape features are left intact and the overall image of the Little Blue Valley is enhanced.

In addition to current ordinances, some quality control standards are needed. This open space must be more than leftover undevelopable land, land damaged by construction, or areas that are needed for stormwater management, utility easements or other necessary infrastructure. One basic standard is to require that a certain proportion (e.g., 50%) of this open space must be suitable for “active” or “passive” recreation. Establishing some minimum dimensions (e.g., 25 feet wide) for acceptable open space will prevent the accumulation of numerous thin strips or fragments.

Open space as referred to in this plan will be analyzed in three primary methods. First, mixed use development areas will require an overall open space percentage. Additionally, each site plan will provide a portion of the general open space requirement. These percentages will be set by the preliminary development plan. Secondly, non-residential developments outside of planned mixed use areas, will be required to provide a percentage of open space for the development as well as a percentage of landscaped open space adjacent to any structures (similar to the requirement of the southeast Independence Overlay Zoning District 0Z-1). Finally, residential developments will provide open space according to the residential design standards of the zoning code.

7.A.10 Enhanced measures to protect flood plain, stream valley and related environmental resources.

A large portion of the Little Blue 100-year flood plain has been used for agricultural purposes due to flood plain development controls. The Army Corps of Engineers has installed flood control measures in the Valley somewhat redefining the 100-year flood plain. Consequently, some former flood prone areas may now be usable for development. It is our understanding that the Army Corps of Engineers is currently remapping the 100-year flood plain limits. This information will be important for determining the full extent of the future development area. The location and design of the LBP and other roads serving the area will also affect development potential of the flood plain.

Portions of the City have experienced severe effects from recent floods. It is of critical importance that new developments are free from the threat of flooding. This may require detailed study of upstream watersheds to determine potential increases in flood levels due to upstream development. Additionally, developments in and near flood plains should expect greater scrutiny of flood-related issues.

Recognizing the special attention that these extensive flood plain and stream valley environments must receive, the City should implement close oversight over activities in these areas. An Environmental Overlay



Open space corridor extending west from the Lake City facility

New State and Federal environmental regulations impact the manner in which the City manages flood plain resources. These regulations also place strict pollution control standards on development activities.



This rock outcropping is being preserved as a landscape feature in the back yard of a new home

zoning district (EO) is one means to permit appropriate development of sites near stream valley, wetland or flood plain environments while meeting the basic environmental protection needs of the Comprehensive Plan. The EO district would specify such protections as setbacks from streams or wetlands, specify the width of buffers from sensitive areas and limit disturbance of steep slopes. The EO would allow developers a good deal of site planning flexibility such as permitting reduction of minimum lot sizes or setbacks when these adjustments will allow development without impairing sensitive resources.

The Zoning Ordinance should therefore include such requirements as minimum buffers (e.g., 50-feet for flood way and flood plains), for wetlands, steep slope protection through grading prohibitions or limitations and forest preservation standards.

7.A.11 Agricultural and rural landscape protection incentives. One method to insure rural preservation is the outright purchase of development rights from rural landowners. This is the surest way to protect properties in an urbanizing area. Preliminary discussions with the City regarding this planning tool, have indicated that the City is not interested in such a highly interventionist approach and does not wish to become a land broker or enforcer of such agreements. Two other options, however, are available that can achieve many of the same results as a purchase of development rights program. These include the use of nongovernmental land trusts and rural clustering.

7.A.11.1 Land Trust Assumption of Development Rights: One way to accomplish farmland protection is through the formation of private land trusts. Private trusts can acquire (through purchase, donation or a combination of both) preservation easements through a private covenant. The City contributes to this strategy by granting the participating landowners significant tax breaks based on the land having no (or diminished) development or subdivision potential.

This land trust strategy has been very successful elsewhere. It does not require the local government to become an active purchaser or agent yet grants participating landowners sufficient financial incentives to remove their property from the development market. This strategy does require formation and cooperation of a legally constituted entity that can acquire such easements and enforce the terms of the agreements.

These limits on development rights can be permanent or time limited (e.g., 25 years). Those that are time limited should be easier to secure and could be an important part of a phasing strategy for Little Blue Valley.

7.A.11.2 Rural Clustering (Northeast Agricultural Area): Another option is for the zoning regulations to require or allow for clustering at very low gross densities in the rural zoning districts. Such rural clustering permits the landowner to extract development potential, but does not result in all the land on a property becoming uniformly subdivided and transformed into private residential lots. Rather than space large lots uniformly across a property, rural clustering would allow a set maximum density (e.g., 1 dwelling unit / 10 gross acres) to occupy smaller lots of a specified maximum size (e.g., 1 acre) within a limited portion of a site. The remainder of the site is then permanently protected through covenants. Such “preservation parcels” can be quite large, perhaps 70% of the original tract.

Preserving rural landscape character through such clustering will help maintain the appeal of the Little Blue Valley for high quality development. Rural small lot clustering and use of the undeveloped open space as buffers can also enable future development to coexist with active agriculture in much of the Little Blue Valley.

7.A.12 Incentives to preserve historic resources and incorporate them sensitively into new development as landmarks and reminders of Little Blue Valley’s heritage.



A vista from Powell Road

The Little Blue Valley is rich in potentially significant, historic resources. Most of these resources are in the form of historic homesteads with a few excellent examples of period architecture. These assets are valuable to the City of Independence and they represent a strong tie to the past culture of eastern Jackson County. One home in the Valley is reported to be one of the oldest structures in Jackson County. Preservation of these assets and integrating them into the future landscape is one way to tie the new development to the history of Independence. Additionally, utilization of these resources in complement to new development will provide a unique and marketable quality to the Little Blue Valley.

Historic preservation tax credits are one means to encourage such preservation without an excess of regulation. Federal and State tax credits are currently available. Granting such credits in return for appropriate preservation, restoration, or adaptive reuse of historic structures can have great appeal to owners and developers. Review of work eligible for such tax credits requires specialized technical skills and oversight of plans and completed work. Submitting to such review in exchange for tax credit is voluntary and is not another layer of zoning regulation.



This Missouri Century Farm has been in one family for over 100 years

Another incentive to encourage historic preservation would be to grant open space credit when a building and its surroundings are protected and appropriately incorporated into a new development, e.g., as a community center or a Town Center or Village Center business. Historic houses are often large and may require a substantial investment to restore or preserve them. Special use provisions should be considered that allow their conversion to limited professional offices, bed and breakfasts, or specialized housing help off-set the cost.

Although, historic preservation need not be highly regulated and can come about through use of incentives, one absolute need is for the City to continue review and approval over the demolition of historic properties. This requires some form of inventory and listing. The City should create a formal list of historic resources within the valley. (See Chapter 1, Article 30 of the City Code for the City's Historic Preservation Code.)

7.B Specific Implementation Measures

The following are some ways the goals cited in Chapter 4 can be achieved through policy and specific implementation measures. (See also figure 16)

7.B.1 Land Use

7.B.1.1 Balanced Growth

7.B.1.1.1 Adopt Comprehensive Zoning for all or part of the Little Blue Valley or add stronger “consistency clause” to the existing City Zoning Ordinance to provide the City, landowners, and developers with long-term predictability by establishing the basic desired future land use mix.

7.B.1.1.2 Refine current Agricultural Zone to make it a more effective holding zone, e.g., by significantly increasing the minimum residential lot size, reducing allowed gross densities or adopting a sliding scale to make each additional lot harder to secure.

7.B.1.1.3 Guarantee the zoning districts implemented in Little Blue Valley include adequate land for all the housing types, costs and densities envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan.

7.B.1.1.4 Consider including a low and medium income-housing requirement for larger subdivisions. Such a general requirement will prevent concentration of such housing at only a few locations within Little Blue Valley.

7.B.1.2 Mixed Use Development

The Refined Concept Plan (Figure 12) shows several mixed use land areas. These areas may be specifically developed with MXD Zoning or generally developed with PCD Zoning. PCD Zoning would allow the defusion or expansion of the mixed use “bubble” to better fit the overall PCD Preliminary Development Plan (PDP).

“One of the most important factors influencing locational decisions for new private sector investment is the attractiveness or amenity of a particular area or city.” Blakely, Planning Local Economic Development, 1989 p. 75

“Soon the Cities were dismembered into separate districts for recreation, for commerce, for industry, for housing of different densities, while society itself was split up according to income, age, white collar and blue collar workers etc. From this grew today’s fragmented city...”
Erickson, The City as a Dwelling: Walking Siting Shaping, 1980, p. 21

7.B.1.2.1 Amend the City Zoning Ordinance to include a Planned Community Development (PCD) zoning district. Minimum size land holding should be established for this zone. The PCD will include mixed use standards possibly having a reduced emphasis on employment uses. A reduction in the emphasis on employment uses is wholly contingent upon successful marketing of Lake City Industrial properties for primarily non-warehouse business uses. Reductions will be based on an updated market analysis and balanced growth principles.

7.B.1.2.2 Amend the City Zoning Ordinance to include Mixed-Use Development (MXD) Zoning District. The MXD would not apply to the Planned Community Development Zoning District. Establish minimum and maximum ranges of various land use categories. Do not allow land consuming-low employee per acre uses such as warehousing and distribution in the Little Blue Parkway corridor. Limit amount of commercial retail square footage to a very small proportion of total development (e.g., 2.5%).

7.B.1.2.3 Adopt Town Center and Village Center Zoning designations as floating zones whose boundaries and layout require a public review process. Limit total size and require certain conditions of approval regarding links to adjacent neighborhoods, mandating civic and open space, road frontage treatments. Both Town Center and Village Center criteria should be included in the Planned Community Development zoning district. Village Center criteria should also be included in the Mixed-Use zoning district.

7.B.1.3 Community Design

7.B.1.3.1 Develop designs for major highways (alignments, right-of-way size, number of lanes, etc.) and adopt a Major Thoroughfare Plan to guide dedications and construction phasing.