

Planning Commission

Staff Report

January 23, 2020



Case No: 19AREAPLAN0003

Project Name: Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan

Applicant: Louisville Metro

Jurisdiction: Louisville Metro

Council Districts: 8 (Coan), 9 (Hollander), 26 (Ackerson)

Case Manager: Michael King, Planning Manager

REQUEST

- Approval of the Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan
- Adoption of the Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan Executive Summary as an Amendment to Plan 2040

CASE SUMMARY

Background

The Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan was initiated by Councilman Brandon Coan (D-8) and administered by Louisville Metro's Office of Advanced Planning & Sustainability. The study area included the Seneca Vista, Bowman, Park Hills, Hawthorne, and Big Spring Gardens neighborhoods, as well as the home rule cities of Kingsley, Seneca Gardens, Strathmoor Village, and Wellington. The study area encompasses portions of three Metro Council districts (8, 9, and 26). Rundell Ernstberger Associates, a local landscape architecture, planning, and urban design firm, was retained as the consultant.

The planning process began in January 2019 and wrapped up in late September 2019. The goal of the process was to engage the communities around Bowman Field and proactively articulate a vision for the area. This vision is one that preserves the character of the area while improving connectivity and quality of life for residents. This represents the first neighborhood planning process for these communities, and the resulting planning document offers a roadmap for future decision-making.

The planning process brought together representatives from nearly every community within the Bowman area, as well as representatives of the Louisville Regional Airport Authority (LRAA). By engaging these groups throughout the planning process, a better understanding and working relationship has developed between residents and LRAA. With respect to the built environment, the area is largely built out. However, there is room for improvements to the existing infrastructure, including constructing new sidewalks and implementing traffic-calming measures.

The study area of approximately 1,200 acres includes the 426-acre Bowman Field airport. The study area is irregularly shaped, though roughly bounded by Bardstown Road to the west, the Watterson

Expressway (I-264) to the south, Seneca Park to the north, and Cannons Lane and Dutchmans Lane to the east.

Advisory Group/Community Engagement Process

In accordance with Chapter 161 of the Louisville Metro Code of Ordinances (Neighborhood Development Plans), an advisory group was established to help guide the planning team throughout the planning process. Members of the advisory group were selected by the representative Council members. The 12-person advisory group was comprised of eight residents, two representatives of the Louisville Regional Airport Authority (LRAA), and other area stakeholders. The group convened during each phase of the planning process, for a total of four meetings. Meetings were held at various locations within the study area.

In addition to the advisory group participation, a robust public engagement strategy was utilized to gather input and feedback from the community. Focus group meetings were conducted early in the planning process to learn from the experiences of area residents and business owners. Additionally, focus group meetings were held with representatives of multiple agencies, including the LRAA, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC), Transit Authority of River City (TARC), Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD), and nine different Louisville Metro departments.

A three-day, intensive community workshop was held on May 14-16, 2019 at the Bowman Field Administration Building. An open house was held on the evening of May 14th to gather public input. Open office hours were held on May 15th to allow for drop-in guests who could not attend the workshop's evening events. Lastly, a public presentation was held on May 16th to present the planning team's initial findings and seek feedback from the standing-room only crowd. Several local media outlets, including Insider Louisville, WHAS, WLKY, WAVE, and WDRB, covered the workshop.

A second open house was held on August 24, 2019 at the Bowman Field Administration Building to present the preliminary goals and recommendations developed as a result of the community engagement process and advisory group meetings. WHAS provided press coverage for the event.

Additionally, a website (bowmanareaplan.com) was created specifically for this project. The website was updated throughout the planning process to provide general information, advertise meetings, collect input, and share documents.

As a result of this robust community engagement strategy, the planning team interacted with over 120 people throughout the planning process.

Vision Statement

The initial vision statement was created as part of the three-day community workshop in May 2019. It was based on comments and input received from the advisory group, focus group discussions, and attendees of the first open house. After presenting the initial statement on the final day of the workshop, the vision statement was further refined with the help of the advisory group. The vision statement reads as follows:

It is our vision for the future of the Bowman area to remain a vibrant collection of neighborhoods with a high quality of life. The desirable location is enhanced with even better pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity, especially along and across Taylorsville Road. Historic Bowman Field remains an invaluable asset to the area, and open communication

between the airport and surrounding neighborhoods is vital to ensure ongoing prosperity. The residential character of the area is reserved, with limited growth at appropriate locations. The Bowman area is green, with a robust tree canopy, and residents have safe and easy access to parks, open spaces, and other community assets.

Plan Components

In accordance with Chapter 161 of the Louisville Metro Code of Ordinances (Neighborhood Development Plans), 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 Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan contains three plan components: Land Use/Community Form, Mobility, and Quality of Life.

Land Use & Community Form Recommendations

The Land Use & Community Form plan component is focused on evaluating land uses and promoting policies that will preserve the character of the area and enhance quality of life. Land Use & Community Form recommendations are based on the study and analysis of existing conditions, issues and opportunities, and the public input process from the planning process. The Land Use & Community Form recommendations are as follows:

- LU1 Ensure any proposed development on the north side of Dutchmans Lane, between Gast Boulevard and Cannons Lane, meets neighborhood goals of building and site design.
- LU2 Ensure continued residential use along Bardstown Road and Taylorsville Road, west of Pee Wee Reese Road.
- LU3 Support residential to commercial conversions on Taylorsville Road, between Dartmouth Avenue and Seneca Boulevard, and along Dutchmans Lane, between Bowman Avenue and the Seneca Place care center.
- LU4 Continue to work with MSD to address drainage issues in the neighborhoods around Bowman Field.
- LU5 Better utilize open spaces as community amenities.
- LU6 Continue protection and expansion of the area tree canopy.
- LU7 Support continued ownership of Metro-owned property adjacent to Bowman Field and Seneca Park.
- LU8 Promote compatible infill housing on vacant residential lots.
- LU9 Form a multi-neighborhood implementation committee to advocate for and assist in realizing plan recommendations.

Mobility Recommendations

The Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan seeks strategies to improve mobility within the area by evaluating existing transportation patterns and general connectivity. Final recommendations are based on the study and analysis of existing conditions, issues and opportunities, and the public input process from the planning process. The Mobility recommendations are as follows:

- M1 Improve pedestrian infrastructure and lighting at key intersections to ensure accessibility and safety.
- M2 Direct pedestrians and bicyclists to safe crossings at controlled intersections.
- M3 Fill gaps in the sidewalk network and construct new sidewalks along high traffic roads that are lacking them.
- M4 Better align bus stop locations with safe pedestrian crossings.
- M5 Ensure the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists by reducing chances of collision and increasing predictability of vehicle movements.
- M6 Coordinate with KYTC for improvements and renovations to Taylorsville Road and Dutchmans Lane with the goal of implementing Complete Streets.
- M7 Explore opportunities for intersection modifications as roadways are renovated and maintained.
- M8 Explore traffic calming and speed reduction tactics.
- M9 Improve connectivity and pedestrian access to Hawthorne Elementary.

Quality of Life

The Quality of Life plan component is focused on promoting policies and actions that will preserve the character of the Bowman area and enhance quality of life. These recommendations are based on the study and analysis of existing conditions, issues and opportunities, and the public input process from the planning process. The Quality of Life recommendations are as follows:

- QoL1 Formalize and grow neighborhood associations and continue collaboration efforts among Bowman area communities.
- QoL2 Enhance existing open spaces with both active and passive amenities to promote healthy living and community gathering.
- QoL3 Maintain trail and open space areas as attractive neighborhood assets.
- QoL4 Enhance communication between neighborhood groups and LRAA.
- QoL5 Promote and celebrate the cultural and historic assets of the community.

QoL6 Beautify key corridors using welcome and wayfinding signs, enhanced landscape treatments, public art, lighting, and street trees.

Interested Party Comments

A copy of the draft plan and accompanying comment section were made available on the project website for public feedback from November 20 through December 13, 2019. Three comments were submitted: one positive and two negative. The positive and one of the negative comments both related to traffic calming measures. The other negative comment related to residential to commercial property conversion along Taylorsville Road (LU3). Additionally, two Advisory Group members provided feedback. The draft plan was circulated to multiple agencies, including Louisville Metro Public Works, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC), and Transit Authority of River City (TARC). All comments were considered by the planning team and incorporated into the plan, as appropriate.

Planning Committee

The Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan went before the Planning Committee on Wednesday, December 18, 2019. At the meeting, it was recommended that the planning team engage with Farmington and Hawthorne Elementary regarding plan recommendations specific to each institution and create a map of buildable vacant residential lots per Land Use & Community Form Recommendation #8. Contingent upon addressing these issues, the Planning Committee deemed the Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan ready for public hearing at the Planning Commission.

Staff Findings – Plan 2040

The Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan is in conformance with Plan 2040. More specifically, the recommendations support the following goals of the comprehensive plan:

Community Form Goal 1

The proposed recommendations guide the form and design of development to be responsive to the distinctive physical, historic and cultural qualities of the Bowman area.

Community Form Goal 2

The proposed recommendations encourage sustainable growth and density around corridors.

Community Form Goal 3

The proposed recommendations enhance the Bowman area by protecting and integrating open space, watersheds and other natural resources.

Community Form Goal 4

The proposed recommendations promote the historic resources that contribute to the Bowman area's authenticity.

Mobility Goal 1

The proposed recommendations promote an accessible system of alternative transportation modes.

Mobility Goal 2

The proposed recommendations promote a safe, accessible and efficient transportation system.

Mobility Goal 3

The proposed recommendations encourage land use and transportation patterns that connect the Bowman area and support future growth.

Community Facilities Goal 1

The proposed recommendations ensure community facilities are accessible.

Community Facilities Goal 2

The proposed recommendations support community facilities to improve quality of life.

Economic Development Goal 1

The proposed recommendations support an economic climate that improves growth, innovation, investment and opportunity for existing and future residents.

Livability Goal 1

The proposed recommendations encourage the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and integration with the built environment as development occurs.

Livability Goal 2

The proposed recommendations promote equitable health and safety outcomes for all.

Livability Goal 3

The proposed recommendations promote equitable access to land use planning and policy-making resources.

Housing Goal 2

The proposed recommendations support the development of a connected, mixed-use Bowman area.

STAFF CONCLUSIONS AND REQUIRED ACTIONS

Staff finds that the proposed goals, objectives, and recommendations contained in the Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan and Executive Summary are in conformance with the Neighborhood Plan Ordinance (Chapter 161) and Plan 2040. Based upon the information in this staff report, the testimony and evidence provided at the public hearing, the Planning Commission must determine if the proposal is in conformance with Plan 2040.

NOTIFICATION

Date	Purpose of Notice	Recipients
January 15, 2020	Public Hearing before Planning Commission	Legal Advertisement in the Courier-Journal

ATTACHMENTS

1. Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan
2. Executive Summary of the Bowman Area Neighborhoods Plan