Joint City-County Planning Commission of Nelson County

Planning Matters

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Access Management: An Overview

by Elizabeth Humstone & Julie Campoli

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The 1960s and 1970s were a major period of road building in the United States. Interstate highways were constructed, major arterial highways were improved, and new roads were developed to provide access to vast, undeveloped lands. With these improvements more commercial development appeared outside of urban and village centers, particularly along major highways and at interchanges. With time, vacant lands between the commercial uses filled in. Individual curb cuts for each business lined the highway. Traffic increased. Congestion began to cause delays for drivers. People found it difficult to enter or leave businesses or homes along the road. The number of accidents grew. State and local officials widened roads to handle more cars. Before long there were traffic signals, left turn lanes, and four, six, and even eight travel lanes.

What can be done to break this cycle of increased congestion necessitating costly road widenings which result in increased traffic? While there is no single solution, one important — and increasingly used — strategy involves what is called "access management."

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Figures 1-5 Below— Evolution of development along a highway. In the early stages, land along the road is used for farming with little traffic generated. As time passes, the highway corridor becomes a de facto growth area Additional businesses demand curb cuts which increase congestion, which results in a wider road and more turning lanes.

What is access management?

Access management is the planning, design, and implementation of land use and transportation strategies that control the flow of traffic between the road and surrounding land. Access management can bring significant benefits to the community,such as:

- Postponing or preventing costly highway improvements.
- Improving safety conditions along highways.
- Reducing congestion and delays
- Providing property owners with safe access to highways.
- Promoting desirable land use patterns
- Making pedestrian and bicycle travel safer.

The Land Use-Transportation Connection

In order to understand the role of access management, it is critical to keep in mind the close connection between land use and transportation. Highways provide access to land which enables the development of that land. Land uses generate vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit trips. In order to manage traffic along a highway, both land use and transportation strategies are necessary.

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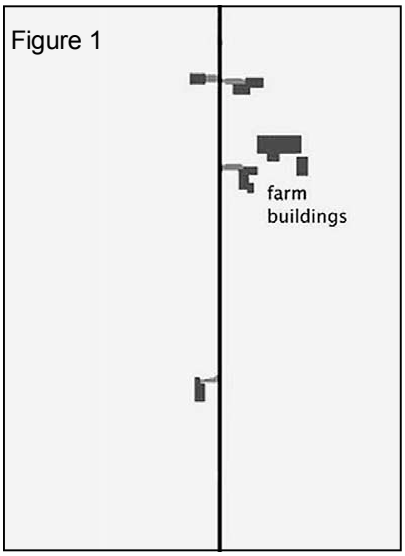
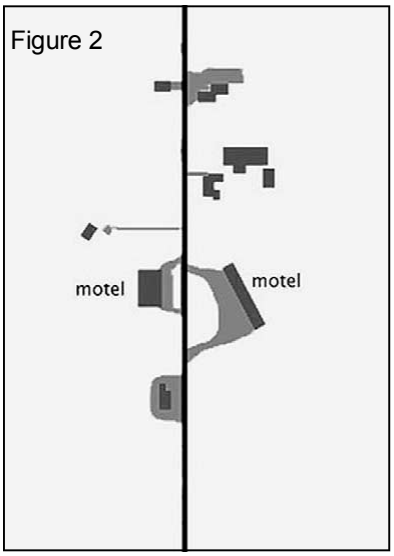
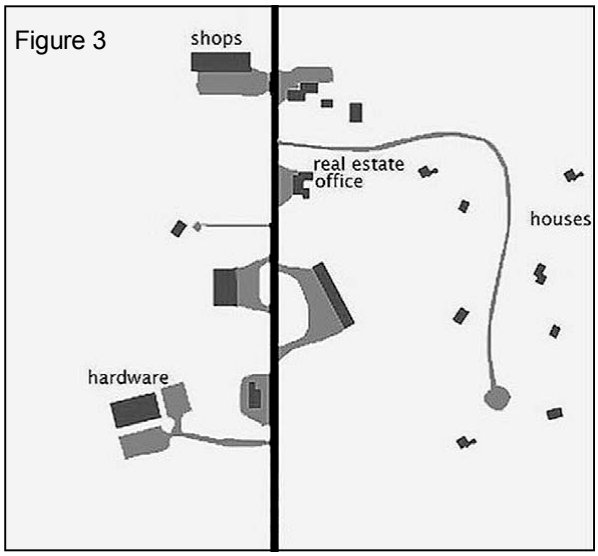






Residential & Commercial Permits Trend Higher in 1st Quarter

During the 1st quarter, the number of zoning compliance permits for residential and commercial increased over last year.

The Planning Commission issued 160 permits for 165 dwelling units, a 27 percent increase in number of permits and 15 percent increase in number of dwellings unit. The total residential construction cost also increased from $13.5 to $18.1 million, a 34 percent over the year before. The average construction cost for a conventional detached single-family dwelling increased from $106,091 to $116,675.

Most of the residential permits were issued for lots within the Bardstown urban area and Deatsville Village. The following provides the geographical distribution of permitted residential units by Future Land Use Areas and corridors:

Future Land Use Map Areas	
Hamlet	2%
Naturally Sensitive	4%
Rural	16%
Suburban	19%
Town	3%
Urban	21%
Village	37%

Geographic Corridors	
Bardstown Urban Area	20.5%
Boston Road Corridor	4.1%
KY 245 Corridor	42.7%
Louisville Road Corridor	7.6%
Bloomfield Road Corridor	11.1%
New Haven Road Corridor	4.1%
Springfield Road Corridor	10.0%

Commercial construction also picked up during the 1st quarter as permits were issued for 7 new commercial structures, including Lowe's and other retail and office buildings, with total construction costs of $6.4 million.

Building Permit Analysis
Total Building Permits Issued by Type, Number, Estimated Cost, & Jurisdiction
January - March 2005

	Total		City of Bardstown		Nelson County	
	Permits	***Est. Cost***	***Permits***	***Est. Cost***	***Permits***	***Est. Cost***
Total Permits	***284***	***$28,317,035***	***50***	***$10,537,129***	***234***	***$17,779,906***
Non-Commercial Permits	***261***	***$19,417,421***	***35***	***$1,975,365***	***226***	***$17,442,056***
Agricultural Structures	17	$138,550	0	$0	17	$138,550
Accessory Additions	3	$31,400	0	$0	3	$31,400
Accessory Structures	44	$440,855	12	$97,365	32	$343,490
Demolitions	2	$0	0	$0	2	$0
Duplexes (4 units)	2	$275,000	1	$75,000	1	$200,000
Manufactured Homes, double-wide	6	$332,627	0	$0	6	$332,627
Manufactured Homes, single-wide	4	$65,500	0	$0	4	$65,500
Multi-Family Dwellings (0 units)	0	$0	0	$0	0	$0
Single-Family Additions	29	$545,780	8	$148,000	21	$397,780
Single-Family Dwellings	147	$17,151,2090	12	$1,540,000	135	$15,611,209
Single-Family Alteration/Remodeling	6	$186,500	2	$115,000	4	$71,500
Townhouses (4 units)	1	$250,000	0	$0	1	$250,000
Total Commercial Permits	***23***	***$8,899,614***	***15***	***$8,561,764***	***8***	***$337,850***
Commercial Additions	1	$40,000	0	$0	1	$40,000
Commercial Alteration/Remodeling	6	$194,500	4	$105,500	2	$89,000
Commercial Demolitions	0	$0	0	$0	0	$0
Commercial Structures	8	$6,351,043	5	$6,274,793	3	$76,250
Commercial Tenant Fit-Ups	3	$216,000	3	$216,000	0	$0
Industrial Additions	2	$401,000	1	$286,000	1	$115,000
Industrial Alterations/Remodeling	1	$279,471	1	$279,471	0	$0
Public Structures	1	$17,600	0	$0	1	$17,600
Public Addition	1	$1,400,000	1	$1,400,000	0	$0

Access Management (continued from page 1)

To manage one without the other will result in congestion, deterioration of the highway corridor, and resident, business, and landowner dissatisfaction. Not all highways influence land development in the same way. For example, interchanges attract industries and warehouses, whereas local streets pose problems for these uses due to weight limits, neighborhood conflicts, and limited maneuvering space.

Highway systems can be barriers or connectors between land uses. For example, interstates bisect communities and limit their interconnection to a few underpasses, overpasses, or exits. Alternatively, local street networks connect destinations within communities. Traffic congestion and delays affect the desirability of doing business along parts of a highway corridor. Improvements designed to ease congestion often attract more traffic requiring more improvements in the future. Increased highway capacity may result in the spread of development to peripheral areas, leaving vacant and abandoned areas behind.

Traffic volumes and choices of mode of travel are influenced by the location, density and mixture of land uses. Communities that separate land uses reinforce driving as the mode of choice. Low density land uses also encourage driving and require longer travel times. More people walk in compact, mixed use centers.

The layout and design of land uses can affect the choice of mode of travel. Low density commercial and residential developments, often with big road setbacks, large lots, and low density, can discourage walking and bicycling. Buildings set far apart by vast parking areas, liberal landscaping and wide access roads discourage walking between uses. Connected sidewalks, attractive walking environments, and pedestrian crosswalks in compact settlements encourage more walking trips.

Land use planning and access management need to work together. When communities plan for the future, they should be aware of how their land use plans will affect the levels of traffic, appearance, and points of congestion on highways.

Corridor Planning

The focus of the "Access Management Guide" which follows is on how access management strategies can be integrated into the planning and design of major roadway corridors. Note the word corridor. It is important in thinking about roadways to consider not just the physical right-of-way, but also the area along the roadway. By looking at the entire corridor, a community can evaluate the traffic conditions, land use conditions, and historic, scenic, and environmental features; identify future problem areas; and make broad recommendations for the area.

Corridor planning is most often undertaken with the assistance of a regional or county planning commission because many arterial and collector corridors serve regional transportation needs. If a corridor plan is being developed for a regional arterial highway, all communities along the highway will need to participate in the planning process.

Planning Policies That Assist Access Management

1. Focus development in villages, urban centers or other growth centers.
2. Provide for mixed uses and higher densities than surrounding areas in these growth centers.
3. Do not plan narrow, commercial strips along highways.
4. Redesign existing strip development areas.
5. Limit development along arterial highways in rural settings.
6. Plan for a community street network.
7. Require master planning for large tracts of land.
8. Plan and design transportation improvements that fit with community character.

Corridor planning requires broad public participation. Local officials, regional or county planning representatives, property owners, businesses, and residents along the corridor, citizens, and representatives from the state transportation agency should be included. All of these people will be affected by the corridor plan and, therefore, must help establish the plan.

For a copy of "Access Management: A Guide for Roadway Corridors" or "Traffic Calming Basics," please contact the Planning Commission office.

Figure 4

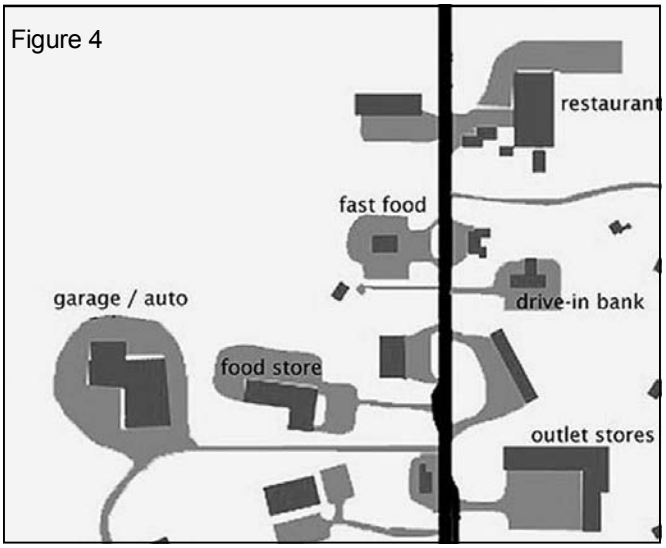
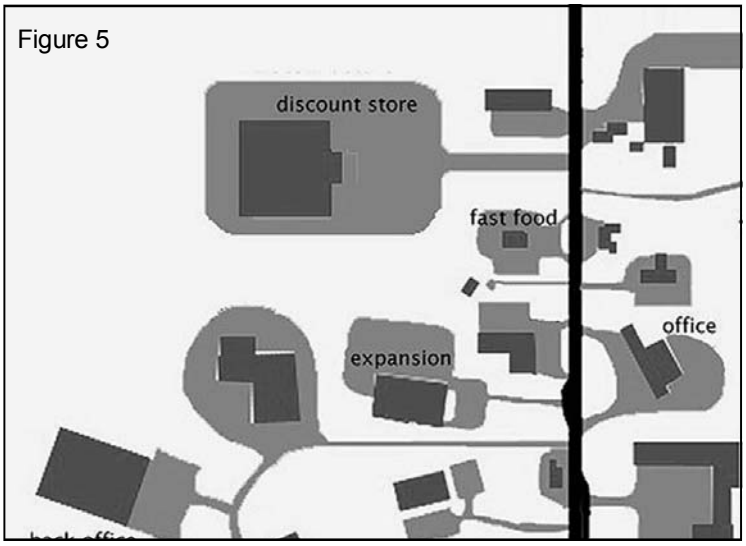


Figure 5



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News

In February, Nelson County Fiscal Court appointed Wayne Colvin to the Planning Commission to represent Magisterial District #5 (Chaplin-Bloomfield area). Mr. Colvin will serve the unexpired term of Roger Burns, who resigned after 6 1/2 years on the Commission. The City of Fairfield recently appointed William Marquess to the Fairfield Board of Adjustment (BOA) for a four-year term. Mr. Marquess replaced Shirley Mattingly, who had served since 2001.

Planning Commission Activity
January - March 2005

Type	January	February	March
Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs)	4	5	3
Conditional Use Permits (CUPs)	0	0	3
Commercial Establishment Design Standards Review	1	2	4
Subdivision Plats—Advisory Plats	3	1	3
Amended Minor/Major Plats	2	2	9
Minor Subdivision Plats (< 3 lots)	5	7	10
Major Subdivision Plats (4+ lots)	7	2	3
Variances	3	2	3
Zoning Map Amendments (zone changes)	7	2	3