

Planning Commission

Staff Report

March 29, 2018



Case No: 18NEIGHPLAN1000 & 18NEIGHPLAN1001
Project Name: South Dixie Highway Master Plan
Applicant: Louisville Metro Advanced Planning
Jurisdiction: Louisville Metro
Council District: 14 (Cindi Fowler)
Case Manager: Michael King

REQUEST

- Review and Approval of South Dixie Highway Master Plan - 18NEIGHPLAN1000
- Executive Summary of Plan to be Amendment to Cornerstone 2020 - 18NEIGHPLAN1001

CASE SUMMARY

Background

The South Dixie Highway Master Plan brings a new focus to the last remaining piece in the roughly 20 mile length of the Dixie Corridor in Louisville Metro not included in any previous master planning effort. Prior efforts, begun in 2010, led to the adoption of a Master Plan and long-term vision for Dixie Highway from Oak Street to the Gene Snyder Freeway. The South Dixie Highway Master Plan completes that work from the Gene Snyder Freeway to the Jefferson/Hardin County line, a distance of approximately 8 miles.

Councilwoman Cindi Fowler sponsored this planning effort, with the goal of bringing the same level of study and forethought, as seen in the previously adopted Master Plan, to this last portion of Dixie Highway. Working with residents and businesses, she sought to bring citizens together with the planning team to study the potential of the area, which has long felt neglected and overlooked, and formulate ideas for the future. She has encouraged a new vision for this area consistent with the adopted master plan for Dixie Highway that covers the segment north of the Gene Snyder Freeway (KY 841).

The plan was formulated around three primary goals:

- Extend the Dixie Highway Master Plan to the county line, ensuring the same level of advance planning for the entire Dixie Highway corridor.
- Support good land use decisions that provide positive impacts and investment.
- Develop transportation guidelines that improve current conditions and mobility options.

Current conditions, proposed improvements, and past development trends were all considered in this planning process. The South Dixie Highway Master Plan seeks to maximize the benefits that can be derived from the natural strengths of the area, enhance the role of Dixie Highway as critical transportation infrastructure, and improve the overall quality of life in this last section of the corridor.

Residents and stakeholders overwhelmingly agree that transportation safety was the principal concern of those using the corridor. Traffic speeds, turning movements and poor sight distances were most often listed. Other issues were the character and quality of development south of I-265 and maintaining the corridor's role as a major employment center. The input was utilized in further development and refinement of the final Master Plan. The three plan elements of land use, transportation, and urban design are utilized to address these concerns.

Public Process

The South Dixie Highway Master Plan is the direct result of a robust public engagement process. Attendance and participation throughout the process was outstanding and produced a wealth of insight from the people who live, work and travel the South Dixie corridor.

A first general meeting of neighbors, property owners and interested citizens took place on December 6, 2016 at the Sun Valley Community Center. An overview of the planning goals and timeline was presented followed by a citizen input session themed around the key areas of concern.

The next citizen interaction was a day-long working session, or charrette, held at the Southwest Regional Library on January 12, 2017. The consultant team performed a general photographic reconnaissance of the study area, prepared maps and aerial photographs, and collected data on traffic volumes, accidents, and other technical information. The day was organized around three citizen focus group sessions interspersed with specific work time for the team with MSD, Metro Parks and Riverport. Other attendees and participants included representatives from the Farnsley Moremen Landing, the Louisville Loop and Metro Public Works, LG&E and the Ohio Valley Raceway.

On March 21, 2017, Councilwoman Fowler and the design team showcased the draft recommendations at a well-attended presentation called the “Fowler Forum” at Valley High School. After the presentation, citizens had the opportunity to speak one-on-one with the design team to answer questions and make suggestions.

South Dixie Highway Master Plan Vision Statement

The future of the Dixie Highway is a vision that celebrates the legacy of this historic corridor through the preservation and enhancement of investment in both public infrastructure and private assets. We envision enhancements to Dixie Highway that will assure its success as a regional commercial corridor with unified but distinct character zones that are functional and safe for all users. With these enhancements, Dixie Highway will not only serve the residents of southwest Louisville, but also provide mobility for people and commerce in the region.

South Dixie Highway Master Plan Plan Components

In accordance with Chapter 161 (the Louisville Metro Neighborhood Plan Ordinance), a neighborhood plan must contain two mandatory components: Land Use/Community Form and Mobility. Other optional plan components may also be included in a neighborhood plan. The South Dixie Highway Master Plan articulates a range of strategies, concepts and recommendations, broadly grouped in chapters of Land Use, Mobility, and Urban Design.

Land Use Form Component

Below are the major Land Use/Community Form recommendations:

Capitalize on Natural Assets

- *Awareness, access, and connectivity should be enhanced between and among the recreational, scenic, and historic assets, such as Jefferson Memorial Forest and the Ohio River Corridor.*

Enhance the Workplace Uses

- *Plan for and support the prime areas identified by the Study for expansion of workplace uses and employment centers.*

Create a Village Focal Point

- *Define the boundary of and establish a Village Form District designation centered around the intersections West Orell Road and Blevins Gap Road with Dixie Highway*
- *Improve Village Center connectivity*

Mobility Component

Below are the major Mobility recommendations:

Increase Village Center Connectivity

- *As part of the Village Center planning, conduct sub-area Transportation study to reinforce east-west connectivity through West Orell Road and Blevins Gap Road.*
- *The Transportation study should also examine north-south connectivity west of Dixie Highway to encourage connectivity and guide residential development.*

Sidewalks on Dixie Highway

- *Plan and design pedestrian facilities on Dixie Highway between Watson Lane to and through the Gene Snyder interchange.*

Pedestrian and Bicycling options

- *Extend bicycling and pedestrian facilities from the Louisville Loop Watson Lane Trailhead towards Jefferson Memorial Forest. This connection should follow the recommend route in the Louisville Loop master plan.*
- *Explore the feasibility of extending bicycling and pedestrian facilities along south Dixie Highway and connection(s) to West Point. Consult Southwest Greenway Master Plan and West Point Planning Department*

Traffic Safety Improvements

- *Prepare a safety and improvement study for the intersection of Dixie Highway and KY 44 and examine strategies to reinforce safe driving speeds along Dixie Highway.*

Urban Design Component

Below are the major urban design recommendations:

Enhance Neighborhood Character

- *Extend and adapt the Urban Design Standards of adopted Dixie Highway Master Plan to this Study Area.*
- *Develop Urban Design Standards for the proposed Village Center*

Executive Summary

Consistent with the format of all neighborhood/small area plans (and as required in Chapter 161, the Neighborhood Plan Ordinance), the executive summary includes the vision statement for the South Dixie Highway Master Plan and a summary of recommendations from the plan.

Staff Findings

The South Dixie Highway Master Plan is in conformance with the Cornerstone 2020 comprehensive plan. More specifically, the recommendations support the following plan elements and policies of the comprehensive plan:

Guideline 1 Community Form

The proposed Land Use/Community Form recommendations in the South Dixie Highway Master Plan promote new development and redevelopment that will be designed to be compatible with the scale, rhythm, form and function of the existing development as well as with the pattern of uses. The recommendations support

existing land uses and patterns of the Village and Neighborhood Form, and preserve the neighborhood character.

Guideline 3 Compatibility

The plan proposes recommendations for promoting the commercial corridor while maintaining the existing residential and natural character of the neighborhood. The proposed recommendations will minimize impacts to existing residences, schools and other areas in the neighborhood.

Guideline 4 Open Space

The plan proposes recommendations for enhancing and connecting open spaces serving the neighborhood and region.

Guideline 5 Natural Areas and Scenic and Historic Resources

The plan recommends efforts to cultivate interaction with the areas natural amenities and enhance the streetscape of the neighborhood.

Guideline 6 Economic Development and Sustainability

The plan encourages growth and development along the corridor and the establishment of a village center.

Guideline 7 Circulation

The proposed Mobility recommendations include improvements to multi-modal functionality and safety.

Guideline 9 Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit

The Mobility recommendations encourage improvements to the current street and sidewalk networks to support access to community facilities via walking and biking. The recommendations also would provide for safer access to public transit.

STAFF CONCLUSIONS

Staff finds that the proposed goals, objectives, recommendations in the South Dixie Highway Master Plan and the Executive Summary are in conformance with the Neighborhood Plan Ordinance (Chapter 161) and Cornerstone 2020. Based upon the information in the staff report, the testimony and evidence provided at the public hearing, the Planning Commission must determine if the proposal is in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

NOTIFICATION

Date	Purpose of Notice	Recipients
February 22, 2018	Hearing before Planning Committee	Subscribers of Council District 14 Notification of Development Proposals
March 22, 2018	Hearing before PC	Legal Advertisement in the Courier-Journal Subscribers of Council District 14 Notification of Development Proposals

ATTACHMENTS

1. South Dixie Highway Master Plan
2. Executive Summary of the South Dixie Highway Master Plan