



WILLIAMSTOWN MASTER PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (DRAFT)

January 2012

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: Foster a strong and diverse economy which provides a full range of employment and economic choices for individuals and families in all parts of the city.

1.1 Downtown Character and Identity

Reestablish downtown Williamstown as the economic heart of the city.

Objectives:

- A.** Encourage cooperative efforts by downtown businesses to define and enhance the character and identity of downtown.
- B.** Plan for and implement downtown-wide infrastructure improvements for such things as sidewalks, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, and water lines.
- C.** Plan for and implement amenity improvements such as landscaping, signage, and public art.
- D.** Promote voluntary improvements to the physical environment within downtown that are attractive to customers and visitors.
- E.** Develop a downtown business association to provide mutual support for advertising, common business hours, and customer support: manage downtown like a mall.
- F.** Support public and private improvements and maintenance actions which help enhance downtown's identity and provide a safe and attractive physical environment.
- G.** Consider incentives, such as a special financing district, special electric rates, and tax-reduction programs for businesses that locate within the downtown area.
- H.** Establish a marketing program for downtown to ensure that residents and visitors are aware of what downtown Williamstown has to offer.
- I.** Identify the types of land uses, such as office, retail and limited residential that would be beneficial for the downtown area.
- J.** Establish design guidelines, such as façade criteria and building maintenance that would ensure the compatibility of new development or redevelopment.

1.2 Urban Development and Revitalization

Encourage investment in the development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of urban land and buildings for employment and housing opportunities.

Objectives:

- A.** Ensure that there are sufficient inventories of commercially and industrially-zoned, buildable land supplied with adequate levels of public and transportation services.

- B. Support programs and policies which serve to maintain downtown Williamstown as the city's cultural, business, and governmental center.
- C. Retain industrial zones and maximize use of infrastructure and intermodal transportation linkages with and within these areas.
- D. Provide for a diversity of housing types and price ranges to meet the varied needs of Williamstown citizens, including market, moderate and low income housing.
- E. Define and develop Williamstown's cultural, historic, recreational, educational and environmental assets as important marketing and image-building tools of the city's business districts and neighborhoods.
- F. Recognize and support environmental conservation and enhancement activities for their contribution to the local economy and quality of life for residents, workers and wildlife in the city.

1.3 Business Development

Sustain and support business development activities to retain, expand and recruit businesses.

Objectives:

- A. Develop incentives for businesses to locate and stay in community designated target areas, such as downtown and the Barnes Road corridor.
- B. Encourage the attraction and retention of locally-owned businesses.
- C. Work diligently to retain existing business and help them expand.
- D. Work to attract or create a grocery store within the city limits.
- E. Work to create and promote agri-tourism, heritage tourism, and ecotourism initiatives, and to develop mutually supporting businesses as well.
- F. Advocate with the other cities within Grant County and the county government itself to consider economic concerns in their land use and transportation planning activities.
- G. Ensure citizen involvement in the policy development and decision making process on publicly funded economic development projects and activities.
- H. Promote the development of small business enterprises, including home occupations, to maintain a diverse economy with appeal to households of all income levels.
- I. Encourage and allow farm-related business in all zones. Revise the zoning ordinance to ensure compatibility of uses in residential areas.
- J. Build public support for the county's farms and farmers and promote, protect and assist agriculture as a functional sector of the local economy.
- K. Strive to use local businesses first whenever possible in city government operations.

1.4 Infrastructure Development

Promote public and private investments in public infrastructure to foster economic development.

Objectives:

- A. Conduct a yearly system-wide review of the city water and sewer services to ensure efficient functioning and planning for future needs.
- B. Work with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to ensure that highway planning reflects the needs of the community. Advocate for all highway and road improvements vital to the community.
- C. Ensure that community service bureaus consider the economic development policies of this Comprehensive Plan in capital budgeting.

- D. Facilitate the development of attractions that will generate new investment, spending and tourism.
- E. Build public and private partnerships to link public infrastructure development to other development plans.
- F. Use public investment as a catalyst to foster private development, primarily in downtown.

1.5 Barnes Road Medical and Technology Corridor

Establish a Med Tech Corridor along Barnes Road from the railroad tracks to the I-75 interchange.

Objectives:

- A. Undertake collaborative efforts and develop economic development strategies that foster and encourage the establishment and growth of the biomedical, bioscience, and bioengineering industries in Williamstown, especially within the Barnes Road Med Tech corridor.
- B. Encourage the development of a broad range of business and education activities in the Med Tech Corridor that will complement and support the corridor.
- C. Support expansion of Northern Kentucky University in the community and work to attract a Gateway Community and Technical College campus within the corridor.
- D. Encourage Williamstown's academic and medical institutions to continue working collaboratively.
- E. Support local, state, and federal efforts to provide and improve educational opportunities.

1.6 Tourism-Related Development

Expand and enhance tourism-related infrastructure.

Objectives:

- A. Develop an overall strategy to get the most out of economic impact from tourist visits into the city.
- B. Consider the establishment of a tourist/visitor welcome center.
- C. Consider the creation of a resort at Williamstown Lake.
- D. Use land-use planning to restrict high intensity tourist attractions to areas within the I-75 interchanges.
- E. Create a tourism services planning category with associated zoning classification.
- F. Develop a wayfinding system – a series of signs that are used to direct visitors around the city.
- G. Update visitor's map.

2. QUALITY OF LIFE

GOAL: Preserve, enhance and promote small town character and appearance.

2.1 City Growth

Land use should reflect historic patterns and existing physical conditions.

Objectives:

- A. Manage growth in the city to ensure that development occurs at an appropriate scale, style, and pace, and in locations that are suitable for the type of development being proposed.
- B. Ensure new development is reasonably compatible with adjacent land uses.

- C. Encourage non-traditional styles of development, such as cluster development and conservation subdivisions, in order to foster efficient use of land, respect the physical environment, and transportation facilities.
- D. Encourage local business growth in downtown and adjacent areas.
- E. Support the adaptive reuse and redevelopment of existing vacant buildings in downtown.
- F. Promote walkability and reasonable connections to the downtown Williamstown core.

2.2 Community Spirit

Promote and create community gatherings, social interaction and areas that bring people together.

Objectives:

- A. Build upon the success of existing festivals and celebrations that are held in Williamstown including:
 - a. Williamstown Derby Day – First Saturday in May
 - b. Marigold Day – Third Saturday in September
 - c. Santa’s Wonderland: A Day of the Children of Grant County – First Saturday in December
- B. Continue participation and support of countywide fairs and festivals including:
 - a. Kentucky Horse Heritage Days – First full week of September
 - b. Grant County Fair – First full week of July
- C. Consider the development of park-related festivals and celebrations

2.3 Community Appearance

Create more appealing city gateways and corridors as well as improve the overall appearance of the city.

Objectives:

- A. Critical areas of the town including gateways such as the interstate interchanges/exits, Barnes Road, Main Street, and KY 36 should be revitalized to add to the image of the community.
- B. Protect and control the aesthetic character of the downtown core along Main Street and all of U.S. 25 with appropriate architectural, landscaping and setback standards and manage the size and scale of commercial development in a manner that is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.
- C. Create gateways at principal entry points into the city and develop a design theme that is used throughout the community to create a sense of unity, identity, and cohesion for both residents and visitors.
- D. Encourage public/private participation and cooperation in beautification efforts. Explore assistance that may be available from private/volunteer groups to contribute to urban design-related projects and to help maintain enhanced public areas (e.g., street medians, small landscaped areas, trails, sidewalks, and pedestrian areas).
 - a. Encourage and incorporate efforts of “Connect to Care” and “Fitness For Life Across Grant County (FFLAG).”
 - b. Build upon the initiatives of Vision 2015 within Williamstown utilizing the core group of volunteers and health professionals already in place.
- E. Increase enforcement of municipal codes and regulations pertaining to property.

- F. Maintenance, upkeep and appearance (e.g., mowing high grass and weeds, removal of clutter and inoperative vehicles, and other visual elements of the city).
- G. Consider requiring the creation and dedication of greenspace in new developments.

2.4 Historic Preservation

Historic resources will be preserved, maintained, and reused to recognize and reinforce the historic character of Williamstown.

Objectives:

- A. Develop regional strategies to protect historic resources and cultural heritage.
- B. Promote reuse and rehabilitation of historic structures.
- C. Build public awareness and secure public support for historic resource preservation efforts.
- D. Develop incentives to encourage private involvement and investment in preserving and maintaining historic resources.

3. LAND USE PLANNING

GOAL: Encourage the most desirable and efficient use of land while enhancing the physical and economic environment of Williamstown.

3.1 Conformity with Land Use Map

Objectives:

- A. New or amended uses of land shall be consistent with the Future Land Use designations as described in the land use element and as portrayed on the Grant County Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use designations are intended to: a) coordinate land use with the natural environment, including soils, topography, and other resources; b) appropriately mix and distribute residential, commercial, industrial, recreation, public and mining land uses; and c) encourage an efficient pattern of development and inefficient growth.

3.2 Land Use Principles

Objectives:

- A. Establish standards related to the development of nonresidential uses in order to ensure a positive visual perception of Williamstown along major thoroughfares, specifically Interstate Highway 75, U.S. Highway 25, Barnes Road, and KY 36.
- B. Establish land use policies to restrict high intensity tourist attractions to areas within the I-75 interchanges. Create a tourism services planning category with associated zoning classification.
- C. Create balanced land use patterns that reduce the need for commuting time between residential land uses and places of employment, shopping, and other public spaces
- D. Require new residential development to incorporate pedestrian access through the new development and to adjacent areas, wherever applicable.
- E. Insure that natural or steep slopes are subject to development only when the natural topography is not drastically altered or construction practices are done in a manner which will not create or promote drainage problems and wind or water erosion.
- F. Insure that proper measures are taken to reduce runoff and retain natural vegetation at construction sites.

- G. Require that large scale land uses involving considerable land modification submit detailed erosion control plans.
- H. Pursue road designs involving minimal amounts of land coverage and a minimal feasible disturbance to the soil.
- I. Discourage the siting of land uses that are incompatible with adjacent land uses.
- J. Encourage Planned Unit Development (PUD) approaches to future residential, commercial and industrial development.
- K. Foster flexibility in the division of land and the siting of buildings, and other improvements to reduce new development's impacts on environmentally sensitive areas.
- L. Ensure that the regulatory policies within the city's zoning ordinance and related map are consistent with current city needs and desires.

4. HOUSING

GOAL: Enhance Williamstown's economic vitality and quality of life by providing housing of different types, tenures, density, sizes, costs, and locations that accommodate the needs, preferences, and financial capabilities of current and future households.

4.1 Housing Availability

Ensure that an adequate supply of housing is available to meet the needs, preferences, and financial capabilities of Williamstown's households now and in the future.

Objectives:

- A. Designate sufficient buildable land for residential development to accommodate Williamstown's projected population growth.
- B. Consider the cumulative impact of regulations on the ability of housing developers to meet current and future housing demands.
- C. Encourage the efficient use of existing housing.
- D. Encourage the efficient use of infrastructure by focusing on well-designed new and redeveloped housing on vacant, infill, or underdeveloped land.
- E. Encourage housing design that supports the conservation, enhancement, and continued vitality of areas of the city with special scenic, historic, architectural or cultural value.
- F. Reduce non-regulatory barriers to the development of vacant residentially zoned sites.
- G. Ensure that the land use plan allows for varied types of residential development.

4.2 Housing Safety

Ensure a safe and healthy built environment and assist in the preservation of sound existing housing and the improvement of neighborhoods.

Objectives:

- A. Ensure safe housing for Williamstown's citizens of all income levels.
- B. Encourage the return of abandoned housing to useful and safe occupancy.
- C. Ensure the safety of the general public by requiring owners to repair substandard housing or as a last resort, demolish dangerous housing.

4.3 Housing Quality

Encourage the development of housing that exceeds minimum construction standards.

Objectives:

- A.** Promote housing that provides air quality, access to sunlight, and is well protected from noise and weather.
- B.** Ensure that owners, managers, and residents of rental property improve the safety, durability, and livability of rental housing.
- C.** Protect housing from excessive off-site impacts including pollution, noise, vibration, odors, and glare.
- D.** Limit conflicts between existing business areas and housing caused by traffic and parking, noise, and signage.

4.4 Housing Diversity

Promote creation of a range of housing types, prices, and rents to: a) create culturally and economically diverse neighborhoods; and b) allow those whose housing needs change to find housing that meets their needs within their existing community.

Objectives:

- A.** Keep Williamstown inviting to households with children by ensuring through public and private action the availability of housing that meets their needs throughout the city.
- B.** Support homeownership opportunities in new multi-dwelling housing by encouraging the creation of condominiums, cooperatives, mutual housing associations, and limited equity cooperatives.
- C.** Accommodate a variety of housing types that are attractive and affordable to potential homebuyers at all income levels.
- D.** Encourage the production of a range of housing types for the elderly and people with disabilities, including but not limited to independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing care facilities.
- E.** Support opportunities for renter households by providing a range of housing types, sizes, and rent levels throughout the city.

4.5 Housing Affordability

Promote the development and preservation of quality housing that is affordable across the full spectrum of household incomes.

Objectives:

- A.** Include strategies and actions that encourage the provision of housing affordable to all income levels in neighborhoods, community plans, and other area plans that pertain to housing.
- B.** Ensure the availability of housing that meets the needs of all Williamstown households.
- C.** Encourage the development and use of housing construction technologies that streamline the housing construction process, reduce development costs and environmental impacts, and produce sound and durable housing.
- D.** Promote conservation programs and energy-efficient practices and programs that reduce housing operating costs for energy, sewer, and water usage.
- E.** Pursue adequate financial resources to develop, maintain and preserve housing and housing assistance programs for households whose needs are not met by the housing market.

- F. Stimulate production of a variety of housing types that are affordable and responsive to the needs of low, moderate, and middle income households.
- G. Expand opportunities for first-time homebuyers.

4.6 Regulatory Costs and Fees

Consider the impact of regulations and fees in the balance between housing affordability and other objectives such as environmental quality, urban design, maintenance of neighborhood character, and protection of public health, safety, and welfare.

Objectives:

- A. Improve housing affordability by imposing the lowest permit fee, or system development charge necessary to recover cost of city services delivered in a cost-effective manner.
- B. Achieve greater predictability in project decision timelines, outcomes, and costs.
- C. Allow reduced parking requirements for housing where the parking demand is low and impacts are kept to a minimum.

5. ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: To protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment in Williamstown.

5.1 Water Quality

Protect water quality in the Williamstown Lake watershed.

Objectives:

- A. Continue water quality monitoring in the Williamstown Lake watershed.
- B. Reduce soil erosion by requiring and enforcing erosion control measures during construction and requiring revegetation of disturbed areas.
- C. Require all new development in the watershed to be connected to sanitary sewer.
- D. Locate and protect wetlands in the watershed.

5.2 Natural Environment

Preserve and protect critical environmental resources, including agricultural soils, hydrology, open spaces, woodlands, and wildlife habitats.

Objectives:

- A. Improve and preserve the quality of waterways.
- B. Improve soil quality and stability through administration and enforcement of erosion control programs, cleanup activities, best management practices, and effective education.
- C. Establish riparian buffers and restore disturbed areas in the Williamstown Lake watershed.
- D. Provide public education about natural resources for students and the public-at-large.

5.3 Urban Environment

Minimize negative impact of urban development.

Objectives:

- A.** Control the impacts of noise, odor, and light, litter, graffiti, junk cars, trash, and refuse in order to protect human health and the livability of the urban environment.
- B.** Encourage only those uses within the 100-year floodplain that are enhanced or unharmed by flooding.
- C.** Protect surface water resources by minimizing non-point source pollution from stormwater discharge.

5.4 Efficiency

Reduce government operating costs.

Objectives:

- A.** In order to reduce the financial investment in built infrastructure while controlling the environmental impacts that infrastructure can cause, explore opportunities to restore or productively use the functions that a healthy ecosystem can provide in conjunction with, or as a substitute for, built infrastructure.
- B.** Reduce consumption of resources and promote conservation of energy, water and material resources among all sectors of the community, including city government.

6. INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL: Provide for the orderly and efficient provision of urban services.

Objectives:

- A.** Ensure that there is adequate water and wastewater available to serve existing areas and new development by monitoring usage and capacity.
- B.** Ensure water availability by proactively maintaining infrastructure systems.
- C.** Expand sanitary sewer service to Williamstown Lake.
- D.** Require new developments to provide adequate facilities such as sidewalks, storm water drainage, and urban utilities such as sewer, water, and fire protection.
- E.** Identify and promote energy-saving and more efficient utility technologies to promote environmental conservation and protection.

7. TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: Maintain a safe and efficient transportation network and provide a range of transportation alternatives.

7.1 Streets and Roads

Objectives:

- A.** Road improvements are recommended for the following roads:
 - a. U.S. 25 South/Main Street to I-75 S Interchange - Roundabout

- b. Barnes Road/U.S. 25 North/RR Crossing Roundabout
- B. Work closely with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and other governments in Grant County to ensure the vital improvements to state roads are included in the state's Six-Year Road Plan.
- C. All rights-of-way in new developments should be dedicated to the city for public use.
- D. Control the creation of new driving hazards by developing access, parking, setback, and road standards which can be used by the city to evaluate new subdivisions and developments.
- E. Provide transportation infrastructure and services in a cost-effective and efficient manner, making the best use of available resources.
- F. Provide for the protection of existing and future rights-of-way from building encroachment.

7.2 Walking and Biking

Provide a safe and inviting alternative to driving.

Objectives:

- A. Support the designation of bike lanes where feasible in the city and promote these and other highway-based routes and tours as a means of alternative transportation and a method of tourism promotion.
- B. All new developments should have sidewalks on both sides of public streets.
- C. Repair existing sidewalks in the city.
- D. Develop a trail plan throughout the city.
- E. Use sidewalks to connect isolated developments.

8. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Goal: To plan and provide for quality community facilities and services to effectively meet the municipal, social, educational and other service needs of Williamstown's residents and businesses in an efficient manner.

Objectives:

- A. Ensure that the town can provide an acceptable level of community services that meet the needs of both the existing and projected population.
- B. Ensure that the public health and safety of local residents are met.
- C. Encourage public and private cooperation in planning for and financing community facilities, including an examination of opportunities to privatize selected municipal services when it is appropriate and practical.
- D. Ensure continued cooperation and coordination between the fire and police departments in order to encourage a cost-effective use of resources.
- E. Provide a rational approach for the financing of the City's community facilities and services.
- F. Ensure that all students have the opportunity to receive the best possible and affordable education so that they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to make a positive contribution to the community.
- G. Encourage educational programs that use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.
- H. Support civic organizations providing for community facilities such as libraries, senior centers, youth centers, museums and other cultural facilities.

9. PARKS & RECREATION

GOAL: Develop a comprehensive system of parks, trails, and open spaces that meet the needs of all age groups within Williamstown.

Objectives:

- A.** Plan a citywide trail system that connects parks, neighborhoods, municipal facilities, and schools, thereby creating a more pedestrian-friendly community.
- B.** Require new residential development to incorporate pedestrian access through the new development and to adjacent areas, wherever applicable.
- C.** Continue exploring new recreational and social opportunities for all age groups, especially for the younger age groups within Williamstown.
- D.** Improve existing or create new playing fields that would better serve the needs of local and regional recreational organizations.
- E.** Make improvements to existing park areas, including rehabilitating and expanding Webb Park and increasing maintenance on a consistent basis.
- F.** Prepare long-range plans for recreation and park development throughout the city and county in locations suited to the demands of projected population growth.
- G.** Support and encourage public/private partnerships and volunteer organizations to collaborate in the development of parks, trails, bike paths and other recreational venues that improve the health and wellness of the residents. These organizations include FFLAG, Connect to Care and Vision 2015.

10. MAINTAIN AND PROMOTE EFFICIENCY AND COOPERATION IN GOVERNMENT

GOAL: Williamstown should strive to offer the highest quality and most cost-effective services possible.

Objectives:

- A.** Maintain and enhance the strong collaboration between Williamstown and the government of Grant County as well as the other cities in the county.
- B.** Maintain and enhance the strong collaboration between the community and the school district.
- C.** Plan for and foster a balance and diversity of uses within the city to control the costs of, and need for, public services and future service upgrades.
- D.** Conduct a review of city office services to determine their appropriateness and cost effectiveness with the assistance of quantitative tools such as benchmarking.
- E.** Continue the review of all city regulations and policies to eliminate unnecessary and outdated policies and laws.
- F.** Assure that the city's public safety budget/staffing levels meet public expectations/needs, including appropriate emergency response analyses.
- G.** Work with other governments in the region to find efficiencies.
- H.** Create a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to implement economic and community development programs.
- I.** Foster a positive, interactive relationship with the public and encourage citizen involvement.

- J. Continue efforts to instill a stronger sense of civic pride by encouraging involvement in public decision making and by soliciting citizen input, especially youth.
- K. Utilize social media to establish communication with and between citizens.
 - a. Create a Facebook page directly related to the community to provide news and information, share pictures and videos, and to highlight good things in the community.
 - b. Establish a Twitter feed to inform of upcoming activities as well as important alerts.
 - c. Create a You Tube channel to broadcast information about the city including the creation of a weekly “Williamstown TV” community update.
 - d. Engage youth in the creation of these tools.

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