



M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: March 14, 2018
TO: Henry County Commissioners
FROM: Brooke Thomas, AICP
RE: Recommended adjustments to the draft Henry County Comprehensive Plan
CC: Darrin Jacobs, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Henry County Planning Commission
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee members
Henry County Health Department

Background

After months of study, review and public comment, and following the favorable recommendation for the adoption of the new Henry County Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Commission, the Henry County Commissioners have identified some recommended changes.

The following pages outline the changes that the County Commissioners are seeking. Where adjustments to the text is needed, the text of the current draft, dated February 20, 2018, is included for reference and then in most instances repeated to include the changes that were discussed during a conference call with Commissioners Butch Baker and Kim Cronk, who were joined by Joel Harvey, and Angela Cox and Shalei Rogers from the Henry County Health Department on March 9, 2018. A series of comments and suggestions submitted by Commissioner Ed Yanos was referenced throughout the conference call. In summary, the following adjustments serve to clarify specific conclusions or recommendations within the plan, and are not intended to suggest that the elected officials intend to reverse or supersede the conclusions and recommendations offered by the larger project team.

Recommended Adjustments

- Page 19 Replace former Planning Commission member Randy Jones, with current Planning Commission member Rachel Clark.
- Page 51 It was suggested that this (blank) page be removed. Rather than remove it, because a new subsection starts on the following pages, the phrase "this page intentionally left blank" was added. Page 81; however, should be able to be removed, even if it mean losing some of the images that accompany the surrounding text. This adjustment will be revisited once these updates are made to the source document.

- Page 57 Change, *“Discourage the extension of city and town services into agricultural areas.”*
To, *“Discourage the extension of city and town services, such as sewers, into prime agricultural areas, as illustrated on the current future land use and transportation plan map.”*
- Page 57 Remove *“Limit non-farm development in agricultural areas to land that is not suitable for farming.”*
- Page 57 Change, *“Limit all new residential subdivisions to the rural residential agricultural areas, and require that they be designed as ‘open space development,’ which is often referred to as cluster development to: have less impervious surfaces, reduce the amount of infrastructure present, maximize the delivery of utilities and other public services, protect environmentally sensitive areas, and optimize stormwater development.”*
To, *“Encourage all new residential subdivisions to be constructed contiguous to existing development.*
And add, *“Require all new residential subdivisions locating in an area where agriculture is the primary use of land to be low impact, or cluster, development to minimize the loss of productive agricultural land.”*
- Page 62 Change, *“Limit, new, multi-unit residential subdivisions to areas in or adjacent to a town or village center.”*
To, *“Encourage all new, multi-unit residential developments to locate in or near a town or village center to strengthen the existing community centers and further ensure that public and public serving programs and services can be delivered efficiently.”*
- Page 62 Change, *“Limit all new residential construction to areas that are already served by public water and sewer.”*
To, *“Encourage all new residential construction to locate in areas that are already served by public water and sewer.”*
- Page 65 Change, *“Limit the extension of sewer and water to planned industrial areas.”*
To, *“Facilitate the extension of public water and sewer to planned industrial areas.”*
- Page 72 Change, *“Encourage all single-family attached and multi-family housing developments to locate within one of the proposed village centers (preferably), or within a mixed-use area so that they can be properly served by fire and EMS, among other things.”*
To, *“Encourage all attached single-family residential developments and all multi-family housing developments to locate within a village center or other mixed-use area to strengthen the existing city and town centers, and to further ensure that these types of developments can be properly served by public and public serving programs and services.”*
- Page 82 Expand the write up and recommendations for improved/expanded broadband service in anticipation of the passage of local and federal legislative changes, and/or the availability of funds in the near-future.
Consider, *“At the time of this study, there were numerous broadband providers for both residential and business. However, broadband access, speed and reliability continues to be an issues for the most rural parts of the Henry County community. The minimum broadband service, as determined from time to time by the Federal Communications Commission, continues to go up. As the rate at which a user is able to download or upload data to the Internet increases, rural communities across the county will struggle to become or remain compliant. Even as the technology improves, it will always be*

more efficient for a telecommunications company to install or upgrade communications infrastructure in areas where there are 2,000 people per square mile, compared to areas where there are 10 people per square mile. For these reasons, Henry County should ensure that local policies are updated to coincide with the National Broadband Plan, and that local standards align with the incentives that maximize the federal governments priorities as it relates to this national infrastructure challenge.”

See also the recommended action steps related to broadband below.

- Page 88 Expand, *“Establish and maintain natural areas that help to reduce the amount of nonpoint source pollution generated from agricultural operations and urban run-off, especially along the Big Blue River, Buck Creek, Duck Creek, Little Blue River, and Montgomery Creek.”*
- To include Flat Rock River, as follows: *“Establish and maintain natural areas that help to reduce the amount of nonpoint source pollution generated from agricultural operations and urban run-off, especially along the Flat Rock River, Big Blue River, Buck Creek, Duck Creek, Little Blue River, and Montgomery Creek.”*
- Page 88 Expand, *“Limit the types of land uses or developments that are likely to need to obtain a discharge permit, especially along the Big Blue River, Buck Creek, Duck Creek, Little Blue River, and Montgomery Creek.”*
- To include Flat Rock River, as follows: *“Limit the types of land uses or developments that are likely to need to obtain a discharge permit, especially along the Flat Rock River, Big Blue River, Buck Creek, Duck Creek, Little Blue River, and Montgomery Creek.”*
- Page 95 Change, *“Use eligible shares of the newly combined Local Option Income Tax (LOIT) for economic development purposes, and consider proposing changes to how the combined Local Option Income taxes are allocated locally.”*
- To, *“Evaluate the use of eligible shares of the newly combined Local Option Income Tax (LOIT) for economic development purposes, as well as how Local Option Income taxes are allocated locally.”*
- Page 106 Replace, *“Study the feasibility of a septic system elimination program.”*
- To, *“Study the feasibility of a septic system elimination program focused on areas where system failure rates are high, housing density is likely to increase, or where the development is in close proximity to a surface or groundwater resource.”*
- Page 110 To further support the policy objectives related to broadband, add the following action steps under the strategy to *“ensure that all administrative processes, procedures, and regulations continue to reflect the vision and values of the larger Henry County community.”*
- “Determine which local laws, policies, standards and incentives need to be updated to maximize the benefits of broadband in governmental sectors, such as public education, health care and government operations.”*
- Page 111 Change, *“Conduct a count wide, cross district utility rate study to accurately account for increasing operating costs and ensure that each utility is self-sufficient; and to further ensure that stormwater is studied as a separate and distinct public utility, and that residences and businesses that are currently on well or septic, or both, are factored into the analysis.”*
- To, *“Help facilitate the completion of a county-wide, cross district utility rate study for the purposes of, among other things: accounting for increasing operating costs; establishing stormwater as a separate and distinct public utility; accurately assessing the needs of even*

those residences and businesses that are currently on well or septic, or both; and establishing a process by which to periodically evaluate the same.”

Page 112 Expand, *“Prepare a site development plan for the I-70/SR 3 interchange (Exit 123) as a top priority, followed by I-70/Wilbur Wright Road interchange (Exit 131).”*

To include the I-70/SR 109 Interchange, as follows: *“Prepare a site development plan for the I-70/SR 3 New Castle/Spiceland interchange (Exit 123) as a top priority, followed by the I-70/SR 109 Knightstown interchange (Exit 115) and I-70/Wilbur Wright Road interchange (Exit 131).”*

Page 114 Change, *“Revisit all local transportation or utility-related plans and then develop and adopt both a long-range, multi-modal transportation plan and a capital improvement plan that considers the possibility of reducing the total number of paved lane miles in some areas, and that only proposes new (public) roads in areas where it greatly improves mobility and economic development efforts throughout the county.”*

To, *“Revisit all local transportation or utility-related plans and then undergo both a long-range, multi-modal transportation plan and a capital improvement plan planning process to determine if there are benefits to reducing the total number of paved lane miles in some areas, and ways in which the county can strategically add new lane miles in areas targeted for economic development, or where transportation improvements are warranted.”*

Page 116 Change, *“Establish a minimum density for residential dwellings in all agricultural zoning districts (e.g. 1 d.u./20 acres in the most intensive agricultural district), and a corresponding minimum lot size for all agriculturally zoned land in the subdivision control ordinance.”*

To, *“Review, and if necessary strengthen, the minimum density regulations for residential dwellings in all agricultural zoning districts, and the corresponding minimum lot size for all agriculturally zoned land in the subdivision control ordinance to protect farms from residential encroachment.”*

Other topics of discussion focused primarily on the distinction between prime agricultural land and other agricultural land use categories. In summary, the two categories offer opportunities to distinguish between the undeveloped land that may someday be developed to accommodate residential, commercial, or industrial growth, and the undeveloped land that serves to accommodate agricultural crop production or livestock farming now and for the long-term future.

Having had the opportunity to review the document one more time, the consulting team will take this opportunity to add a map legend to the sub-set map included on page 89.