

The Rural Comprehensive Plan

PLAN GOALS:

The goals express the County's collective sentiment for the future of the unincorporated area of Johnson County.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND RURAL CHARACTER

Residents feel a sense of community and a connection to the surrounding environment with its open spaces and rural character.



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Public participation is active and open with well-informed and engaged citizens.

COORDINATED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

Political and service jurisdictions throughout Johnson County have a coordinated decision-making framework for ensuring the orderly location and orientation of future land uses with adequate public improvements and services.

AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Adequate public facilities and services are available and in place as development occurs and development patterns reflect an efficient, equitable, and effective use of public and private dollars.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

Johnson County coordinates its planning and development to contribute to the physical, social, and economic well being of the greater Kansas City region.

TRANSPORTATION

Unincorporated Johnson County has an efficient and safe transportation system.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Development is integrated with the natural environment, respects the limitations imposed by environmental factors, and protects the amenities that natural assets offer.

LAND USE

Johnson County has achieved the compatible physical and economic coexistence of rural residences, agriculture uses, and cities.

POLICY AREAS:

URBAN FRINGE POLICY AREA

The purpose of the Urban Fringe Policy Area is to allow for "balanced and orderly" growth - preserving existing residences, active agricultural uses, and valuable open space, while enabling the gradual transition of portion of this area to development through close cooperation between the County and adjacent cities as well as through coordinated planning with utility and other service providers (e.g., electricity, fire protection, and schools).

Standard Residential Density: 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres.
*1 dwelling per 2 acres if adequate infrastructure is available.

RURAL POLICY AREA

The purpose of the Rural Policy Area is to maintain the existing open 10 space amenities and rural character, while allowing limited residential development that incorporates rural characteristics, and, to the extent reasonable, protects and promotes open space systems, wildlife habitats, riparian areas, and scenic views. The purpose of this policy area is also to ensure the efficient allocation of limited public resources and to assure that there is adequate infrastructure to support development. Proposed developments that do not meet this standard may be viewed as premature and inappropriate.

Standard Residential Density: 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres.

RURAL TRADITIONAL POLICY AREA

The purpose of the Rural Traditional Policy Area is to maintain and support the area for continued farming and agricultural production with only very low levels of farming-related residential development due to the limited availability of public infrastructure and services to support it. Non-agricultural related development that is incompatible or may interfere with agricultural operations in the Rural Traditional Policy Area is discouraged.

Standard Residential Density: 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres.

OPTIONAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES IN ALL POLICY AREAS:

Planned Rural (PRUR) subdivisions that allow up to 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres, plus one bonus lot per 30 acres in the subdivision, with all lots at least 4 acres in size.

OPTIONAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES IN THE RURAL AND RURAL TRADITIONAL POLICY AREAS:

Clustered/conservation subdivisions with densities greater than 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres, that comply with the regulations, and conserve open space, wildlife habitat, agricultural uses, and protect the environment and scenic vistas, and blend with the surrounding area.

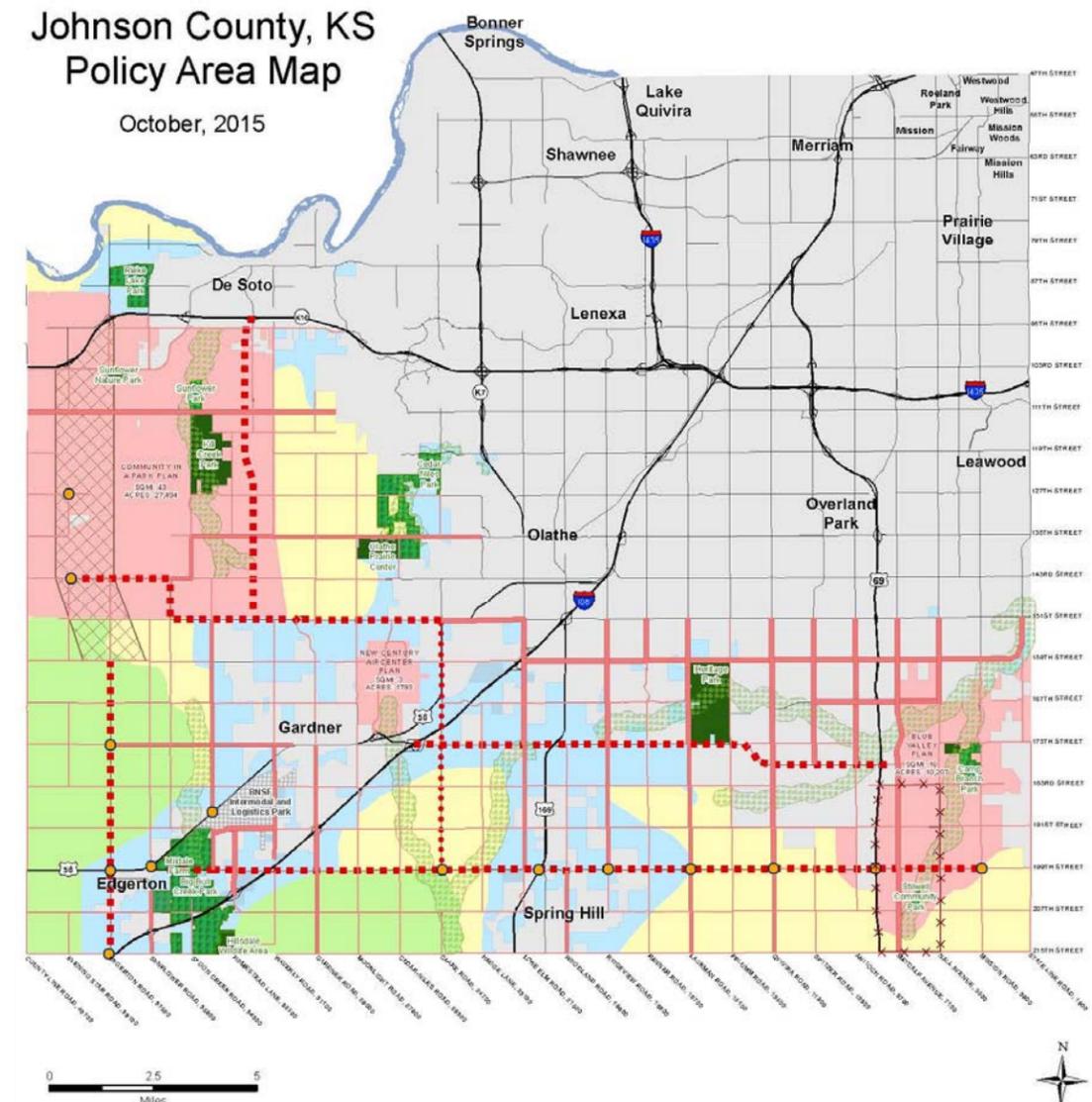
AREA PLANS:

Refer to Chapter 3 Area Plan

The Rural Comprehensive Plan

Johnson County, KS Policy Area Map

October, 2015



LAND USE POLICY AREAS

- URBAN FRINGE - 52 SQ MI / 33,472 AC
- RURAL - 51 SQ MI / 32,529 AC
- RURAL TRADITIONAL - 31 SQ MI / 19,935 AC
- STILLWELL COMMUNITY PLAN - 6 SQ MI / 3910 AC
- AREA PLAN (ALSO RECOGNIZED AS URBAN FRINGE)
- CITY
- BNSF INTERMODAL FACILITY

CARNP & ASSOCIATED FEATURES

- TYPE I / 2 LANES 120FT. ROW
- TYPE II / 2 LANES 120FT. ROW
- TYPE II / 4 LANES 120FT. ROW
- TYPE III / 2 LANES 150-200FT. ROW
- TYPE III / 4 LANES 150-200FT. ROW
- HIGHWAY
- MAJOR ROADS
- RESERVED GRADE SEPARATION
- CARNP CORRIDOR STUDY AREAS

PARKS & ASSOCIATED FEATURES

- OPEN/EXISTING
- FUTURE
- PLANNED STREAMWAY PARK AREAS

FINAL APPROVED VERSION: 8/27/2015

NOTICE: Please be aware that the Planned Stream Park Area (PSPA) shown on the Johnson County Policy Area Map date August 2015, is different than and not identical with the PSPA map adopted by the Johnson County Park District. Therefore, all interested parties should contact the Park District to determine the exact location of any proposed PSPA.



The Rural Comprehensive Plan

10-Point Planning Framework

The following Planning Framework has served as the basis for establishing the goals, policies, action steps, and Policy Area Map contained in the Rural Comprehensive Plan (Plan).

1. Continued Slow Growth in the Unincorporated Area

As it has in the past, over the next 20 years the vast majority of Johnson County's population growth will occur within its cities. Today, Johnson County's 20 cities account for 53% of the County's total 477-square miles of land area and 97% of the County's population. In contrast, only 3% of the County's population resides in the unincorporated area, which accounts for the remaining 47% of total land area in the County. Over the next 20 years this general trend of city expansions and slow population growth in the unincorporated area is expected to continue.

Rooftop-to-rooftop development is not envisioned within the unincorporated area over the next 20 years. Instead, the existing development pattern of low-density residences, limited commercial development, and predominately agricultural uses is expected to continue. Continuance of this trend is reinforced because of the County's limited resources available to provide major infrastructure improvements or increase the public services necessary to support extensive growth in the unincorporated area. Development outside of cities, therefore, is expected to continue at its current relatively slow rate (e.g., approximately 100 residential building permits issued annually).



2. Natural Resources Protection

Johnson County's city and rural residents place a high value on the protection and enhancement of open spaces, rural character, and environmentally sensitive areas not only for today but also into the future. The goals, policies, and action steps contained in this Plan reflect this high priority.

The "Natural Resources Map" in the County Park and Recreation District's master plan, MAP 2020, shows the locations of the County's existing and proposed parks, streamway trails, and other natural amenities that are recommended for preservation. This Plan uses the Natural Resources Map as a guide for delineating and protecting these important natural features within the unincorporated area.



3. Continued Agriculture Production

The goals, policies, and action steps contained in this Plan support small scale agriculture (e.g. truck farming and wholesale nurseries), as well as large scale farm production as a valued County resource. Farming creates jobs; brings fresh produce to local markets; requires little public infrastructure; and preserves rural character, scenic views, and wildlife habitats.

Because of the relatively slow growth expected to occur within the unincorporated area, agricultural activities are expected to be able to continue without excessive pressures to convert farmland for development purposes. This is especially likely for the more remote areas of the County such as in the far western reaches of McCamish Township where there is very limited infrastructure to support development (e.g., lack of central water systems).



4. "Sense of Community" and "Sense of Place" Development Quality

Distinctive and coordinated development that fosters a strong "sense of community" and a "sense of place" is encouraged. This type of development is sensitive to cultural and the natural resources and blends well with existing surroundings. The neighborhoods created are attractive and walkable, promoting a sense of neighborliness and belonging. Quality development is sustainable and served by adequate public infrastructure and services. The Plan discourages fragmented, unending, or incompatible development requiring major funding allocations to provide adequate public infrastructure or services.

The Plan further recognizes that the County is an attractive and desirable place to live and work. The Plan supports the continued maintenance of high development standards and supports the protection of existing and future residential areas from encroachment by incompatible development.

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5. Limited Housing Choices

This Plan recognizes and supports the desire of Johnson County citizens to have a range of housing options from which to choose throughout the County. Housing choices within the unincorporated area, however, are generally limited to low-density residences (homes on 10-acre and larger lots to 2-acre lots) due to County regulations and the limited availability of infrastructure available to support more dense development.

Although there may be some exceptions, this Plan, in combination with the County's Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, enables the opportunity for primarily low-density single-family residences provided necessary conditions are met (e.g., County Minimum Infrastructure Requirements) and the Board of County Commissioners authorizes such development.



6. Fiscal Responsibility - Adequate and Cost Effective Infrastructure and Public Services

Johnson County has always sought to achieve the highest level of fiscal responsibility in its delivery of public infrastructure and services. In order to maintain a high quality of life while minimizing the burden on taxpayers countywide, the County has provided both adequate and cost effective infrastructure in keeping with the rural nature and limited development in the unincorporated area.

The County, however, has traditionally not provided the much higher levels of services and infrastructure needed to serve dense or very intensive nonresidential developments normally found within cities. This Plan continues that practice and does not promote nor facilitate urban development in the unincorporated area. Development requiring a high degree of community or public services (e.g., public safety, and road maintenance), therefore, is encouraged to locate within cities where such necessary infrastructure and services are available.



7. County/City Coordination

Development allowed within the unincorporated area generally within a mile of cities will be closely coordinated with the cities and will be of a transitional nature, preserving open space and natural amenities and land for future development. The County will also continue to work with cities to develop new or update existing Area Plans (e.g., Blue Valley Plan and the Lone Elm Vicinity Plan) near or adjacent to city boundaries. The objective is to ensure that future growth by cities is orderly so that the extension of future municipal infrastructure and services will be unencumbered and coordinated with the County.

8. Public Services and Utilities Coordination

To achieve development that occurs in an orderly and efficient manner, continued close coordination is needed between County service providers (e.g. County Wastewater District, Public Works, and public safety) and community facility and utility providers (e.g., school districts and water districts).

9. Quality Transportation

The County's adopted Comprehensive Arterial Road Network Plan (CARNP) identifies future major transportation routes and construction standards, as well as supports multi-modal forms of transportation where feasible (mass transit, pedestrian, and bicycling). CARNP will continue to serve as the County's plan for guiding future transportation improvements within the unincorporated area.

Recognizing that rural patterns of development generally promote reliance on motor vehicles, development patterns that reduce this reliance and promote multi-modal forms of transportation are encouraged. New development should provide for safe, efficient pedestrian facilities.

10. Predictability and Public Involvement

The County is committed to making development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective by encouraging community and stake-holder information sharing, problem solving, and collaboration in the decision-making process.