

Chapter 6

Environmental Conditions

Introduction

The type and degree of development in a community is dependent on the physiographic features of the area. An area's terrain, soils, watercourses and other natural resources either prohibit or encourage varying types of development. LaRue County's existing and anticipated infrastructure, transportation networks, community facilities and physiographic features influence the shape of future development and redevelopment. Soils associated with certain geographic areas may be restrictive in terms of sewage disposal or the availability of water. Topography also affects growth and a community's steep hillsides and flood prone areas should not be developed in order to mitigate and avoid natural disasters.

This chapter examines specific environmental features and conditions in LaRue County and explains how these features and condition may limit or encourage growth and development.

Climate

The climate in LaRue County is marked by four distinct seasons that bring a refreshing variety of weather conditions and events. With an annual average temperature of 56.4 degrees Fahrenheit, no month averages below freezing in the winter, or above 90 degrees in the summer.

The region's annual growing season averages about two hundred days in length, with temperatures above 32 degrees, which provides for a fairly long harvest cycle. The relatively long growing season enables the region to produce an abundance of agricultural crops.

Precipitation is well distributed throughout the year in LaRue County, with an average annual precipitation of 49.3 inches. The average number of days per year with .1 inch or more of precipitation is 105.1 days. The average annual snowfall is 4.1 inches. The annual average number of days with 1 inch or more of snow is 3.06.

Prevailing winds are from the south/southwest providing the region with moderate temperatures. However, wind patterns vary and can come from all directions on any occasion throughout the year. The annual average wind speed is 17.15 miles-per-hour. During winter months, cold fronts with northerly winds occur and bring occasional snow events. Calm conditions dominate the region during late summer and early fall.

Topography

LaRue County's topography accounts for the region's scenic attributes, however, the County is part of a much larger topographic region that affects a large portion of the State.

LaRue County lies within the Mississippian Plateau that is commonly known as the Pennyryle region of Kentucky. The Rolling Fork River is part of the eastern boundary of the county and follows along the base of Muldraugh Hill. The most striking topographic feature in the county is the Muldraugh escarpment that rises 300 to 400 feet above the valley flats. Steep slopes are present, but sheer cliffs are rare. The Muldraugh Hill feature underlies the northeasterly portion of the county. It consists of a dominant ridge that stretches from the Ohio River in Meade County and traverses southeasterly through Meade, Hardin and LaRue Counties. It is characterized by its plateau-like shelf with dramatic ridge-like edge prevalent on its eastern boundary.

The lowest elevations in LaRue County are found along the Rolling Fork River. The valley flats are about 440 to 450 feet above sea level. The lowest point in the river is 421 feet where it leaves the county.

Most of LaRue County is a low, rolling plateau. Elevations in the northeast part of the county on Muldraugh Hill near Cecil Ridge, are highest at 1,202 feet. The plateau surface declines to the southwest to approximately 750 feet in the western part of the county. Sinkholes are a common feature of the terrain in the western part of LaRue County. Elsewhere in the county, normal stream drainage prevails.

Higher elevations in LaRue County are also found along the drainage divide that marks the boundary between LaRue and Green counties and LaRue and Taylor counties. Elevations in excess of 1,000 feet are common in this area. Elevations along the LaRue-Taylor County line have been mapped at 1,080 feet.

Groundwater

Groundwater in LaRue County exists in both unconsolidated sediments and consolidated bedrock. Unconsolidated sediments, which include gravels, sands and silts can store and transfer water to underlying bedrock or receive water from bedrock. When sufficiently large enough and located at relatively high altitudes, as in upland or high terrace deposits, unconsolidated sediments can be a significant source of recharge to bedrock deposits. Similarly, unconsolidated sediments at lower altitudes, such as river valleys, are partially recharged by groundwater from surrounding bedrock and may form local aquifers. In summary, groundwater recharge occurs in one of three ways in the area; by overland flow into sinkholes in karst areas, by infiltration through the soil and unconsolidated deposits, and by loss of water in streams to the aquifer.

The movement of groundwater through the water table is affected by the type of parent material it flows through. Groundwater moves in response to water pressure gradients from points of recharge to points of discharge. Usually, recharge points are found in upland and karst areas, and discharge points are in stream valleys. The United States Geological Survey has mapped the configuration of LaRue County's water table within its primary aquifer. The local USGS office can be consulted for specific details of the water table and groundwater yields. With an understanding of recharge and discharge points, careful

planning and design must be done when considering any proposed development of upland areas.

General Soil Types

A critical factor to consider when determining suitable development patterns and specific uses of land is the soil type present in the area. It is imperative to know if a soil type is capable of supporting a building, road, or other infrastructure. It is also critical to know if a soil type is capable of supporting septic systems. Placement of septic systems in soil not suitable for that use can lead to contamination of ground or surface water which can lead to outbreaks of disease or other public health hazards. A general description of soil types in LaRue County follows.



The Natural Resources Conservation Service assesses soil types and characteristics for counties and cities. For planning purposes, the soil types are grouped into categories called soil associations. A soil association, is an area that possesses a distinctive collection of soils and most often contains one or two major soil types as well as the presence of minor soil types. Soil is the product of the forces of weathering and physical development acting on the parent material that has been deposited or accumulated by geological episodes. Characteristics of soil are the by-products of five factors: 1. The physical and mineralogical composition of the parent materials; 2. The climate in which the soil has evolved; 3. The past and present plant and animal life in the soil; 4. The degree of slope or lay of the land; and 5. The amount of time the soil has been present.

There are seven basic soil associations that have been identified in LaRue County, however, four soil associations are dominate, and cover a greater percentage of the LaRue County area. The Crider-Vertrees-Nicholson association makes up about 35% of the county, while the Garmon-Caneyville-Lenberg association makes up about 19% of the county. The Sonora-Gatton-Riney association makes up another 18% of the county, and the Crider-Pembroke-Cumberland association makes up another 16% of the area.

The Crider-Vertrees-Nicholson association landscape consists of nearly level to rolling, hilly and steep soils on broad uplands that are largely crisscrossed by many small streams. Some parts of this association are karst topography with drainage ways that lead through sinks and depressions into underground streams. Karst valleys are common with depressions of ponded water. This soil association makes up about 35% of LaRue County. The association consists of approximately 40% Crider soils, 35% Vertrees soils, and 15%

Nicholson soils. This association is used extensively for farming. Small woodlots and some large tracts of woodland are scattered throughout the area. Idle fields, in the process of reverting to hardwood trees, are common in some parts. Most farms are owner-operated with many of the owners working part-time at farming. Corn, tobacco, and small grains are the main crops grown. Legumes and tall grasses are grown extensively for hay and pasture land. Beef cattle and hog production are important livestock enterprises.

While this association has good potential for intensive crop farming use, the steepness of slopes, and wet nature of the soil are major deterrents for urban development. Great care must be taken when selecting sites for sewage disposal systems.

The Garmon-Caneyville-Lenberg association landscape is characterized by very steep to moderately steep soils on narrow ridges and valley walls. This association is made up in part by the Muldraugh Escarpment. The association is comprised of approximately 36% Garmon soils, 15% Caneyville soils, and 7% Lenberg soils.

The potential for use in areas with this soil is severely limited due its topographic characteristics of steep slopes and moderate depth before reaching bedrock. This association has good potential for forestry, wildlife, and limited recreational uses. Some of the minor soils contained in this association are suited for farming if adequate measures are taken to control erosion. Foot slopes in this area are prone to slides.

The Sonora-Gatton-Riney association landscape is characterized by undulating to rolling and hilly soils in upland areas that are dissected by numerous small streams. This association is composed of about 49% Sonora soils, 13% Gatton soils, and 11% Riney soils. These areas are used mainly for farming. Small woodlots are common with several large tracts of woodlands present. Idle fields and gullied and severely eroded spots are also common within this association. Most of the farms are owner operated with many of the owners, part-time farmers. Corn, tobacco, small grains, hay and pastures are the chief crops. Production of beef cattle and hogs are the main livestock industries.

The soils in this association have the potential for extensive crop production. Slope steepness and low permeability of the dense Gatton soils are the limitations for use of these areas for urban and recreational development. However, the association has relatively good potential for residential and industrial use and development.

The Crider-Pembroke-Cumberland association consists of gently sloping to moderately steep soils on karst uplands. Surface runoff collects mainly in the small depressions and sinks which dot the landscape and drain into underground streams. This association is made up of 18% Pembroke soils and 17% Cumberland soils. Corn, tobacco and small grains are the important crops grown in this association. Clover and tall grasses are grown here as well and used for pasture and hay. Beef cattle and hogs are raised, constituting the livestock enterprises within this region. There are many farm homes and small communities in this association. Hodgenville is located near the eastern boundary of this association. This association has good farming and urban development potential. The

main limitation for use of the soils for crop production is erosion. Limitations for most urban development are slight to moderate.

Prime Agricultural Land/Soils

Prime soils suitable for agricultural activities are highly regarded by counties and the State. Clearly, when such soils are developed for residential, commercial or industrial purposes, their use for agricultural production is lost. Kentucky depends on its most productive soils for agricultural purposes, which has led to the soil classification system described below. This system helps identify and protect certain soils from inappropriate development activities.

A soil classification system identifies each soil type in terms of its suitability for agricultural production. Certain soils are considered Prime Agricultural and classified “I” and “II.” Other, less suitable soils, are classified with higher numbers. The location of different soil types and their suitability for use in LaRue County, have been identified and mapped by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, also known as the Soil Conservation Service. Specific maps are available through the Hardin and LaRue County Soil Survey. This survey provides the site-specific detail necessary for identifying all local soil types based on their individual characteristics.

The soil survey is used, by the Land of Lincoln Planning Commission to evaluate the soils on a specific site, to identify and classify their suitability to support agricultural and urban land uses when development is proposed. Therefore, the survey can be used to identify prime agricultural soils within LaRue County and preserve these areas. A State map depicting soils of agricultural importance can also be obtained as part of a soil survey. The primary method of preserving prime agricultural land is to minimize residential, commercial and industrial development in those areas.

Surface Water Resources

LaRue County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and local residents can obtain flood insurance. The county became eligible by adopting floodplain management regulations intended to reduce future flood losses. Typical homeowners’ insurance policies do not cover flood losses and, prior to the county’s participation in NFIP, local residents could not insure their property against losses due to flooding. Flood insurance can be purchased through any insurance agent. Additional floodplain management regulations can be adopted as the need arises.

LaRue County residents can purchase flood insurance even if they do not own property in a designated flood area. However, residents who own property in an identified flood hazard area are required to purchase flood insurance as a condition to get a mortgage from any federally backed lender or loan program. Lenders are required to notify prospective buyers if the property they plan to purchase is located within a designated flood hazard area.

There are some portions of LaRue County that are officially designated as Flood Hazard Areas. When development is proposed anywhere in the county, especially within one mile of any creek, body of water, or low-lying area, the official Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) must be consulted to determine if construction will be in a Flood Hazard Area. Development in a flood hazard area should be avoided, if at all possible, to protect the functional integrity of the floodplain as well as the health, safety and financial security of county residents. As the official administrator of the Floodplain Maps, the county must regulate and prohibit development within the floodplains in LaRue County.



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Chapter 7 Community Facilities

Introduction

To determine the need for future development of community facilities, it is necessary to evaluate the location, condition and quality of all existing community facilities. The purpose of the Community Facilities Plan is to recommend the most desirable, appropriate, economical and feasible location for public and private community facilities serving the residents of the planning area. This chapter will examine types and condition of all community facilities currently available in LaRue County and identify future needs based on regional population projections.

Benefits

Implementation of recommendations made in the Land of Lincoln Comprehensive Plan, will result in enhanced opportunities and services in LaRue County to include educational opportunities, sufficient open space, adequate fire and police protection, good public utilities and comprehensive health and welfare services that will insure the health, safety and quality of life of the entire community.

Recommendations contained in the Community Facilities Plan will eliminate duplication of effort, haphazard growth, and the construction of unnecessary facilities. Orderly growth and development throughout the planning area will be aided by the recommendations set forth in this plan. Conformance with the recommendations within the Comprehensive Plan will result in a more uniform and equitable planning process that will enhance the relationship between the community and its residents as well as other individuals who have an interest in LaRue County.

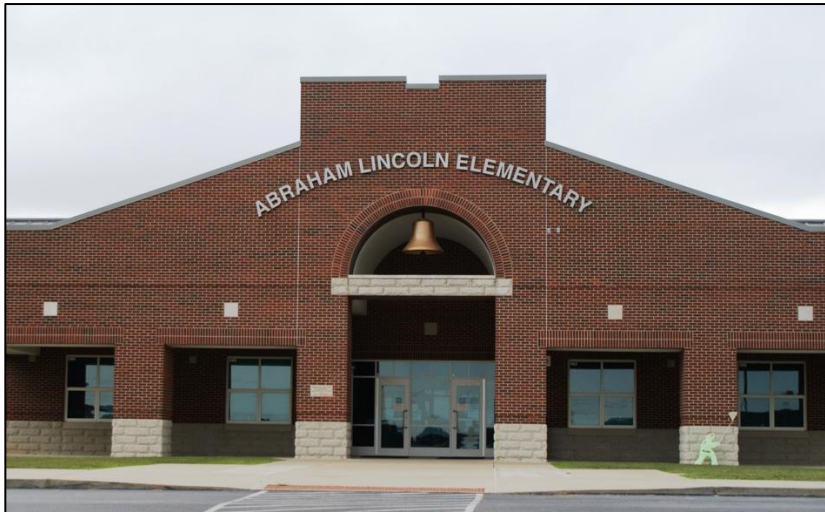
The Community Facilities Plan is a valuable tool for providing structure and coordination to the efforts of local government entities. It serves as a guide to defining planning area needs and informs LaRue County residents of the status of the public services and facilities within the community.

Education

Community educational facilities are a key component to future success. An inventory of schools is an important part of a Community Facilities Plan. Schools offer social and educational building blocks for the young and a focal point for community activities and interests. If a community has a sound education system it is better positioned to attract new business and residents and ensure the success of its children.

It is not the purpose of a comprehensive plan or a function of the Planning Commission to advise school authorities of the need for physical or curriculum improvements; the School Board and administrative officials are in the best position to determine specific

improvements. The job of the Planning Commission and Comprehensive Plan is to ensure



that adequate land is reserved for future educational facilities that may be needed.

Educational Facilities

The opportunity for a sound education is one of the most important goals a jurisdiction can provide to residents. For young and old alike, a good education

to ensure employability and a good quality of life, paves the way for a better future. An excellent educational system also helps a community attract new business and residents, while providing future employers with a skilled and knowledgeable work force.

Figure 20. Schools in LaRue County

School	Location	Enrollment	Pupil/Teacher Ratio
Abraham Lincoln Elementary School Grades P - 05	Hodgenville	487	15:01
Hodgenville Elementary School Grades P - 05	Hodgenville	580	15:01
LaRue County Middle School Grades 06 - 08	Hodgenville	566	14:01
LaRue County High School Grades 09 - 12	Hodgenville	783	16:01
The Life Connection Alternative School Grades 5 - 12	Sonora	40	13:01

Source: Kentucky Department of Education (2023)

The LaRue County School System is composed of one high school, one middle school, two grade schools and one alternative school. The table above illustrates the schools in LaRue County and their approximate enrollments. Since 2003, LaRue County has relocated two elementary schools in Magnolia and Buffalo, and eliminated its intermediate school. According to the Kentucky Department of Education, the average expenditure for each LaRue County public school student during the 2019-2020 school year was \$11,352.00.

School Facilities Plan

All Kentucky School Systems are required to anticipate local needs and complete district-wide School Facilities Plans every four years. Every school system’s scheduled improvements must be outlined in its School Facilities Plan. The LaRue County School System updated its Facilities Plan in 2021, and continues to evaluate its future needs.

Additional information concerning LaRue County’s School Facilities Plan is available from the school district.

Public Library

A community public library can serve a population in several ways. It can be a source of passive recreation and can augment a community’s educational system. When a population has more leisure time and higher educational attainment goals, a good public library assumes an increasingly important role in community life. Great care and planning should be taken by a community to provide for the continued development of its public library and library programs. The public library can play an important role in the vitality and viability of a community.



The LaRue County Public Library is located at 215 Lincoln Drive in Hodgenville.

The library contains approximately 24,402 volumes of works. The library also has internet accessible computers available to the public free of charge. Library services are listed below.

Figure 21. LaRue County Public Library Services	
Books, magazines, audiobooks and DVD’s	Genealogy Section
Internet access	Chilton Library Database
Copies and FAX service	Testing & Education Reference Center
Free Wireless Internet	Database
Free downloadable books	Kentucky Virtual Library Database
Children, teen & Adult Programs	Bookmobile Service
News Bank – America’s News	Ancestry Library Edition
Meeting Room Available	

Historic Resources

LaRue County has a rich history with connections to important historic events. Abraham Lincoln was born just outside of Hodgenville and lived in LaRue County as a young boy. The Lincoln Birthplace and Boyhood Home, two National Historic Sites administered by the National Park Service, are located in the county. As Lincoln grew and began his career,



his influence in the area was always present. The Lincoln Museum in downtown Hodgenville chronicles Lincoln's life with many fascinating exhibits and artifacts.

History is a source of pride and strength for county residents and visitors. Historic assets must be recognized, protected and enhanced. A Cultural and Historic Resources Plan would identify, investigate and inventory

historic assets and provide measures for their protection and enhancement.

The 31E National Scenic Byway runs through LaRue County. Historic markers are located at Little Mount Cemetery on Leafdale Road and along the 31E Scenic Corridor.

Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park

The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park is located 3 miles south of Hodgenville. The site's main attraction is the Memorial Building, which is the first national monument dedicated to Abraham Lincoln in the United States. Located within the Memorial Building is the historic symbolic birth cabin. The grounds include 116 acres, many of which were part of the original Thomas Lincoln "Sinking Spring Farm", the site of the Boundary Oak Tree, and the Sinking Spring. The visitor center includes a film, bookstore, and museum exhibits.



Boyhood Home Unit at Knob Creek

This site, located 8 miles northeast of Hodgenville, is also part of the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park. Visitors explore the historic Boyhood Cabin and the recently restored Knob Creek Tavern visitor center, its modern exhibits, and park bookstore. Visitors can also take a walk in Lincoln's footsteps across fields that today look much like they did when the Lincoln family lived there, see where young Abe almost drowned in Knob Creek, or hike to the top of the knob via the Overlook Trail.

Churches

Churches can serve a community in numerous, transitional ways and can offer the community unique architectural and cultural diversity. Although churches are allowed in any zoning classification, they are required to be commercially inspected.

Recreational Facilities

LaRue County acknowledges the need for parks and green space to afford residents the facilities necessary to enjoy passive and active recreational activities. Sufficient space for recreational and leisure activities greatly improves the quality of life in the County. The County currently has multiple diverse recreational areas. These facilities and their respective amenities are listed below.

Creekfront Park

Located at the entrance to downtown Hodgenville off of Highway 210, Creekfront Park has a mile long, paved walking trail, covered pavilion, basketball court, pickleball courts, playground, restrooms and off-street parking. It boasts Lincoln heritage with split rail fences and small log cabin.



LaRue County Environmental Education & Research Center (Pearman Forest)

The LaRue County Environmental & Research Center is located three miles from downtown Hodgenville off of Highway 31E. It serves as an outdoor classroom and provides educational information on ecology, genetics, forestry, natural resource conservation and wildlife management.



It has a gravel trail that is six feet wide and 4400 feet long and has seating along the way. It accommodates walking, jogging and non-motorized biking. It allows the use of motorized vehicles for the physically challenged.

LaRue County Parks & Recreation

The LaRue County Parks & Recreation is located behind the LaRue County Middle School. The park has four fields for softball and baseball, a soccer/football field, and one pavilion. It has a community center that is available to rent, by the public.

LaRue County Country Club

The LaRue County Country Club is a private recreational facility featuring an eighteen-hole golf course and clubhouse.

LaRue County Sportsman's Lake

The LaRue County Sportsman's Lake Club is a private facility located off of Highway 210, about three miles from Hodgenville. It contains a fishing lake, clubhouse, playgrounds, and campgrounds.

McDougal Lake & Trails System

McDougal Lake is a 90-acre lake situated southeast of Hodgenville. It is owned by Hodgenville and located at 1781 State Highway 916. There is a concrete boat ramp leading into the lake and boats with small trolling motors are allowed on the water. Since the lake is a freshwater reservoir, gas motors or any type of petroleum products of any kind are prohibited. Anglers spending time on the lake can find crappie, bluegill, and bass. The lake is surrounded by several hiking trails for those looking to enjoy the beauty of the lake without heading out on the water. The McDougal Lake Trails system contains multiple routes that can be enjoyed by an array of outdoor enthusiasts, including biking, hiking, running, and walking. Primitive camping is also available by permit. The permit is available online by scanning the QR code on the kiosk at the trail head or on the city website, www.cityofhodgenvilleky.com.

Salem Lake

Salem Lake is a 99-acre lake owned by Hodgenville that can be accessed at the end of Phillips Lane off State Highway 2217. There are two concrete boat ramps leading into the lake and boats with trolling motors are allowed. Since the lake is a freshwater reservoir, gas motors or any type of petroleum products are prohibited. The city of Hodgenville receives raw water from a pipeline directly to the water plant. Anglers spending time on the lake can find crappie, bluegill, and bass. Primitive camping is available by permit which can be obtained online at www.cityofhodgenvilleky.com or at City Hall.

Lincoln Square Entertainment Destination Center

The Entertainment Designation Center (EDC) is a project to draw people to Hodgenville's downtown, strengthen existing local businesses, and attract new entrepreneurs. The EDC boosts existing restaurant and hospitality industries by allowing customers to take to-go

alcoholic beverages in designated cups from participating businesses and stroll the city's historic streets, browse the windows of local businesses and partake in outdoor events.

Guidelines

The following guidelines should be considered when locating and developing new recreational facilities:

- A. Park and recreational areas should utilize natural areas unsuitable for other development.
- B. Park and recreational areas should be located in areas with compatible and complementary land uses to minimize adverse impacts of noise, pollution and heavy traffic.
- C. The natural areas of recreational sites should be preserved to enhance the aesthetic appeal. Crowded and excessive development should be minimized.
- D. Park and recreational areas should be located within or near the edge of heavily populated areas to facilitate accessibility by the greatest number of users.
- E. Park and recreational areas should utilize, include or incorporate existing community structures and open space, such as churches and schools, for indoor and outdoor recreational uses.
- F. Walkways and bikeways should be developed within recreational areas to provide an internal pathways system. This internal system should be connected to sidewalks, national bike tours and trails, and other pedestrian or bike systems to provide safe and ready access to park and recreational facilities.



Public Safety

Public buildings are necessary to house the many services needed in a community. Public buildings house fire departments, police, a post office, offices of city and county officials as well as numerous other services and departments. These structures should be located in convenient locations and constructed and operated in the most efficient way possible to serve local citizens.

A good system of public safety allows the citizens of Hodgenville and LaRue County to work and live in an environment that is safe and harmonious. People value a feeling of security knowing their lives and property are protected. The governmental agencies in the county must make sure that public safety services keep pace with growth and population changes.

LaRue County 911 Center

The LaRue County 911 Center provides 24-hour emergency response services to all of the communities in LaRue County. Full services are provided during business hours as well as at home on-call after hours services. The 911 Center employs full-time dispatchers, who answer all emergency calls. Depending on the location of the call and the emergency situation, emergency responders are dispatched to the scene from an appropriate agency. State police, sheriff's office, emergency medical personnel as well as fire and police respond to callers throughout the county. This comprehensive response service offers life-saving help to the entire community. Each emergency response agency coordinates its efforts with other agencies, and provides a high level of service countywide.

Police Protection

The LaRue County Sheriff's Department provides 24-hour protection for the entire county. The Department is directly linked into the countywide 911 Emergency Dispatch System. The sheriff's department consists of the Sheriff and deputy officers. They patrol the entire county outside of the Hodgenville City limits and are available to assist in Hodgenville if needed.

The Hodgenville Police Department also provides 24-hour police protection within the city limits and is directly linked into the countywide 911 Emergency Dispatch System. The Police Department moved into a renovated facility at 1251 Old Elizabethtown Road in Hodgenville. Police assist in the county when needed. The city employs two school Resource Officers that are deployed within the LaRue County school system.

Fire Protection

Eight fire departments provide fire protection in LaRue County. The Hodgenville/LaRue County Fire Department share the same station located in Hodgenville. They serve the City of Hodgenville and LaRue County. Another volunteer fire department is located in the community of Magnolia and has several volunteer firefighters to serve the area. A department is also located in the Community of Buffalo and consists of all



volunteer firefighters. Other fire protection agencies serving the area include: Upton, Rolling Fork, Sonora and New Hope.

Public Water and Sewerage

The City of Hodgenville operates the only water and wastewater treatment facilities in the county. Wholesale water is purchased and distributed by LaRue County Water District #1 within the county with a large amount of the wholesale water coming from the City of Hodgenville. Raw water sources in LaRue County are not abundant in supply. North Fork Nolin River at the convergence of Castleman and McDougal Creek remain about the only viable source of water considering the county's geography. Many efforts are being made to preserve this water source.

Since potable water infrastructure is in short supply, special efforts should be made to encourage develop in areas of sufficient capacity and discourage in areas of limited supply unless developers are willing to extend the municipal infrastructure to serve their projects.

Septic Tank Systems

A septic tank system is an on-site sewage treatment system consisting of two parts; the septic tank and the drain-field. The septic tank holds sewage and processes it by organic matter. The drain-field absorbs effluent that drains out of the septic tank. Usually, septic tank systems serve single-family households. Septic tank systems are prone to failure and have generally poor methods of treating effluent. Whenever possible and cost effective, it is better to provide sanitary sewer service to local homes. In the county where this is impossible, it is prudent for the county to control and regulate development in areas where soil conditions do not support the use of septic systems.

Electricity and Natural Gas

LaRue County receives electricity and natural gas utilities from various providers. Residents and interested parties can obtain more information from the offices at City Hall and the LaRue County Courthouse.

Natural, gas service in LaRue County is provided by the Louisville Gas and Electric Company. Natural gas is sourced from the Texas Gas Transmission Corporation.

Refuse

Hodgenville and LaRue County residents have access to private collection companies for the disposal of solid waste. Information about the frequency of collections and collection fees can be obtained from the offices at City Hall and the LaRue County Courthouse.

Recommendations/Conclusions

A community's public facilities provide necessary services to its residents. The quality and quantity of services affects the public health, safety and welfare of the area. While a school system is another critical community facility, the LaRue County School System is required to plan for its facilities every four years, and this responsibility does not lie with local units of government.

Continued growth in LaRue County is dependent on the area's ability to accommodate growth safely. Consideration must be given to the ability of the region to provide new residents with public water, fire and police protection, and other services in an effective and cost-conscious manner. To keep the costs of public services as a reasonable level, the Land of Lincoln should continue its policy of guiding growth to existing population centers and limiting growth in areas without sufficient infrastructure.



Chapter 8: Tourism

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Chapter 8 Tourism

Introduction

A critical component of planning for the future is understanding the ebb and flow of people and resources coming through the community. One of the main factors influencing this flow is tourism. Tourism can provide an enormous economic boost to even the most rural communities if properly nurtured and cultivated to get the most out of what the community has to offer.



It is important that the county adequately plan for the maintenance and development of tourism sources as they provide both a significant economic boost to the area as well as contribute to the local culture that citizens of the county know and love.

Purpose

The purpose of the Tourism element of the Comprehensive Plan is to identify and analyze both current and future tourism sources in LaRue County. This information can be used to project the impact that tourism will have on the community moving forward as well as provide recommendations for the best ways to nurture and develop the current sources of tourism available and develop new sources to strengthen this aspect of the county's economy both now and into the future.

Scope and Benefits

This section first provides a list of tourist attraction and destinations in LaRue County and the City of Hodgenville. It also provides a list of future plans to develop what the county offers to potential tourists across the board. This is beneficial as it provides a structure for both maintaining current tourist attractions throughout the county as well as guidelines for future developments to the tourism industry to bring further growth and economic development to the county.

The scope of this section is limited to the county's main tourist attractions. There are a multitude of smaller local shops and attractions throughout the county that are not addressed but it will be important to keep them in mind as well when looking to

accentuate and highlight what LaRue County has to offer when attempting to attract tourists, businesses, and manufacturers alike.

Attractions

Biking and Hiking

LaRue County is home to a wide array of hiking and biking trails. Downtown Hodgenville is minutes away from the McDougal Lake Trail System, the Pearman Forest Trail System at the LaRue County Environmental Education and Research Center, the trails and sites at Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park, Knob Creek Boyhood Home Unit and the heavily regarded gravel biking section on Wayne Ennis Road. Hodgenville is also a popular beginning/ending point for the U.S. Bicycle Route 23, and a popular stop-over point for the 2,359-mile U.S. Bicycle Route 76 Trail. The Creekfront Park is another location that provides an extensive trail network for bikers and hikers alike to explore and enjoy the natural beauty of the community.



National Parks

The National Parks are one of the key sources of tourism for the county. Visitors come from all across the nation to see the place where one of our nation's most famous president was born and lived. The steps leading up to the replica of the log cabin at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park is a favorite location for tourists to take photos and document their visit to LaRue County. When outlining what the county has to offer, the Birthplace is always going to be one of the first things to come to people's minds.

Along with the Birthplace, LaRue County also offers tourists the opportunity to visit the Kentucky Boyhood Home at Knob Creek. From the age of two until eight years old, a young Abraham Lincoln was shaped by this place. Guests can view a historic log cabin, similar to the one Lincoln lived in, explore the Visitor's Center and enjoy the scenic trails.