

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dixie Highway forms the heart of the southwest corridor of Louisville Metro, as the central artery providing access for commerce and residents. Dixie Highway is part of a national highway system conceived as early as 1914 to connect Canada to Florida. The South Dixie Highway Master Plan (SDHMP) focuses on the southernmost piece of the corridor between the Gene Snyder Freeway and the Jefferson-Hardin County Line. This plan completes the long-term vision for the 20-mile Dixie Highway Corridor. By creating an overall guide for existing and future projects, the SDHMP intends to support strong land use decisions that enhance the area, to improve safety of transportation facilities and enhance mobility options, and to create a uniquely local character and sense of place. Overall, the study seeks a safe, functional, and business-friendly corridor serving southwest Louisville.

After assembling background data and mapping, a series of public meetings and workshops gathered valuable input from residents and users of the study area. Objective information and grassroots citizen knowledge were compiled and analyzed to develop an overall set of recommendations. These were grouped into the three general areas - Land Use, Mobility and Urban Design - that are consistent with the existing master plan for the northern portions of the Dixie Highway corridor.

LAND USE

The study area presents a number of natural assets, a major employment base, and a potential small town character, hence the three recommendations.

The area's natural resources should be appreciated for their recreational and scenic potential. Few environments in the region can boast the proximity of the Ohio River Corridor and the Jefferson Memorial Forest. Destinations such as the Farnsley-Moremen Landing, the Ohio River Levee trail, and the 6500-acre Forest are only minutes from the Dixie Highway corridor. Over time, a better, interconnected system of transportation linkages should be developed to strengthen the area and create a gateway to the area's natural features and recreational opportunities.

Workplace development patterns form a core of the land use and employment base in the study area. This will most likely continue and extend the growth of industry, through projects such as the planned expansion of Riverport. These large tracts represent a substantial investment in Workplace infrastructure, which will hopefully bring the potential for new types of businesses and employment.

Discussion with citizens brought up the benefits that could be derived from the creation of a community focal point. More than nostalgia for small town character, a village-like development pattern would support the master plan goals by creating a distinctive local environment, establishing a gateway for the area's natural features and providing a user-friendly center of the community with unique local businesses. Consider establishing a Village Form District centered on the intersection of Dixie Highway and Blevins Gap Road. A map of the general area recommended for a Village Form District designation is shown on page 31.

MOBILITY

Movement within the study area is defined by contextual conditions, both environmental and man-made. Nature has bounded the corridor with steep slopes to the east and the Ohio River to the west. The land use patterns change dramatically in this part of the Dixie Highway corridor. A mix of residential, highway commercial and large industrial uses are present. Additionally, the north-south railroad line limits the potential for east-west connectivity. Because of these factors, the study area mobility recommendations are divided into sections; Dixie Highway to just south of Watson Lane and then from Watson Lane to the County Line.

- In the northern area it is important that connectivity is preserved and enhanced, therefore:
- Improve the east-west connection through W. Orell Road and Blevins Gap Road as this intersection can help to mark the future Village Center.
- Construct pedestrian facilities for Dixie Highway from Watson Lane to the north. Consider use of shared use paths to enhance pedestrian and bicycle mobility to and through the Village Center.
- Extend and connect with the Louisville Loop between the Ohio River Levee Trail and the Jefferson Memorial Forest.
- Consider connections between W. Orell Road and the residential development south of Moreman Road.

South of Watson Lane the commuter and industrial nature of Dixie Highway suggests a series of safety and intersection access measures to improve the users experience of the corridor. All major entry and exit points, such as the LG&E and CEMEX plants, and the intersection with side roads, such as the difficult Dixie Highway / KY 44 intersection, merit specific recommendations outlined in the Mobility Section of this report.

URBAN DESIGN

The existing Master Plan for the northern portions of Dixie Highway contained a series of Urban Design recommendations intended to produce a unified look for the corridor. The SDHMP believes that this vocabulary, as implemented in that plan, should simply be continued to this study area. Particular emphasis should be placed on a distinctive and consistent appearance within the proposed Village Center.

Please see the Implementation Table on Page 63.