

# Planning Commission

## Staff Report

October 1, 2015



**Case No: 15NEIGHPLAN1002 & 15NEIGHPLAN1003**

**Project Name: Highview Neighborhood Plan**

**Applicant: Louisville Metro Advanced Planning**

**Jurisdiction: Louisville Metro**

**Council District: 23 (James Peden)**

**Case Manager: Kendal Baker, AICP**

### REQUEST

- Review and Approval of Highview Neighborhood Plan
- Executive Summary of Plan to be Amendment to Cornerstone 2020

### CASE SUMMARY

#### Background

The Highview Neighborhood Plan was initiated at the request of Councilman James Peden (District 23) and managed through the Office of Advanced Planning. The neighborhood is located in south central Jefferson County, between Okolona and Fern Creek. Moore High School is located in Highview, along with three major private schools: St. Athanasius, St. Bernard, and Whitefield Academy. The Central Government Center is also located in Highview, which is adjacent to Highview Park.

Population estimates for the area are approximately 15,000 people, with about 6000 households. The racial makeup is approximately 90% White, 8% African American, and 2% other. The average household size is approximately 2.56 people. The population is spread out with 23% under the age of 18; 8% from 18-24; 30% from 25 to 44; 25% from 45 to 64 and 13% are 65 or older. The median income for a household in the area is approximately \$50,000. About 2.6% of families and 4.3% of the population are below the poverty line.

#### Scope of Plan

During the process of this plan, the Advisory Group and citizens contributed ideas and thoughts on the future vision of Highview. Based on that, a vision statement was created. The following key issues and goals are highlighted in the vision and were defined in scope of work for this plan:

- Maintain Highview as a safe, well-maintained, multi-generational neighborhood.
- Promote "Downtown Highview" as a vibrant town center, building on its "main street" character and charm
- Focus commercial and higher density residential uses in well-designed centers and nodes.
- Maintain and enhance neighborhood civic spaces, recreational areas/activities, and community assets, particularly Highview Park
- Enhance mobility in Highview to include a well-connected network of streets, walkways, public transportation, and bike facilities.

## **Advisory Group and Community Participation Process**

An Advisory Group consisting of area stakeholders was appointed to assist with the planning process. The group met approximately monthly beginning in August 2014 through Spring 2015. Gresham Smith and Partners, partnering with Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group, and URS, was selected as consultants to develop the plan, working with the Advisory Group and Advanced Planning and other Metro staff.

In every neighborhood planning effort, there is a need (and a requirement) to get input from the public on neighborhood issues, opportunities, and the draft plan/recommendations. However, community meetings intended to engage the public in long-range (non-crisis/non-controversial) planning efforts usually yield a minimal amount of public input. The Highview Plan employed a unique community participation method; throughout the entire planning effort, all neighborhood public input was collected in conjunction with existing community events: three Highview FridayFest events and the Highview Fall Festival. As hoped, this method of community engagement was extremely successful and yielded more than triple the typical amount of input from the neighborhood.

## **Sustainability Principles**

In an effort to better coordinate with the Sustain Louisville Plan, the Highview Plan includes overall sustainability principles related to neighborhood and small area planning. Ten sustainability principles were developed to use as a gauge to assess whether the plan recommendations are promoting sustainable growth and development. In the implementation section, the plan denotes the recommendations that seem to specifically support the sustainability principles.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN COMPONENTS**

In accordance with Chapter 161 (the Louisville Metro Neighborhood Plan Ordinance), the Highview Neighborhood Plan must contain the following components: Land Use, Community Form, and Mobility. Below are overviews of plan recommendations:

### **Land Use/Community Form Recommendations**

The Land Use/Community Form plan element is focused on evaluating land uses and promoting policies that will preserve the neighborhood character. These recommendations are meant to assist in the development of community centered place-making that promotes cultural diversity, encourages economic vitality and enhances the quality of life.

The following is an overview of primary Land Use/Community Form recommendations:

- LU1 Revise Town Center Form District boundaries
- CF1 Adopt a Plan Development District (PDD) that incorporates Town Center architectural design standards and uses
- LU2 Establish a network of strategic neighborhood activity centers/nodes
- CF2 Incorporate design principles for neighborhood activity centers/nodes
- LU3 Revise Suburban Workplace Form District boundary and limit future industrial uses to that district
- LU4 Replace Suburban Marketplace Corridor Form District with Neighborhood Form District
- LU5 Conduct a market study for the Town Center, neighborhood activity centers/nodes, and large vacant or underutilized properties
- LU6 Limit future commercial zoning within the Town Center and neighborhood activity centers/nodes

- LU7 Limit multifamily residential to within or immediately adjacent to the Town Center and neighborhood activity centers/nodes
- CF3 Incorporate design principles for new development/redevelopment of multifamily residential
- CF5 Incorporate streetscape design stands for key corridors/adopt Streetscape Master Plan
- CF6 Develop and implement gateway treatments
- CF7 Encourage redevelopment of former big box sites in a way that establishes a more compatible scale/pattern of development
- LU10 Establish a Highview Neighborhood Planning and Implementation Group to preserve and promote the intent of this plan
- LU11 Develop a Master Plan for Highview Park

**Mobility Recommendations**

The Highview Neighborhood Plan seeks strategies to improve mobility within the neighborhood by evaluating existing transportation patterns and general connectivity to identify service gaps. The primary goals for improving mobility include improving safety along primary streets, improving pedestrian, bicycle and transit access and improving connectivity to area parks and community facilities.

The following is an overview of primary Mobility Legal Advertisement in the Courier-Journal recommendations:

- M1 Study Fegenbush/Vaughn Mill intersection design to create a gateway and improve safety
- M4 Work with TARC to prioritize locations and identify funds for enhancing transit stops
- M5 Prioritize and implement sidewalk improvements to eliminate gaps and improve pedestrian safety
- M6 Develop a network of neighborhood travelways that allow for residents to ride their bikes or go for walks, instead of driving through their neighborhoods
- M8 Consider the feasibility of moving the existing Park and Ride to Government Center/Highview Park

**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 Highview Neighborhood Plan and the recommendations from the plan specifically related to Cornerstone 2020 and the Land Development Code.

**Staff Findings**

The Highview Neighborhood 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 Highview Neighborhood Plan promote new development 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 proposed form district changes/rezonings support existing land uses and patterns of the Neighborhood and Town Center Forms, and preserves/enhances the neighborhood character.

**Guideline 2 Centers**

The focus on encouraging investment/reinvestment in the revised Town Center and the network of neighborhood activity centers/nodes, promotes efficient use of land and investment in existing infrastructure and encourages vitality and a sense of place in the neighborhood and community.

**Guideline 3 Compatibility**

The plan proposes recommendations for expanding commercial opportunities while maintaining the existing residential character of the neighborhood. The proposed development locations will minimize impacts to existing residences, schools and other sensitive areas in the neighborhood.

#### **Guideline 4 Open Space**

The plan proposes recommendations for maintaining existing open spaces (Highview Park) and enhancing neighborhood access to these community assets. The proposed recommendations seek to enhance existing open spaces serving the neighborhood.

#### **Guideline 6 Economic Development and Sustainability**

The Land Use/Community Form recommendations propose strengthening the Town Center and establishing a network of strategic neighborhood activity centers. These recommendations encourage redevelopment and reinvestment opportunities that will be compatible with and stabilize the residential land uses.

#### **Guideline 7 Circulation**

The proposed Mobility recommendations in the Highview Plan provide for adequate services to support existing uses and promote growth. Implementation of the mobility recommendations will provide walking and bicycling opportunities that will decrease the use of single-occupant vehicles and improve safety.

#### **Guideline 9 Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit**

The Mobility recommendations place an emphasis on making 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. The Land Use/Community Form recommendations support expanding opportunities for neighborhood-serving commercial uses, which could lead to a reduction in vehicle trips for retail goods and services.

#### **Guideline 12 Air Quality**

The proposed Highview Neighborhood Plan recommendations reduce the impacts of pollution caused by vehicular traffic and land uses by encouraging compact development in centers and promoting alternative modes of transportation by improving bicycle and pedestrian access in the neighborhood.

#### **Guideline 15 Community Facilities**

The Plan recommends enhancing connections to Highview Park and throughout the neighborhood via walking and biking. As such, the plan supports the guideline's goals to have community facilities that are accessible to the adjacent neighborhoods.

### **STAFF CONCLUSIONS**

Staff finds that the proposed goals, objectives, recommendations in the Highview Neighborhood 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**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Purpose of Notice</b>	<b>Recipients</b>
September 10, 2015	Hearing before Planning Committee	Subscribers of Council District 23 Notification of Development Proposals
October 1, 2015	Hearing before PC	Subscribers of Council District 23 Notification of Development Proposals Legal Advertisement in the Courier-Journal

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Highview Neighborhood Plan
2. Highview Neighborhood Plan Executive Summary