

Johnson County Comprehensive Plan – Draft Goals, Strategies, and Implementation Items

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HAS REVIEWED THROUGH ITEM INF-3 ON PAGE 6. ANY MINOR WORDING CHANGES THEY MADE HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE TEXT, AND ANY MAJOR ADDITIONS OR CHANGES ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN GREEN THROUGH ITEM INF-3. THE BOARD WILL RESUME REVIEW AT THE 1 PM WORK SESSION ON JULY 13, 2017, IN THE SECOND-FLOOR BOARDROOM OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 913 S. DUBUQUE ST. IN IOWA CITY.

LAND USE

LND 1 – Promote and protect sustainable agricultural land uses in rural Johnson County.

Strategy 1 (S1) – The County will advocate for agricultural preservation within all Fringe Area Agreements.

Implementation a (Ia) – Pursue adoption of Fringe Area Agreements with cities where no agreement currently exists.

Ib – Within the fringe areas, advocate that areas not identified for city growth shall adhere to the county Future Land Use Map.

Ic – Update all existing Fringe Area Agreements within two years of adoption of the comprehensive plan and review Fringe Area Agreements every three years thereafter.

Id – Promote the use of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and the restoration of native prairies.

Ie – Promote Sensitive Areas Ordinance and Stormwater Management Regulations in all Fringe Area Agreements

S2 – Consider updates to Johnson County’s agricultural exemption policy.

Ia – Explore methods to expand agricultural exemption to smaller farming operations.

Ib – **Develop policies that control the proliferation of industrial farming operations, such as concentrated animal feeding operations.** ~~Ensure that the updated agricultural exemption policies discourage the proliferation of industrial farming operations, such as concentrated animal feeding operations.~~

Ic – Ensure that updated agricultural exemption policies do not become a method for unplanned residential growth.

Id – **Explore methods for limited residential development for small-scale agriculture.** ~~Explore policy to allow farms of less than forty (40) acres, but greater than ten (10) acres the ability to build a single family home.~~

S3 – Develop recommendations to alleviate conflicts between agricultural property owners and non-agricultural neighboring properties

Ia – Revise and distribute information on what to expect when moving to rural Johnson County. ~~that align with the state of Iowa’s Right to Farm Law (352.11 Code of Iowa)~~

Ib – Explore creating “good neighbor” guidance that identifies strategies to avoid conflicts between different land uses ~~and outlines the responsibilities of both parties.~~

S4 – **Discourage** ~~Reduce the number of~~ concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in Johnson County.

Ia – Explore classifying CAFOs as an industrial use and zone appropriately.

Ib – Continue to lobby the Iowa State Legislature to allow counties the ability to regulate CAFOs.

Ic – Encourage and promote best management practices for CAFOs.

Id - Mitigate the adverse environmental effects of concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) in Johnson County.

LND 2 – Direct future residential development based on location and then site-specific criteria contained in Appendix ZZZ of this plan.

S1 – Support rezoning applications in areas identified as non-agricultural uses on the Future Land Use Map (**Future Land Use Map**), which are also in compliance with the Future Land Use Development Matrix (**FLUDM**).

Ia – Focus residential development in [CPC & BOS to determine with Future Land Use Map creation]

Ib – Review and potentially update the Future Land Use Map every five years after adoption.

- Ic – Develop procedure for the individual property owners to request a change to the Future Land Use Map.
- Id – Develop procedure for combined rezoning, subdivision, and/or development applications.
- Ie – Allow for flexibility in the zoning ordinance by adoption of planned unit development (PUD) zoning districts and overlay zones.

S2 – Support rezoning applications on parcels that meet the standards identified by the Future Land Use Development Matrix (**FLUDM**) contained in Appendix ZZZ of this plan.

- Ia – Review and update Stormwater Standards at least every 5 years.
- Ib – Review and update Sensitive Areas Ordinance (SAO) at least every 5 years.
- Ic – Review and update the Road Performance Standards to consider factors such as safety, volume, speed, traffic type, and other national standards.
- Id – Identify environmentally sensitive area criteria to protect natural areas and prevent conflicting land uses.
- Ie – Johnson County will create a FLUDM that may consider items such as:
 - (1) the adopted Comprehensive Plan, Village Plans, or long-range transportation corridor plans or studies;
 - (2) access to existing or planned hard surface roads to serve the subdivision or development;
 - (3) adequate sanitary sewer and potable water capabilities;
 - (4) adequate storm water drainage, storm water treatment facilities, or storm water management either within the development site or downstream and;
 - (5) Johnson County’s environmental protection regulations’
 - (6) surrounding land uses;
 - (7) public safety service access (e.g. sheriff, fire, etc.); and
 - (8) historical land uses

S3 – Continue use of existing Farmstead Split rule.

Ia – Explore limiting the size and number of agricultural outlots.

Ib – Review and revise language as subdivision rules are updated.

LND 3 – Direct future commercial and industrial development based on location and then site-specific criteria.

S1 – Encourage commercial and industrial development within the cities and the Urban Growth Areas.

Ia – Coordinate effort during Fringe Area Agreement.

Ib – Encourage new commercial and industrial development that can be served by municipal water and sanitary sewer.

S2 – Incorporate economic growth areas into Future Land Use Map.

Ia – Review and update current economic growth areas.

Ib – Review and update the economic growth areas on the Future Land Use Map every five years.

Ic – Identify vacant or under-utilized parcels zoned commercial and/or industrial within the unincorporated areas of Johnson County.

S3 – Develop overlay zones to allow more flexibility in rural commercial development.

Ia – Develop criteria for where commercial and industrial overlay zones are appropriate.

Ib – Develop criteria for where neighborhood commercial uses are appropriate.

Ic – Develop criteria for where agri-tourism uses are appropriate.

LND 4 – Coordinate land use planning with and between local governments to achieve mutually beneficial development policies.

S1 – Work with individual cities to update Fringe Area Agreements.

Ia – Pursue adoption of fringe areas for cities where no agreement currently exists.

Ib – The urban growth area of each FAA will identify areas of immediate development (next five years) adjacent and contiguous to city boundaries.

Ic – The rural preservation area will be the remaining portion of the Fringe Area expected to remain in its current land use for the duration of the FAA period.

Id – Review and update all existing fringe area agreements in accordance with the fringe area agreement schedule contained in Appendix XXX of this plan.

S2 – Work with cities and school districts to pursue collaborative growth strategies for mutual benefit.

Ia – Serve as a resource for the community, city staff, and other organizations regarding regional planning issues.

Ib – Pursue regional, multi-jurisdictional intergovernmental agreements.

LND 5 – Continue to protect and improve Johnson County’s natural resources: land, water and air.

S1 – Begin to identify and evaluate all critical and sensitive environmental features in Johnson County.

Ia – Establish criteria to evaluate these areas.

Ib – Coordinate with cities to map sensitive features countywide.

S2 – Encourage Agricultural uses to utilize best management practices and observe conservation practices that prevent erosion and preserve natural resources.

Ia – Staff will stay informed of the best management practices and available conservation programs to assist with funding and the public’s education.

Ib - Promote the use of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and the restoration of native prairies.

LOCAL ECONOMY

ECON 1 - Foster a diverse and resilient local economy.

S1 – Support industries that complement and enhance the existing local economy

Ia – Identify targeted industries that support a livable wage and a clean energy economy.

S2 – Accommodate rural businesses that provide employment and consumer opportunities for residents and visitors that improve the livability of Johnson County in appropriate areas.

Ia – Develop an Ag-Tourism Zoning District Ordinance to allow greater flexibility for value-added agriculture activities.

Ib – Develop a neighborhood commercial zoning district to allow low intensity commercial activities.

Ic – Support efforts to expand telecommunication infrastructure for rural areas (e.g. High Speed Internet).

Id – Support the local food industry in Johnson County

S3 – Promote the county’s natural amenities and livable communities to attract new economic activities.

Ia – Use economic development and tourism promotion organizations as a resource to promote Johnson County.

Ib – Highlight quality of life rankings and other awards on the Johnson County website.

Ic – Partner with local cities and regional entities to promote and recruit targeted industrial clusters that benefit the local economy and support the quality of life in Johnson County.

S4 – Encourage partnerships between business and educational institutions to advance job skills and promote labor retention.

Ia – Explore using county facilities as resource centers to connect businesses with local experts.

Ib – Promote the resources provided by the University of Iowa, Kirkwood Community College, and other major institutions to attract and retain businesses.

ECON 2 – New and expanding commercial and industrial uses will follow the County’s adopted Economic Development Plan.

S1 – Update and maintain an Economic Development Plan for unincorporated Johnson County.

Ia – Clearly define Johnson County’s role in economic development.

Ib – Include Economic Development Areas in the Future Land Use Map.

Ic – Obtain a Target Industry Analysis.

S2 – Regularly review and update the Economic Development Plan and its policies.

Ia – Review economic development best management practices and economic development areas on the Future Land Use Map at least every five years upon adoption.

ECON 3 – Encourage sustainable agricultural activities.

S1 – Explore methods to accommodate smaller farming operations. Consider updates to Johnson County’s agricultural exemption policy.

~~Ia – Explore methods to expand agricultural exemption to smaller farming operations.~~

S2 – Develop policies that control the proliferation of industrial farming operations, such as concentrated animal feeding operations. Ensure that the updated agricultural exemption policies discourage the proliferation of industrial farming operations, such as concentrated animal feeding operations.

S3 – Support farmers who wish to maintain and expand agricultural activities in accordance with the goals of this plan.

Ia – Support local, state, and federal programs designed to assist sustainable farming operations.

Ib – Support conservation and natural resource management programs.

S4 – Promote and support local food and small farm operations.

Ia – Continue to provide staff support for local food and agri-tourism activities.

Ib – Continue to support resident engagement to improve discussion and action on food and agriculture initiatives in Johnson County.

~~Ic – Explore policies to allow agricultural exemption of small farm operations (i.e. less than 40 acres).~~

Ic – Support the development of infrastructure and programs that encourage public institutions, restaurants, and other entities to purchase more locally grown food.

Id – Explore flexible zoning regulations to encourage local food production.

Ie – Explore food hub **and food enterprise** options that include food processing, packaging, and storage.

ECON 4 – Provide opportunities for sustainable commercial/industrial activities that enhance livability and are compatible with surrounding land uses.¹

S1 – Revise the site plan review process to address varying levels of intensity.

Ia – Incorporate scalable rules for size and intensity in site plan review to allow for appropriate review of smaller developments.

Ib – Create and use a matrix to provide multiple ways to achieve compliance with site plan regulations.

S2 – Direct large-scale commercial and industrial development projects to the cities and Urban Growth Areas where utilities, services, transportation, and other infrastructure are readily available.

Ia – Coordinate with local and regional economic development organizations.

S3 – Direct smaller-scale, less-intensive commercial and industrial development projects to cities, unincorporated villages, or economic development areas as identified in the Future Land Use Map.

Ia- Identify and review development opportunities within the unincorporated villages.

Ib – Engage residents and update village plans accordingly.

¹ Potentially add an S4 directing staff to create a list of economic development resources with contacts and maintain a page on the county's website.

INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC AMENITIES

INF 1 – Develop well-connected recreational parks, public open/natural spaces, and trails throughout the county.

- S1 – Improve connectivity between subdivisions, open space, and destinations that generate traffic.²
 - Ia – Identify and map opportunities to create greater connectivity between existing developments.
 - Ib – Support local and regional trail plans.
 - Ic – Continue to serve on and work with existing area and regional trails committees.
 - Id – Facilitate improvements recommended by water trail plans.

INF 2 – Utilize existing infrastructure and adopt green infrastructure practices.

- S1 – Coordinate development policies with road improvement and maintenance plans.
 - Ia – Planning staff will participate in the annual review of the Johnson County Secondary Roads Five-Year Plan.
 - Ib – Review and update the existing Road Performance Standards to consider factors such as safety, volume, speed, traffic type, and other national standards.
 - Ic – Identify and consider projects to optimize the use of existing public infrastructure.
- S2 – Encourage the use of green infrastructure.
 - Ia – Identify opportunities to use green infrastructure instead of traditional practices.
 - Ib – Explore potential incentives such as density bonuses.
- S3 – Coordinate with regional transportation investments and long-range transportation plans.
 - Ia – Actively participate in local and regional planning activities.

INF 3 – Make transportation, land use, and infrastructure decisions that encourage a reduction in auto-dependent travel.

- S1 – Promote safe use of the road network by all users.
 - Ia – Identify best management practices for rural road systems.
 - Ib – Consider complete street features as appropriate for higher density areas.
 - Ic – Provide appropriate “Share the Road” signage on highways and other major roads with extended shoulders.
- S2 – Support development that will reduce vehicle miles traveled.
 - Ia – Require connectivity plans for new subdivisions showing intended connections to the existing and planned trail and road network.
 - Ib – Update the subdivision regulations to require connectivity plans and limit the creation of cul-de-sac and dead-end roads unless impractical.³
 - Ic – Consider adding requirements for sidewalks and trail connectivity to the subdivision regulations.⁴

INF 4 – Support environmental, cultural, and historic elements in the planning and design of future infrastructure.

- S1 – Protect and raise awareness of environmental amenities and character of the county.

² COMMENT: clarify how the county will coordinate with Conservation Board to capitalize on Conservation bond funds.

³ NOTE: There was not consensus on this item.

⁴ NOTE: There was not consensus on this item.

Ia – Develop an ordinance that balances scenic road features, safety requirements, and Secondary Road plans.

Ib – Establish criteria to identify environmental, cultural, and historic elements.

Ic – Work with the Iowa Department of Transportation to develop watershed educational standards including roadway signage.

~~S2 – Explore the need for cultural and historic overlay zoning districts and regulations.~~

INF 5 – Support amenities that enhance livability and quality of life.

S1 – Support the Johnson County Conservation Strategic Plan.

Ia – Consider revisions to align zoning ordinance and other County policies.

S2 – Promote livability initiatives across all Johnson County’s departments.

Ia – Encourage livability initiatives within all administrative activities across all Johnson County departments.

S3 – Support appropriate special events and activities across Johnson County.

Ia – Establish new or promote existing central events calendar for all activities.

Ib – Consider grant incentives and programs that support or develop events or activities that are of benefit to the county.

S4 – ~~Consider~~ Promote improvements to communication infrastructure and access to technology in coordination with economic development goals.

SUSTAINABILITY

SUST 1 – Support and implement sustainability strategies that preserve natural resources.

S1 – Revise building permit procedures to improve on-site resource protection.

Ia – Create top soil preservation rules.

Ib – Update soil erosion control regulations to require erosion control on all building permits for new structures.⁵

Ic – Create an inspection procedure for sensitive areas, stormwater, topsoil preservation, and soil erosion control for all development sites.

S2 – Foster the development of watershed and water quality plans.

Ia – Continue to participate in Watershed Management Authorities and collaborate with local experts.

Ib – Incorporate Stormwater management best management practices.

SUST 2 – Develop and/or coordinate with local and regional hazard mitigation, resiliency, and climate change planning.

S1 – Review and help update the Johnson County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan 2014 – 2019.⁶

Ia – Consider how the plan’s requirements affect other county goals.

Ib – Promote greater coordination between county and city governments and other organizations.

Ic – Contribute to and comply with future plans as they are created.

S2 – Discourage development in flood-prone areas.

Ia – Use and educate the public about Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) digital Flood Hazard Maps and local floodplain regulations.

Ib – Consider updates to the Floodplain Development Regulations for better protection from flood damage.

Ic – Adopt the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) latest model floodplain ordinance with considerations specific to Johnson County.

Id – Establish best management practices.

Ie – Secure membership in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) so property in unincorporated Johnson County qualifies for discounts on flood insurance premiums.

S3 – Create a climate action and resiliency plan.

Ia – Coordinate efforts with existing plans and efforts of incorporated areas.

Ib – Identify key stakeholders/partners for plan development and implementation.

SUST 3 – Support affordable and equitable access to quality housing.

S1 – Promote a variety of housing options.

⁵ NOTE: There was not consensus on this item. COMMENT: need to consider the cumulative impact of erosion control of an individual property on larger waterways.

⁶ COMMENT: This plan should address drought as a potential hazard facing our communities.

Ia – Encourage, where appropriate, higher density and multifamily housing by using incentives such as density bonuses.⁷

Ib – Support the Johnson County Housing Trust Fund’s efforts to develop affordable rental and owner-occupied housing for families and seniors.

Ic – Participate in and/or conduct regional housing studies to identify housing needs.

Id – Consider how housing options relate to coordinated land use goals in this comprehensive plan.

S2- Consider establishing a rental housing inspection and licensing program for unincorporated areas.

Ia – Review best management practices.

Ib – Dedicate financial resources to fund these activities.

SUST 4 – Support and advance energy efficiency, resource conservation, and renewable energy programs.

S1 – Continue to offer the Sustainability Grants Program for Nonprofits to improve their operations

S2 – Continue to be a resource to the community on sustainable practices.

Ia – Complete website enhancements to better promote available services.

Ib – Provide educational events.

Ic – Establish other programs through partnerships with municipalities, the University of Iowa, and other organizations serving Johnson County.

SUST 5 – Prioritize green building and sustainable development practices for existing and future residential, commercial, and industrial development.

S1 – Require the most up-to-date building code standards.

Ia – Adopt the most current International Building Code (IBC).

S2 – Ensure new development conforms with adopted sustainable development standards.

Ia – Create and use a Sustainable Subdivision Design Ordinance that uses a scoring matrix ~~of the following elements~~ that includes elements such as: 1) interconnectedness of road networks, 2) density standards, 3) infrastructure provision (current roads), 4) preservation of sensitive areas, 5) provision of sidewalks/trails/amenities, 6) preservation of open space, 7) shared septic systems, and 8) existing zoning.⁸

Ib – Revise existing other standards to reflect sustainable practices.

S3 – Provide incentives for green development.⁹

Ia – Incentivize voluntary practices such as open space preservation, renewable energy, and affordable housing through best practices such as density bonuses.

SUST 6 – Remain a leader in green facilities, operations, and infrastructure.

S1 – Continue to reduce the environmental impact of Johnson County facilities and operational practices.

Ia – Enact administrative appropriate policies

⁷ NOTE: There was not consensus on this item. COMMENT: County should consider revising cluster development standards by reducing green space set aside to 25% or 30%.

⁸ COMMENT: This list would be developed based on guidance from the BOS at the time the ordinance is developed. This means it may be prudent to remove the specifics from this implementation step to allow flexibility in the creation of that ordinance.

⁹ COMMENT: May want to word smith the implementation steps under this strategy.

Ib – Continue to coordinate with the Capital Improvement Plan and follow the Sustainability Capital Standards Process.

Ic – Initiate and maintain energy and resource conservation practices.

Id – Adopt sustainable infrastructure practices on county road and parking projects.

Ie – Continue to utilize solar power and consider other renewables for county facilities.

If – Promote non-single occupancy vehicle use such as carpooling, bicycles, etc.

S2 – Coordinate efforts with local organizations, institutions, and agencies.

Ia – Continue to work with the Sustainability Working Group of Johnson County.

Ib – Provide employee and public education events such as Earth Week and Bike Month.

DRAFT