



Chapter 2 Land Use, Public Facilities Draft

The Land Use Chapter analyzes existing development patterns and provides city-wide land use and design recommendations to guide growth and redevelopment in Highland Heights.

This chapter also provides policy directives for quality-of-life enhancements. They include reservation of adequate land for housing, retail amenities, and employment opportunities, protection of natural features and preservation of green space.

The Land Use chapter also considers the long-term needs for public facilities and institutions. As the home of Northern Kentucky University (NKU), Highland Heights has a large amount of public-owned offices, grounds and facilities.

Much of Highland Heights' housing inventory was constructed prior to the construction of I-275, I-471 and NKU. The presence of regionally significant infrastructure will likely drive land use change and redevelopment in Highland Heights.



Existing Land Use

Land Use distribution is shown on Map LU1: Existing Land Use on page LU3.

**TABLE LU1 - EXISTING LAND USE
ACREAGE**

Existing Land Use	2024 Acres
Single-Family Residential	454
Multi-Family Residential	75
Commercial	61
Public/Institutional	315
Parks/Recreation	12
Vacant Land	375
Business Park	33

Single Family Residential is the largest land use in Highland Heights followed by Public/Institutional uses. NKU represents the majority of acreage assigned to Public/Institutional uses.

Highland Heights’ suburban development pattern contains cul-de-sac neighborhoods and strip commercial development along major thoroughfares.

As a bedroom-community founded in 1927, Highland Heights lacks a central organizing feature such as a downtown or city center. However, this Plan supports ongoing efforts to create a town center along US 27 between Johns Hill Road and Nunn Drive.

NKU’s central quad design offers a highly pedestrian environment and serves as an exception to an otherwise suburban land use pattern. *The 2022 NKU Master Plan Update contains recommendations for additional pedestrian connections into the surrounding city fabric.*

Single Family

Single Family residential land use is shown as “yellow” on Map LU1 and includes detached houses, duplexes and triplexes. The majority of housing in this category is located in platted neighborhoods.



Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family use represents attached housing, typically for rent, with at least four dwelling units per structure. Newer, larger multi-family developments are found near NKU providing additional sources of housing for students.

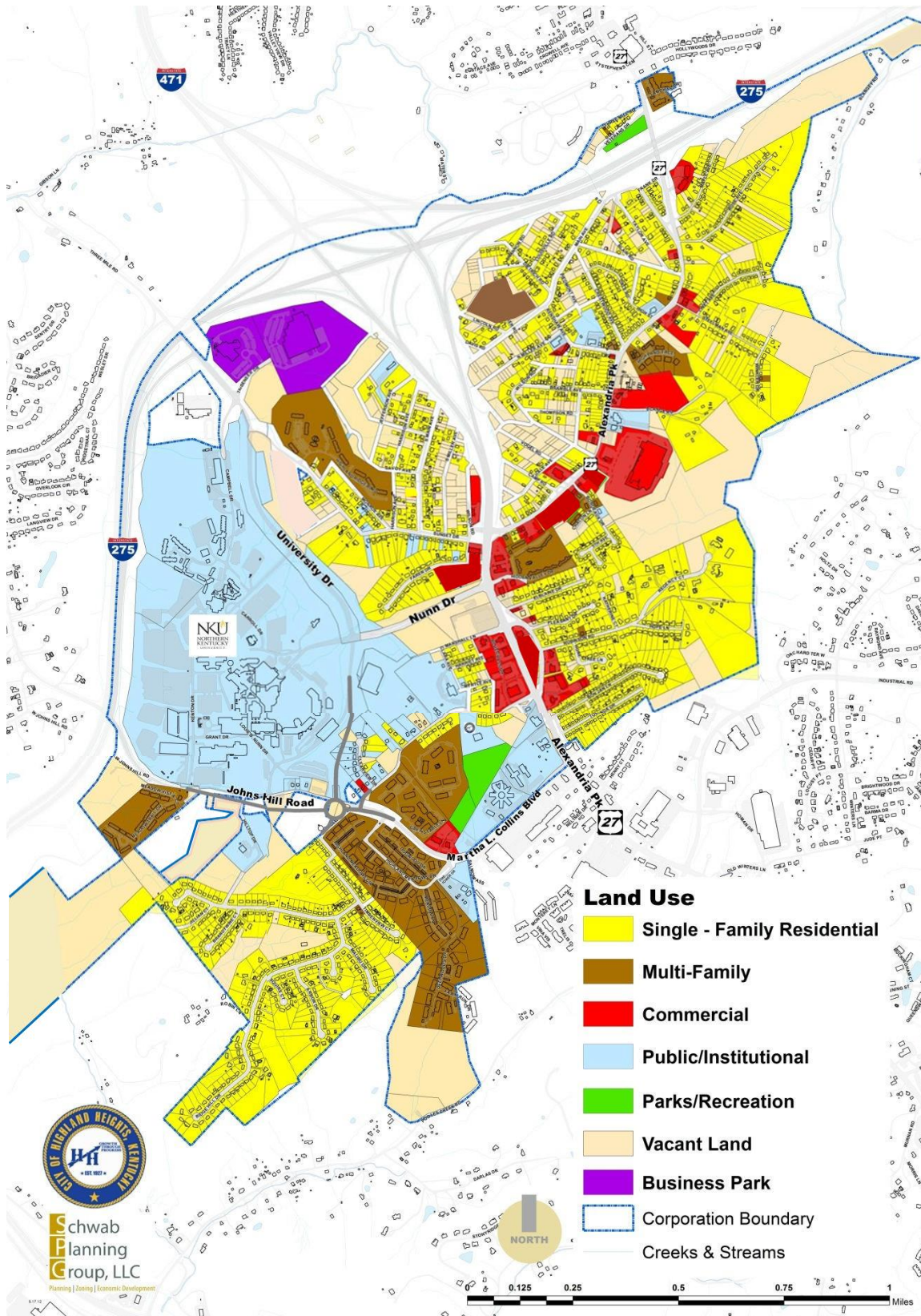


Commercial

Commercial land uses are dominated by retail sales and services found in shopping centers and stand-alone sites along US 27. “General” and “professional” office uses are also designated as Commercial. *The new MOB and Highland Pointe are the major additions since 2013.*



Map LU1 – Existing Land Use 2024



Schwab
Planning
Group, LLC
Planning | Zoning | Economic Development



Commercial, continued

Three neighborhood scale shopping centers serve surrounding residents, commuters and NKU students. A fourth was approved in 2012 in the “Island” property” adjacent to 5/3 Bank. Convenience-orientated goods and services such as casual fast food are plentiful.



Highland Heights, by design, lacks drive-through restaurants. As a result, the city’s landscape is unique in that it lacks corporate imagery associated with fast-food restaurants.

Regional-scale shopping centers are currently not found within Highland Heights but are located in nearby communities. For example, County Square Shopping Center, anchored with a supermarket on Martha Collins Boulevard, is located next to the City in Cold Spring. More large-scale retail development is occurring further out US27 from the city in Cold Spring and Alexandria.

Public/Institutional

Public/Institutional use, shown as “light blue” on Map LU1, includes the City of Highland Heights offices for police, general administration and maintenance; NKU administrative offices, instructional facilities and dormitories; and private institutional uses including not-for-profits and places of worship.



Public/Institutional uses are generally scattered throughout Highland Heights, although NKU represents the largest area on the City’s west side.



Parks/Recreation

Green shaded areas on Map LU1 represent public parks and private recreation uses. Veterans Park, located north of I-275, and Earl Reuscher Park, located next to the City’s offices, serve as the City’s parks. Another source of recreation is the City’s 30-acre nature preserve. The preserve includes a 4-mile nature trail with 18 educational stations. The city has prepared plans for active recreation development on its parcels adjacent to the City Building.





Parks/Recreation, continued

A bowling alley and dance studio, two private recreation providers, are located on Alexandria Pike in the northern part of the City. During 2022, the City approved a private in door pickleball court.

NKU provides its students with a range of athletic facilities at varsity and intermural levels.

Business Park

Business Park Use, as seen on Map LU1, immediately north of NKU’s campus, presently consists of two large site employers: Thermo Fisher and Prysmian Cable (formerly General Cable). They currently are Highland Heights only corporate office and manufacturing uses and are among the largest private employers in the City. Thermo Fisher recently completed a significant addition. These two corporations are located within NKU’s Foundation’s Business Park. This business park is currently out of land making business recruitment activities difficult in Highland Heights.



Vacant Land

Vacant land, shown in “cream” on Map LU1, is undeveloped. Steep hill sides and floodplains account for a significant amount of land classified as vacant on Map LU1.

Many undeveloped lots in the northern part of the City are remnants of Highland Baby Farms Subdivision established in the 1920s.

As stated in the following “Development Framework” section, the majority of vacant land is designated for “preservation” in order to maintain Highland Heights’ scenic qualities and open space.

Few large vacant lots suitable for development remain available, underscoring the need for redevelopment to ensure Highland Heights grows and remains viable.



Development Framework

An analysis of development opportunities and constraints is useful when undertaking a comprehensive plan update.

Development Constraints

As Map LU2 Development Framework illustrates, Highland Heights is encumbered with a significant amount of steep hill sides with slopes of 20% or greater. Floodplain and wetlands are also present.

The majority of steep hillsides remain vacant. Developing this vacant acreage will be difficult and costly to overcome environmental constraints. Residents and City officials alike want to preserve steep slopes and the natural terrain that contribute to community sustainability and its resulting benefits.



Development Opportunities

Vacant land available for development is scarce. Even fewer acres suitable for development exist when environmental constraints are considered.

White areas on Map LU2 identify undeveloped flat land. These lands are suitable for development but are limited in number and area. Some white areas include limited site improvements such as parking lots.

The former Thriftway Supermarket site between Marshall Lane and Nunn Drive is currently the largest development opportunity in Highland Heights. Six acres are available there.

NKU owns this site and is considering mixed-use development to include a hotel with retail to support *Truist* Center events among others.



Other development opportunities 1 acre or larger include large parking lots associated with NKU and Lowes as well as a few undeveloped, relatively flat ridge/hill tops.

Conclusion

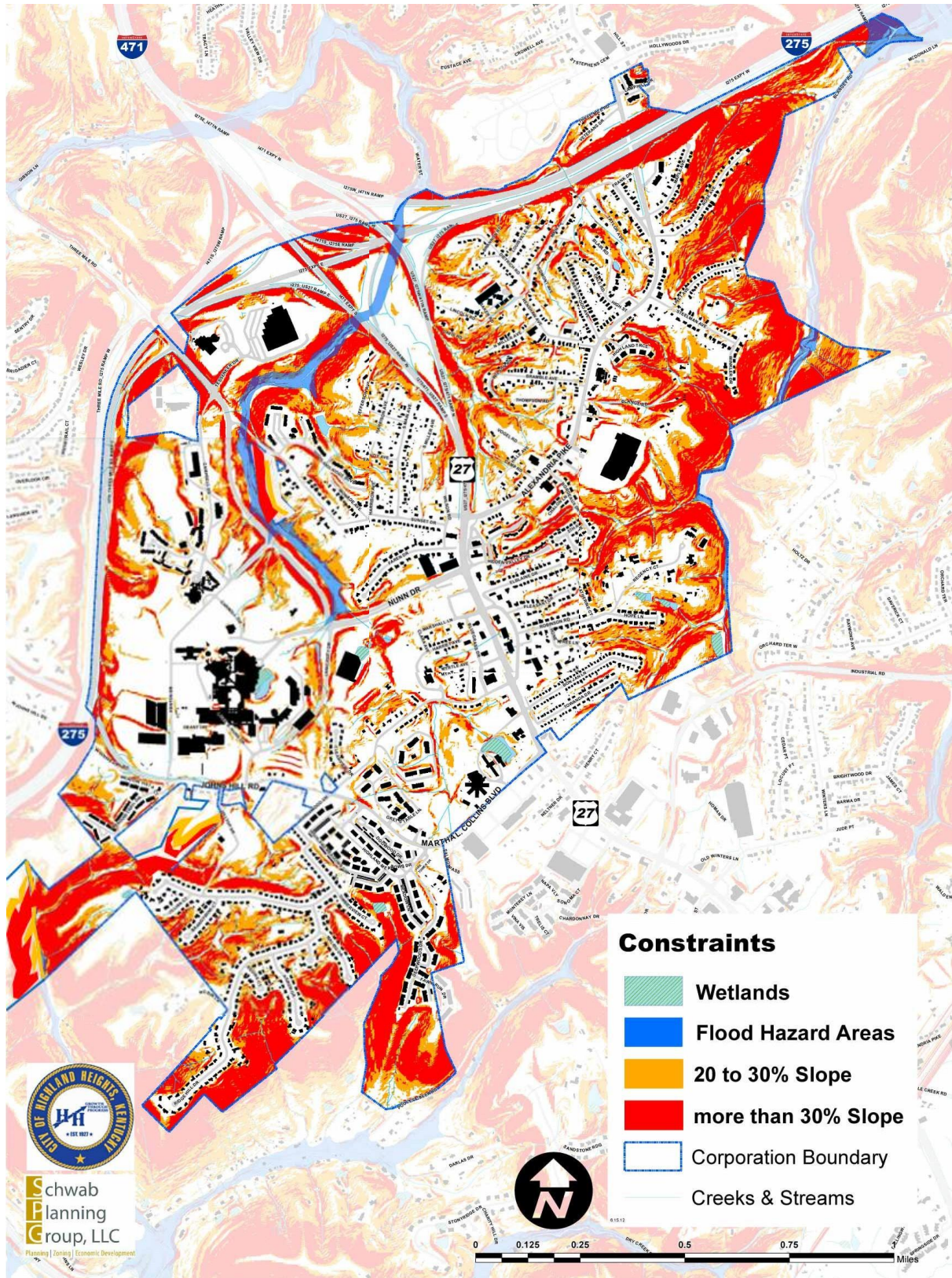
Highland Heights is faced with few development opportunities. Growth can be achieved through one of two primary methods – annexation and redevelopment.

Annexations are supported in this Plan. However, annexation alone cannot meet the City's long-term sustainability needs. Highland Heights is land-locked to the north, south, and west and significant environmental constraints are encountered on adjacent land to the east and southwest.

As such, City leaders must embrace a proactive and long-term redevelopment campaign. While this mindset is not new, emphasis is added on the importance of reinventing strategically located sections of the City in this Comprehensive Plan update.



Map LU2 – Development Framework 2024





Land Use Strategy

The City's land use strategy embraces four fundamental goals as follows: (1) encourage mixed use development; (2) encourage redevelopment and economic development in strategically targeted areas; and (3) preserve environmentally sensitive open space.

Goal 1 Mixed use

Mixed use development is emphasized in most commercial land use classifications. This is done to promote sustainable development and to add variety to "single" use districts.

Mixed Use provides land use flexibility in return for greater attention to urban form and enhanced design.

Mixed Use planning improves community image; creates healthy, walkable neighborhoods; and provides residents with additional amenities close to where they live.

Mixed use also strives to create a "community of choice" attribute for the City as a leading and desirable place to reside, operate a business and visit

Why Mixed Use?

Mixed Use, as its name implies, clusters multiple uses in the same building, development or neighborhood. Mixed use is desired to: (1) maximize benefit of the few remaining development opportunities; (2) break the monotony of single use districts; and (3) create developments that appeal to residents and NKU students and faculty.

Mixed use development often *integrates residential, office, retail, restaurants, parks and public uses* in the same project. Each use is synergistic with the other. For example, residential and office uses support retail. Retail, as it grows, can be used to attract more residents.

Mixed use development *strives to meet the everyday needs of residents within walking distance.*

People living in mixed use developments tend to walk and socialize more which in turn reduces auto trips, pollution and household fuel costs.

Mixed use relies on *interesting architecture and thoughtful urban design* creating community enhancing developments. A mixed use strategy can add vitality along busy corridors and at key intersections improving overall community image.





Goal 2 Economic Growth and Redevelopment

Growth in Highland Heights will depend a great deal on property redevelopment in line with uses supported by market needs and extensive regionally-orientated infrastructure including I-275, I-471, US 27 and NKU.

The City's ability to provide and maintain a high quality of life and community facilities and services is directly linked to its ability to redevelop strategic areas to generate economic growth and jobs (i.e. payroll taxes).

Town Center, Gateway East and West are the City's primary economic growth and redevelopment areas.

Goal 3 Preserve Open Space and Natural Features

The Future Land Use Plan recognizes some land areas should not be developed based on environmental constraints and recreational and historical significance.

Preservation and enhancement of such areas along with stronger connections to each are called for resulting in an interconnected network of greenspace. Preservation provides place-defining natural features and breaks the monotony of the urban built-environment.



Sustainability

Highland Heights' ability to retain and attract residents, visitors, companies, workers and property owners (i.e. tax payers) is directly related to how well the City sustains community, environmental, and social well-being.



The Land Use Strategy coupled with a guiding Future Land Use Plan lays the foundation for economic, environmental and social sustainability in Highland Heights.

Growth Management

Redevelopment will displace some residents and remove housing units. To keep displaced populations, Highland Heights is encouraged to annex land for new residential development to the west and southwest.

Outward growth and its impact on public expenditures and ability to provide adequate services (police, fire) and facilities (roads, water, sewer, schools, parks) should be considered before any annexation occurs.



Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map and the supporting text collectively form Highland Heights' official land use policy. The Land Use Plan guides where and how the City should grow.

The Future Land Use Plan sets long-term policies that guide City, property owner and developer land use decision-making. Decisions regarding future zoning map and text amendments will be made upon review of the Future Land Use Plan.

Comprehensive Plan policy guides but does not replace Zoning Ordinance regulations. However, a review of the Zoning Map and Text is anticipated after this Comprehensive Plan's adoption to align Zoning regulation with Comprehensive Plan policy.

Future Land Use Classifications

Nine unique future land use classifications are used to plan Highland Heights. Each classification is shown on Map LU3 and is more fully described in this section.

1. Single-Family Residential
2. Multi-Family Residential
3. Public/Semi Public
4. Parks
5. Open Space/Green Space
6. Commercial/Business
7. NKU Campus
8. Town Center Mixed Use
9. Business Park

Primary Uses

Primary uses are land uses that are desired in specified locations as shown on Map LU3 Future Land Use. Primary uses take precedence over Secondary Uses on individual sites and should comprise the most significant land use on the property and properly reflect the phasing of uses in a new development.

Desired primary uses represent a continuation of the established land use pattern in most areas. In some cases, primary uses call for a land use adjustment in recognition of changing community goals, needs and markets.

Secondary Uses

Secondary uses are land uses permitted in combination with Primary Uses. Secondary uses are subordinate to primary uses and are permitted only when minimum primary land area requirements are satisfied in the applicable regulations.

Secondary uses are ideally developed as part of an approved mixed use development plan, particularly when the developments are several acres or larger. Secondary uses could be approved as Conditional Uses on smaller projects or Planned Unit Development in larger projects.

Public and Institutional Uses

Public and Semi-Public uses are generally permitted in all Future Land Use Classifications.

Public and Semi-Public uses can benefit neighborhoods. Public, civic, and institutional uses are generally viewed as community assets and neighborhood anchors.





Single Family Residential

Goals

(1) To provide suitable acreage for a wide variety of housing styles at planned locations on Map LU3. (2) To recognize Highland Heights opportune proximity and access to the downtown area and develop additional high-quality housing to retain and attract residents. (3) To encourage the exterior upgrade of older housing units in line with increased demand for more efficient and larger houses. (4) To encourage “infill” development on remaining available lots in existing subdivisions. (5) To maintain the integrity of single-family housing neighborhoods as owner occupied. (6) To explore large single-family housing on small lots. (7) To provide for innovative types of small housing units as infill development.

Primary Land Uses

Single-family primarily includes detached single-family residential units at densities between 2 and 6 units per acre depending upon site constraints and densities of adjacent developments.

Attached units including duplexes and triplexes are permissible provided adequate steps are taken to ensure such development does not change the character of adjacent neighborhoods. Attached units should not be constructed between detached housing units.



Secondary Land Use

Parks, places of worship, open spaces and public offices are planned secondary uses.

Cluster Development

Landowners and developers may choose to “cluster” units on smaller lots to conserve more natural features and create open space.

The resulting open space can be used for active or passive recreation but the primary intent is to preserve natural features.



Developers typically choose cluster development as an option when a density bonus is offered in return for additional open space. Planned Unit Development or similar zoning is often the mechanism to allow this.

Grading is kept to a minimum to maintain the integrity of existing forms, geologic formations and natural topography. Existing vegetation is preserved to the extent possible. A large percentage of open space is reserved in perpetuity.



Single-Family Residential, continued

Modernization and Revitalization

A portion of Highland Heights' housing supply is outdated. Modernization and expansion of these units is needed to ensure long term neighborhood sustainability is achieved.



Older houses can be modernized as these before and after pictures show.

Modernization projects increase property value and curb appeal keeping neighborhoods sustainable.

Work with NKU and Homebuilders Association to modernize and expand a house of *typical* type in Highland Heights as a demonstration project.

Review zoning requirements for minimum lot size and setbacks and modify standards when warranted to remove regulatory barriers that thwart investment in existing housing.

Provide one public or accessible private open space or park within a quarter mile of each residence. Parks, schools and open space attract residents, provide nearby amenities and boost neighborhood market value and desirability.

Property maintenance is culturally and legally accepted as an owner's responsibility. Utilize code enforcement when residential properties are not maintained to standard. Adopt or

update a property maintenance code to assist enforcement efforts.

Student Rentals

Develop an off-campus guide with NKU. Include guidance dealing with holding parties, legal occupancy of a building, legal parking of motor vehicles, and city codes and housing policy. Educate students on being considerate of neighbors and of possible consequences of inappropriate behavior.

The City of Clemson's Joint City University Advisory Board published an Off Campus Living Guide. It can be accessed at <http://www.clemson.edu/administration/studentaffairs/dean/documents/OffCampusLivingGuide.pdf>

Several examples exist where universities actively work with Cities to manage off campus student housing. One such example is Colorado University's Off Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations Department.

Rental Registry/Inspection

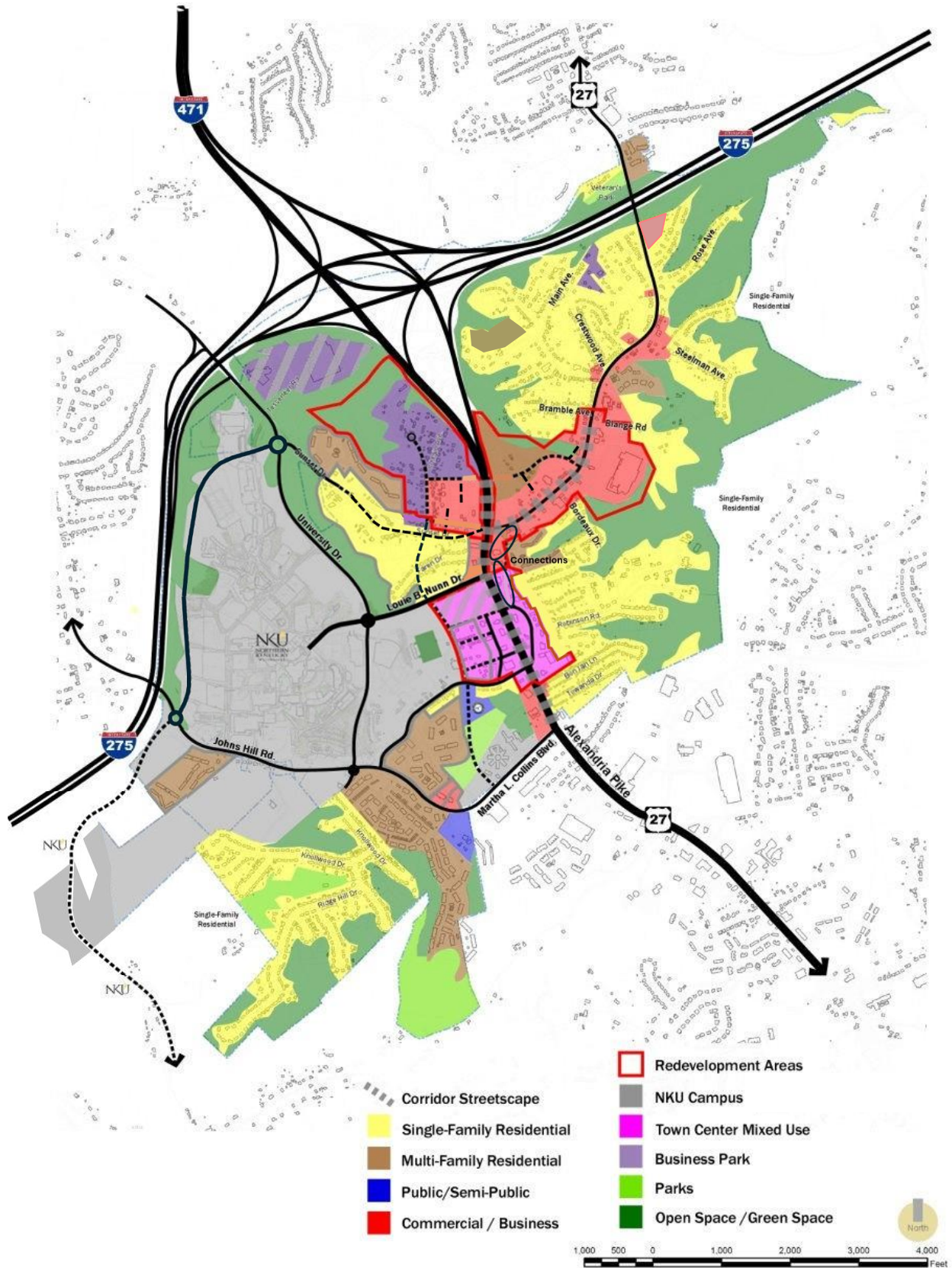
Some communities implement a rental registry and inspection ordinance that require each landlord or property manager to register with the City.

Cities enact such ordinances to maintain contact with landlords. Some communities require annual rental inspections while others inspect rentals each time a property is sold or leased to keep rental units in good condition.

A rental registry *would* also ensure the City can contact landlords when problems are encountered. *A registry, however, implies inspections, monitoring, record keeping and the possible need for enforcement; all activities that result in costs.*



Map LU3 – Future Land Use 2024





Multi-Family Residential

Goals

- (1) To maintain existing stable multi-family residential neighborhoods and allow for additional units as planned on Map LU3.*
- (2) To encourage the development of attached units as part of mixed-use projects on small lots and within mixed-use buildings.*
- (3) To ensure multi-family development is properly located along thoroughfares.*
- (4) To protect planned single-family neighborhoods from larger and denser multi-family developments.*
- (5) To encourage on-site amenities are offered as part of multi-family developments.*

Primary Uses

Attached residential developments including apartments and townhomes are planned up to 12 units per acre. This designation *includes* low-maintenance, senior housing and similar quarters for institutionalized persons. The City supports Neighborhood Foundations' efforts to bring tax credit housing to promote senior living in Highland Heights.

Secondary Uses

Small scale, convenience retail or service uses are encouraged as part of an approved multi-family development. Examples include day care centers, hair salon, and coffee shop not to exceed 10,000 square feet in total.



Location

Multi-Family is shown as “brown” on Map LU3. Land planned as multi-family reflects existing multifamily uses.

One new Multi-Family area is planned in the Gateway East redevelopment district behind US 27 commercial frontage property. The Town Center Mixed Use District also permits multi-family development as part of a broader mixed-use project.

Newer and larger multi-family units are located close to NKU. Older and smaller units are located along Alexandria Pike.

Multi-Family is generally located on arterial and collector streets. The higher traffic, visibility and access of these streets are appropriate for high-density residential uses. Noise barriers along I-275 and the I-471 ramps may help open more land to residential redevelopment.

Development Strategy

Multi-family developments are encouraged to offer resident amenities in an effort to reduce the public burden to provide the same including parks/open spaces, athletic fields and courts, club houses and pools, etc.





Public and Semi Public

Goals

(1) To maintain and encourage continued investment and growth of public and quasi-public land uses. (2) To maintain the positive influences civic and institutional uses provide the community and its neighborhoods.

Primary Uses

Offices, facilities and administrative uses associated with hospitals, outpatient clinics, schools, libraries, post-secondary education, government, service organizations and civic uses including worship and assembly are the primary uses in this category.



Secondary Uses

Small retail shops such as gift center, cafeterias, and guest housing are permissible as part of master planned development secondary to primary uses listed above.

Location

Public and Semi Public uses are generally permitted in all Future Land Use Classifications which explains why so few areas on Map LU3 are specifically planned as Public and Semi Public.

This designation includes City of Highland Heights offices, the Campbell County Media Center, Campbell County Cooperative Extension, and Campbell County Fire Training Center.

Asbury Methodist Church and First Baptist Church are public uses located on US 27.

These uses are desired at their perspective locations. They are planned “Commercial” given their access and visibility on US 27.

NKU, due to its size and importance, is given its own future land use designation even though it could be included in the “Public / Semi Public” designation.

Public Facilities and Services

Utilities and public services are essential for proper land planning and growth of Highland Heights. Some facilities and agencies are local, while some are regional districts or state level organizations. Some are both, and others have federal involvement or funding. The city should always recognize that local control gives more representation to citizens and property owners while more state and federal exemptions and control means less representation for people and businesses. The following list and description is not exhaustive, but indicates organizations that have a significant impact on land use planning in Highland Heights:



Adjacent Cities and Unincorporated

Campbell County – All of these communities maintain comprehensive plans and land use regulation. Future growth in any of these municipalities, particularly Cold Spring, nearby Alexandria, and Campbell County will increase transportation impacts on US 27 through the center of Highland Heights. The geography and topography of Campbell County limit overall connectivity. This needs to be anticipated and addressed in the body of the Highland Heights Comprehensive Plan. Most commonly this will affect the Transportation Element in terms of improvements to existing thoroughfares and the promotion of new ways of ingress and egress such as the proposed Poole’s Creek Connector Road.

Campbell County Economic Progress

Authority Inc. (CCEPA) – non-profit acquisition, retention, development/redevelopment of land for industrial and commercial purposes in area bounded by US 27, I-275, and the AA Highway. The CCEPA emphasizes that the location of this area is opportune because it’s only 7 miles from major Cincinnati area attractions and is directly accessible from two interstates including the circle freeway I-275, and direct access to downtown I-471. As part of this effort, NKU created the Institute for New Economy Technologies (INET) to meet the demand for knowledge-based companies. NKU is developing programs that support technological development. The presence of Prysian Cable and the Fisher Scientific expansion in 2022 and 2023 are prime examples. NKU is known for its Information Technology academic progress. The Metropolitan Education and Training Services program (METS) and Marketing Research Partnership (MRP) are two other ways that NKU is connected with the community. A detail of the Triangle shows the three cities involved and the fact that the Plan is coordinated with the cities’ comprehensive plans. There also was a detailed development plan prepared for the farm area overlooking I-275 and

the Licking River valley. The Plan lists and describes Tri-ED (now BE NKY) programs and how they are used to enable and retain business development. This demonstrates how these organizations collaborate on their planning processes.

Campbell County Planning and Zoning

– The current plan was adopted in 2008 and the Goals and Objectives updated in 2015. The Plan is undergoing an extensive public review beginning in October of 2023 and anticipated to be completed in 2025. The NKADD Housing Study of 2023 and specific transportation projects are two of the main items that demonstrate the need for review of the Plan. Public Utilities and Services have also changed in recent years. The current statement of Goals and Objectives are many pages, and of most pertinence to Highland Heights, they emphasize providing alternatives to low-density suburban sprawl, collaboration with NKU, good public infrastructure planning, and transportation concepts such as multi-modal, a balanced system, I-471 studies, and importance of US 27.

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and Ohio

Kentucky Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI)

– Every two years the Kentucky General Assembly enacts a Six-Year Plan of improvements that are approved for funding. The most recent was June 2022 and the next is being examined at the 2024 General Assembly. Overall, KYTC has made capacity improvements in recent years on I-471 and I-275 (ramps) and the new Cross-Campus Boulevard and the additional lane construction in the Town Center area. The Poole’s Creek Connector shows funding authorized in 2023 for design and 2024 for construction. This project has been on the map and lists since the early 2000’s.



A future reconstruction of Poole’s Creek Road is also included in the six-year plan. Other projects in the 2022 Plan are concentrated on guardrails, pavement condition, and bridges at the Licking River and Ohio River. The City had interaction with KYTC on an additional US 27 lane during 2023 and has ongoing discussions and strategy development on the through-function of the highway and the ability to access from cross streets. The City has received funding to design and implement the Sunset Dr. realignment project through KYTC and OKI. The US 27 Smart Corridor Plan, involving four cities has begun with pedestrian and bicycle and bridge improvements on US 27 in Newport.

Neighborhood Foundations and non-profit organizations - South Bank Partners – Several were involved in the US 27 Smart Corridor Plan 2019 – 2020.

Planning and Design Services (PDS) formerly Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission – the City is working with GIS Services to closely coordinate public information, including zoning and public infrastructure.

BE NKY Growth Partnership (formerly Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation, TRI-ED). The BE stands for Build and Elevate. BE NKY markets and promotes Northern Kentucky on a national and international basis with desirable commercial real estate for new or expanding businesses and assists existing local companies to expand operations and grow their customer base. BE NKY benefits Highland Heights by showing available development or redevelopment sites. BE NKY is interested in the city properly planning for the creation and assemblage of such tracts.

Northern Kentucky University (NKU) – represented on the Steering Committee. The University was annexed to Highland Heights in 2008. The University recently updated its Master Plan, completed 2020. Research and innovation and stewardship of place are important features of the Plan. One of the three goals of the Plan is to define the perimeter of the campus to provide easier access, improved parking, communications, signage, walkways, wayfinding, and campus entry points. The Master Plan provides edge opportunities for industry/corporate partnerships economic development and innovation to serve both the university and the surrounding community. The Plan references and supports the Town Center concept for the city. The 2020 Plan is less definitive and less committed in future university land acquisition than the 2009 Master Plan. The university is the southern terminus and an anchor for the US 27 Smart Corridor Study, 2019.

Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce – The Chamber’s mission and vision promote a vibrant economy and a better quality of life. The Chamber provides assistance of many kinds to businesses. It is estimated that 85 percent of businesses are 10 employees or smaller. The Chamber also affects policy at the local, state, and federal levels with the Priority Agenda based upon the 2024 Where We Stand overview document. The key goals are to attract and retain workforce, strengthen workforce resources, invest in early childhood education, advance critical infrastructure, promote better health outcomes, and work toward a competitive, fair and simplified tax code.

Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) – performed a system redesign plan, adopted in 2020. Currently TANK provides a



commuter express route, an express I-275 connection (although it does not connect directly to the airport), a local route for north US 27 and a circulator route for NKU. No neighborhood service routes exist in Highland Heights. The 2020 Plan recommends frequency modifications on some of these routes, but no significant changes. The Plan notes NKU, Castellini complex in Wilder, US 27 Frisch's and two Kroger stores as the main trip generators of this area.

Campbell County School District – The District serves the unincorporated county, and the cities of Alexandria, California, Cold Spring, Highland Heights, Melbourne, Silver Grove, Wilder, and Woodlawn. There are five elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The District maintains a three-to-five-year comprehensive improvement plan in keeping with the Kentucky Department of Education. There are no public schools within the City of Highland Heights currently. The old elementary school was removed about a decade ago. Any future facilities need to be placed on much larger land parcels than in the past to meet standards. Although Highland Heights is at a very strategic location in the transportation system of the county, it is difficult to implement a school development parcel large enough and flat enough to accommodate a public-school facility. Much of the residential growth of the county is further south in the US 27 and AA Highway corridors. Single-family detached residential development typically generates the greatest need for school capacity based on historical demographics. The District maintains an emphasis on technology and collaboration with NKU programs.

Central Campbell County Fire District – Serves the cities of Cold Spring, Crestview, Highland Heights, unincorporated areas of Campbell County, and the NKU Campus. The District provides fire and EMS services for three elementary schools, an alternative school, day care facilities, thirteen churches, and industrial businesses. A Columbia Gas transfer station and a large gas main are present and the District contains two interstates and the AA Highway. The District also lies under several flight paths of the Airport. The Truist Arena at NKU represents a major responsibility as well. The District maintains annual reports and has experienced a fifteen percent increase in run volume in the past two years. The future redevelopment of the Highland Heights Town Center, Gateway East, and Gateway West areas would require additional growth of the District's facilities, personnel, and capabilities because of the planned density and building height in these areas. The planned city street grid system with multiple means of ingress and egress for these areas would benefit the District. Multiple means of ingress and egress would also benefit services provided for the University Campus. Mutual Aid is a practice where different Districts assist each in responding to calls. The District also provides inspection services for commercial, multi-level buildings and assembly buildings. Overall, commercial development generates the most sufficient revenue for the District.

Sanitation District No. 1 of Northern Kentucky, SD#1 – Notable limitations in sanitary sewerage system – 8-inch gravity main under I-275 from NE quadrant of US27 and I-471 ramps. This could affect the amount and density of future development in this portion of the City if not addressed. Furthermore, this 8-inch main intersects another 8-inch, then



intersects a 12-inch and they all flow into a 12-inch main under the I-275 and I471 interchange. Conceptually, two gravity sanitary sewer mains serve the north part of Highland Heights and the university, and in general capacity would be sufficient to handle Town Center development shown in the City's Comprehensive Plan. Notable limitations in the stormwater system include significant flooding in the Three Mile Creek watershed and City of Wilder to the Licking River that is being studied, hillside and road slippage in the Blange Rd. watershed to the Ohio River and impacts on Poole's Creek Road from the stream in that area. Almost all of NKU and the northwest quadrant of the City drain to the Three Mile Creek watershed. In general Highland Heights is situated at the top of several ridges and so stormwater generated there flows through other communities before it gets to the rivers. SD#1 is completing equalization tanks and pump stations in Highland Heights and Silver Grove to eliminate 21 million gallons of annual sanitary sewer overflows. SD#1 is planning significant improvements in the US 27 and AA Hwy corridors including new mains and pump stations adding capacity and reducing wet-weather sewer overflows to accommodate new economic development and residential growth.

Northern Kentucky Water District, Campbell County – The Memorial Parkway Treatment Plant and North Reservoir in Ft. Thomas are currently being renovated to better supply water to the area system. Several water main extensions and replacements are occurring further south in Campbell County to help support new growth in the AA Highway corridor and the Alexandria area.

Duke Energy – Electric – There exist many other utilities on their infrastructure poles and

alignments/easements, so that Duke Energy physical infrastructure and working relationships with other agencies is critical in many ways. During 2017 through 2020 there were numerous meetings, research, and planning level work done to consider underground electric lines, especially in the US 27 corridor. These efforts not only affect electric service and transmission but all these other utilities and services as well. Financially, the best way to accomplish goals like these is to implement the Tax Increment Financing District and similar measures.

Communications – Alta Fiber, Spectrum, other pole mounted utilities, underground fiber lines, and wireless systems typically support development rather than direct development to certain locations.

Duke Energy - Gas – The Northern Kentucky Replacement Project will upgrade miles of existing gas mains to new higher strength materials. The existing lines date to the 1950's. This project is in the design and routing stage currently, and construction is planned for 2027 and 2028. A gas main re-routing had occurred in the Marshall Drive/Nunn Drive area. A gas main replacement is planned for Cold Spring to Martha Layne Collins Blvd.

Northern Kentucky Area Development District – Housing Study 2023 – Generally concludes that Northern Kentucky needs more one-and-two bedroom units, and that there has been a shift in demographics from 3-and-4 bedroom units to smaller dwelling units to support the type and amount of employee population present and expected to grow.

This is aggregate data however, presented mainly in the format of county level data. Unlike many of the cities and much of the



unincorporated area, Highland Heights occupies a unique location that is readily accessible from downtown, east areas of Ohio, I-275, The Airport, AA Highway and points east and south in Kentucky. The city is situated only seven minutes from downtown and supports large traffic counts in the US 27 corridor and stable land values. Highland Heights also contains NKU which is unique to all other Northern Kentucky communities. A key finding of this 2023 Study is that the workforce is outpacing the provision of housing units that serve it. The Study recognizes that the logistics industry is setting the pace for job creation. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee has observed that Highland Heights does not contain much of that business type and that the city is in a different economic setting than many of the communities around the I-275 beltway. The Study refers to this industry as generating “lower wage” jobs. A statistic presented in the study is that there are 2.68 jobs for each house that can be afforded by that employment level. The steering committee concludes that these aggregate county data do not readily represent Highland Heights with this city’s direct connection to downtown and the university. The logistics industry is most prevalent in Northern Kentucky in the Boone County and Kenton County areas. Consequently, the committee does not see as much demand for lower-priced housing with limited bedrooms and does, however continue to envision the need for 3-4 bedroom units including detached single-family. Although average household size has dropped for decades, it has now leveled off around 2.41 for Campbell County. The Study found more households, but less school enrollment in public schools. Median household

income was found to be \$66,000 and increasing year by year in Campbell County. The Study presents on page 25 a chart that compares income brackets per number of bedrooms as well as a chart the presents Department of Housing and Urban Development income data compared to household size. The Study maintains that rentals are under-represented in Northern Kentucky. The study recommends fewer large housing units and especially fewer units with 4 plus bedrooms.

Northern Kentucky Health Department –

Serves four counties and operates one central health center in each of the counties. In addition to the District Board of Health, there is a local board for each of the four counties. The city of Highland Heights has taken a lead role over the years in the regional efforts to combat the opioid epidemic. The District’s resources are directed at the following programs in order of budget amount: clinics, environmental health, general administration, HIV/AIDS, Disaster Preparedness and Response, Child Health, Community Health Promotion, Harm Reduction, Epidemiology, LGBH, Healthy Homes, Breastfeeding Support. From a land use perspective the Department would favor the job creation of new business districts in the City and the provision of multiple levels of quality housing. The mixed-use style of redevelopment in the City’s comprehensive plan is favorable to offering efficient services to the most people in a concentrated area for the District. The District regulates septic tank systems, and the urban style of development proposed in the Comprehensive Plan requires public sanitary sewer and therefore negates the need for these systems.



Parks

Goals

(1) To encourage active lifestyles and healthy activity. (2) To provide an alternative from indoor living environments. (3) To maintain parks in their current locations for long-term community use. (4) To encourage additional parks where needed in neighborhoods. (5) To ensure safe pedestrian access to parks.

Primary Uses

Public and private parks and recreational facilities including playground equipment, athletic fields, ball courts, maintenance facilities, pavilions, exercise equipment, community centers and other similar uses. Trails and hiker and biker paths are also designated as planned Park land uses.



Location

Planned Park locations are designated as “light green” on Map LU3. This designation maintains Veterans Park and Earl Reuscher Park at their existing locations north of I-275 and next to the City Building respectively, and the recently designated Greg S. Meyers Park off Collins Blvd.

Most neighborhoods are underserved by parks. As a general rule, it is desirable for residents to have access to a public park or open space within a five-minute walk.

As the below pictures illustrate, parks located close to housing provide significant benefits including increased property values.

Land for new parks can be assembled by buying vacant lots, tax delinquent property, foreclosed homes, etc. Location and visibility are important factors to consider when purchasing property for new parks.





Open Space / Green Space

Goals

(1) To preserve a network of greenspace, stream corridors and sensitive environmental areas such as steep (20% or greater) slopes for sustainable, long-term environmental and community health. (2) To maintain and enhance the natural character and image of Highland Heights. (3) To create an interconnected network of green space and natural areas that provide wildlife habitat, absorbs and cleans stormwater and filters the air. (4) To protect areas unsuitable for development from possible environmental hazards associated with flooding or hillside slippage. (5) To protect property and minimize flooding impact downstream.

Primary Uses

Detached single-family residential at 0.3 units per acre, agriculture, stables, and parks and recreation and similar uses. Open Space/Green Space supports preservation of FEMA designated 100 year floodplains, wetlands, and steep hillsides.



Secondary Uses

Cemeteries, places of assembly, public office and facilities such as fire stations and schools provided all applicable local, state and federal environmental regulations are met.

Location

Open Space / Green Space include wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes (20% or greater) planned in environmentally sensitive areas identified on Map LU2 Development Framework.

Desired Character

This designation offers a wide range of open spaces, recreational facilities and opportunities, and natural landscapes. Building density in planned Open Space / Green Space areas is the lowest among all future land use classifications. Any permitted use of land including active or passive recreation is planned to have minimal intrusion, thereby maintaining the natural landscape to the greatest extent possible.





Commercial / Business

Goals

(1) To concentrate commercial uses in nodes and along major corridors at convenient locations. (2) To provide residents access to needed goods, services and employment. (3) To give the market a broad range of uses to choose from while investing in Highland Heights. (4) To promote mixed used development and support NKU's mission by providing developments that appeal to students and faculty. (5) To achieve high quality development that abides by minimum design standards and effectively integrates uses together, and to propose minimum architectural and site standards in specific zones or locations. (6) To revitalize or reposition underutilized commercial property.

Primary Uses

Commercial / Business is a flexible, mixed-use classification permitting a broad range of retail, retail services, hospitality, food service and office uses. Ideally, no one use will exceed 80% of gross floor area in a development larger than 3 acres.

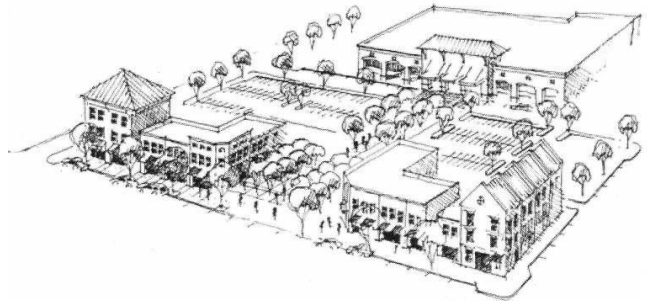


patrickschneider.photoshelter.com

Secondary Uses

Upper-floor residential lofts are encouraged in developments 3 acres and larger.

Up to 50% of a planned “Commercial/Business development 5 acres or larger can be utilized for stand-alone, attached housing provided primary uses are developed in the first construction phase per an approved development plan.



Location

Commercial / Business is generally located on parcels with frontage on the City's Arterial streets – mainly US 27/Alexandria Pike and Martha Layne Collins Boulevard. The higher traffic visibility and access on major thoroughfares are appropriate for a mix of commercial and high-density residential uses.

Additional Commercial / Business is planned in Gateway East and West. See the subarea plan for more information.

Desired Character

Land uses are mixed horizontally across space and/or vertically in buildings. Uses are integrated in a pedestrian-friendly environment and provide pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods and to the City's sidewalk system. Development complements its surroundings and does not overwhelm adjacent buildings.



NKU Campus



Goals

(1) To support NKU's mission and their continued investment and growth in Highland Heights. (2) To coordinate NKU's growth with City land use policy. (3) To provide NKU and Highland Heights with a well-planned and integrated land use pattern that promotes the flow of pedestrians and vehicles between them.

Primary Uses

Office, administrative, instructional, and athletic and student housing facilities and uses and others including maintenance typically associated with a large public university.

Secondary Uses

Retail, food service, hotels, recreation and residential are permissible as part of master planned development secondary to primary uses listed above.

Location

NKU Campus is shown as gray on Map LU₃ and includes NKU's main campus on the west side of Highland Heights. Smaller areas are planned NKU Campus reflecting property acquisitions located apart from the main campus. In addition, one area is planned both as NKU Campus and Town Center and another area is planned as NKKU Campus and Business Park. These two areas are designated with grey diagonal lines. This is done to promote private sector commercial uses in both areas while recognizing NKU's ownership.



NKU Campus, continued

Desired Character

NKU Campus exhibits a master-planned, landscaped setting with a strong central, pedestrian orientation. Campus entrances make a statement with landscaping and attractive entryway signage. Buildings are connected with and oriented toward a cohesive pedestrian network.

Architecture, landscaping and signage are coordinated to create cohesive, attractive brand image.

Development Strategies

An institutional campus zoning district was added to the City's Zoning Ordinance during 2023. Communities adopt Campus Institutional Zoning Districts to recognize the unique land use needs of major institutions as activity centers and traffic generators. Such zoning districts accommodate campus growth needs and coordinate campus master plans with City plans and zoning.

Typically, the city adopts a campus master plan as a PUD or Development Plan. Afterwards, the institution builds new facilities with minimal approval oversight by the community as long as such development is consistent with the approved master plan.

Approval of the master plan also sets the district boundary on the City's Zoning Map.





Future NKU Acquisition

In past Comprehensive Plans, the “Future NKU Acquisition” designation on Map LU3 identified parcels included on NKU’s Acquisition Plan. Such properties had a “grey” border on Map LU3.

During its 2020 Master Plan Update, NKU and its Steering Committee elected to be more conservative about future acquisitions. Therefore, Map LU3 indicates less NKU acquisition area than in previous comprehensive plans. The 2020 NKU Acquisition Plan notes that "some properties not required for the implementation of near-term or long-term projects were removed from the Acquisition Plan." In general, the 2020 NKU Master Plan indicates less property acquisitions north of Sunset Drive than in the 2009 Master Plan. In 2020, the 65,000 square foot Medical Office Building was completed at US 27 and Louie B. Nunn Drive.

Property purchased by NKU subsequent to the adoption of this Plan will be automatically included in the “NKU Campus” future land use category.

Future NKU Acquisitions are identified on Map LU3 to inform existing and future property owners of NKU’s potential growth path.

NKU was founded in 1968 and became a public university in 1970. The original campus was planned for 5,000 students with 730,000 feet of building space. NKU has far surpassed these benchmarks.

Today, NKU enrollment is typically 15,000 to 16,000 and maintains 3 million square feet of gross building area.

In 2022, approximately 17% of students lived in college-owned, operated or affiliated housing while 83% were commuters.

To better manage rapid growth, NKU has prepared five campus Master Plans. The most recent was prepared in 2020. The 2020 Master Plan can be downloaded at <http://inside.nku.edu>



This photo, provided by NKU, shows land as it existed prior to NKU’s development.

Considering NKU’s past and future success, it is important for the City and its residents to recognize NKU’s enrollment and geographic footprint will continue to grow-

NKU’s property acquisition map can be viewed using the above provided link.



Town Center-Mixed Use

Goals

(1) To develop a physical center and deeper community identity in Highland Heights. (2) To provide a vibrant, mixed-use gathering place with an emphasis on retail and entertainment uses. (3) To develop a safe pedestrian-orientated business district. (4) To enable high density residential in the district to support retail uses. (5) To encourage redevelopment consistent with Town Center land use and development policies.

Primary Uses

Retail – Ground Floor

Office – Upper Floors, six story maximum

Residential – Upper Floors, six story maximum

Secondary

Hospitality and attached residential such as apartments, lofts, and townhomes up to 18 units per acre developed part of an approved master redevelopment plan 3 acres or larger. Secondary uses are permitted provided ground floor retail is proposed as part of an approved development plan.

Location

Town Center, shown as “hot pink” on Map LU3, is located on US 27 generally between Nunn Drive to the north and Johns Hill Road to the south.

Desired Character

Town Center is urban in form with a dense building “street wall” with two story minimum building heights. Buildings are located close to sidewalks with room for two rows of parking and landscaping yards, if desired.

Ground floor vibrancy is accentuated by storefronts with clear vision glass and articulated entrances. Parking is primarily on-street or behind buildings. Wide sidewalks and gathering areas – plazas, squares, greens – create pedestrian comfort zones.





Business Park

Goal

(1) To provide land to meet economic growth needs and increase tax revenue at convenient locations. (2) To attract a variety of offices, research and high-tech industrial users. (3) To offer businesses the ability to locate close to NKU. (4) To support NKU's entrepreneurial programs.

Primary Uses

Primary uses include corporate offices, research and development facilities, laboratories, high-tech manufacturing and educational facilities.



Secondary Uses

No secondary uses are proposed due to the limited amount of acreage available.

Location

Business Park is planned along I-275 and I-471 and is designated as "purple" on Map LU3. This limited location takes advantage of highway visibility and access and close proximity to the intellectual, academic and workforce infrastructure provided by NKU.

Development Strategies

University affiliated science and research parks (business parks) are being developed across the country. Their popularity is driven by businesses that desire a close presence

to major universities and their numerous benefits including:

1. Access to an educated workforce.
2. Ability to collaborate with leading thought leaders in related fields and industry.
3. Potential to use university owned specialized equipment and facilities including labs and sophisticated computer technology.
4. The ability to use university networks to advance business interests.

In addition to the above, universities use business parks to nurture, protect and commercialize their intellectual capital.

Coldstream, the business park affiliated with the University of Kentucky, serves as one example of this. NKU and Highland Heights would benefit similarly by developing a university-affiliated business park in Gateway West.

