

***A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
FOR  
MAYSVILLE/MASON COUNTY  
KENTUCKY  
2016***



**Prepared for  
The Mason County Joint Planning Commission  
City of Maysville  
Mason County Fiscal Court**

# Mason County Comprehensive Plan

2001 Version Prepared by  
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**Adopted by the Mason County Joint Planning Commission**

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# INTRODUCTION

In 1987, Mason County had its first comprehensive plan completed. The plan attempted to address the problems confronting the Maysville and Mason County, and made a number of recommendations for improving conditions for both the City and the County. However, the plan's emphasis was largely on the City of Maysville, with very little attention directed to rural and agricultural issues.

In accordance with the requirements of K.R.S. Chapter 100, a planning unit shall review and may revise its comprehensive plan at least once every five years. After 13 years, the joint planning commission contracted with RM Associates, Inc. of Richmond, Kentucky to complete a thorough review and revision of the original plan. In addition to the normal requirements needed to develop a comprehensive plan, the two governments were in agreement that the new plan should address two vital issues: Provide a more balanced presentation of City and County interests, and ensure that citizen input is maximized in the process.

The initial consultant incorporated these two requests in the planning process by holding monthly meetings with citizen groups and public officials. A special Farm Task Force was appointed by the judge executive to oversee the inclusion of rural/farm issues in the plan. In addition, the Agricultural Extension Office, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the rural homemakers group have played an important role in the different steps of the process. The City Commission and the Fiscal Court together with City and County staff members were encouraged to play an active role in plan development and review. It is estimated that more than 250 people were involved directly in the planning process from the beginning.

The plan is organized around several principal elements or components: 1) the Physical Setting (the natural environment), 2) Population, 3) Transportation, 4) Economic Development, 5) Housing, 6) Public Facilities and Services, 7) Historic Preservation, and 8) Environmental Quality. Within these plan components, several items were singled out for special emphasis: downtown revitalization, historic values, senior citizen needs, the farm economy, retail trade, and tourism.

Planning and development are considered to be inter-related parts that together comprise one process: the planning and development process. The plan has very little meaning if it is not implemented. At the same time, action without direction will likely result in poor decision-making on the part of governmental officials.

Development of this plan followed what is often referred to as the nominal or basic planning approach. This approach begins with 1) an assessment of the community in order to establish an information base, and to identify local strengths as well as problem areas. This step also includes a look at some of the trends taking place, and makes projections into the future. Once the assessment has been completed, 2) general directions are provided. This step includes an examination of values and visions, and the development of goals and objectives. Following this step, 3) more specific directions (strategies) are provided. This step focuses on the question of how: How does the local government go about accomplishing what they spelled out in their statement of goals and objectives? At this point, most of the planner's efforts have been completed and it is up to local officials (4) to make decisions regarding the strategies that are to be implemented. Once the choices have been made, then it is necessary (5) to take action - to commit the necessary resources to getting the job done. The sixth step actually takes place during the other steps in the process and following implementation, 6) monitoring the process to determine the degree of success resulting from the action taken. Figure 1 puts the various steps in perspective. The diagram attempts to illustrate the cyclical nature of planning and development (an on-going dynamic process), the inter-relationships between the different steps, and the feedback of information needed to make adjustments in the process.

The players in the process can be grouped under three headings: Citizens, government officials, and appointed staff members and agencies. Citizens get involved as individuals or as members of a wide range of interest groups. The plan should be citizen oriented, since the primary goal is to improve the overall quality of life of the community. Government officials are elected to represent the people and to make decisions in their best interests. Staff members, such as codes enforcement officer, engineer, road supervisor, etc., and with agencies, such as planning commission, board of adjustment, industrial development authority, etc., are involved in much of the routine, nitty-gritty activities that keep the system operating. If planning is to be a success, all of the players need to be moving in the same direction.

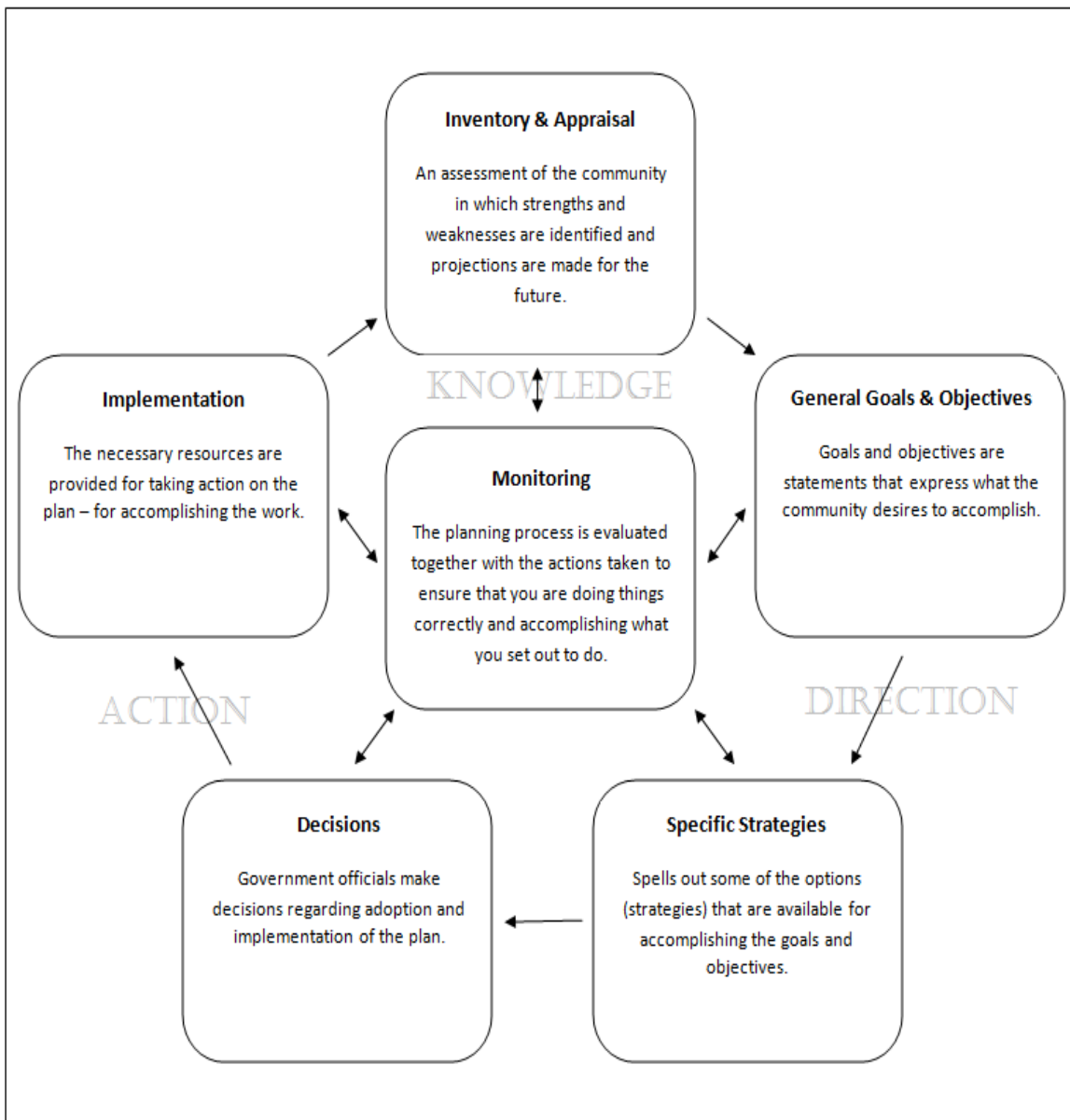


Figure 1. The Planning and Development Process

# COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment is to gain a better understanding of the community through the acquisition and analysis of a wide range of information. In this plan the term community applies to all of Mason County. While there are several different political units in the County, for planning purposes it is important to view the area as one inter-related body.

The assessment is based on a wide range of information sources, both past and present. The effort started with a review of the 1987 plan to determine what had been planned, what had been accomplished, and which components were still applicable. Subsequently, the same effort has been put forth with the 2001, 2006, and 2011 plans. Other past plans (Downtown Revitalization, Market Study, etc.) were examined in a similar manner. The 2016 Plan incorporates ideas from several other plans including, but not limited to: Maysville Port Authority Study, Maysville/Mason County Industrial Development Authority Strategic Plan, and Old Washington, Inc Community Plan. Several groups were surveyed (farm committee, rural homemakers, planning commission, etc.) for input regarding the community's strengths and the problems that needed to be addressed. Several meetings were held with City and County officials in order to determine the present status of operations and to find out what plans and projects were proposed or underway.

The assessment step in the planning and development process serves as the information base which is drawn upon in completing the remaining steps in the process. The information needs to be as complete, current, correct, and comprehensible as possible (within the constraints of resources). Good planning and development is dependent upon good information.

The assessment begins with a look at the physical environment as the foundation upon which human activity takes place. It is essential that such elements as location, landforms, geology, soils, water resources, climate, vegetation, and wildlife be given strong consideration in any plans for development of the landscape. The natural environment provides the resources that are used in the natural state or processed into more useful products.

# THE PHYSICAL SETTING

## LOCATION

Mason County is located in the northeastern part of the state on the Ohio River. It is strategically located in that it is situated within an hour's drive of three metropolitan areas – Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky, Lexington, and Ashland/Huntington – shown in Figure 2. In addition, it contains Maysville, the largest city serving a seven-county area, which is largely rural and agricultural in its characteristics. Location played an important part in its early settlement and hence its rich, historical heritage. Location is one of the most valuable assets Mason County has to offer.

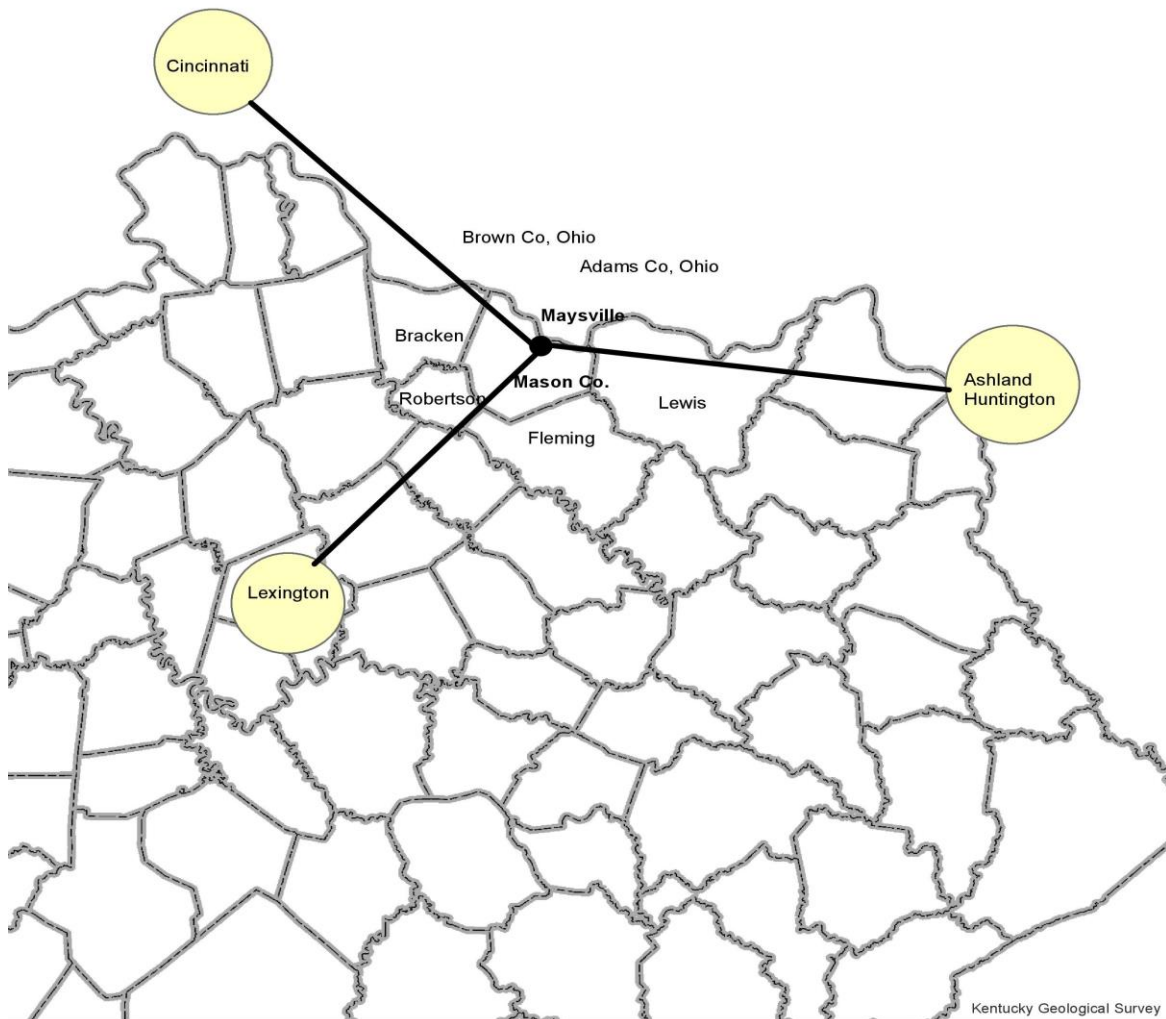


Figure 2. Mason County's Relative Location

## LANDFORMS AND GEOLOGY

Mason County is situated in two physiographic regions: the Outer Bluegrass, and the Hills of the Bluegrass. The Outer Bluegrass comprises the majority of the County (central, southern, and eastern parts), and the Hills of the Bluegrass make up the remainder (northern and western). The relief ranges from rolling to very steep. The broadest ridges are found in the central and west-central parts of the County, while the steeper slopes are in the northern, eastern, and western parts of the County and along major streams. The northern third of the County drains into the Ohio River, with the majority of the county draining to the west by the North Fork of the Licking River. A small area in the southwest drains southwest through Robertson and Fleming counties into the Licking River.

Two geologic systems underlie most of the County; the Ordovician System, and the Silurian System. The Ordovician System is the more extensive of the two and consists of interbedded limestone, shale, and siltstone of the Preachersville Member of Drakes Formation, and the Bull Fork, Grant Lake, Fairview, Kope, and Clays Ferry Formations. The Silurian System underlies the eastern part of the County, and consists of dolomite and dolomitic limestone interbedded with clay shales of the Crab Orchard and Brassfield Formations.

There are six major groups of soils in Mason County:

1. Wheeling-Nolin-Otwell,
2. Lowell-Faywood-Nicholson,
3. Eden-Lowell,
4. Cynthiana-Faywood-Lowell,
5. Fairmount-Cynthiana-Faywood, and
6. Beasley-Fairmount-Cynthiana.

A brief description of soils for general planning purposes is provided in Table 1.

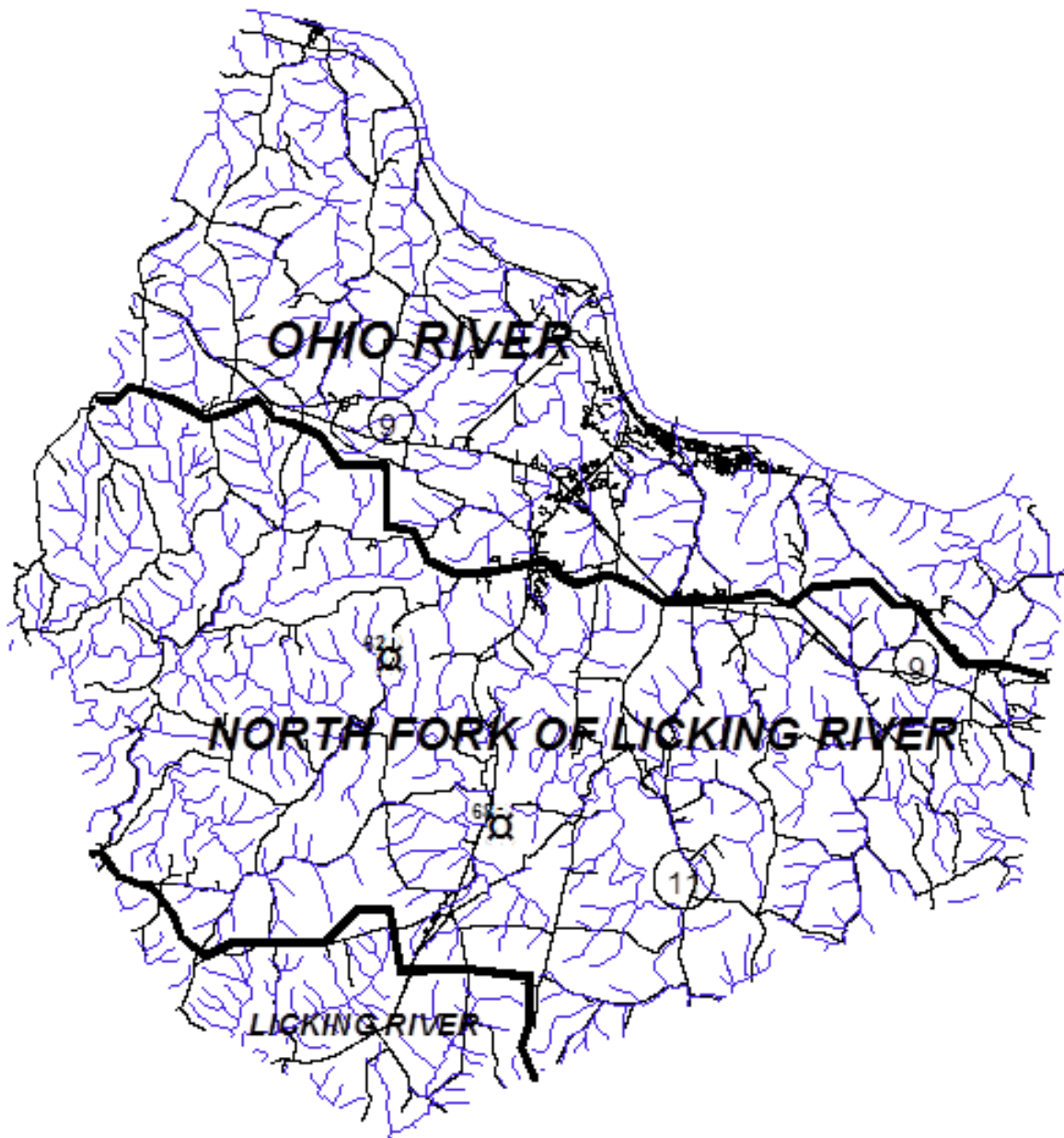
<u>Soils</u>	<u>General Use</u>
Wheeling-Nolin-Otwell	Well-suited for cultivated crops; Suited for urban development (with limitations)
Lowell-Faywood-Nicholson	Well-suited for cultivated crops (on broad ridges and hillsides); Suited for urban development (with limitations)
Eden-Lowell	Poorly-suited for cultivated crops; Poorly-suited for urban development
Cynthiana-Faywood-Lowell	Poorly-suited for cultivated crops; Poorly-suited for urban development
Fairmount-Cynthiana-Faywood	Poorly-suited for cultivated crops; Poorly-suited for urban development
Beasley-Fairmount-Cynthiana	Suited for cultivated crops (in smooth areas); Suited for urban development (with limitations)

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Table 1. Soils of Mason County

## WATER RESOURCES

The Ohio River is obviously the most notable of Mason County's water resources. The County has approximately 20 miles of river front, with potential for commerce and recreation. There are three major watersheds within the County: 1) the North Fork of the Licking River is the largest stream and flows through the central part of the County in a westward direction, 2) the southern portion of the County drains in the main tributary of the Licking River, and 3) the northern area drains directly into the Ohio River. Figure 3 identifies the major watersheds of Mason County.



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Figure 3. Watersheds of Mason County

### CLIMATE

According to the Koppen Climate Classification System, the climate of Mason County is classified as *Cfa* Humid Subtropical. Summers are warm to hot, with moderately cold winters. Rains are fairly well distributed throughout the year.

Snow falls nearly every winter but usually stays on the ground for only a few days. In summer the average temperature is 73 degrees, while winter temperatures average 33 degrees. The highest temperature on record (104 degrees) occurred at Maysville on July 15, 1954. The coldest temperature on record (-19 degrees) was reached at Maysville on January 29, 1963.

The total annual precipitation is 44 inches, with 55 percent of this occurring in April through September. The heaviest daily rainfall was recorded in Maysville in May, 1988. The average seasonal snowfall is 11 inches.

The average relative humidity in mid afternoon is about 60 percent. The sun shines about 70 percent of the time possible in summer and 40 percent in winter. The prevailing wind is from the south-southwest, and the highest average wind-speed of 11 mph occurs in spring.

## VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

Mason County is located in the western Mesophytic Forest Region with such trees types as chinquapin oak, bur oak, white oak, hackberry, sugar maple, ash, black walnut, black cherry, Kentucky coffee tree, American elm, shagbark, and butternut hickories commonly found. Approximately 26,600 acres (17 percent of the land area) contains commercial wood. The central mixed-hardwood forest type is the most extensive, covering about 7,000 acres; oak-hickory comprises about 4,000 acres; red cedar-hardwood makes up another 4,000 acres; the remainder of the acreage is in maple-beech, elm-oak-cottonwood, white oak, oak-pine, and southern pine.

It is estimated that there are 34 species of mammals, 33 species of reptiles and amphibians, and 110 species of breeding birds in Mason County. Among the wildlife species that are hunted or trapped are the cottontail rabbit, gray squirrel, fox squirrel, white-tailed deer, raccoon, red fox, mink, muskrat, bobwhite quail, mourning dove, woodcock, and several species of waterfowl. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) is considered an endangered species, and the Northern Long-Eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) is considered threatened.

In summary, Mason County has a highly diversified natural environment. Its landforms are conducive to a wide range of human activities. Soils support a strong farm economy and under proper conservation and management techniques, lend

themselves to development. The climate is generally temperate, but offers clear and distinctive seasonal variations. Vegetative cover is extensive and provides suitable habitat for a substantial wildlife population. Care should be given in future development to insure that natural resources are used wisely so that future generations may continue to benefit from them.

## **THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE**

### **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

Mason County was initially organized as part of Bourbon County, Virginia, and subsequently became the eighth county to be formed when Kentucky became a state in 1792. Settlement actually began before the American Revolutionary War. Christopher Gist came into the area in 1751 to conduct a survey for the Ohio Land Company. Two decades later, Simon Kenton entered Mason County and played a major role in its settlement. The earliest settlers came from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey.

Maysville (initially named Limestone) was founded as a station on the Ohio River in 1784. It was established as a town in 1787 and eventually became the county seat in 1848. Kenton's Station also was established near the future site of Washington in 1784. One year later, Washington was laid out in a one square mile grid. It became a town in 1786 and served as the county seat when the County was first formed.

A buffalo trail (trace) stretched from the Ohio River to salt licks near Blue Licks. This trail developed into a wagon road and eventually a turnpike connecting these settlements with Paris and Lexington. With the invention of the steamboat in the early 1800s, river traffic increased and trade by land to the south declined.

Agriculture was the primary economic activity in the early settlement with tobacco as the major crop. The legislature of Virginia opened a tobacco warehouse, the first in northern Kentucky, in 1787. Along with tobacco, farmers grew corn, wheat, flax, and hemp.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, growth continued to take place, with Maysville becoming the center of activity and Washington experiencing a decline. New highways were constructed, along with a bridge over the Ohio River, making Maysville more

accessible to nearby smaller rural communities. In recent years, the City has become a diversified, small growth center for a seven-county area, and has seen a boom in retail trade and banking.

## POPULATION

From its original settlements in the 1700s, Mason County has grown to over 17,000 people. Population changes since 1970 are indicated in Table 2 for both Mason County and the City of Maysville. There are three other incorporated areas in the County: Dover (population 246), Germantown (population 153), and Sardis (population 101).

Census Year	<u>Mason County</u>			<u>Maysville</u>		
	Total	Change		Total	Change	
		Total	%		Total	%
1970	17,273			7,411		
1980	17,760	488	2.8	7,983	572	7.7
1990	16,666	-1,094	-6.2	8,113	130	1.6
2000	16,803	137	.8	8,993	880	10.9
2010	17,490	687	4.1	9,011	18	.2
2014	17,166	-324	-1.9	8,851	-160	-1.8

Table 2. Population Changes for Mason County and Maysville, 1970 to 2010. (Census.gov Quick Facts 2014 Estimates).

The sex and racial composition of the population, shown in Table 3, are important characteristics for understanding the population. Females outnumber males (51.6% to 48.4%), and the majority of the County’s population is white (90.7%).

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>% Change from 2010</u>
White Population	15,570	-1.4 (15801)
Black Population	1,133	1.1 (1,120)
Hispanic	257	3.6 (248)
Females	8,858	-2.1 (9,056)
Males	8,308	-1.5 (8,434)

Table 3. Mason County Population by Sex and Race. (Census.gov Quick Facts 2014 Estimates).

The County’s population is growing older. The median age in 2013 was 40.8, above the state median age of 38.2. The population distribution by age groups is given in Table 4 below:

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Totals</u>	<u>% Change from 2010</u>
0-17	4,231	-0.8 (4,265)
18 & over	13,221	0.0 (13,225)
20-24	1,012	3.8 (1,012)
25-34	1,970	4.1 (1,893)
35-44	2,254	-7.2 (2,429)
45-54	2,601	2.1 (2,548)
55-64	2,435	8.1 (2,253)
65 & over	2,622	3.8 (2,527)

Table 4. Mason County Population by Age Group. (American Community Survey, 2013).

Males constitute a majority in the 0-17 and 18-24 age groups while females comprise the majority in the other three groups. The 45-54 age group is the largest of the eight categories, accounting for 20% of the total over 18. The 0-17 and 65+ age groups constitute 39% of the total population. 15% of the people are 65 years of age or older.

## TRANSPORTATION

Mason County is fortunate to have a diversified transportation system; water, rail, air, and highway. Although the County’s location on the Ohio River has not generated much commercial freight traffic, the river does contribute to the County’s economy by the visit of river boats bringing tourists to the area.

Mason County is served by the CSX Railroad, the Trans-Kentucky Railroad, and Maysville is a stopping point on the AMTRAK system.

The Fleming-Mason Airport is located about six miles south of Maysville and has a 5,500 ft. (instrument approach) paved runway. The airport acquired an additional 90 acres in 2015 to the west of the existing runway to be utilized for future safety zone improvements. The airport is heavily utilized by local industries and is in the process of making improvements.

Mason County is served by U.S. Highway 62/68, Kentucky Routes 8, 10, and 11, and Kentucky 9 (AA Highway). The Simon Kenton Memorial Bridge connects Maysville with Highway 52 in Ohio. The William Harsha Bridge connects Highway 9 in Kentucky with Highway 52 in Ohio and was completed in 2000. Mason County is located approximately 45 miles from Interstate 64 (Rowan County, Kentucky), and 75 miles from Interstates 75 and 71 (Boone and Kenton Counties, Kentucky).

Maysville has a public transportation system that operates within city limits. Handicapped persons have access to a van that is also operated by the City. Taxi service is available through private companies.

A limited amount of river barge traffic originates from Mason County, but the total amount of freight moving on the Ohio River is extensive. Several river (tour) boats may dock at Maysville during the year. In 2015, the Maysville/Mason County Port Authority was included into the Greater Cincinnati Port Authority.

The components of Mason County's transportation system are shown in Figure 4.

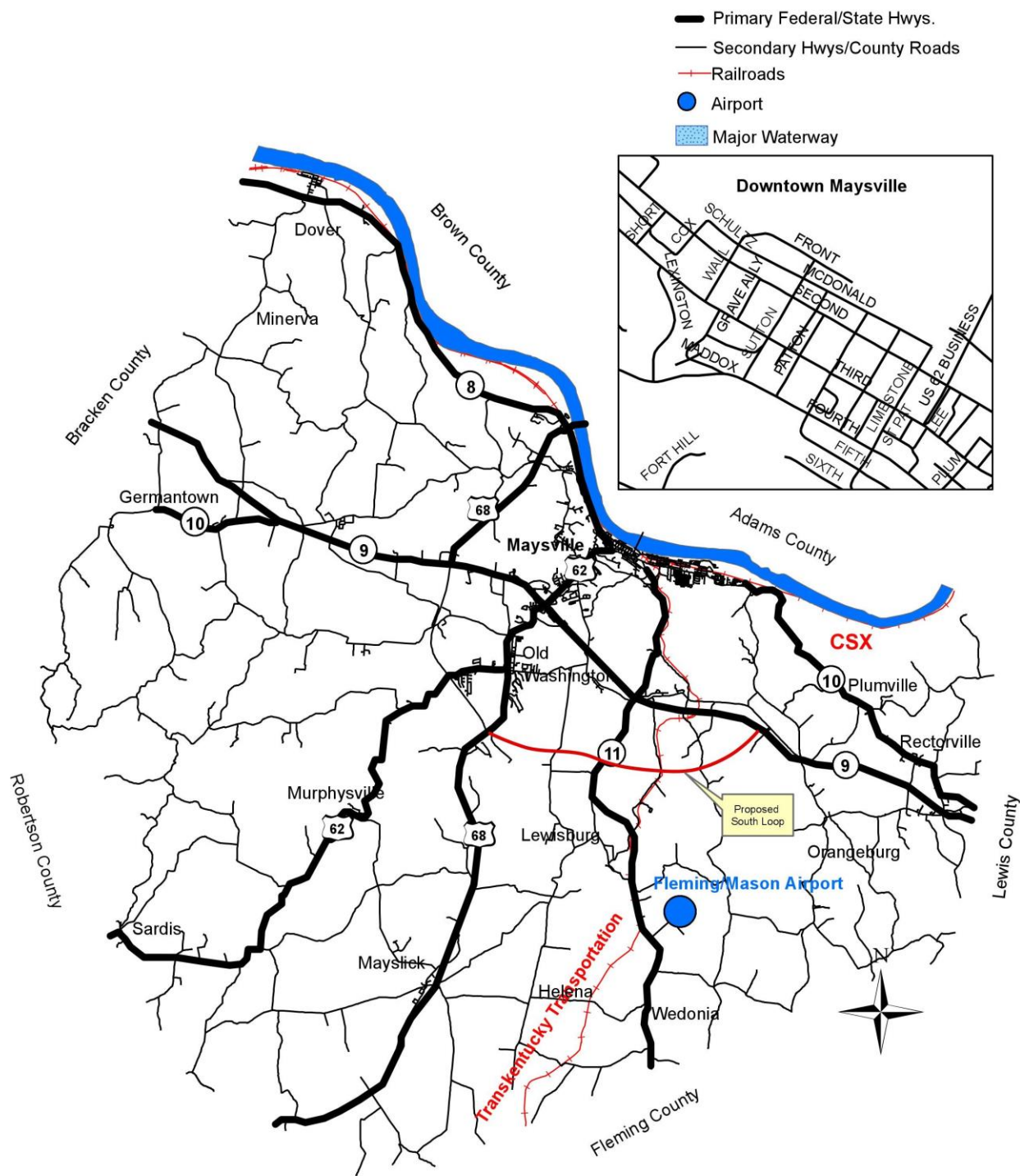


Figure 4. Mason County Transportation Systems

## THE ECONOMY

The local economy is comprised of four sectors: 1) the Primary Sector, which includes extractive activities (farming, mining, logging, etc.); 2) the Secondary Sector, which involves processing of raw or semi-finished materials; 3) the Tertiary Sector, which is comprised of trade and services; and 4) the Quaternary Sector, which consists of information processing and high-tech activities. As the economy matures, its focus increasingly shifts from the primary sector toward the quaternary sector. Mason County's employment by industry classification for 2013 is shown in Table 5.

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<u>Industry Classification</u>	<u>Employment</u>
Construction	423
Manufacturing	1,218
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	1,865
Information	94
Financial Activities	232
Services	2,823
Public Administration	347

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Table 5. Employment in Mason County by Industry Classification. (Kentucky Department for Economic Development).

As discussed previously, Mason County has a long history of agricultural production. From its early farm economy origins, the County, with Maysville as the focal point, has become quite economically diversified. Not only does it serve as a retail/service center, but it has become a major manufacturing center during the past decade.

Agriculture is currently going through a difficult period of transition. The mainstay of the farm economy was tobacco, the local production of which has virtually been abolished in the past decade. Mason County's farm economy can be described as diversified or as general farming, with a good mix of crops and livestock. A farmer's market and produce/hay auction was established in Lewisburg in 2004.

The section on Rural and Agricultural Areas includes information from the County's Comprehensive Farm Plan, which was developed by the Mason County Agricultural Development Council in conjunction with the Agricultural Extension Office.

Comparative figures through the last three agricultural census periods (2002, 2007, and 2012), shown in Table 6, demonstrate some of the major changes taking place in County farming.

	2002	2007	2012	Change, (02-12)	
				Total	%
Number of Farms	726	753	634	-92	-12.7
Land in Farms (acres)	128,123	139,814	126,722	-1,401	-1.1
Average Size of Farm (acres)	176	186	200	24	13.6
Average Value of Land & Buildings per acre (\$)	1,889	2,528	2,578	689	36.5
Crop Land Harvested (acres)	45,732	50,474	50,501	4,769	10.4
Pasture (acres)	41,294	27,982	14,668	-26,606	-64.4

Table 6. Changes in Selected Mason County Farm Statistics (USDA Census of Agriculture).

In summary, the number of farms has decreased by 92 (-12.7%); the amount of land in farms has decreased by 1,401 acres (-1.1%); the size of the average farm has grown by 24 acres (13.6%); the average value of land and buildings per acre has increased by \$689 (36.5%); the amount of cropland has increased 4,769 acres (10.4%); and the amount of pasture has declined by 26,606 acres (64.4%).

Despite these trends, Mason County produced 4,021,275 pounds of burley tobacco in 2012, along with 610,947 bushels of corn, 278,730 bushels of soybeans, 27,688 bushels of wheat for grain, 79,880 tons of all hay, haylage, grass silage and greenchop. While agriculture has experienced its problems with the loss of a tobacco base, grain production has significantly increased over the past decade. The County ranked 15th and 3rd in the Kentucky in production of burley tobacco and alfalfa hay, respectively.

In addition, despite a decrease in the local farm economy's livestock sector, in 2012 Mason County had 26,229 head of cattle and calves (13,318 beef cows). Furthermore, milk production ranked 21<sup>st</sup> in Kentucky with total of sales of \$2,612,000 in 2012. Agri-tourism has grown in the County and the River Valley Agritourism Alliance was formed in 2005.

Manufacturing experienced considerable growth in the late 1990s. Since 2000, several larger employers, including Jockey and Emerson, have left the community, although there have been increases in the number of employees at existing facilities to help offset those losses. In 1989, there were 2,818 people employed in

manufacturing, which rose to 3,394 in 1998, a gain of 575 (20.4%); yet, by 2009, that figure had dropped drastically to 1,531. Table 7 lists the community’s leading manufacturing, service, and technology employers as of June 26, 2016, as well as their approximate employee counts.

<u>Name of Employer</u>	<u>Employees</u>
Power Transmission Solutions	115
Green Tokai Co. Ltd.	241
International Paper	113
Wald Manufacturing Co., Inc.	60
Mitsubishi Electric Automotive	378
Crouse Corporation	165
East Kentucky Power	206
Carmeuse Lime	170
Stober Drives	120
GLENRO	42
Meadowview Regional Hospital	337
Federal Mogul	182
Carlson Software Inc.	20
Comprehend Inc.	66
JBR Industrial Services	15
Maysville Materials Co.	14
Ranger Steel Inc.	31
Standard Supply Co	20
Superior Windings LLC	9
Ledger Independent	42
UPS	31
J.T. Thorpe & Son, Inc.	9
Emergency Disaster Services	10

Table 7. Leading Manufacturing, Technology and Service Employers, 2016.  
(Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development).

Trades and Services include construction, manufacturing, trade/transportation/utilities, information, financial activities, services, and public administration. According to the US Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics, there were 7,002 trade and service jobs in Mason County in 2013. This number has increased noticeably since 2009, when there were 4,036 trade and service jobs in Mason County. Most of the growth in trade and services in recent

years has taken place on the hill (“Top of the Hill”) overlooking the area in and around downtown Maysville (“Bottom of the Hill”). Downtown Maysville, with its physical limitations, has undergone a transition from retail/office functions to predominantly office functions and has become a mainstay for the cultural arts. It is expected that proposed transportation system improvements (South Loop) will bring even more change to the distribution of economic activities in the County.

Quaternary activities are difficult to extract from the Tertiary sector. Past Census reports have not made a distinction between these two sectors. It can be assumed that a number of employees in Mason County are now involved in information processing, computer programming, research, etc., but the actual percentage is not known. Notable companies include Carlson Software and Courika Solutions.

Other measures of economic activity in Mason County include wages paid, income, poverty, labor force, unemployment rate, and related statistics are shown in Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11. The labor market area mentioned in Tables 8 and 9 include Mason, Bracken, Fleming, Lewis, and Robertson Counties in KY, and Brown, Adams, and Highland Counties in Ohio.

	<u>Mason County</u>		<u>Labor Market Area</u>	
	<u>2015</u>	<u>April 2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>April 2016</u>
Civilian Labor Force	7,446	7,366	73,691	74,865
Employed	6,993	6,971	68,799	70,318
Unemployed	453	395	4,892	4,547
Unemployment Rate (%)	6.1	5.4	6.6	6.1

Table 8. Civilian Labor Force. (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mason County</u>	<u>Labor Market Area</u>	<u>Kentucky</u>	<u>US</u>
2011	8.9	11.4	9.5	8.9
2012	8.4	9.5	8.2	8.1
2013	9.4	9.9	8.3	7.4
2014	7.8	7.9	6.5	6.2
2015	6.1	6.6	5.4	5.3

Table 9. Unemployment Rate (%). (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics).

	<u>Mason County</u>	<u>Kentucky</u>	<u>US</u>
All Industries	704	784	957
Construction	1,157	911	1,019
Manufacturing	1,011	1,030	1,176
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	561	722	817
Information	609	853	1,616
Financial Activities	756	1,069	1,549
Services	551	692	857
Public Administration	561	813	1,097
Other	492	1,109	987

Table 10. Average Weekly Wage, 2013. (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics).

Median Family Income (2014):	(Mason County):	\$39,783
	(Kentucky):	\$54,928
	(U.S.):	\$54,482
Per Capita Personal Income (2014):	(Mason County):	\$23,694
	(Kentucky):	\$23,741
	(U.S.):	\$28,555
Percent in Poverty (2014):	(Mason County):	19.9
	(Kentucky):	18.9
	(U.S.):	15.6

Table 11. Income and Poverty in Mason County. (U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2014 American Community Survey).

Figure 5 identifies the major retail, service, and industrial employment centers in Mason County.

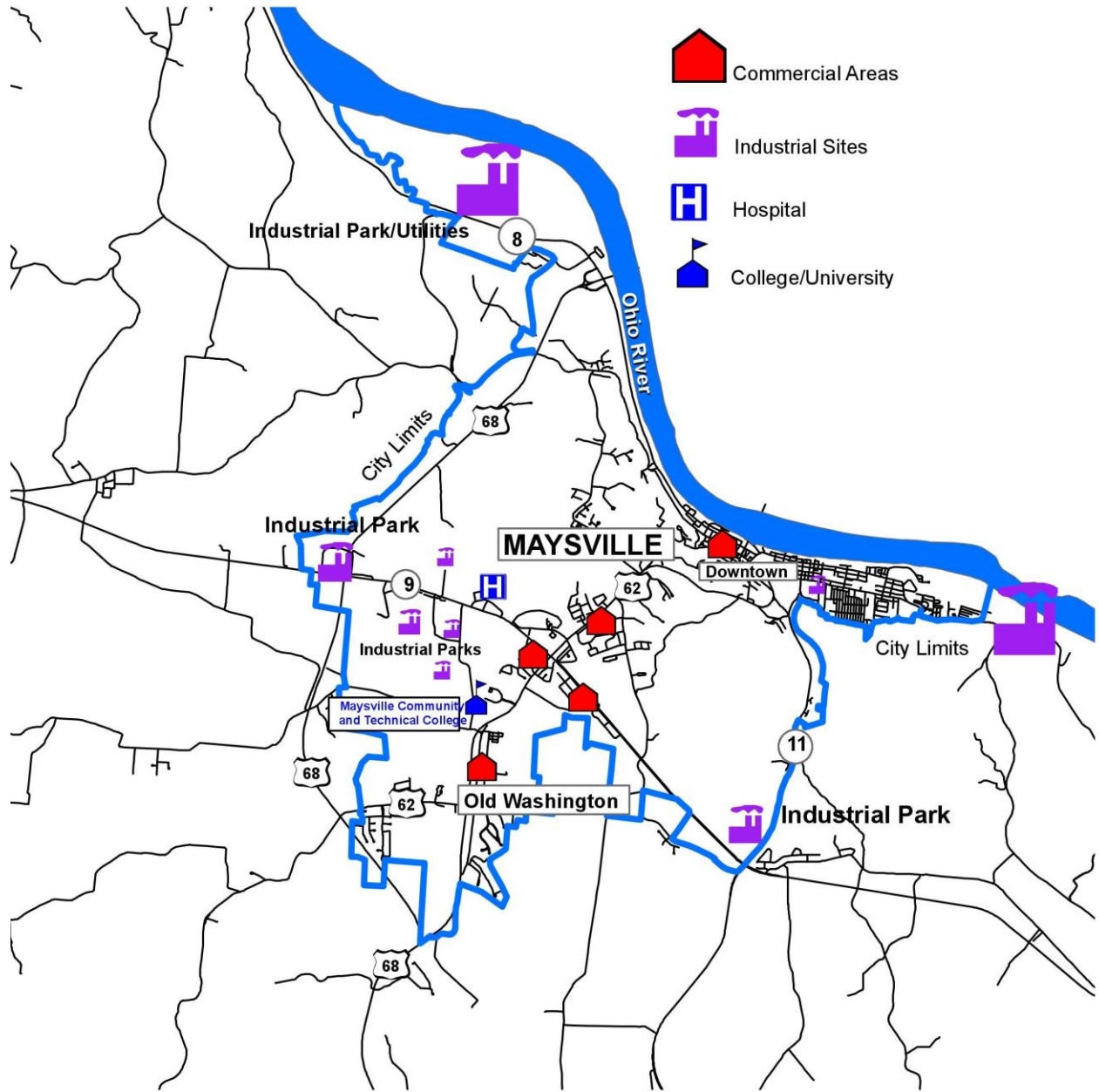


Figure 5. Retail, Service, and Industrial Employment Centers of Mason County

## PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Local government provision of public facilities and services is an important component in the planning and development process. Government is called upon to provide an increasing amount and diversity of services. This plan element includes administration, streets/roads, utilities, recreation, tourism, education, fire and police

protection, emergency services, planning and codes enforcement, and health services.

The City of Maysville has operated under the city manager form of government since 1958. Administration of City policies and programs is conducted by the mayor and board of commissioners (four members), with the city manager serving as the chief administrative officer. Daily operations are handled through the following departments/agencies: City Attorney, Codes Enforcement, Comptroller, Personnel, Engineering, Fire Department, Port Authority, Industrial Development Authority, Police Department, Public Works, Tourism, and Water and Sewer.

County government operates under the commission form of government with commissioners elected at-large from three districts, and the County judge/executive presiding over the fiscal court. County departments/agencies include Maysville-Mason County Landfill and Recycling Center, Road Department, Sheriff's Department, Emergency Services, Health Department, County Attorney, Mason County Detention Center, Mason County Animal Control/Shelter, County Treasurer, County Property Valuation Administrator, and the County Clerk.

The County has an eight member joint planning commission with four members appointed by the City and four members appointed by the County. The commission's primary responsibilities include overseeing the completion and maintenance of the comprehensive plan, administering subdivision regulations throughout the County, and making recommendations on zoning changes within the City of Maysville and unincorporated areas of Mason County. In keeping with the requirements of KRS 100, there are also separate City and County Boards of Adjustment established to deal with variances, conditional uses, non-conforming situations, and appeals on interpretations by the administrative official. Both boards are served by the City planning & zoning administrator and by legal counsel.

The City of Maysville operates a water treatment plant and sewage treatment plant. Both plants currently have sufficient capacity to accommodate additional growth. The sewage treatment plant presently handles an average of 1.5 million gpd, with a capacity of 3.4 million gpd. The system can hold up to 8.5 million gpd for a short time. Seven sewer pump stations have been upgraded recently. In the County, sewage disposal is primarily carried out by on-site septic tanks. Reliance upon septic tanks creates an undesirable situation in most areas of the County since the majority of soils have severe restrictions for on-site sewage disposal. Kentucky approved a county sewer district, Western Mason Sanitation District, which became

operational in December, 2006. The District serves approximately 430 households, and ties into the City sewer system. More than 3,800 customers are served by the City sewer system.

The City's water treatment plant pumps an average of 2.4 to 2.8 million gallons per day, peaking at 3 million gpd in the summer. The water treatment plant was upgraded in 1996 to a capacity of 4 million gpd. Water storage includes 2.7 million gallons (in-ground), and 550,000 gallons in tanks. In 2005, a new storage tank was constructed at Industrial Park 4, along with the extension of a new line.

Water is sold by the City to five water districts in the County. The total number of customers being served is around 15,000. The majority of waterlines within the City are eight inches in diameter or larger while in the remainder of the County lines are four inches or less in diameter (Washington has some three- and four-inch lines). There are no accurate maps of older waterlines, especially in the downtown Maysville area.

Most of the demand for water and sewer services has been up on the Top of the Hill in recent years. A new tank at Industrial Park 3 will be completed in 2017. This tank will hold 250,000 gallons, and provide added fire protection to the Park as well as increased usage for domestic services.

Solid waste is disposed of at the Maysville-Mason County Landfill, which is located in the eastern part of the County. This site is owned by the City and County and operated by the County. It serves as a regional landfill, receiving some 300 tons of waste daily. The facility also has a recycling program (including tires and appliances), composting, and a collection system for methane gas.

Mason County is served by a variety of recreation facilities, both public and private. There are small parks located at Dover, Germantown, and May's Lick. The May's Lick and Germantown parks have a walking path.

The Cummins Nature Preserve fulfills the last wish of Dr. Claude E. Cummins, who wanted the land to be used as a preserve, to be open for public use and enjoyment. Since 2002, the Mason County Fiscal Court has worked to turn the land into a nature preserve with nature trails, a primitive camp for Scouts and other groups, a wildlife educational area, a rustic shelter, and small restrooms.

The largest park is the Maysville-Mason County Recreation Park, located just outside of Old Washington. This park encompasses 57 acres and includes two pools, a par-three golf course, a miniature golf course, two softball fields, three tennis courts, various picnic sites, a one mile walking path, and a 12-acre fishing lake. Smaller parks are also scattered throughout the City: January Park, Mulberry Park, the Adair Park, AMVETS Memorial Park, Wood Street Park, Wald Park, and Beechwood Park. Also, there are various pocket parks scattered throughout the County.

The Maysville Marina and Campground is located on the Ohio River on the eastern edge of the City. This park features 30 camp sites, a boat dock and launch, a picnic area, and a playground.

Other recreation facilities include the Limestone YMCA, the Tom Browning Girls and Boys Club, and three golf courses: Kenton Station Golf Course (public), Laurel Oaks Golf Club (public), and the Maysville Country Club (private).

Tourism for the County is handled by the Maysville-Mason County Convention and Visitors Bureau, which is located in Maysville. Activities are focused around the numerous historic sites and structures found throughout the County, as well as on special events that are held throughout the year. One of the leading local historic sites is Old Washington, an historic village dating back to the late 1700s. It contains a number of shops, historic buildings, and museums, including the Harriet Beecher Stowe Slavery to Freedom Museum. In downtown Maysville, the Russell Theater features Spanish Colonial Revival architecture dating back to 1930. Limestone Landing has attractive historic murals painted on the floodwall. The Landing is a stopping point for riverboats traveling the Ohio River. Visitors can also stop by the Kentucky Gateway Museum Center, which includes the Kaye Savage Browning Miniature Collection, and the Washington Opera Theater, which houses the Maysville Players.

May's Lick is another settlement dating back to 1787. Charles Young, who was born into slavery in 1864 in a log cabin built around 1800 on the outskirts of May's Lick, went on to have a noteworthy military career from 1869 until his passing in 1922. The cabin was purchased by the Mason County Fiscal Court, and is currently being rehabilitated. The Baptist Church in Minerva, built in 1793 by stonemason and Minister Louis Craig, is one of the five oldest standing structures in Kentucky. The issue of slavery split the church in 1805, and the slave balcony still exists.

Special events and festivals attract a great number of visitors from throughout the region. A list of these activities includes Halloween, numerous theatrical productions by the Maysville Players, “The Old Reliable Germantown Fair”, the Simon Kenton Festival, Frontier Christmas, Maysville Uncorked, Oktoberfest, Twilight Christmas Parade, Veterans Parade, Parade for Christ, Pig Out in Maysville, and numerous 5K races.

The citizens of Maysville and Mason County have access to information from a number of different sources. The Ledger-Independent Newspaper provides news coverage throughout the seven county trade area; WFTM Radio (AM/FM) is located in Maysville; cable television and Internet services are available through Limestone Cablevision; telephone and Internet services are provided by various commercial entities.

### Mason County Schools

The Mason County School System (MCSS) is made up of four schools, one at each instructional level, serving 2,728 students in grades K-12 and an additional 112 pre-school students. 16% of the MCSS student population consists of minorities, with the largest ethnic group being African-Americans. 60% of all students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. MCSS employs 202 certified staff, six of whom are National Board Certified, as well as 168 classified staff. Three of the schools – Straub Elementary School, Mason County Middle School, and Mason County High School – are located on the main campus on U.S. Highway 68 near the intersection with the AA Highway, approximately 2 miles south of downtown Maysville. The fourth school, Mason County Intermediate School, is located on a secondary campus in Old Washington, and the STEAM Academy is located across the street.

The purpose of Mason County Schools is to provide the opportunity, resources, facilities, and instruction for all students to graduate with the skills to be self-sufficient in the workplace and in the community. To achieve this, students must be literate in reading, mathematics, and communication skills, and must be able to think critically. Our Mission Statement, developed by a committee of parents, students, teachers, administrators, classified staff, and community and business representatives, is to provide a safe, welcoming community where all students are challenged and inspired to reach their potential and pursue their dreams. Our vision is to know every child by name and face and foster college, career, and life readiness. This same committee, with the leadership of the superintendent, developed a comprehensive Strategic Plan with the following goals:

- Goal 1: All classrooms and buildings will be safe, welcoming environments that support next-generation learning. The use of "Project Based Learning", implementation of "The Leader in Me", the K-12 implementation of "Project Lead the Way", and the STEAM Academy (science, technology, engineering, agriculture, and mathematics) that opened in August of 2015, are part of this goal. Through partnerships with Maysville Community & Technical College and Morehead State University, Mason County High School has over 130 students taking college or dual-credit courses. The high school offers 15 Advanced Placement courses with 334 enrollments in those courses. MCSS has also developed partnerships with local businesses in order to improve graduation rates and the post-secondary success of graduates. The Kentucky Center for School Safety conducted safe school assessments in all schools and examined each school's learning environment with the purpose of improving the school's climate and culture, and provided a needs assessment that was used to revise the School Safety Plan. Finally, five to six teachers per year are trained at the Ron Clark Academy to acquire high energy, high engagement teaching styles to be replicated in their classrooms.
- Goal 2: New and lasting partnerships will be formed with community partners. The "Plant the Dream Initiative", a local mentorship program started by the superintendent, will be expanded so that students can see what success looks like in the world of work. Collaboration with the Maysville-Mason County Chamber of Commerce on "Work Ready Community" status with local agricultural leaders to increase opportunities in this area of the economy, and with community and civic organizations to develop a Graduation Compact, will help assure a 100% graduation rate.
- Goal 3: Schools will communicate promptly and collaborate effectively with parents and the community. Each school in Mason County will create both a Parent Advisory Council and a Student Advisory Council to solicit input on positive aspects of the school and to identify areas for improvement. A committee composed of students, parents, community stakeholders, and district staff developed a comprehensive communication plan based on an analysis of target audiences and current effectiveness.

The Mason County School System has moved from no proficient schools to two of three schools with accountable grades and the district being classified as Proficient. In 2012, Mason County High School became an "iPad one-to-one" school with distribution of over 800 iPads to all Mason County High School students. The rollout was attended by numerous local dignitaries, business persons, and public servants, and was covered by Lexington and Northern Kentucky media. The rollout was rated one of the top 100 in the world for 2012 by Fortune Magazine. In 2016, Mason County was the first school system in the state to implement "Project Lead the Way" across all grade levels. MCSS also remodeled an existing building to house its new STEAM Academy. It is the goal of the Mason County School System that all students reach academic proficiency and graduate college and/or are career ready.

Specifically, the Mason County School System will address four areas for improvement:

1. Increase the graduation rate annually until all accountable students graduate;
2. Reduce the non-duplicated achievement gap annually;
3. Increase the percentage of students who are college and/or career ready annually until all students are able to successfully transition to postsecondary education or the workforce; and
4. Increase the percentage of students scoring proficient or higher and decrease the percentage scoring novice annually in the combined reading and mathematics category until all students are academically successful as measured by accountability assessments.

The Mason County School System is known across the state for its choral, orchestral, and art programs. The Mason County Concert Choir has performed a number of times in prestigious venues both in the U. S. and in Europe. The sports program has produced two state basketball championships. The track and cross country teams are competitive at the state level, and the Indoor Track Team was the 2014 state champion. MCSS annually submits the maximum number of applicants to the Governor's Scholar Program with most chosen to participate. The world language department leads a tour each year to Europe or Central America. This year the tour went to France and Spain.

## St. Patrick's School

St. Patrick's is a K-12 parochial school. The school is accredited by the Kentucky Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The grade school program offers nine years of education in religion, language arts, math, science, social studies, practical living, and arts and humanities. Students at this level have extracurricular activities in sports competitions, 4-H, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and academic teams.

The high school offers a comprehensive program that is primarily college-prep in focus. However, students also have access to vocational education in cooperation with the local state vocational school. High school students who attend St. Patrick's are required to complete a minimum of 28 credits for graduation. 18.5 of those credits must meet the requirements of the Kentucky Department of Education. Students must also meet the school requirement of four credits in theology. St. Patrick's High School and Maysville Community and Technical College have a dual credit agreement for the following courses: Calculus/Statistics, US History, Advanced Biology, and College English.

Students come from all parts of the socio-economic spectrum. Many faiths are represented in the student body, of which approximately 60% are Roman Catholic. The total enrollment of St. Patrick's School in the 2015-2016 school year was 207 students. The 2014 senior class of 19 students was offered total scholarship monies in the amount of \$2,176,038.

## Highland Christian School

Highland Christian School began in the basement of the Highland Christian Church in the fall of 1999 with three faculty members, 12 students, and three grades ranging from Jr. Kindergarten to First Grade. Within four years, the school experienced growing pains from the lack of space and an obvious need to expand into further grades.

The school was able to purchase the large building previously occupied by E.A. Robinson at the Bottom of the Hill on US 68. This purchase took place in May, 2003 and the school re-opened for the 2003-2004 school year in September, 2003. At the grand opening, six classrooms were fully operational and staffed, a cafeteria was in operation, and plans for an outdoor playground were on the drawing board.

The school continued to grow and meet community needs by implementing a daycare facility in the spring of 2005. Highland Christian School and Daycare has a current enrollment of over 100 full- and part-time daycare and preschool students and an average daily attendance of 65. The school also operates an after-care program, which allows working mothers and fathers to leave their children after school in a safe and secure environment. As of 2016, several students from the Mason County School System ranging in grades from Head Start to early elementary are transported by bus on a daily basis to Highland Christian School and Daycare to use its after-care program.

In March 2015, Highland Christian School and Daycare became the central kitchen in the Maysville area for the UMC Food Ministry located in Latonia, KY. UMC Food Ministry partners with non-profit organizations to provide food to children in areas of substantial need. As the central kitchen, Highland Christian School and Daycare provides meals to its own children as well as to participants of the Tom Browning Boys and Girls Club, Camp Discovery, and several local churches and church camps. Meals are provided free of charge to all participants regardless of income.

### Nativity Montessori School

In 1916, a community preschool was started at the Episcopal Church of the Nativity in Maysville, which became the Episcopal Day School in 1974. In 2004, the classrooms were converted into one large room, resulting in the creation of the Nativity Montessori School. The school had 26 students enrolled in 2011-2012, with three of the students receiving partial scholarships and one student receiving a full scholarship.

The school's goals for the next 10+ years are:

1. Attain Kentucky and/or National Montessori Accreditation by the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year;
2. Continue to remain a financially-viable school in uncertain economic times, while providing a leading high-quality and affordable education for the area;
3. Continue to increase viable financial aid options for students and families;
4. Maintain and grow Nativity's involvement in the Maysville/Mason County greater community; and
5. Explore growth and expansion options to First Grade and beyond.

## Little Hands Learning Center, Maysville Church of the Nazarene

In 2011, the Church of the Nazarene received a conditional use permit from the Maysville Board of Adjustment to establish a private school. The Church was initially equipped with classrooms upon construction in 1998, and its school officially opened in the spring of 2012. As of early 2016, the Church has four classrooms: an infant room, a one-year room, a two- and three-year room, and a Preschool room; the Church plans to open a fifth room in the summer of 2016. There is also a gym for indoor play with the potential of having an outdoor playground constructed by the end of summer, 2016.

## Maysville Academy

Maysville Academy provides a unique opportunity for families in and around Maysville to enroll their children in an institution focused on academic excellence and sporting prowess, while fostering a deep understanding of science, mathematics, and technology. Rooted in the classical liberal arts tradition, delivered by graduates of the world's leading universities, Maysville Academy provides a safe, driven, and caring environment in which positive competition is encouraged, alongside the fostering of character, integrity, and community engagement.

Maysville Academy seeks to combine the best practices of traditional British independent schools, proven components of American curricula, and cutting-edge approaches to science and technology instruction in its endeavor to cultivate the next generation of sophisticated innovators. Set along the idyllic Ohio River and surrounding hills of Maysville, Kentucky, the Academy will provide pupils with unparalleled access to excellent education in the Sciences through individualized attention, the acquisition of practical, in-demand skills in hard technology, and literacy in all forms. Pupil learning is enhanced by exposure national, global, and international perspectives. Knowledge based teaching, supplemented by instruction in practical and technical skills, fosters pupils who are autonomous logical thinkers, capable of solving the challenges proactively.

The Academy encourages positive competition, integrity, and academic achievement at the highest levels. Outside the classroom, athletic training instills the virtues of perseverance, teamwork, and self-improvement. Pupils will be positioned to excel in all forms of standardized testing, although this is a by-product of the Academy's unique approach to tuition, not the rationale for it. Finally,

Maysville Academy graduates will leave with refined manners, etiquette, foreign language proficiency, and an informed understanding of the world around them.

### Licking Valley Head Start

Licking Valley Head Start provides a comprehensive child development program for low-income children three and four years of age. Ten percent of the enrollment is available for children with disabilities. Children with disabilities and their families receive the full range of Head Start developmental services. Head Start also subcontracts with the Fleming County Board of Education to provide KERA Preschool services to eligible three- and four-year-old children.

The four major components of Head Start are: 1) Education – the Educational program is designed to meet each child's needs, and every child receives a variety of learning experiences to foster intellectual, social, and emotional growth; 2) Health – Head Start arranges for every child to receive comprehensive health care, including medical, dental, mental health, and nutrition services; 3) Parental Involvement – an essential part of every Head Start program is the involvement of parents in Parent Education program planning and operating activities; and 4) Social Services – services are provided that will build upon individuals strengths of families to meet their needs.

### Colleges and Technical Schools

Maysville Community & Technical College (MCTC) is a two-year college that has served the region since 1968. As part of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, MCTC is a premier education and training provider. The college has campuses in four different locations: Cynthiana, Maysville, Morehead, and Mount Sterling. Its service region consists of 17 northeastern Kentucky counties and 2 southeastern Ohio counties. MCTC is accredited by the Southern Associate of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

MCTC awards associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates in more than 25 areas of study, and students enjoy flexible course scheduling such as day, evening, online, and ITV class options. Upon successful completion of their desired program, students can transfer to four-year institutions to pursue additional education or engage a fulfilling career in the workforce. The philosophy of “Students First” remains the long-term commitment of MCTC, as does a renewed dedication to be different, better, and purposeful in all aspects of the college.

The Mason County Area Technology Center serves high school students by enhancing and expanding student career options that lead to continuation of education at the postsecondary level and/or successful employment upon graduation from high school. Feeder schools for the Technology Center include: public schools in Mason, Bracken, and Robertson Counties; St. Patrick's; Augusta Independent; and Tollesboro Christian School. Students are able to learn skilled trades, which include: auto-body repair, electrical technology, health sciences, welding technology, and automotive technology. The role of the Technology Center is vital in the overall scheme of economic development, because it provides an additional avenue by which business and industry personnel may be trained.

### Other Services

Home health service, rural home health, and personal touch home care services are provided through the Meadowview Regional Medical Center, the Buffalo Trace Cancer Care Center, the Dialysis Clinic, Inc., the Mason County Health Department, Comprehend, Inc., Mental Health-Mental Retardation Board, the Maysville-Mason County Ambulance Service, Hospice of Hope, Hayswood Home Health, Cancer Fighters United Resource Center founded by Janie Hord, and the Radiation Therapy Center. Meadowview has a medical staff of 34 active physicians, 37 courtesy physicians, 87 registered nurses, 20 licensed practical nurses, and 23 nurses aides. There is also a private regional transport service that transports patients from facility to facility. In 2013, Hospice of Hope completed a 32 room assisted living facility as well as an 8 bed in-patient facility located on Kenton Pointe Way between the AA Highway and Kenton Station Golf Course. Both facilities are designed with room to expand.

The Maysville Fire Department is manned by 26 full-time public safety officers who are trained as firemen and EMTs or paramedics. Equipment includes three pumper trucks, 77 ft. ladder truck, and four ambulances. The MFD responds to calls within city limits while ambulance service is county-wide. They have two stations, one in downtown Maysville, and one on Kenton Station Road near the hospital. Statistics from the Kentucky Transportation Center at the University of Kentucky regarding traffic safety are shown in Table 12.

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Total Accidents	2,147
Alcohol-Related Accidents	160
Pedestrian Accidents	23
Bicycle Accidents	8
Motorcycle Accidents	42
Truck Accidents	229
Drug-Related Accidents	25
School Bus Accidents	7

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Table 12. Selected Traffic Accident Data, 2008-2012. (Kentucky Transportation Center).

The Washington-Maysville Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department has nine members who supplement the paid department and serve outside city limits. Their equipment includes a pumper, tanker, boat, and a variety of rescue items. Fire protection in the County is provided by volunteer fire departments located at several sites. Each volunteer fire department has trained firemen and adequate equipment to cover the unincorporated areas of the County.

Police protection is provided within the City of Maysville by 26 full-time police officers. The Maysville Police Department has a trained Emergency Response Team, cross-trained K-9 units, bike patrol, and a Criminal Investigation Section. Officers utilize 26 cruisers for patrolling the area inside city limits. Police protection is provided in the unincorporated parts of the County through the Mason County Sheriff Department and the Kentucky State Police; in addition to the Sheriff, the Mason County Sheriff Department employs 11 deputies. A new county-wide communication system is housed at the Maysville Police Department.

HAZMAT 8 is a regional response team whose function is to refine and contain contaminants in response to incidents in which contaminants have spilled or leaked into the environment. The City and County have ordinances that pertain to hazardous material incidents; they require the owners of hazardous products to provide clean-up measures and bear the cost whenever an incident occurs.

Figures 6A, 6B, and 6C show the locations of public and community facilities in Maysville and Mason County.



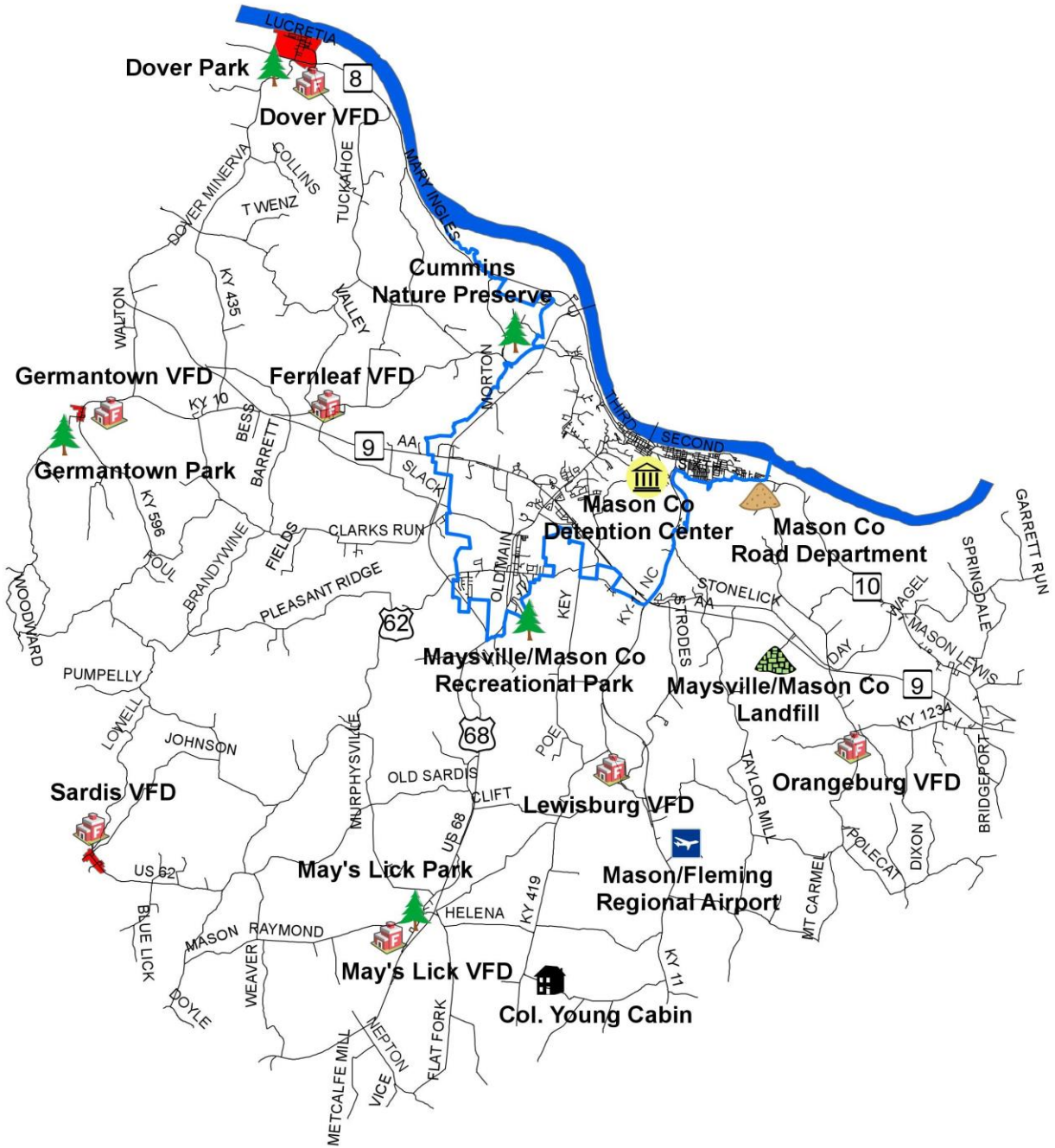


Figure 6B. Mason County Public Facilities Map

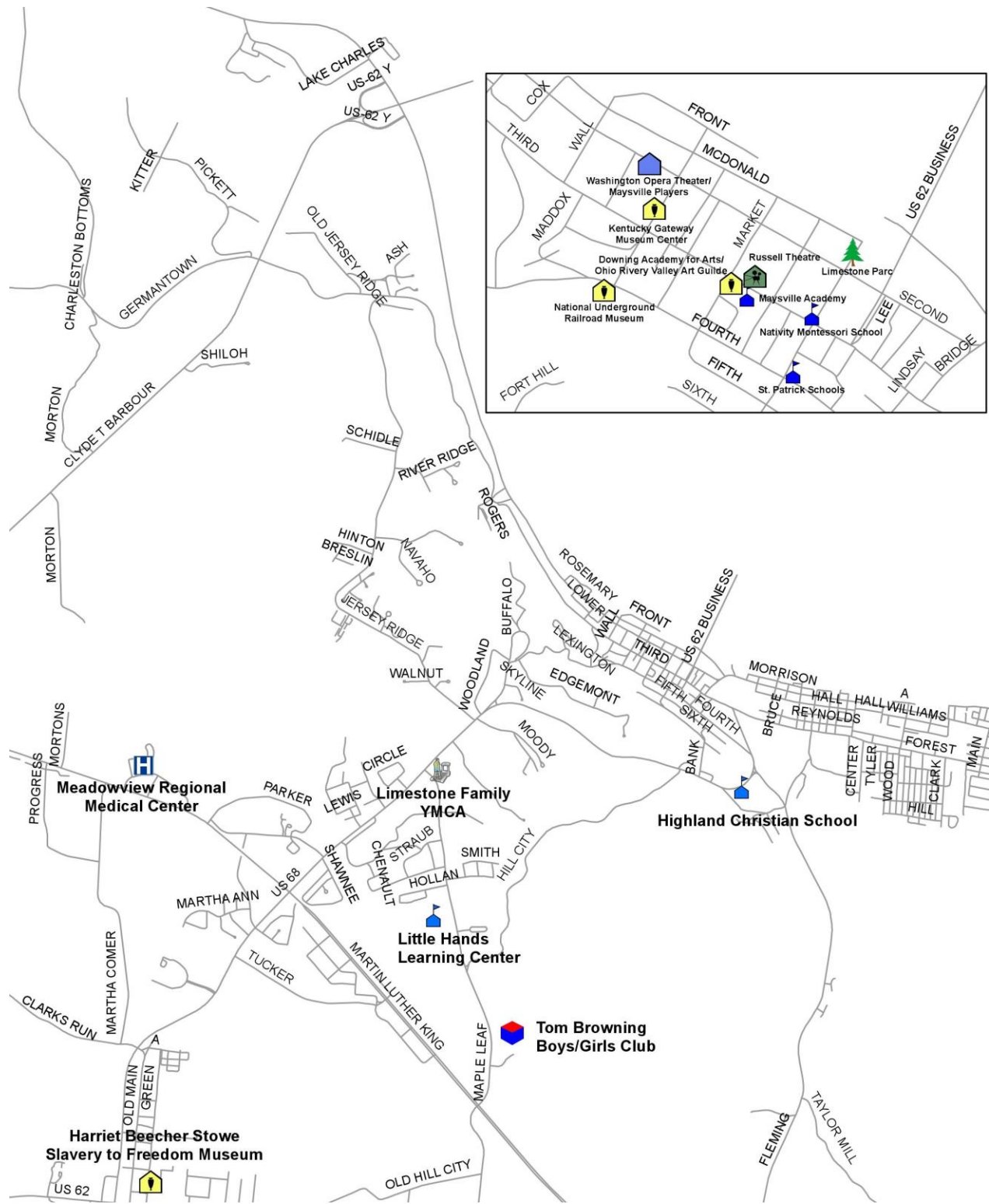


Figure 6C. Maysville Community Facilities Map

## HOUSING

The latest information on housing was provided in the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 QuickFacts estimates and in the 2010-2014 American Community Survey. The Census information contained therein is useful in developing a general view of the local housing situation in Maysville and Mason County, while recognizing that a number of changes have taken place since 2010.

In 2015, Mason County had a total of 8,138 housing units, a change of only 33 units since 2010. Updated information is not available concerning how many of those housing units are in Maysville as of 2015. However, because of the relatively small change of 33 units since 2010, it is likely that the 2010 housing totals – 4,477 units located in the City of Maysville, and 3,628 units located in the remainder of the County – remain relatively accurate. The breakdown on County housing units is demonstrated in Table 13.

<u>Type Unit</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Single-Family residences	6,276	77.3
Multi-Family residences	854	10.5
<u>Mobile homes</u>	<u>987</u>	<u>12.2</u>
Total:	8,117	100.0

Table 13. Housing Types in Mason County, 2010-2014. (American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate).

In 2014, approximately 59.4% of Mason County's 8,117 housing units were at least 34 years old, compared to 68% of Maysville's 4,382. Only 0.6% of the 6,636 occupied housing units in Mason County lacked complete plumbing facilities, and 0.7% lacked complete kitchen facilities; of the City of Maysville's 3,575 occupied housing units, only 0.3% lack complete plumbing facilities, and 0.7% lack complete kitchen facilities. In Mason County, 4,567 of the 6,636 occupied housing units (68.8%) were owner-occupied, and 2,069 (31.2%) were renter-occupied; within the City of Maysville, 2,097 of the 3,575 occupied housing units (58.7%) were owner-occupied, and 1,478 (41.3%) were renter-occupied. Single-family housing accounted for 77.3% of all housing in Mason County and 78.9% of all housing in the City of Maysville; multi-family, 10.5% and 19.1%, respectively; and mobile homes, 12.2% and 2.1%, respectively. The homeowner vacancy and rental vacancy rates were less than 1% in both Mason County and in the City of Maysville. In Mason County, of the estimated 6,636 households, 4,714 (71%) were family

households and 1,922 (29%) were non-family households. In the City of Maysville, of the estimated 3,575 households, 2,255 (63.1%) were family households and 1,320 (36.9%) were non-family households. The median value of housing in Mason County and in the City of Maysville was \$102,600 and \$108,400, respectively.

The Housing Authority of Maysville and Mason County Fiscal Court both operate public housing units. The Housing Authority of Maysville operates 260 units of Low Income Public Housing in 11 locations, mostly in the East End of downtown Maysville. The average occupancy rate varies between 95% and 98%. The average yearly gross income for a public housing resident is \$10,192.60, which produces an average family rent of \$230.76 per month. The gross income reported in the 2011 Comprehensive Housing Plan compared to the 2016 gross income reported reflects a \$405.83 increase in the public housing resident's annual income. This impacts the family's rent by a \$41.94 increase over what had been previously reported in 2011.

The Section 8 Rental Assistance Program operates up to 108 units within the community and helps families and individuals meeting the regional Very Low-Income Standard. Section 8 units have always been inspected using Housing Quality Standards, which are the minimum standards set forth by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. The Housing Authority of Maysville has contracted with the City of Maysville to have Section 8 units inspected by the City's HQS Inspector and Building Official. The Mason County Fiscal Court adopted the Kentucky Building Code and Kentucky Residential Code in 2005. This code, which was previously in place in the City, regulates the construction of residential, commercial, industrial, and accessory structures. The County, in agreement with the City, uses the City Building Inspector for all structural inspections. Since contracting building inspections with the City of Maysville, the Housing Authority of Maysville has seen an increase in the building integrity of its Section 8 Rental units. This partnership has had a positive effect for Section 8 clients, their landlords, and the whole community.

The Housing Authority of Maysville operates several programs for the benefit of all residents: 1) assistance with daily living activities for any willing elderly or disabled participant; 2) a Masters of Computer Basics program that teaches keyboarding, Microsoft products, Internet use, e-mail, and Quickbooks accounting using 18 stations at the Amo Peters Community Center; 3) a summer lunch program beginning on the day after the last day of school in the spring and finishing on the day before the first day of school in the fall; and 4) a partnership with Maysville

Community & Technical College to offer GED classes at the Amo Peters Community Center.

The need for affordable housing has continued to be an issue in the City and the County since it was originally discussed by a number of citizens during the assessment process of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan update. Much of the population in the Maysville area is an aging population. Housing facilities designed for the elderly and disabled populations, specifically ground-level one- and two-bedroom apartments, are greatly needed. Furthermore, since the last update of the Plan in 2011, there have been several facilities constructed or remodeled, that provide affordable housing and housing tailored for the elderly population. These include: the Kenton Pointe Assisted Living Facility, Woodleigh Apartments, the Landings, and Menemsha Townhomes. The Woodleigh Apartments and the Landings are great examples of adaptive re-use projects in the City.

The Housing Authority of Maysville has 100 units in its portfolio that are 68 years old. It has made the decision to replace the original windows with more energy-efficient double-pane windows and install central air conditioning. Hopefully, this will help make these units more marketable to clients. Upgrades to each unit's kitchen and bathroom will take place as more funding becomes available.

The current economic conditions alone indicate that there is a very strong need for affordable housing. Housing goals are achieved through rent from the tenants, subsidies from the federal government, and grant money that can be obtained from competitive funding. With many housing authorities nationwide facing extreme budget cuts for both public and Section 8 housing, there are concerns about how to maintain existing affordable housing services. The Housing Authority of Maysville must look to the future for innovative ways to continue to achieve its housing goals through cooperative partnership with non-profits and individuals.

## LAND USE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Most of the land in Mason County is used for agricultural activities. There are three small incorporated cities in the western part of the County: Sardis, Dover, and Germantown. Additionally, there are several small rural communities dispersed throughout the County, and a few fairly sizeable residential subdivisions. Figures 7A, 7B, 7C, and 7D show the general land use patterns for the City of Maysville and Mason County.

Land use within the City of Maysville and unincorporated parts of the County is guided by the Maysville/Mason County Land Use Management Ordinance. The land use ordinance is closely linked to the Comprehensive Plan and serves as a means of implementing the plan. Uses of land and structures are regulated to encourage the harmonious arrangement of land uses, and to minimize negative impacts of development on the quality of life in the City and County.

The negative trends that have disrupted tobacco farming are expected to result in more interest and pressure being exerted to redevelop rural farmland into urban type land uses. The plan recommends an approach for dealing with these problems. The negative tobacco farming trends also present the opportunity to redevelop land in the East End of downtown Maysville. There are multiple tobacco warehouses that were historically used to store tobacco after it was harvested. Much of this land either lies empty, or tobacco warehouses that remain on the land are disused or are used primarily for storage. Furthermore, virtually all former tobacco warehouse land is currently zoned as industrial land. Figure 7C demonstrates changes to the future expected land uses of the East End, with much of the disused industrial land shown as either open space, commercial, mixed-use, or residential land.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION

History is one of Maysville's and Mason County's outstanding assets. As documented earlier in the text, Maysville and Mason County have an abundance of historic sites and structures, from the early settlement days of the late 1700s, to the Civil War involvement, to distinctive architecture of the 1800s and 1900s. The City has a Tourism Director who oversees efforts to preserve the historic value of downtown Maysville while encouraging its physical and economic revitalization. The Maysville-Washington Board of Architectural Review also plays an important role in preserving the historic and architectural heritage of the community. Great care should be given by all responsible parties to insure that the community preserves these historic treasures while supporting their use as appropriate.

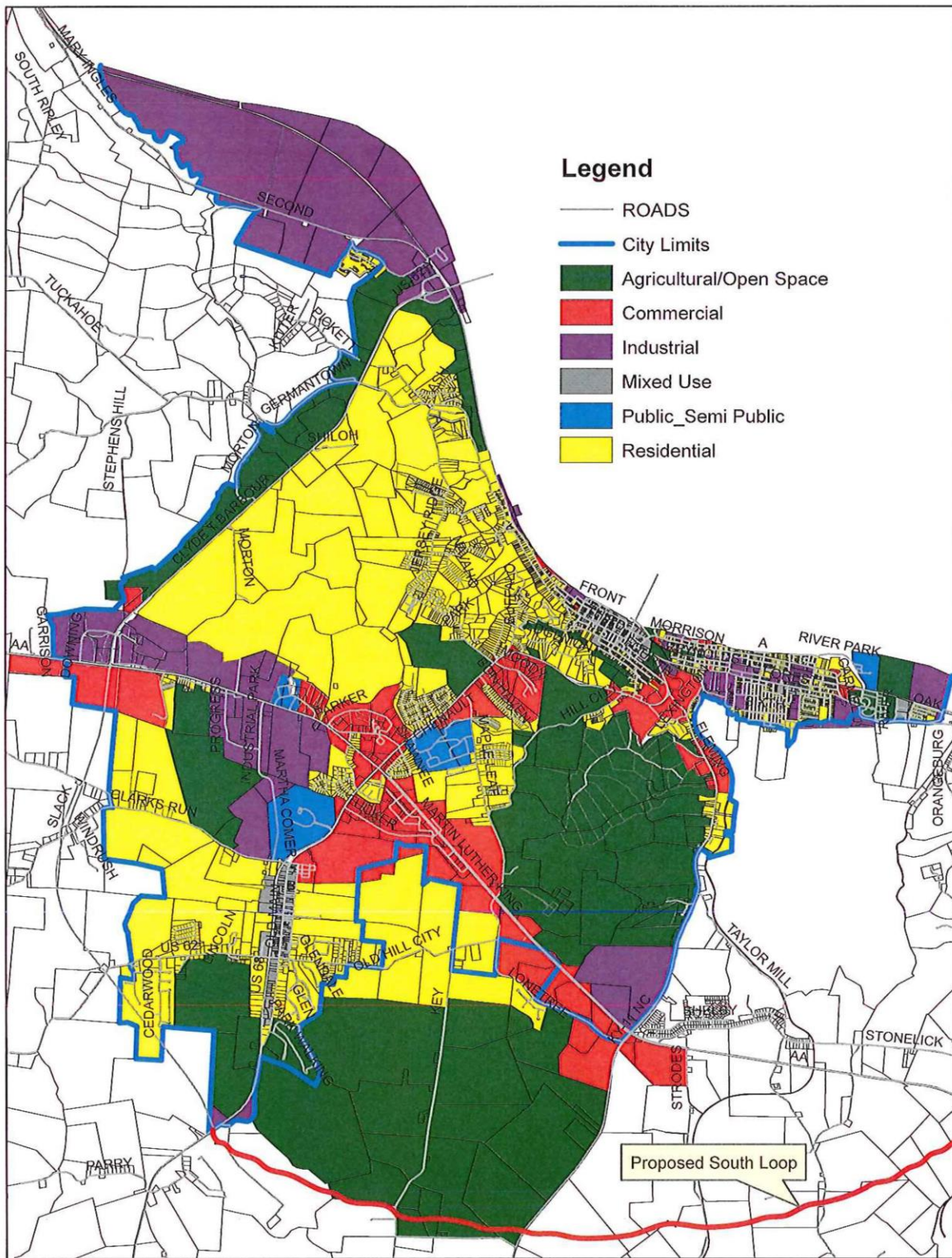


Figure 7A. Maysville Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map

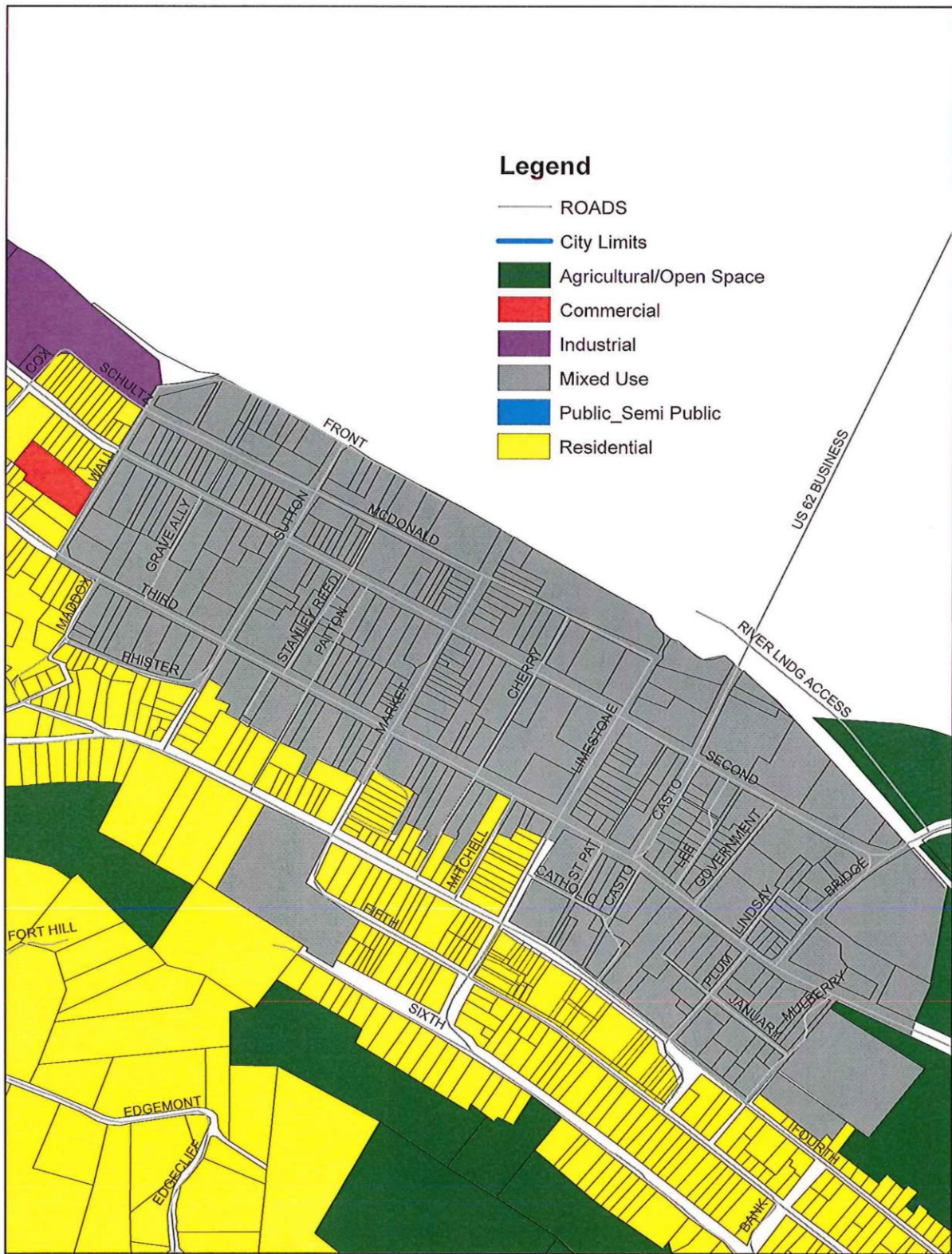


Figure 7B. Maysville Central Business District Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map

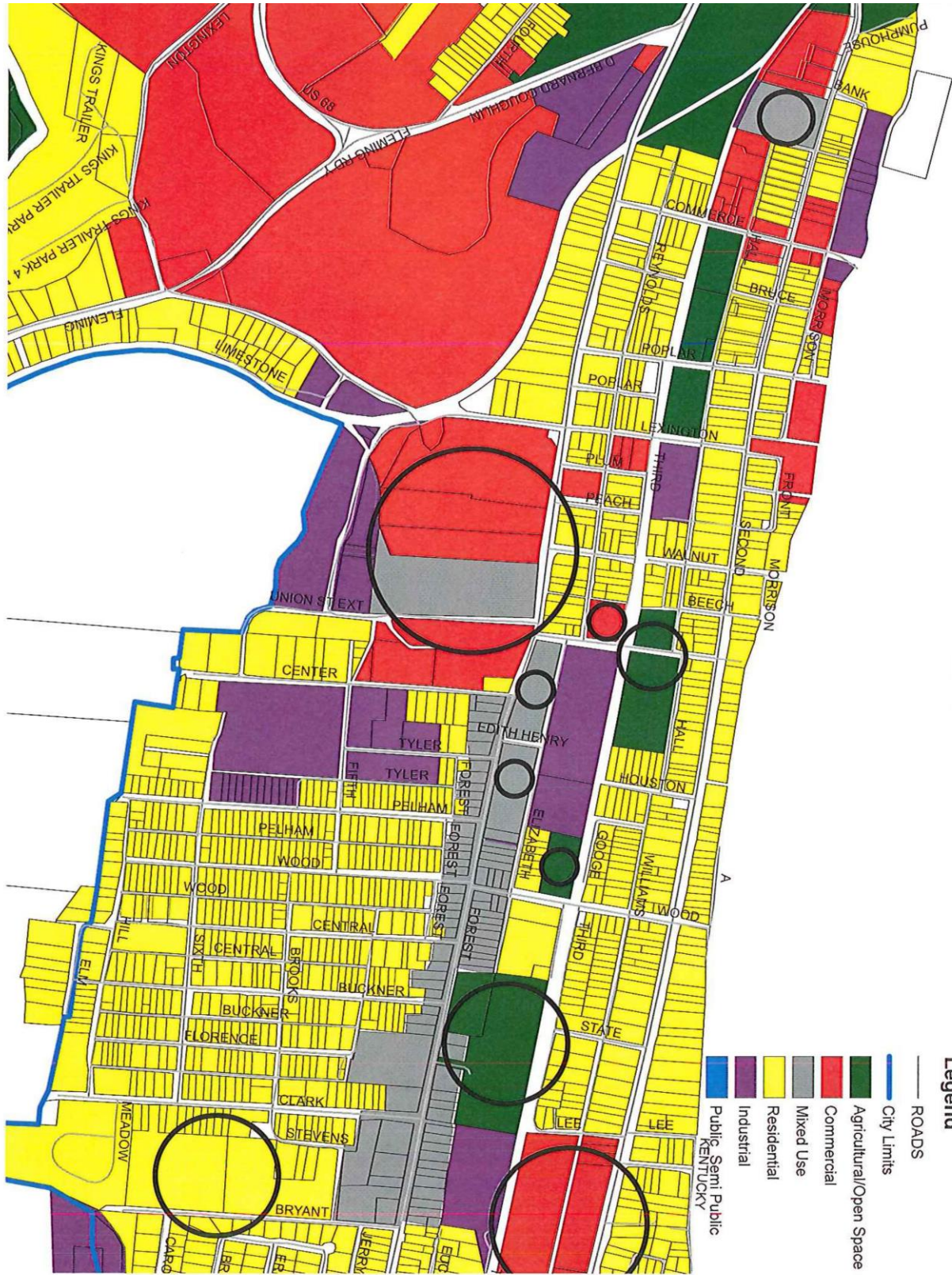


Figure 7C. Maysville East End Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map

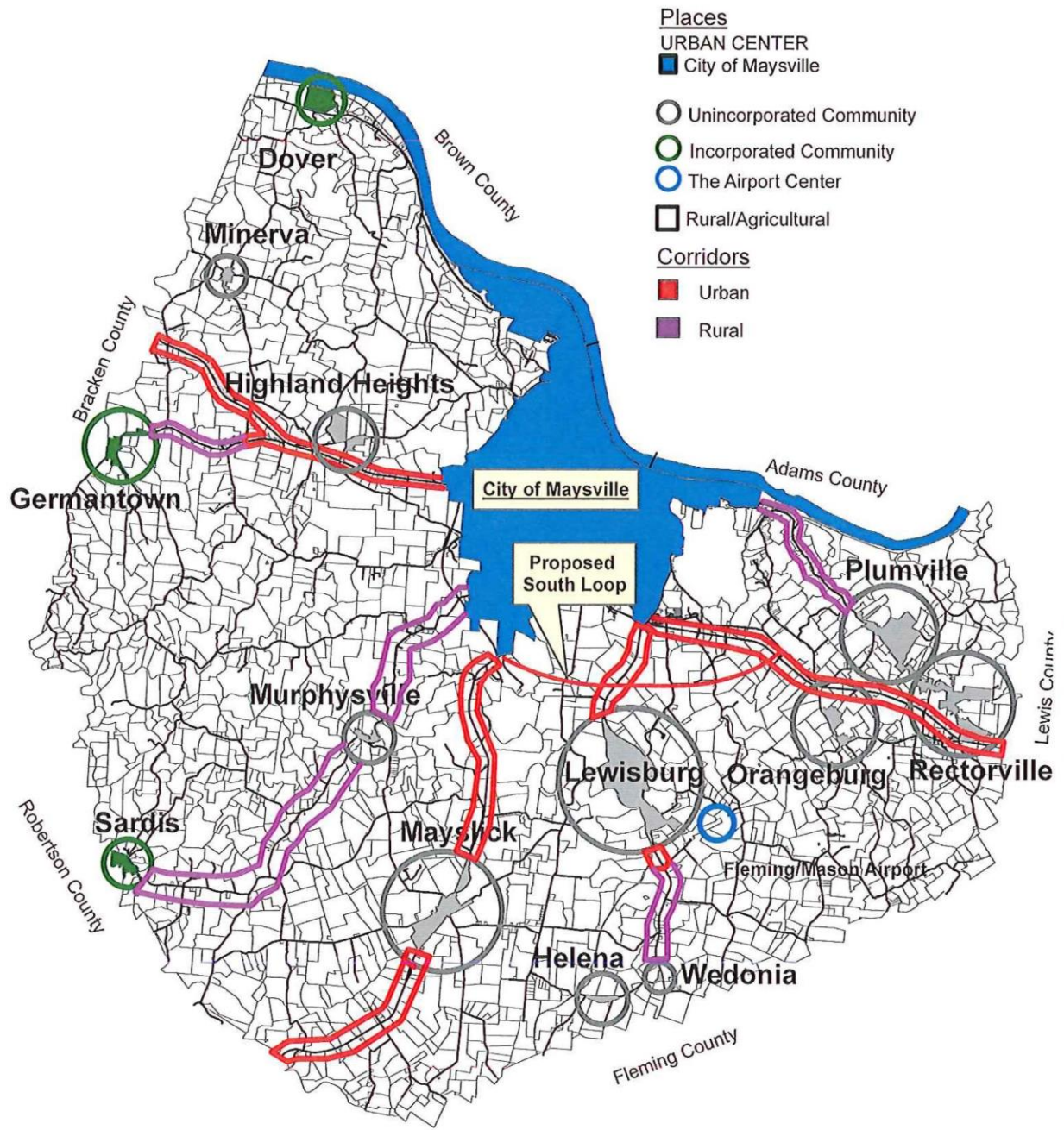


Figure 7D. Mason County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map

# SUMMARY STATEMENT

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

In order to determine the directions to be taken in the plan, it is necessary to assess the status of the community and its resources. Part of this community assessment process consisted of asking various individuals and groups for their perception of the community's strengths and problem areas. The statement of goals and objectives, as well as the plan strategies, are based on an understanding of what needs to be changed, and on the community's ability to deal with those changes. The following lists summarize the findings of the community assessment:

## COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

1. **Location** on the Ohio River roughly within an hour's drive of three metropolitan areas, with two bridges, a diversified transportation system, and a surrounding largely rural-agricultural landscape, gives the County strategic advantages for the future.
2. Probably the single most important strength the community has is its **people**. The population is regarded as friendly, willing to support local activities, hard-working, capable of making adjustments to changing circumstances, having a positive outlook about the future, etc.
3. The community's **diversified economy** is a major asset. The farm economy has remained strong and viable over the years, by shifting production away from tobacco to more corn, soybeans, and grain. With a well-established trade and service sector and an expanding industrial base, the County's economy should be able to weather the short-term ups and downs that will occur.
4. **Educational resources** are considered to be one of the County's strong points. Improvements in academic measures and the availability of technology in both public and private schools, along with the resources of the community college, should help improve employment opportunities and increase the quality of life for citizens.

5. **Pending Transportation Improvements** will help to alleviate some of the congestion problems, improve access throughout the County, and improve linkages with surrounding counties.
6. The great number of **churches** and the many **civic-volunteer organizations** are seen as **stabilizing factors** in the community.
7. The **richness of historic value** in the community provides strong reference points, and offers additional opportunities for tourism development.
8. The **small size and relative compactness** of the County lends itself to effective administration and community closeness.
9. **Excellent medical facilities and health services.**
10. The **availability of land and the quality of soils for farming.**
11. The **potential** to strengthen the community's role as a **small regional growth center.**
12. The **assistance** of Buffalo Trace Area Development District resources as well as state and federal government offices.
13. **Cooperation of local financial institutions** in local development projects.
14. **People from outside the community** who have been **willing to invest** in preservation and other projects.
15. **Cooperation between City, County, and the Buffalo Trace Area Development District.**
16. **The emergence of a vibrant cultural arts district**, which includes the Maysville Players, Downing Academy of Performing Arts, Maysville Community and Technical College's Culinary Arts Program, Ohio River Valley Art Guild, Kentucky Gateway Museum, local high school art students, and the Arts Commission.
17. **The positive impact of commerce via the Ohio River.**

## PROBLEM AREAS

1. **Inadequate sewage disposal** in the rural areas of the County leading to pollution problems and possible health concerns. Steps should be taken to see that future concentrated development is not dependent upon septic tank systems for sewage disposal.
2. **Visual blight** resulting from littering, dumping of garbage/trash, substandard structures, junkyards, etc., and **lack of attention being paid to aesthetic values**. Most people desire to live in an attractive environment. In addition, a clean landscape is an important component in any tourism development program.
3. The **aging of the population** and the related need for support services, housing, etc. As the local population continues to grow older, it will be necessary to spend more time planning for their needs and to allocate additional resources to this segment of the population.
4. The **need for revisions to the plan and the tools used to implement the plan**. The 1987 plan is being revised through this document, to include recommendations for improving upon the policies and programs needed to carry out the plan's proposals.
5. The **problems related to tobacco farming** and the need to fill the void created by its decline. The problems related to the decline in tobacco farming are far-reaching, but with the disposition of settlement funds alternatives are being explored, such as cattle, increased grain production, and agri-tourism.
6. The **need for more assisted/affordable housing**. It is increasingly difficult for a large segment of the population to find decent affordable housing. Increases in land values, housing costs, and down-payments, together with low vacancy rates, all contribute to this problem.
7. The **low level of citizen involvement** in community issues. Citizens have a tendency to stay away from meetings on public issues unless there is a very direct/personal tie to their property and/or financial concerns.
8. **Inadequate protection of watersheds**. Development is taking place without adequate attention being paid to drainage and soil erosion.

9. **Inadequate protection of historic sites and structures.** As indicated in the list of assets, Mason County has a unique quality due to its rich historic resources. These historic sites and structures cannot be replaced, and their retention should be a high priority.
10. **Inadequate infrastructure in rural areas** to meet the needs of more intensive development. Much of the County has roads that are too narrow for heavy traffic, waterlines that are too small for domestic use or fire flow, and septic tanks that do not function well.
11. **Aging infrastructure**, including the sewer and floodwall systems in the City and road system in the County. Many of these issues should be alleviated as the City will be completing a Combined Sewer Overflow project in 2017, and is working closely with the Army Corp of Engineers and Federal Emergency Management Agency to make upgrades to the floodwall.
12. The **lack of sufficient local governmental resources** (money, staff, etc.) in meeting increasing demands for services. It is anticipated that both the City and the unincorporated portions of the County will continue to experience growth and development. With most of the economy/revenues concentrated in the City, it will be increasingly difficult for the County to provide an adequate level of services without new revenues.
13. **Traffic congestion** in some areas, largely during peak hours in a few spots. There are a few locations in Maysville where traffic flow reaches undesirable levels. Completion of pending road improvements should help to reduce these problems.
14. The need for **additional recreational resources** and the **conservation** of natural areas.
15. **Drug addiction** to pain killers, heroin, and other illegal drugs has become a major problem in Maysville and Mason County.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Many of the findings of this assessment parallel the findings of the 1987 Comprehensive Plan. The 1987 Plan stressed the needs of the City of Maysville and

placed a high priority on industrial development, transportation (highway) improvements, and land use controls. The recommendations regarding industrial development and transportation were largely acted upon, and since the adoption of the 2001 Plan, recommendations on county-wide land use controls have been addressed. The 2016 Plan shifts the emphasis to a more broad-based approach to meeting the needs over the next 15-20 year period. This shift will become more apparent in the statement of goals and objectives and in the development of strategies for implementing the plan.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

#### *Goal Statement:*

To encourage the development and maintenance of a diverse transportation and communication system that will move people, goods, and information effectively.

#### *Objectives:*

1. Complete the transportation system improvements that are presently included in the six-year transportation plan.
2. Continue to make recommendations for transportation improvements to be included in the state's long-range and six-year planning cycles.
3. Develop a plan for maximizing use of the proposed South Loop around the south side of Maysville while providing for orderly growth and development, via corridor districts, that is not detrimental to traffic flow.
4. Continue to reduce traffic congestion problems through operational improvements. The City may want to consider traffic flow changes in the downtown business district, utilizing input from the Maysville Main Street Board.
5. Support the improvement of Kentucky Highway 8 from the Harsha Bridge to downtown Maysville.

6. Continue to maintain the Simon Kenton Bridge.
7. Stay current with high-tech changes taking place, including the KentuckyWired project, which plans to bring high-speed fiber optic cable to the entire state.
8. Increase utilization of the Ohio River for recreation, tourism, and commercial activities (Port Authority Study), and utilize signage, maps, and mobile technology to help guide visitors throughout the community.
9. Continue efforts to improve the County road system.
10. Encourage provisions for pedestrian and bicycle traffic along major routes and in residential subdivisions.
11. Continue to support expansion of the airport and promote use of the facilities.
12. Provide a plan for better transportation systems north of the community into Ohio.
13. Promote increased use of the local Amtrak station, and support heavy rail usage.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### *Goal Statement:*

To support the development of a broad-based economic system that leads to improvements in quality of life by providing enhanced employment opportunities, a diversity of goods and services, and a strong revenue base.

### *Objectives:*

1. Support the attraction of additional industrial and commercial activities from outside the County, including the promotion of recruitment efforts.
2. Continue to support the entrepreneurial program and incubator program to assist citizens in their efforts to establish new businesses.

3. Expand the potential economic benefits of tourism- and recreation-related activities.
4. Continue to support revitalization efforts in downtown Maysville and Old Washington.
5. Promote and market Mason County as a retirement community.
6. Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses and industries, utilizing the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Board, and Maysville Open for Business.
7. Continue efforts to strengthen and market agri-business farms and agri-tourism.
8. Utilize resources to retain members of Millennial Generation, as well as provide amenities that will attract members of the generation from outside the community.

## **PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

### *Goal Statement:*

To provide the people of Maysville and Mason County with an adequate level of community facilities and services to meet their basic needs and enhance their quality of life.

### *Objectives:*

1. Continue the upgrading and expansion of the utilities necessary to meet future development requirements, and to meet compliance with mandatory changes to the combined sewer outflow system as well as integration of new strategies dealing with storm water runoff. Locations of wireless, cellular communications, and similar facilities shall be determined so as not to be offensive to residential or scenic areas; co-location shall be required when possible.

2. Continue to support a leadership/entrepreneurship programs for all school levels.
3. Continue to support Maysville Community & Technical College and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System for the benefit of existing and proposed industries in Mason County.
4. Continue efforts to increase the levels of educational attainment for all age groups.
5. Provide additional resources for recreational facilities and programs for all ages, with special emphasis on senior citizen needs, and expand seasonal opportunities at the Maysville/Mason County Recreation Park.
6. Maintain adequate staffing and equipment in the protective services to meet increasing demands associated with growth.
7. Continue consistent review and enforcement of regulations applicable to land use changes and development.
8. Continue to support a comprehensive program of health care and social services for all citizens, ensuring land use criteria are met.

## **HOUSING**

### *Goal Statement:*

To support the development of a program that ensures an adequate supply of standard housing units for all citizens of Maysville and Mason County.

### *Objectives:*

1. Continue enforcing current ordinances, such as Rental License and Vacant Property, to improve neighborhood quality by eliminating blighted and deteriorated housing. Also utilize fire inspections and forced sales.
2. Support additional housing options for senior citizens and Rural Communities.

3. Continue to utilize the full range of governmental programs to renovate existing housing and to provide new housing for low- and moderate-income families.
4. Encourage the revitalization of the local Habitat for Humanity housing program.
5. Continue a program of in-filling of vacant parcels of property within the City of Maysville.
6. Encourage residential subdivision development to take place in areas where the infrastructure is adequate.
7. Encourage development of additional and varied housing options for all citizens.
8. Encourage the revitalization/rehabilitation of structures when possible.

## **LAND USE AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

### *Goal Statement:*

To ensure that there is an adequate supply of land available to meet residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and public needs, managed in such a way as to protect the total environment.

### *Objectives:*

1. Establish, follow, and rewrite when needed, a comprehensive land use management program that will meet the specific development needs of the City of Maysville and the unincorporated areas of Mason County.
2. Continue to encourage redevelopment/revitalization of the tobacco warehouse areas of the City for other uses.
3. Make revisions to the existing subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance to account for any changes in K.R.S. 100, and to meet the needs of changing conditions and concerns in the local area.

4. Continue to strengthen the County's efforts in solid waste management.
5. Strengthen efforts to make citizens aware of the need to reduce littering and to dispose of solid waste in a responsible manner.
6. Reduce the problems of water pollution by requiring developed areas outside the City to tie onto the city sewer system where possible.
7. Reduce drainage and soil erosion problems through the enforcement of development requirements and regulations.
8. Ensure that all environmental concerns are properly addressed in applications for land use changes and development plans, and that the preservation of existing green space is addressed.
9. Promote the creation of a watershed management plan utilizing National Resource and Conservation Services.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### *Goal Statement:*

To preserve the historic sites, structures, and events in Maysville and Mason County consistent with the wise use of resources.

### *Objectives:*

1. Continue support of downtown Maysville revitalization and Old Washington Preservation programs. (See attached list of proposed goals and objectives for Old Washington).
2. Consider the establishment of protective buffers around major historic and cultural sites and structures.
3. Ensure that historic concerns are addressed in all applications for land use changes and development.

4. Support efforts to better utilize historic sites, structures, and events in the development of tourism and travel-related programs; and utilize social media to target specific groups.
5. Encourage property owners to preserve and maintain historic properties county-wide, and further protect them from demolition by neglect.
6. Review and revise the list of historic sites and structures to insure current and comprehensive coverage.
7. Mason County Fiscal Court should create a preservation board to oversee historic districts and landmarks in the unincorporated parts of the County.
8. Create a tree succession and maintenance plan in the Maysville and Washington Historic Districts, and utilize the Master Gardeners for upkeep.

## **OLD WASHINGTON**

### *Goal Statement:*

To preserve and protect the historical heritage of Old Washington and its built environment.

### *Objectives:*

1. Implement the 2007 Plan for Future Development of Old Washington.
2. Diversify the goods and services available in Old Washington.
3. Strengthen the organization and management of Old Washington, emphasizing the need for cooperation and coordination of activities.
4. Protect Old Washington from further encroachment by undesirable land uses and structures, both within the Old Washington Historic District and within Greater Old Washington.
5. Examine the feasibility of acquiring additional property and improving parking.

6. Revise the registry format for tracking visitors to the Visitor's Center.
7. Utilize more locations for visitor information.

## **DOWNTOWN MAYSVILLE:**

### *Goal Statement:*

To promote a healthy mix of land uses within the Central Business District.

### *Objectives:*

1. Identify and recruit business and retail uses.
2. Increase residential occupancies in and around the Central Business District through infill development and redevelopment in fringe areas, and encourage residential occupancy in upper floors of existing buildings.
3. Encourage and promote evening entertainment and restaurants, as well as daytime residential amenities.

### *Goal Statement:*

To encourage continued maintenance and revitalization of storefronts and facades.

### *Objectives:*

1. Develop financial incentive programs to assist property owners, such as low interest loans, tax moratoriums and abatements, facade grants, etc.
2. Offer professional design assistance.

### *Goal Statement:*

To promote tourism.

### *Objectives:*

1. Continue support of Maysville/Mason County Convention and Visitors Bureau.
2. Increase the advertising range.
3. Expand riverfront development.
4. Continue to market and promote the downtown Maysville Conference Center, including use of the Cox Building.
5. Help market and promote target destinations.

*Goal Statement:*

To strengthen the historic preservation program.

*Objectives:*

1. Evaluate existing program, staffing, and resources to identify areas needing improvement.
2. Update and revise Historic Preservation Ordinance.
3. Investigate ways to improve public awareness, education, and communications.
4. Inventory historic resources beyond the boundaries of the Maysville Historic District for possible expansion of the district.
5. Continue expansion of the downtown National Register District

## **RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS:**

*Goal Statement:*

To ensure that the rural farmland areas of Mason County are adequately provided for in the Comprehensive Plan.

*Objectives:*

1. Retain the appointed agricultural task force in the development of new farm strategies that will help to offset the losses sustained by the decline in tobacco farming.
2. Continue to support rural entrepreneurial development programs to assist local farmers in the start-up of new agricultural enterprises.
3. Continue to support and market the farmer's market to serve the needs of the local and regional population.
4. Develop a program to encourage the revitalization of selected rural towns and other communities.
5. Establish a program for maintaining green space and scenic values through- out the County.
6. Develop programs to support the retention of productive farmland.

(Note: A number of the goals and objectives apply to all parts of the County. The items listed above are especially applicable to the rural and agricultural portions of Mason County).

## **PLAN STRATEGIES**

Strategies are more specific statements about how the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations are to be implemented. This section of the Plan provides decision-makers with the information needed for making appropriate choices of actions to be taken. The same format used in previous sections is followed to give consistency to the text and to facilitate the reader's understanding. The first Plan element to be addressed is transportation.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

As discussed in the Plan Assessment, Mason County has a well-developed and diversified transportation system that provides adequate linkages with adjoining counties and regions. The highway system radiates outward from the City of

Maysville in all directions and facilitates the flow of vehicular traffic to and from important urban centers (Cincinnati, Lexington, Ashland, Columbus, etc.). The railroads serve a heavy volume of north-south freight movement as well as passenger traffic east and west by Amtrak. The airport is increasingly becoming a focal point for general aviation traffic. The Ohio River provides Mason County with direct access to one of the major inland waterways in the United States. Mason County presently has excellent east and west connections via the AA Highway. North-south linkages have recently been improved, particularly south of Mason County between Millersburg and Lexington. The William Harsha Bridge has improved connections with communities in Brown County, Ohio. Current construction projects on U.S. Hwy. 68 in Nicholas and Bourbon Counties will improve Mason County's access southward to the Lexington Metro Area.

Traffic flow figures for 2014 provided by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet show the following average daily totals: 3,500 (3<sup>rd</sup> & Limestone Streets); 12,400 (3<sup>rd</sup> & Bridge Streets); 12,000 (KY 9 & Market Square Drive); 4,700 (Maple Leaf Road and Straub Elementary access point); 17,500 (US 62 & Bon Haven Drive); 8,500 (US 62 & Tucker Drive); 1,200 (South Loop); 5,500 (KY 9 & Lewis County line); 5,700 (KY 9 & Fleming Co. line); 3,100 (US 68 & Fleming County line); 5,600 (KY 9 & Bracken County line); and 800 (KY 8 & Bracken County line).

The 2016-2022 Six Year State Highway Plan includes the following projects for Mason County:

1. New fully-controlled access route from US 68 near Washington, east to KY 11, including a new interchange at KY 11. Estimated cost is \$36,630,000 (2020).
2. New fully controlled access route from KY 11 northeast to KY 9 (AA Highway). Estimated cost is \$37,930,000. (2019)
3. Repair bridge on US 68 (Harsha Bridge access road) over Lawrence Creek, 0.13 miles southwest of KY 3056. Estimated cost is \$2,550,000. (2019)
4. Addition of interchange on Heather French Henry Southern Loop (US 62 and US 68). Estimated cost of construction is \$10,000,000 (2020)
5. Reconstruction of US 62 toward Sardis between KY 324 and Sardis (between two bridges). Estimated cost of construction is \$300,000. (2017)

6. Construct right turn lane (SB) into Clarkson-Sherman Road (Landfill) to provide safety for motorists traveling along the AA Highway. Estimated cost of construction is \$300,000. (2017)

See Figure 8 for the locations of these projects.

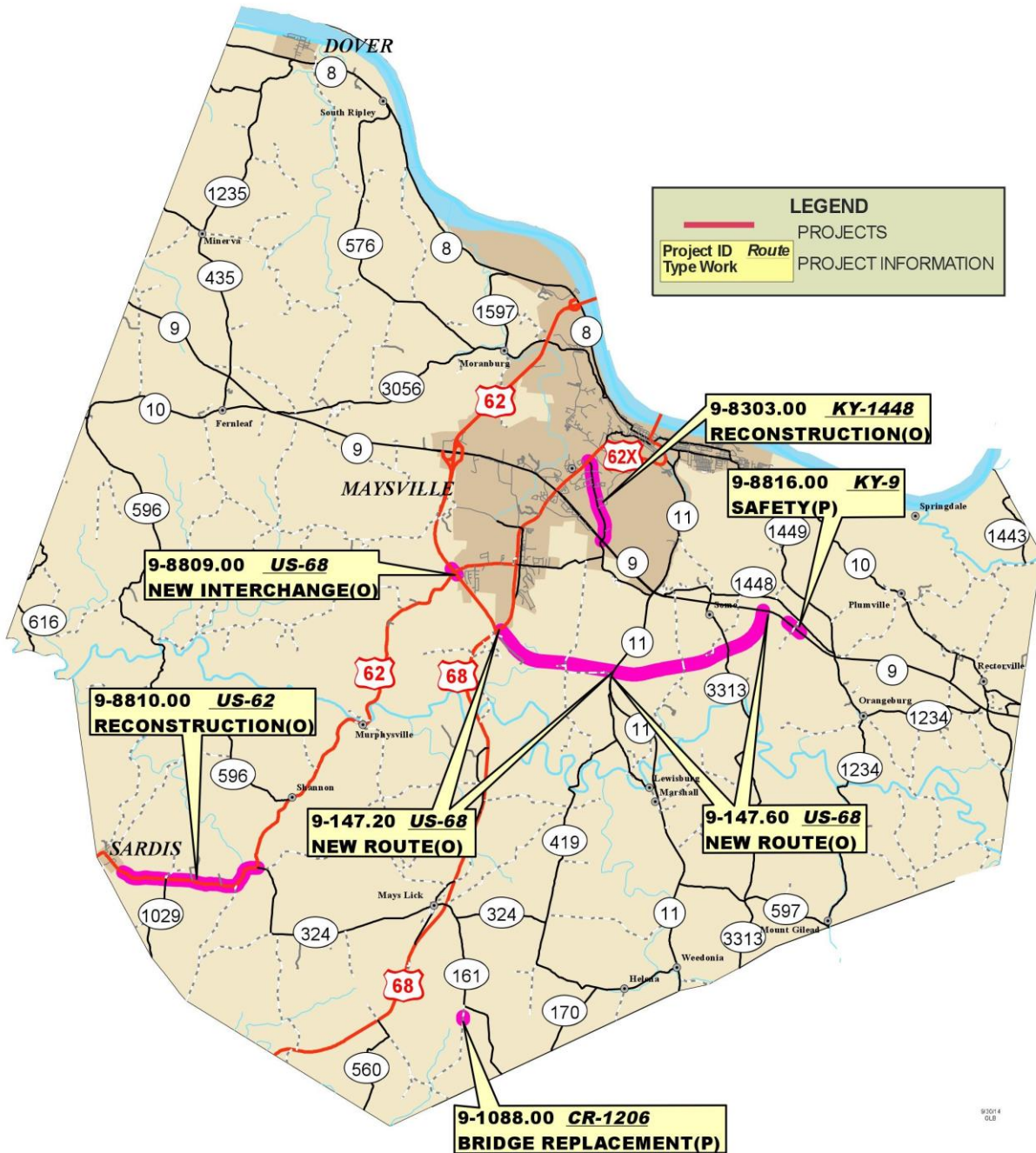


Figure 8. Mason County 2014 Highway Plan Projects

The 2016 prioritization list from the Kentucky Department of Highways included the following projects (top 10 out of 21):

1. Widen AA Highway to four lanes/increase capacity and decrease conflict points north of the junction with KY 435 to the Bracken County line; and then on in to Bracken County to mile-point 5.55 to support 2025 traffic volumes, address sight distance concerns, improve intersection safety and reduce speed differentials.
2. Increase capacity and decrease conflict points on KY 9 from project end at KY 435 to Bracken County line.
3. Increase capacity and decrease conflict points on KY 9 from the Lewis County Line, to existing 4 lanes near KY 11 to support 2025 traffic volumes, address sight distance concerns, improve intersection safety and reduce speed differentials.
4. Increase capacity and decrease conflict points on KY 9 from the Mason County Landfill to the KY 11 intersection.
5. Increase capacity, safety, and decrease conflict points on KY 9 (AA Highway) from the Lewis County Line to just North of the Mason County Landfill access road.
6. Relieve congestion on US 68 from KY 2517 (Old US 68 Loop #7 Road), one mile south of Old Washington, to improve traffic flow.
7. Rehabilitate US 68 to improve pavement conditions, drainage, shoulders, guardrail, etc.
8. Correct geometric and width deficiencies and improve long-term stability of KY 8 from KY 3056 to the Harsha Bridge.
9. Improve safety and decrease the risk of rear-end collisions by adding left and right turn lanes for exit onto KY 597 from KY 11.
10. Move the beginning of the truck passing lane on KY 11 between KY 3170 and KY 419 more towards the Bottom of the Hill, so that the "merge" area can be moved away from the Top of the Hill/left-hand turn/end of bridge.

The projects with the greatest impact on future traffic flow patterns are the completed section of U.S. 68 from south of Maysville to the Harsha Bridge, and the new connector from near Washington to KY Highway 11 and the AA Highway in the east. These latter two projects together comprise major elements of a proposed South Loop around Maysville and are being designed as partial access highway improvements, with direct access allowed at major highway and road crossings. The proposed roadway cuts through rural farmlands and will play a major role in future land use decisions. Because the proposed South Loop will affect future local land use, the City of Maysville, the Mason County Fiscal Court, and the Mason County Planning Commission joined forces to make the following recommendations regarding the South Loop:

1. Grade separations at all crossroad with grading for future ramps.
2. Limited access in order to maintain effective traffic flow.
3. Two lanes from the AA Highway south to US Highway 68.
4. Two lanes, but grade and drain for four lanes, from US Highway 68 to KY 11.
5. At KY 11, grade and drain for future grade separation.
6. In order to address the dangerous intersection at the AA Highway and KY 11, the City requests at the present intersection be reconstructed to provide grade separation. Alternately, the situation can be addressed by expecting the construction of the remainder of the South Loop from KY 11 to the AA Highway near Orangeburg. The intersection at that location should consist of a ramp from the South Loop eastbound to the AA Highway and a ramp and overpass from the AA Highway westbound onto the South Loop.

The County road system consists largely of paved roadways that are less than 20 feet in width and inadequate to meet the needs of significant additional development. The system is quite extensive and is faced with difficulties in making future improvements due to limitations of the terrain. The County works with the Commonwealth of Kentucky on an annual basis to determine road maintenance priorities. The minimum paved roadway width should not be less than 20 feet in order to adequately accommodate the level of traffic flow associated with intensive residential, and to some degree, commercial development. The County should

continue to support the subdivision regulations that promote interior development instead of existing road frontage.

Mason County's greatest long-term need for regional accessibility is an improved north-south connection in Kentucky. The Harsha Bridge provides a better linkage northward to Highway 52 and Highway 32, a four-lane highway, in Ohio. Lexington is an important southern focal point for interaction with Mason County, but access is very limited by the existing two lane highway, US 68. Selected segments of US 68 are being reconstructed, and local officials should continue to press for the entire route to be upgraded. The sections from Lexington to Paris and Paris to the south side of Millersburg are complete, and the section by-passing Millersburg began construction in 2016.

The Fleming-Mason County Airport is located six miles south of Maysville just off of KY 11. Airport facilities include a paved runway 100 feet wide by 5,000 feet in length with navigational lights. There is a localizer and GPS approach to direct aircraft in bad weather. A modern terminal building with pilot lounges is the base of operations for Coleman Aviation, the on-site airport manager for over 20 years. Hangars and deck space can accommodate 40 aircraft. There are some 35 private aircraft presently based on site. Aircraft operations average about 700 flights per month comprised of both private planes and industry jets.

The Airport is jointly-funded by Maysville and Mason County, and Flemingsburg and Fleming County. Fuel sales and hanger rents provide additional revenues. Other services include plane and pilot rental, flight instruction, certified maintenance personnel, and aerial photography. Funding for major capital improvements comes from the Federal Aviation Administration and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. An airport board comprised of three representatives from both counties oversees operations.

The Airport has recently acquired approximately 90 additional acres west of the existing runway for future airport safety enhancements and improvements. Fleming-Mason Airport is also in the process of installing above-ground tanks that will provide 24-hour access to self-service fuel.

The Airport is a vital element in the local economy and industrial recruitment. With future improvements, the Airport's level of activity is expected to increase and its general aviation function should take on a much greater role in area growth and development.

Both the City and the County have applied for and received funds for Transportation Enhancement projects to include, the Bierbower House, Minerva Church, Maysville Bridge lighting, Russell Theater, Streetscape Phase II, underground utilities in Old Washington, downtown sidewalks, and the Harriet B. Stowe House.

### Maysville-Mason County River Port Authority

According to the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO), the Ohio River extends a distance of 981 miles from its origin at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, ending in Cairo, Illinois where it flows into the Mississippi River. The Ohio River Basin, shown in Figure 9, covers parts of six states, and is home to more than 25 million people (almost 8% of the U.S. population total). The Ohio River System is considered to be the most modern in the country from a navigational standpoint. There are 20 dams and 45 power generating facilities on the Ohio River, and a nine-foot minimum depth is maintained for navigation. More than 230 million tons of cargo are transported on the Ohio River each year, with coal and other energy products making up 70% of the commerce traveling by barge.

In terms of total tonnage in 2014, the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky port was the 13<sup>th</sup>-largest port in the United States with 49.9 million tons; Huntington, West Virginia ranked 16<sup>th</sup> with 46.4 million tons; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> with 31.5 million tons (United States Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics). There are numerous smaller ports situated along the length of the Ohio River, including Portsmouth, Ohio; Mt. Vernon, Indiana; and Owensboro, Kentucky. Portsmouth, Ohio, located about 63 miles upstream from Maysville, has recently reclaimed a 130-acre brownfield site for riverfront industrial development. Most of the counties in Ohio on the Ohio River are considered to be priority investment areas, with prospective companies qualifying for higher tax credits, lower than normal interest rates on financing, and other incentives. The Maysville-Mason County River Port Authority could tap into similar economic incentives offered by the Cabinet for Economic Development in Kentucky.



Figure 9. The Ohio River Basin

The Meldahl Hydroelectric Plant in Foster, Kentucky, approximately 30 miles downriver from Maysville, has been developed under a partnership with American Municipal Power, Inc. and the City of Hamilton, Ohio, which holds a 51 percent share in the ownership of the plant. Plans for the distribution of future power production are being made. An application was made with the Ohio Power Siting Board to run a 138-kilovolt electric transmission line from the Meldahl Hydroelectric Plant to the existing 345-kilovolt Zimmer-Spurlock transmission line, approximately two miles inland from the Ohio-side landing of the river crossing. With an estimated average annual gross output of 558,000 megawatt-hours of electricity, completion of the cofferdam means the Ohio River and any flooding issues will be contained. Operation began in 2016.

Maysville and Mason County's location on the Ohio River is an important asset, the potential of which has not been fully-tapped. Commercial river boats make periodic stops to allow travelers to take in the tourist attractions in the area, and significant quantities of coal and limestone move out of the area by river barge. The Maysville-Mason County River Port Authority was established to provide a local means of promoting and developing river-related industry, agriculture, and commerce along the Ohio River. The Authority receives revenues from industrial development for its operation. The River Port Authority may borrow money from any source on its own credit in anticipation of revenue to be derived from taxes, appropriations, or other income, and for such purposes the Authority may pledge the taxes, appropriations, or anticipated income.

A study was undertaken to determine the feasibility of developing river-related services and facilities. Recreational use of the Ohio River is under-utilized. Steps need to be taken to improve access to the river, as well as the creation of a large marina.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Mason County's economy has undergone major changes since the 1987 Plan. That plan called for major emphasis to be placed on attracting new industries to the County. As discussed in the Community Assessment, manufacturing is significant and continues to play a major role in the economic mix. The 1987 Plan also called for retail growth, promotion of tourism, development of a port, and diversification of the farm economy. Those general goals continue to be applicable in the new Comprehensive Plan.

The economy is the primary generator of the other components that comprise the community. Economic development is responsible for the creation of job opportunities, production of goods and services for consumers, the generator of revenues for both the public and private sectors, and in many ways impacts the overall quality of life in the community. It is essential that community leaders have a strategic plan in place for strengthening the economy.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**

There are a number of important principles that should be considered in the City/County economic development plan:

1. Place emphasis on **basic** economic activities – those that bring new money into the community from outside. These activities will in turn have a **multiplier effect** on the local economy, generating additional non-basic or supporting activities (restaurants, grocery stores, etc.).
2. Stress the **retention** of the **viable components** of the local economy. Identify and encourage those businesses and industries that are alive and well by providing assistance as needed.
3. Look for **expansion opportunities**. Identify and encourage those entities that are considering an expansion to their operation and provide appropriate assistance.
4. Continue to **attract** new businesses and industries into the community. Emphasis should be placed on those businesses and industries that will enhance the local economy and will be good community partners.
5. Continue to **diversify** the economy. In the process of attraction and expansion, give consideration to those entities that will broaden the economic base, both across and within the different economic sectors.
6. **Concentrate** economic activities in selected areas. Guide new businesses and industries into those areas that are zoned for those kinds of activities, and where the advantages of agglomeration may be maximized.
7. **Entrepreneurship development**. Encourage both local people and outside interests to become involved in the creation of new ideas and start-ups through the provision of incubator facilities and training programs.
8. **2025 Plan**. Utilize the Maysville/Mason County Industrial Development Authority's 2025 Strategic Plan in recruitment of new commercial and industrial projects, as well as the retention of the Millennial Generation.

## THE FARM ECONOMY

Farming is an important component of Mason County's economy. However, the number of farms has decreased, although the amount of land used in farming has remained roughly the same over the last 10 years. Additionally, more intensive land uses are encroaching into farming areas, and the primary source of farm income,

tobacco, has been diminished. Recommendations for dealing with such problems are discussed in the Comprehensive Plan element entitled “Rural and Agricultural Areas.”

## MANUFACTURING

As described in the Community Assessment, manufacturing, service, and technology have experienced a significant increase in employment during the past decade. The top 20 manufacturing, service, and technology firms employed 1,813 workers as of April 2016. In 2016, Mitsubishi Electric Automotive was the leading employer with 378 employees, followed by Green Tokai (241), HL Spurlock Power Station (206), and Crouse Corporation (165).

## TOURISM

Tourism and travel contributed \$60,304,577 to the local economy, making Maysville the 4<sup>th</sup> largest contributor to the Northern Kentucky River Region & 35<sup>th</sup> among Kentucky’s 120 counties. Travelers spend about \$291 per trip on average in Kentucky according to the Travels America Visitor Profile Report for 2014/2015 provided by Kentucky’s Travel and Tourism Industry.

Maysville pulls visitors from all over Kentucky, as well as from Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Illinois. In order for Maysville and Mason County to maximize the revenues that come with tourism, the local area must function as a destination for more tourists rather than serve as an intervening opportunity.

Highlighting activities that attract younger visitors and those willing to spend more on their trips, particularly fine dining, wineries, distilleries, shopping, outdoor adventure parks, unique tours, and evening entertainment, is a great way to start.

Maysville-Mason County Tourism has always believed in the importance of constantly building a presence online, and with other multi-media outlets to not only update returning visitors on activities and attractions, but also to entice new planned and unexpected travelers into staying in Maysville.

Five of the most important tourism attractions in Maysville and Mason County are the arts, outdoor adventure, history, architecture, and dining. Downtown Maysville, Old Washington, and rural Mason County are rich in all of these assets.

Some of the major focal points for tourists include:

### The Arts

1. Ohio River Valley Art Galleries
2. The Washington Opera House
3. The Russell Theatre
4. Floodwall Murals
5. Barn Quilts
6. The Kathleen Savage Browning Miniature Collection

### Outdoor Adventures

1. Cummins Nature Preserve
2. Washington Recreational Park
3. Maysville Marina and Campground
4. Maysville Equestrian Center
5. Public Golf Courses
6. Hiking/Biking Trails

### History

1. Civil War
  - a. Albert Sydney Johnston House
2. Slavery
  - a. The Underground Railroad Museum
  - b. Harriet Beecher Stowe Slavery to Freedom Museum
  - c. Underground Railroad Trail
  - d. The Charles Young Museum
3. Pioneer
  - a. Meffords Fort
  - b. The Simon Kenton Shrine
  - c. The Pioneer Graveyard
4. Other
  - a. Kentucky Gateway Museum Center
  - b. Rosemary Clooney
  - c. Custom Private Tours

### Architecture

1. Old Washington Historic Village

2. Downtown Historic Maysville
3. May's Lick
4. Minerva
5. Germantown

### Dining

1. European Style Cafés
2. Boutique Restaurants

In addition to these attractions, there are many special events each month in Maysville and Mason County. Each of these is designed to attract people from the surrounding area, states and other countries. These special events are listed below:

### March

1. Quilters Inspiration Weekend
2. MCTC Farm & Family Nigh

### April

3. Maysville Antique & Craft Expo
4. Mason County Spring Musical
5. Maysville Firefighters Association 5K Run/2 Mile Walk
6. Buffalo Trace Children's Advocacy Center 5K Run/2 Mile Walk
7. Historic Washington Art Festival
8. Empty Bowls

### May

9. 400 Mile Yard Sale
10. Festival of Hope 5K Run/ 2 Mile Walk
11. Relay for Life
12. Big Rock - Forever Summer Music Series
13. Picker's and Grinner's Open Air Market & Music Festival

### June

14. Maysville Uncorked
15. Big Rock - Forever Summer Music Series

## July

16. 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration
17. Big Rock - Forever Summer Music Series

## August

18. Oktoberfest
19. Old Reliable Germantown Fair
20. Chrome & Cruse
21. Parade for Christ
22. Big Rock - Forever Summer Music Series

## September

23. St. Patrick Fall Festival
24. Pig Out in Maysville
25. Simon Kenton Festival
26. Maysville Filthy 5K
27. Big Rock - Forever Summer Music Series

## October

28. "R" Farm Pumpkin Festival
29. Halloween Festival
30. Run for Your Life 5K Run/2-Mile Walk
31. Kids Fest
32. Big Rock - Forever Summer Music Series

## November

33. Veterans Day Parade
34. Downtown Merchants Shopping Weekend
35. Small Business Saturday

## December

36. Frontier Christmas Festival
37. Twilight Christmas Parade
38. BJ's Gif of Giving Christmas Party

## KENTUCKY MAIN STREET

The City of Maysville was one of the first five Main Street programs established in the Commonwealth of Kentucky in 1980. The program is funded solely by the City of Maysville and has a 13-member Board, which is administered by a Main Street Director. Appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Maysville City Commission, Main Street Board members include Main Street business owners and residents, as well as participants from the Maysville Community and Technical College, Maysville Regional Entrepreneurial Center, Maysville Players, Arts Commission, Cultural Arts District, Rescue the Russell, Tourism, and the Maysville-Mason County Area Chamber of Commerce.

The program is tasked with implementing the National Main Street Center's Four Point Approach: Organization, Design, Economic Restructuring, and Promotion. This approach is centered on historic preservation through economic revitalization. In the past four years, the Main Street Board has been highly successful in joining with the City to implement a Boarded Window/Door Ordinance that provided matching funds for property owners. More recently, the Board implemented a facade program, which helped to generate approximately \$270,000 in private investment in the Main Street District.

## ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

There are sites and areas in Maysville and Mason County that were formerly viable parts of the local economy, which have subsequently experienced decline or abandonment. An important strategy in any economic development plan is to redevelop/revitalize these sites and areas so that they will make a positive contribution to the community. Included among these areas are downtown Maysville, Old Washington, and selected rural communities in the county.

Mason County has three small incorporated towns: Dover (population 246), Germantown, (population 153), and Sardis (population 101). These three communities have the basic ingredients for serving as small growth centers. In addition, there are several small rural communities in various stages of economic viability, including Orangeburg, May's Lick, Plumville, Lewisburg, Rectorville, and Minerva. Some of these communities could be revitalized to serve as small growth centers. As rural growth centers, these communities could meet some of the future residential, commercial, recreational, and religious needs of the surrounding areas.

A more detailed discussion of this concept is included in the plan element dealing with Land Use Management.

## RETENTION AND EXPANSION

There are a number of businesses in Maysville and Mason County that are in a marginal situation in regards to their continuation. In order to further assist the recruitment and retention of business, the Maysville Community and Technical College has created a regional entrepreneur center. The office is located within the Maysville-Mason County Area Chamber of Commerce on East Third Street and assists existing businesses with current and future needs, as well as entrepreneurs looking to locate in the Maysville/Mason County area.

KY-FAME (Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education) is a partnership of regional manufacturers, the purpose of which is to implement dual-track, apprenticeship-style training that will create a pipeline of highly-skilled workers. The primary method to achieve this goal is through partnerships with local educational institutions to offer the Advanced Manufacturing Technician Program (AMT). KY-FAME is a vital retention tool and a part of the 2025 Maysville/Mason County Industrial Development Authority's Strategic Plan. The purpose of KY-FAME is to be the catalyst for developing world-class technical talent for manufacturing. KY-FAME will strive to be a conduit between industry and education with a primary focus on meeting the needs of manufacturers.

KY-FAME will specifically implement the AMT Program, which is a work-study training/apprenticeship-style program designed to produce work-ready, multi-skilled associate degree graduates. KY-FAME will work with other workforce development and training organizations, including, but not limited to, The Kentucky Association of Manufacturers (KAM), the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the Manufacturing Institute, Kentucky state and local governments, public and private school systems, and educational institutions.

In accordance with this purpose, KY-FAME will support creation of additional skills training programs in the model of AMT to increase the skills levels of manufacturing employees by partnering with statewide educational and workforce development providers. (Information acquired from [kyfame.com](http://kyfame.com)).

## RETIREMENT POTENTIAL

Mason County should be promoted as a destination for people who desire to retire and get away from the problems and pace of living inherent to large urban areas. Over the years, many former residents of Mason County have migrated to other places in search of better job opportunities. Some of these people are now senior citizens and might be enticed to come back home. Kentucky people have strong ties to the land and maintain those ties throughout their lives. Some of these former residents might be financially able and willing to invest money in development projects in Mason County. People looking for retirement destinations are usually concerned about “quality of life” issues. They are searching for a place that is not too heavily populated (has a small town atmosphere), has a good selection of goods and services (including health/medical services, recreation, continuing education programs), is attractive (aesthetic values), with a relatively low cost of living, housing options, a moderate climate, and recognizable historic reference points associated with the seniors’ generation. Mason County has most of these qualities. There is a need to develop additional housing and recreation opportunities, and to enhance the attractiveness of the area through cleanup programs, removal of substandard conditions, etc.

There are a number of publications that are designed to meet the needs of retired people, such as *Activetimes Magazine* (circulation - 7 million), *Mature Outlook* (circulation - 725,000), and *Modern Maturity* (circulation - 20.5 million). Advertisements should be considered for these publications as well as for regional metro newspapers such as *Cincinnati*, *Louisville*, *Dayton*, and *Lexington*.

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC CENTER

Mason County should be promoted and marketed as the Regional Growth Center for Northeast Kentucky/Southeast Ohio, in addition to current promotional/marketing efforts. Mason County is presently the strongest economic center between the metro areas of Cincinnati, Lexington, Dayton, and Ashland/Huntington. The County dominates the industrial, retail trade, and service functions of a seven-county area in Kentucky and Ohio. In addition, it is the focal point of significant historic assets, medical/health facilities, art/culture, educational resources, and transportation. Its locational advantages are being enhanced by on-going transportation and socio-economic improvements. The completion and implementation of an up-to-date comprehensive plan also adds to its competitive position above other small regional urban centers. A Regional Tourism Marketing Plan was established in 2004 and

should be updated in the next 2-3 years. Finally, it is noteworthy that the 2025 Maysville-Mason County Industrial Development Authority Strategic Plan places a major emphasis on regionalism.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

Buffalo Trace Area Development District has been heavily involved in securing state and federal funding for a variety of public projects. Both the City and County should continue to utilize the expertise available in the BTADD office to tap government programs and to provide badly needed technical assistance in selected areas.

## **PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES**

### UTILITIES

#### Water

A goal of both governments is to see that all residents in the community have access to quality water for domestic uses. In addition, the water needs of businesses and industries must be met, along with the requirements of fire protection. As described in the Community Assessment, the Maysville Utilities Commission supplies water to the City of Maysville, and sells water to four rural water districts. The City has recently made improvements in its treatment and storage capacities, along with the extension of new lines into developing areas. A grant of \$150,000 in state funds has been made available to upgrade waterlines in the rural areas of the County. The distribution of the water system is shown in Figure 10.

#### Sewer

Maysville's recent improvements in sewage disposal facilities have provided a surplus in capacity that should enable contiguous areas to connect to the sewage system in the future. The Plan calls for the reduction in dependence upon on-site disposal systems where it is economically feasible to do so. In 1999, the Mason County Fiscal Court received over \$2 million in Community Development Block Grant funds for sewer improvements in the Western Mason Sanitation District, which includes the City of Germantown and the subdivision known as Highland Heights. The project was completed in December, 2006 with over 400 households accessing the line, which ties into the Maysville sewer system

## WIRELESS AND CELLULAR COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES

The recent demand for wireless services brings with it the need for quality infrastructure. Cellular, public safety, and wireless communications are quickly surpassing the need for land-based telephone and computer infrastructure and services. Until 2004, only two wireless communication towers were present in Mason County. Five cellular communication towers were applied for and approved by the Mason County Joint Planning Commission in 2004. Since 2004, twelve cellular communication towers have been approved by the Commission. The siting of new wireless communication infrastructure should take place so as not to be a detriment to residential and scenic areas in Maysville and Mason County. Co-location on current infrastructure is encouraged in order to limit the number of towers. If co-location is not an option, the prime areas for these towers are the agricultural and industrial zones. Both the City and County should encourage wireless infrastructure and technology, along with the recruitment of businesses engaged in high-tech practices.

KentuckyWired is a statewide, open-access fiber optic network, which will deliver robust, reliable, and affordable Internet to communities across the state through broadband technology. Communities need reliable Internet to grow and thrive. Unfortunately, Kentucky ranks at, or near, the bottom of national and international rankings of broadband speed and capacity. This fact puts our state at a major disadvantage for attracting jobs, growing local business, and expanding education. Broadband, like electricity, water and sewer, is now an essential service. However, it has been too expensive for private carriers to build out a high-speed, high-capacity network across the entire state. With KentuckyWired, the state will be responsible for building out the middle portion of a fiber network. The success of KentuckyWired depends on building state and local partnerships that provide not only a middle mile connection but also the last mile connections to local communities and residents. Much like building the interstates did, KentuckyWired will change Kentucky's landscape, by driving economic growth and improving quality of life. Services in Mason County are expected to be complete by early 2018 ([kentuckywired.ky.gov](http://kentuckywired.ky.gov)).

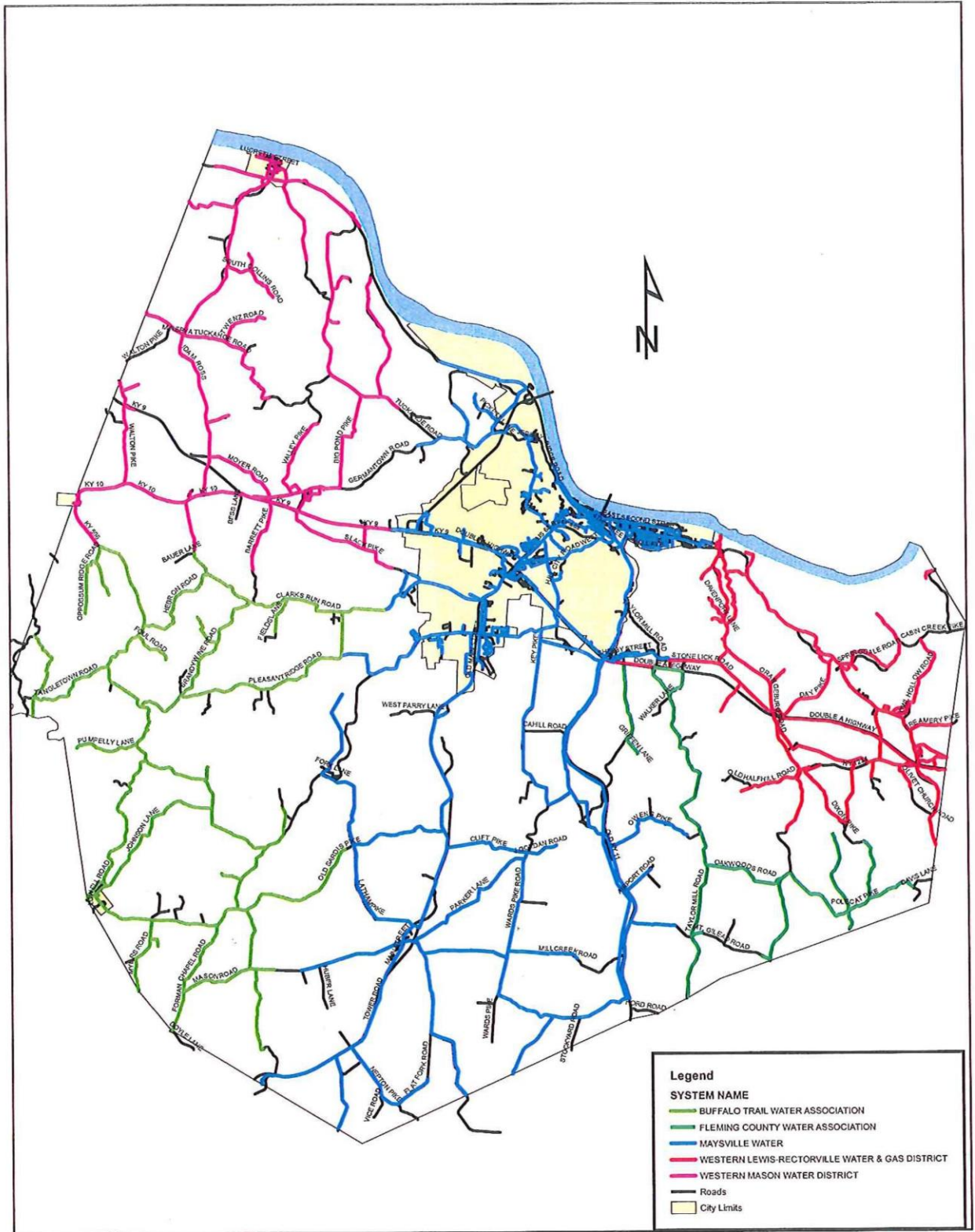


Figure 10. Mason County Water Systems

## WASTE DISPOSAL

Solid waste is disposed of at the Maysville-Mason County Landfill, which is on a 544-acre tract located in the eastern portion of the County. The complex, under a joint local agreement, is owned by both the City and County, and operated by the County. The facility consists of a contained landfill, a recycling center, a composting operation, and drop-off centers for tires, appliances, and batteries. Waste from Bracken, Fleming, Lewis, Mason, Nicholas, Bourbon, Greenup, Rowan, and Robertson Counties in Kentucky, as well as Adams, Clinton, Hamilton, Highland, Lawrence, Pike, and Brown Counties in Ohio, are accepted at the complex. Approximately 250 tons of wastes arrive at the site on a daily basis.

The landfill meets all environmental regulations and has a permitted capacity sufficient to last the region approximately 41 years at the present intake of about 250 tons per day. The contained landfill cell has a clay-HDPE composite liner and leachate collection system to prevent contamination of groundwater. Air emissions, groundwater, and surface water discharges are monitored to ensure that the facility is not contaminating the environment. A landfill gas collection system has been installed in the landfill to control emissions and migrating gasses.

During 2015, the recycling center diverted 1,442 tons, and the compost operation diverted 423 tons of waste from the landfill. This amounts to a total diversion rate of 3.4% or 3,207 cubic yards of bulky material, thus extending the life of the contained landfill by approximately five to seven years. The additions of Butler Recycling, Mitsubishi, Inland Container, and Daniels Metal provides a diversion rate of 30-35%. 86,086 tons of waste was disposed of at the site in 2015. The recycling center collected \$158,928 in 2015. Recycling costs exceeded revenues, resulting in a net loss of \$205,231. Mason County spent \$23,279.23 in grant money cleaning up litter around the County.

Door-to-door waste collection is mandatory in the County at a monthly fee of \$10.37 (over 65 rate is \$8.57), with 2,856 households participating. Roll-off dumpsters are available, for a fee, for any person or business.

The City of Maysville provides door-to-door residential waste collection for \$10 per month and has approximately 3,800 participating households. Dumpsters are available for businesses and non-profit organizations for a monthly fee. With an estimated total of 6,656 households county-wide, the participation rate is approximately 100%. In addition, the two governments should examine the

possibility of providing trash service to commercial and industrial entities in Maysville and Mason County. Such service would pay for itself in approximately three years, and subsequent revenues could be utilized to strengthen their respective budgets.

Considerable progress has been made in recent years in the collection and disposal of solid waste in Mason County. The continuing public education activities and programs of the Solid Waste staff, business and political leaders, homemakers, and conservation districts of the region are the main reasons for success. The recycling center has a daily spot on the local cable/radio station and advertises in the Ledger-Independent, promoting recycling efforts with emphasis on special environmental events such as the Commonwealth Cleanup Week and Earth Day activities. All fourth grade students in Mason County and most high schools from the region tour the facility each spring. The solid waste staff gives talks to the various civic groups and on-site lectures to environmental classes.

## PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The City of Maysville Police Department (MPD) has a staff of 26 full-time police officers. In addition to being responsible for public safety and responding to calls within city limits, the MPD also operates the Communications Dispatch Center and Records Department. Furthermore, the MPD is one of the smallest city police departments to attain accreditation, meeting national and state standards in terms of training and number of personnel based on population served. The MPD is located in the former Coca-Cola Building on Government Street; it moved there due to its need for a larger facility. The current location also contains a relatively new communications center.

The Mason County Sheriff Department, which has relocated to the former site of the Buffalo Trace Area Health Department on West Third Street, is responsible for law enforcement in the unincorporated areas of the County; it employs a sheriff and 11 deputies. In addition, the Sheriff Department has the responsibilities of collecting taxes, and providing services to both the district and circuit courts.

The 2014 Crime in Kentucky report published by the Kentucky State Police compares Mason County's and Kentucky's five highest crimes and percentage of the total number of crimes, shown in Table 14.

	<u>Mason County</u>		<u>Kentucky</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Rate</u>
Assault Offenses	192	16.65%	30,193	13.72%
Burglary/ Breaking and Entering	110	9.54%	21,278	9.56%
Destruction/Damage/ Vandalism of Property	129	11.19%	19,928	9.05%
Drug/Narcotic Offense	259	22.46%	44,680	20.3%
<u>Larceny/Theft Offense</u>	<u>344</u>	<u>29.84%</u>	<u>65,074</u>	<u>29.57%</u>

Table 14. Mason County Crime Rates, 2014. (Kentucky State Police).

The City of Maysville Fire Department (MFD) employs 24 full-time fire officers, along with a Chief and Assistant Chief, who are also trained in emergency medical response. Although the MFD is responsible for fire protection within city limits, it responds to ambulance calls both within and outside the city limits, providing emergency services on a county-wide basis.

The County operates eight volunteer fire departments, located in Dover, Fernleaf, Germantown, Lewisburg, May’s Lick, Orangeburg, Sardis, and Washington. Each station has at least one pumper and a tanker; other equipment includes rescue vans and brush trucks. These departments have an adequate number of trained firefighters and the equipment necessary to provide fire protection throughout the unincorporated areas of Mason County. As the County continues to grow in population and more development takes place, these volunteer fire departments will need additional personnel and fire equipment. Germantown, Lewisburg, Dover, Fernleaf, and May’s Lick have recently constructed new fire departments and community buildings.

## HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Maysville and Mason County have a broad range of human and social services available. The Resource Guide published by the Maysville-Mason County Area Chamber of Commerce lists approximately 48 organizations and 76 churches that provide a wide array of resources for meeting human needs. These groups include public, non-profit, and private organizations. Some agencies concentrate on

providing a single service, while many are multi-purpose organizations. Resources generally include the following types of programs:

- |                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Alzheimer Services                | Health Services               |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse                | Heating Assistance            |
| Child Care/Preschool              | Hospice                       |
| Children’s Advocacy Center        | Hospitals                     |
| Clothing Assistance               | Housing Assistance            |
| Community Services                | Legal Services                |
| Counseling                        | Medical Assistance            |
| Court Appointed Special Advocates | Mental Health Services        |
| Comprehend, Inc.                  | Nursing Homes                 |
| Disability Services               | SAP (Substance Abuse Program) |
| Drug Court                        | Senior Citizen Services       |
| Education                         | Social Services               |
| Employment Services               | Support Groups                |
| Financial Assistance              | Transportation                |
| Food Assistance                   | Women and Crisis Services     |

The Planning Commission should work with local officials to determine appropriate locations and language in the zoning ordinance for drug rehabilitation/treatment facilities. Statistics will show that an overwhelming number of inmates at the detention center have been incarcerated for drug related charges. Several attempts have been made to locate half-way homes and residential treatment facilities in Maysville and Mason County, but have been dismissed because of opposition from residents in the nearby area(s). Utilizing existing data in regards to the drug problem in the area, as well as assistance from doctors and local health professionals, may assist the Planning Commission in educating citizens on the need for appropriate facilities.

## LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

In 1997, the Maysville-Mason County Area Chamber of Commerce with the Fleming County Chamber of Commerce began a leadership program for future leaders. Residents from Bracken, Fleming, Lewis, Mason and Robertson counties in Kentucky, and Adams and Brown counties in Ohio are invited to participate. The 19<sup>th</sup> class will begin in September 2016. Goals of the program are designed to provide participants with a broad set of facts, resources, and information about the area, stimulate critical thinking about problems and opportunities in the region,

develop a network of potential leaders, and enhance their ability to contribute to positive changes in their communities.

The program leads class members in the exploration of all our region has to offer, including sessions on Tourism and Recreation, Education, Media, Health and Human Services, Kentucky State Government, Economic Development and Agri-Business, and Local Government. The first session develops team building skills with emphasis on understanding personality types.

The program has been very popular and the Board is looking at adding a second year for past graduates. The shortened schedule would look at one first year session in greater depth.

Since the 2014-15 school year at Mason County High School, the Maysville-Mason County Area Chamber of Commerce with the Buffalo Trace Education Consortium and Mason County Schools instituted a Work Ethic Seal for Juniors and Seniors. Participants must apply and then meet the following criteria:

- Must maintain a minimum average daily attendance of 98%
- Must have 4 or fewer tardies
- Must have no more than 1 disciplinary referral
- Must maintain a grade point average of 2.5 with NO failures
- Must be involved in at least two of the following: organized team sport, organized non-team sport, extracurricular program, part-time employment, or verifiable community service project
- Must submit a resume and completed application to the Work Ethic Seal Program

The recognition must be earned each year. Recipients receive a letter of recommendation signed by all three organizations. Seniors also receive a gold seal on their letter and a cord to wear at graduation.

St. Patrick's school will be added to the program in the future.

## BUFFALO TRACE AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Buffalo Trace Area Development District has its office in Maysville, and provides the city and the county (in addition to other surrounding counties and communities) with a wide range of services. One of the most important functions of BTADD is

assisting in the writing of grants and acquisition of outside funding to support local programs and projects. The BTADD mission is to provide regional planning, promote economic development, coordinate social service delivery, and facilitate effective change to ensure the prosperity of our present and future generations. A brief listing of the ADD's services is given below.

Community and Economic Development

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Projects  
Economic Development Administration Projects  
Kentucky Infrastructure Loan Program  
Land Water Conservation Fund Projects  
National Recreational Trails Fund Projects  
Revolving Loan Fund  
Water and Wastewater Management Planning  
911 Services  
Geographic Informational Services (GIS)  
Agriculture Diversification Funding

Aging Services

Home Care  
Home Delivered Meals  
Long Term Care Ombudsman  
Aging Disability Resource Center  
Consumer Directed Options (Medicaid)

Workforce Development

Business Services Team  
Adult and Dislocated Worker Training  
On Job Training with Businesses  
In School and Out of School Youth Programs

EDUCATION

Citizens of Mason County have access to an educational system that addresses needs ranging from pre-school through continuing adult programs. In recent years major improvements have been made in both public and private schools to include computers and related technology as well as in achievements in academic programs. There is a continuing need to stress education at all levels, to encourage more high

school graduates to continue their education, and to better prepare workers for the new economy.

A new technology Center was built on the Maysville Community & Technical College campus in 2005. The 50,000 square foot facility was constructed at a cost of \$7.5 million and provides training in a variety of technology areas. The new 20,000 sq. ft MCTC Science/Administration Building Project was completed in the amount of \$4,925,661.00 and classes began in January 2010.

The Maysville Community & Technical College had an enrollment of 3,184 in the fall of 2015 and operates campuses in Cynthiana, Maysville, Morehead, and Mt. Sterling. The college offers programs leading to the Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.), which is designed to prepare graduates for immediate employment, and the Associate in Arts (A.A.) and the Associate in Science (A.S.), both of which are awarded to students planning to transfer to a baccalaureate program. As part of the Workforce Solutions Program, MCTC offers courses in leadership, technical areas, information technology, safety, quality/lean, and many other professional development areas. The College also provides Distance Learning courses.

## GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY

The Internet will play an important role in the acquisition and distribution of information for Maysville and Mason County. Maysville was the first city in the state to have high speed cable internet access. Also, the telephone company keeps up with new technology. Both governments, along with the Mason County School System, the Chamber of Commerce, Maysville Community and Technical College, Buffalo Trace Area Development District, and other entities, have web pages. Since these web pages are the point of visibility – or image – for the local area, they should be kept current, and should be tracked for number of visits to determine the importance of their functions. The City of Maysville and Mason County Fiscal Court have utilized social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter as additional avenues of information to residents and people outside of the community. A major priority should be the focus of obtaining high speed internet access for everyone in Mason County.

There is a need for local governments to increase training in the use of computers and related technology for staff members, and for members of boards and committees, as appropriate. In addition, it is recommended that the two governments extend the range of computer usage in their daily operations. One way

to accomplish this is by the utilization of tablets for meetings and in the field. Training board and commission members to use tablets enables the sharing of information in real-time and achieves a reduction in paper costs.

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

As described previously, the City and County governments share responsibilities in planning and development through a joint planning commission. The Mason County Joint Planning Commissions responsibilities are as follows:

1. Prepare, review, and revise the Comprehensive Plan;
2. Administer and amend the Subdivision Regulations;
3. Review and make recommendations to the City and County regarding applications for amendments to the land use regulations and zoning map;
4. File certificates of land use restrictions.

The Planning Commission conducted a comprehensive update of the land use ordinance and subdivision regulations in 2005, and since then has made incremental changes to both documents. It is recommended that the Planning Commission take another look at both documents in the near future to determine what updates need to be made.

## RECREATION

Recreational resources in Maysville and Mason County include parks in Maysville, Dover, Germantown, and May's Lick, school playgrounds and gymnasiums, public and private golf courses, a marina and campground, YMCA, Girls and Boys Club, zip line, skating rinks, a nature preserve, etc.

There is a need for additional recreational space based on national standards. Recreation and Open Space Standards suggested by the National Park Association call for a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 population (close-to-home space). For Maysville, the recommendation would be about 55 acres of public recreation and open space, and for the remainder of Mason County an additional 55 to 60 acres, for a total of 110-120 acres. Total public recreation space in Maysville and Mason County is estimated to be approximately 180 acres. The Maysville-Mason County Recreation Park accounts for most of the public recreation space with some 57 acres. This park is well-located to serve the population of both the City and the County. Transportation access in the area will be improved further upon completion of the

South Loop. It is recommended that the two governments look into acquiring additional 40 to 50 acres to expand and further diversify recreational activities near the South Loop. The 100-acre Cummins Nature Preserve off of Pickett Lane has created a surplus of recreation acreage for Mason County. However, both governments are open to acquiring land for additional parks and running/biking trails.

Limestone Parc, located at the intersection of Limestone and East Second Streets, is a new addition to the City. Developed by Bruce Carlson, and opened in 2016, Limestone Parc is located on a former car lot and has added greenspace to downtown Maysville. Mr. Carlson is also exploring a walking trail along the Ohio River from Limestone Landing to Wall Street.

Since 2014, Wald Park Inc., a non-profit organization, has started raising money to rehabilitate what was formerly known as Wald Park. Once completed, this park will be the home of St. Patrick baseball, softball, and soccer, and can be utilized by other groups for tournaments, etc.

Several vacant lots located in the East End of Maysville have the potential to be utilized as small neighborhood parks, with the ideal situation being the development of a large downtown park. The City should work with private property owners to obtain land for a large park, as this could be a catalyst for redevelopment and a prime opportunity for open space.

There is a need for a riverfront recreation area with a marina, public boat dock/launch, picnic shelters, playground, and related activities. One option is to redevelop and expand the Maysville Marina and Campground. The Ohio River is a valuable water recreation resource that should be utilized more intensively.

Rural parks are found at May's Lick (walking trail, playground equipment, and shelter), Germantown (ballfield and playground equipment) and Dover (a small park with playground equipment). The Cummins Wildlife/Nature Preserve is located just outside the northwest City limits. The County should continue to make improvements at its small rural community parks on an as-needed basis, in conjunction with the rural community revitalization program.

## HOUSING

The goal statement for housing calls for a plan and programs that will ensure an adequate supply of standard housing for all citizens of Mason County. During the course of meetings with different groups, the question of adequate, affordable housing came up several times. The Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center's report "Visioning Kentucky's Future" listed achieving safe, decent, affordable housing as the State's third most important goal. The report pointed out that many Kentucky families can only afford marginal or substandard housing. A study by the National Housing Conference revealed a 17% increase in the number of working families being priced out of their own homes, forcing many to spend as much as 50% of their income on housing or live in substandard conditions.

From the aforementioned statistics, it is apparent that a significant number of citizens in Mason County have a difficult time finding decent housing they can afford. The 2014 American Community Survey of Housing showed that 59.4% of the housing units were at least 34 years old; 0.6 and 0.7% of all occupied units lacked either complete plumbing or complete kitchen facilities, respectively; 44.8% were not on a public sewer; 19.8% of homeowners and 40.6% of renters were paying more than 30% of their household income on housing; and 12.2% of the housing units in the county were mobile homes. The need for housing options for senior citizens has been strongly voiced during each Comprehensive Plan update. Fortunately, there have been attempts by private developers to address senior citizen needs through proposed assisted-living units, including the Kenton Pointe Assisted Living facility.

One of the housing objectives is to improve overall neighborhood quality by eliminating blighted and deteriorated housing. The City of Maysville through its Code Enforcement Department is working to bring all residences up to code standards. A similar program is needed in the unincorporated areas of the County.

Both the City of Maysville (operated by the Housing Authority of Maysville) and Mason County have public housing programs that meet housing needs of low income families. The Housing Authority's program consists of 260 low income public housing units serving a total of 500 people, and provides Section 8 assistance to 108 units housing 197 people. There are four public housing complexes, largely on the east side of the City, and Section 8 units scattered in various parts of the City. The housing program is impressive in its comprehensive approach to meeting housing needs. Not only are the physical shelter needs addressed, but the program also seeks to meet the recreational and educational/skill development needs of the residents.

The Mason County Fiscal Court converted buildings on the Carrigan property into six rental housing units for low income elderly citizens along with an adult daycare facility.

The Comprehensive Plan calls for encouraging residential development to take place in areas where the infrastructure is adequate. Access to adequate waterlines, public sewer, and other public facilities and services is most readily available within the city limits of Maysville, or in selected contiguous areas just outside the City boundaries. In addition, within the City there are a number of individual vacant lots that could provide “infill” housing. In some cases, development of these lots would require approval of variances due to their limited building area or insufficient yard areas.

The Maysville/Mason County Zoning Ordinance and Building Codes are broad in scope and allow for almost any type of housing structure to be developed: Single-family units, duplexes, multi-family units, condominiums, etc.

There are many programs available to assist with housing needs through the Kentucky Housing Corporation. Through their single-family ownership program, the agency has made 50,000 home loans available to low- and moderate-income households to purchase single-family dwellings. It also has programs to assist renters and other organizations that help to meet housing needs, such as builders, developers, non-profits, for-profit agencies, housing authorities, and local governments.

Another agency that was quite active in building homes for low-income families is Habitat for Humanity. Habitat is an ecumenical Christian housing ministry that builds simple, decent, affordable housing for families around the world. The program is based largely on volunteers who lend their time and skills to constructing homes, thereby considerably reducing building costs. Lack of volunteers caused the program to be put on hold, but there should be a priority to re-establish the program.

## **LAND USE**

The 2001 Comprehensive Plan divided the County into three different components: Places, Corridors, and Intervening Areas. City and County governments utilize Euclidian Zoning, which divides both communities into zones: Residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural.

## PLACES

### The City Of Maysville

The largest incorporated area in the County with a population of 9,000 and with an area of 24 square miles. Maysville experienced real growth in the late 1990's through a vigorous annexation effort. The City serves as the social, economic, and political focal point of Mason County. It should continue to grow at a steady pace over the next 20 years. Growth factors include: the William Harsha Bridge, downtown revitalization efforts, the South Loop, expansion of the community college's role, a new technical school, continuing industrial recruitment, expanded trade/service roles. Maysville, as the focal point of future growth and development, presently has, and will continue to require, the highest level of infrastructure and services. It is the regional hub that serves approximately 180,000 people from five counties in Kentucky and two counties in Ohio.

In 2014 and 2015, the Commonwealth of Kentucky won the Governor's Cup Trophy issued by Site Selection Magazine. The magazine recognizes states for their industrial activity in creating and retaining jobs. With the selection, Maysville was named one of the top micropolitan cities in the United States.

### Other Incorporated Areas

Included in this category are Dover (population 246), Germantown (153), and Sardis (101). These three small incorporated places are located on the western fringes of Mason County. They serve as small residential service centers for surrounding rural and agricultural areas. Their locations on highways tend to encourage development, while their marginal positions make the provision of additional public infrastructure difficult. Their future roles would be that of secondary growth centers with a much lower level of anticipated development.

### Unincorporated Rural Communities

Scattered throughout the County are small rural communities, such as May's Lick, Lewisburg, Wedonia, Plumville, Orangeburg, Murphysville, Helena, Rectorville, Fernleaf, and Minerva. These are very small rural settlements located largely on state-maintained rural secondary roads, in varying stages of viability. A number of these communities might be characterized by a small grocery store, a church or two, and a number of dispersed single-family residences in close proximity.

With a booming Amish community, several residential neighborhoods, the South Loop, and proximity to Blue Lick's State Park, May's Lick has the potential to become a rural hub in Mason County. It does, however, suffer from inadequate sewer access, which somewhat limits its viability as a rural hub.

## CORRIDORS

Corridors are linear areas that parallel major transportation arteries, serve as locations for public utilities, and are often the primary locations of development. Corridors may be designated as either Urban or Rural, depending upon their function. Urban Corridors are those corridors that are located in the urban (city-like) environment, and have a high potential for future development. Beyond the Urban Corridors are the Rural Corridors, which usually allow for agricultural or natural resource uses, often with scenic views, and are less amenable to intensive development because of their distance from urban centers and a lack of necessary infrastructure. The County expects to rezone the urban corridors radiating out from Maysville city limits to prepare for future commercial uses, once the appropriate infrastructure is in place.

## INTERVENING AREAS

Intervening Areas are those areas that are located between the various places and corridors previously described. Again, they can be designated as Potential Urban Areas or Rural and Agricultural Areas based on similar characteristics found in the corridors. The intervening areas in close proximity of Maysville have a high potential for urban development. Most of Mason County would be characterized as Rural and Agricultural Areas with limited potential for urban-type development.

For purposes of this plan, the term growth will be used to describe the quantity of change that takes place, and quality will be used to describe the type or kind of change that occurs. Some very basic observations about growth and development in Mason County are as follows:

## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

1. Growth has been taking place at a slow, steady rate over the long terms with a somewhat more rapid rate experienced in the late 1990s. Population

projections indicate that growth over the next 20 years should continue at a fairly slow, steady rate.

2. Growth is reflected in the number of new subdivisions, the amount of automobile traffic, new businesses and industries, number of employees, increases in retail sales, tax revenues, etc.
3. Development is visible in terms of the types of houses being built, the types of jobs being created, the types of stores opening, the kinds of recreational activities being added, the degree to which land uses are in harmony with each other, etc. With an increase in the "Baby Boomer" and Millennial" populations, efforts should be made to have shovel-ready sites for multi-family development. This can occur by having properties rezoned and ready for this type of use.
4. There are both good and bad examples of planning and land use management, both in the urban and rural areas. Regulations are needed to ensure that future growth and development is positive. There is also a need to enforce these guidelines in a consistent and reasonable manner.
5. Growth and development in the unincorporated areas was addressed in the middle of the last decade by placing incentives in the zoning and subdivision regulations for property owners to develop the interior of their property, and by creating two Rural Residential Zones. The local governments encourage rational and orderly growth in the unincorporated areas, while supporting the farming community and land preservation.

Figure 11 shows the major areas of development over the past decade.

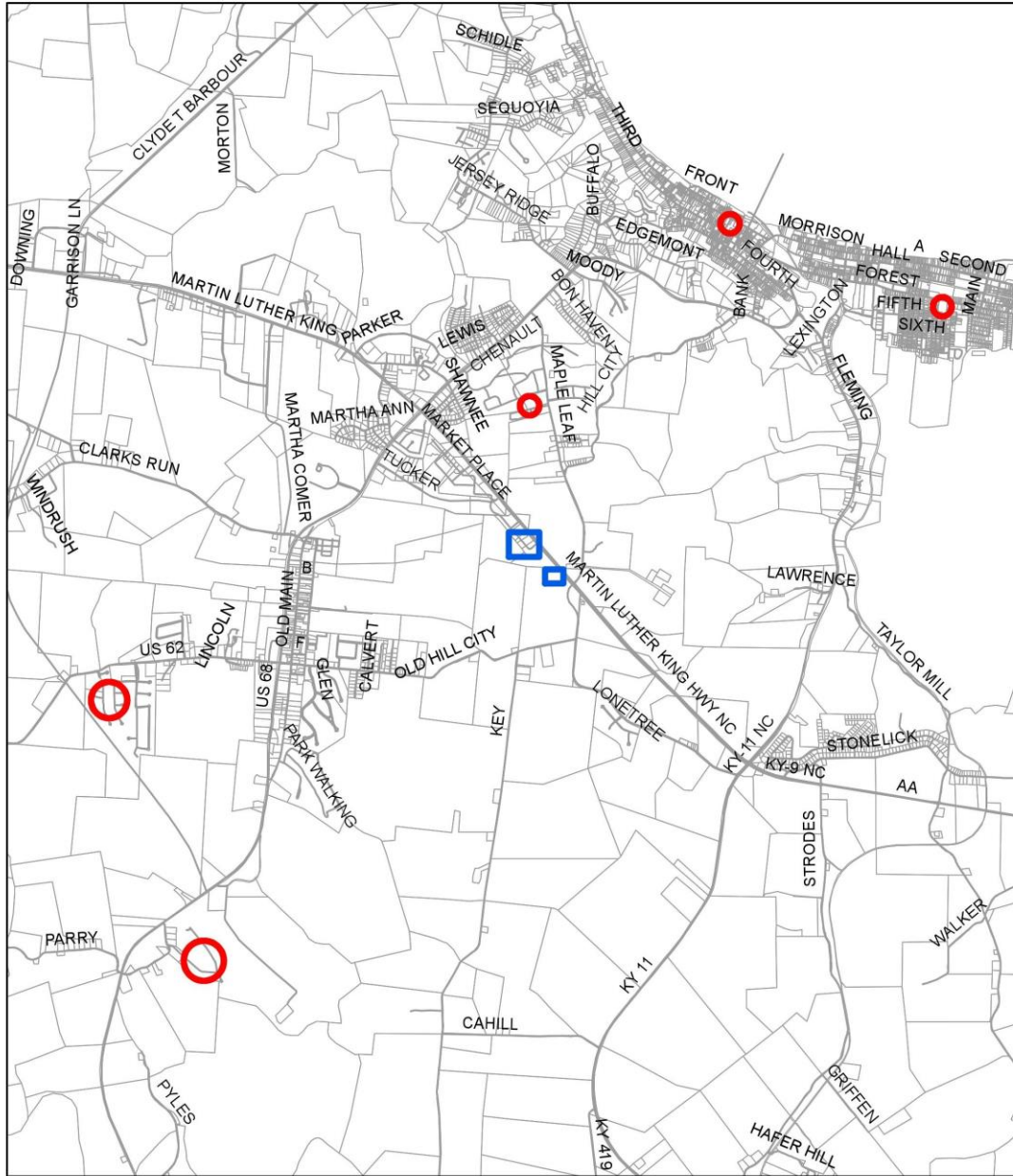


Figure 11. Major Areas of Development Since 2006

## FUTURE LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

Planning for future land use must take into consideration the conditions previously described. It is necessary to know how much change can be expected in terms of the amount of growth, the kind of development, and the locations where these changes are likely to take place.

Two concepts that are widely accepted in community planning today are 1) Smart Growth and 2) Sustainable Development. Smart Growth involves balancing the various perceptions of growth so that all interests are fairly represented. Economic interests must be weighed against social and environmental interests. Sustainable Development aims at doing those things that will not deplete the resource base, but will allow the community to sustain itself indefinitely.

The most important projection for planning purposes is that of future population totals. The expected population figures can be used as the reference point for other components: Number of houses to be built, additional traffic, number of jobs needed, amount of water to be consumed, etc. The official projections from the Urban Studies Center at the University of Louisville for Mason County indicate an increase of about 1,541 people (8.1%) between 2010 and 2030.

The Comprehensive Plan will use the figures in Table 15 as a general guide for population growth.

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### Mason County

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population Total</u>	<u>Change</u>	
		<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent</u>
2010	17,490	N/A	N/A
2020	18,419	971	5.3
2030	19,031	612	3.3

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Table 15. Estimated Population Projections for 2020-2030. (Kentucky State Data Center).

In addition to population projections, the amount of land being used for various purposes is an important factor in looking at future land use needs. Residential land uses account for most of the developed land and will absorb the largest portion of developed land uses in the future. Estimates for land use in Maysville in 2016 are shown in Table 16.

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Residential	1,300	10.2
Commercial	400	3.1
Industrial	480	3.8
Public/Semi-Public	900	7.0
Agriculture/Open	<u>9,720</u>	<u>75.9</u>
Totals:	12,800	100.0

Table 16. Estimated Land Use in Maysville, 2016.

According to Table 16, just over 75 percent of the 12,800 acres within the city limits of Maysville remains undeveloped. Residential uses, which consist of mostly single-family homes, account for most of the remaining land at 1,300 acres, followed by public and semi-public uses, which constitute 900 acres. The land area within Maysville when the 1987 Comprehensive Plan was completed was estimated at 3,150 acres.

As of 2016, approximately 85% of the land area in Mason County remained as agricultural and related uses. Maysville’s land area comprises over half of the total amount of land occupied by communities and dispersed urban-type uses. The total land area occupied by the City of Maysville, Dover, Germantown, Sardis, the rural communities, and dispersed residential, commercial, industrial, and public/semi-public land uses is given in Table 17.

	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Maysville	12,800	8.2
Other communities	8,945	5.8
Dispersed development	2,362	1.5
Agriculture/open	<u>131,457</u>	<u>84.5</u>
Totals:	155,564	100.0

Table 17. Land Use in Mason County, 2016.

With an expected population increase of some 3,400 people over the next 20 years, Mason County could expect an additional 4,400 acres of undeveloped land to be converted into residential, commercial, industrial, or public and semi-public uses.

## FUNDAMENTALS OF LAND USE PLANNING

There are some fundamental planning principles to consider in determining the future distribution of land uses. From the perspective of governmental administration/costs, it makes sense to encourage growth to be more compact. As the degree of sprawl increases, costs of services and infrastructure increase. Random development in Mason County also has a negative effect on farming. Often, high quality farmland is surrounded by residential development, which is not compatible with farm operations. Growth and development in the County have been addressed by changes in the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. These changes allow for orderly growth and take into consideration the preservation of open space and farmland.

Growth and development should take place in locations that are best suited for change, based on site characteristics and the surrounding area. The most intensive land use changes should occur in and around the City of Maysville, where the required level of public services and infrastructure are most likely to be found. There should be opportunities for somewhat less intensive development in both intervening areas and corridors that are in close proximity to the City. Out beyond this urbanizing area, development should be limited to smaller clusters of residential land uses with supporting convenient type businesses that have adequate access to major highways and roads, water, sewer, and other services.

## THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA

The Urban Development Area includes the City of Maysville and portions of Mason County that lie within and along the South Loop, which extends from the Harsha Bridge southward to U.S. Highway 68, and then eastward to KY Highway 11 and northward back to the Ohio River. It is bounded by an arterial highway corridor loop, with other urban corridors radiating outward from the center. This relatively compact area of some 35-40 square miles has the highest level of services available to meet the future demands of growth and development, and would require the greatest level of planning and management. This area has sufficient space to accommodate most of the County's growth over the next 50-60 years. Most of the area would be under the jurisdiction of the City, with smaller areas under County jurisdiction. The Urban Development Area would be treated as one unit from the standpoint of planning and development regulations.

The Comprehensive Plan would call for most urban development over the next 20 years to be contained within this Urban Development Area, with clusters of

commercial or industrial development taking place around major intersections of the Loop with the intersecting highways of the AA Highway, U.S. Highway 68, and KY Highway 11. Land along the South Loop between the intersections would be largely devoted to residential use. Consideration should be given to development of a circular green belt with hiking/biking trails paralleling the Loop. Direct access to the South Loop should be limited primarily to intersecting highways, with few exceptions. Additional access could be provided by creation of parallel service roads constructed as the area develops.

## URBAN CORRIDORS

Radiating outward from this core Urban Development Area would be Urban Corridors along Highways 8, 10, AA, 11, 62, and 68. These corridors would contain the major public utility lines, would be subject to fewer choices in land uses than the Development Urban Area, and would be less stringently-regulated. As of 2016, the AA Highway, KY Highway 11 south, and a portion of U.S. Highway 68 south are better equipped than the other corridors – due to having water service – for accommodating development. In 2011, approximately 500 acres in the Highland Heights area along the AA Highway between Maysville and Bracken County line were rezoned to commercial business. Similar action needs to be taken in other areas, including May’s Lick, Orangeburg, and Lewisburg, once infrastructure is improved.

## RURAL COMMUNITIES

Outside the corridors, there would be selected rural communities in which limited development would be permissible, largely consisting of convenience-type businesses and single-family residences, with the hope of revitalizing these places and supporting them in meeting the basic needs of the surrounding rural areas.

## THE AIRPORT AREA

The Fleming-Mason County Airport would be treated as a special area because of its transportation and economic development functions. With continuing growth and development of Maysville and Mason County, the role of the airport is expected to increase along with the need for additional space. The Airport has the potential to attract some commercial and industrial development.

## RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS

Most of Mason County would lie within the Rural and Agricultural Areas, with land use regulations geared toward accommodating existing and potential agricultural uses, resource activities, recreation, and low-density residential uses. One of the primary functions of the Rural and Agricultural Areas would be the retention and bolstering of the farm economy, as well as the preservation of rural values, which include aesthetic concerns.

It is noteworthy that within any of these districts there would be land areas that are not suitable for development due to flooding, steep slope, or other physical limitations.

The official Land Use Management Maps for Maysville and Mason County are illustrated in Figures 14A, B, C, & D.

## LAND USE AND SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The City of Maysville and Mason County have both zoning regulations and subdivision regulations. The regulations should be reviewed for consistency and revised as needed, in order to strengthen various aspects, and to mesh with new statutes and laws.



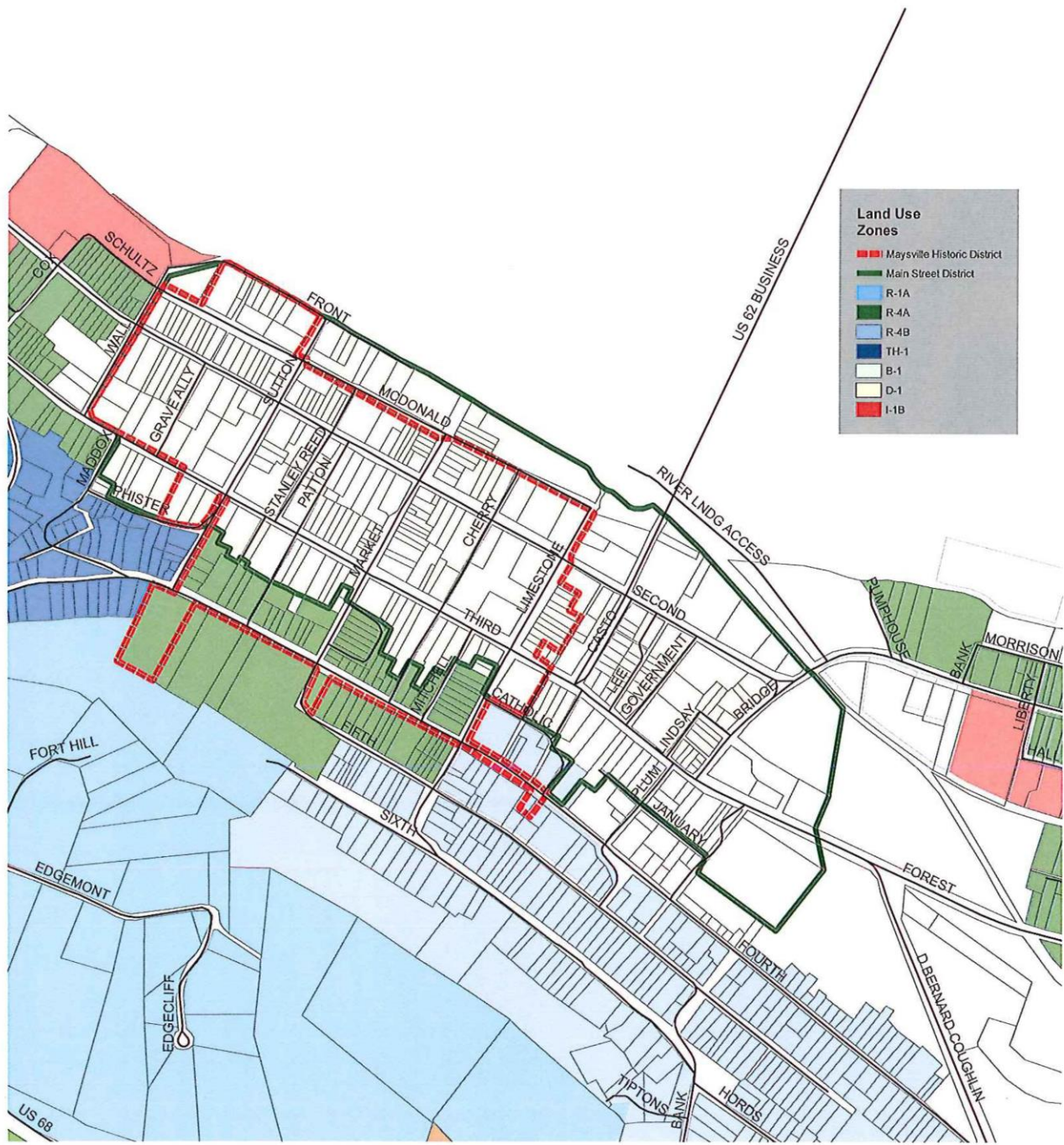


Figure 14B. Officials City of Maysville Central Business District Land Use Map

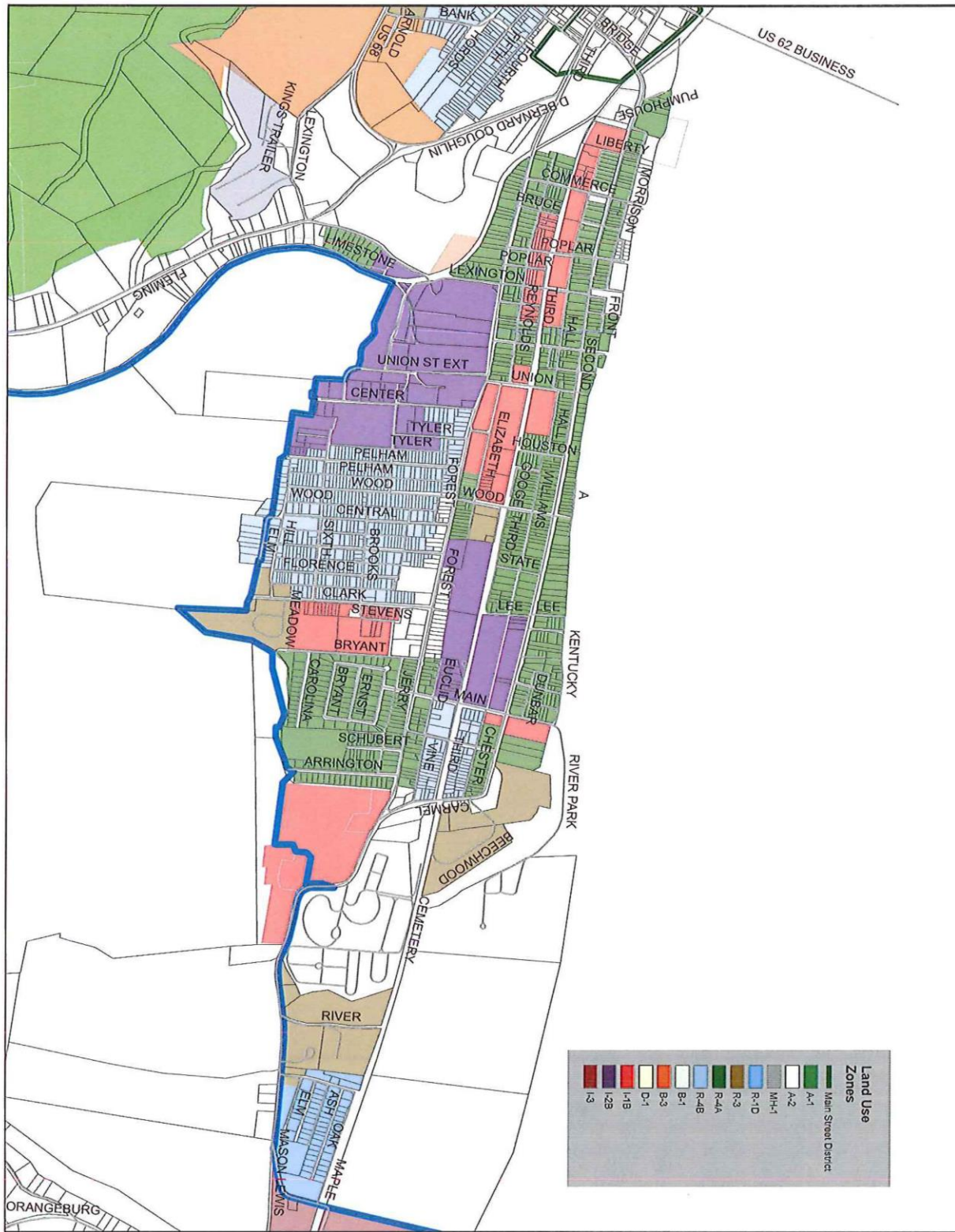


Figure 14C. Official City of Maysville East End Land Use Map

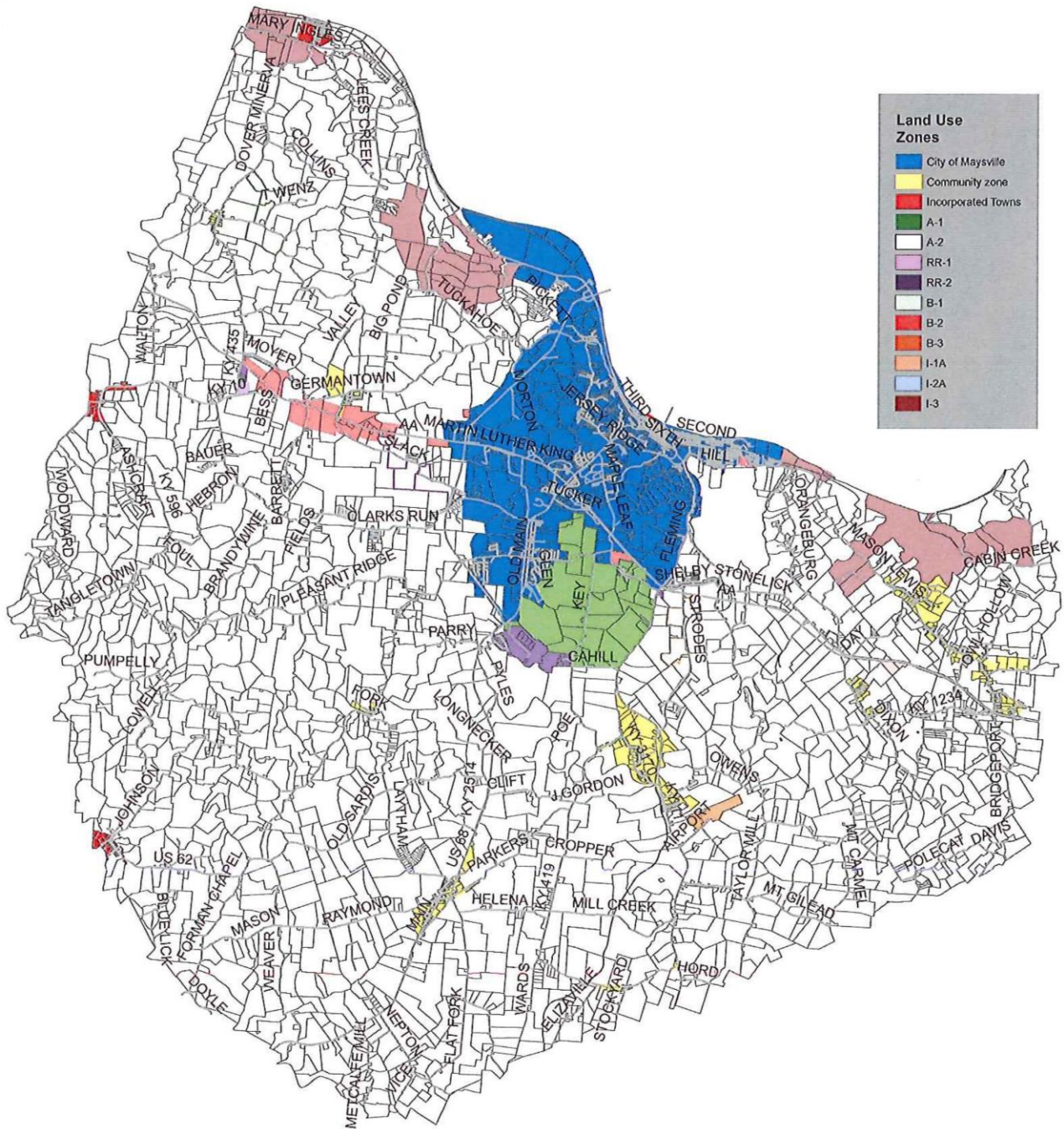


Figure 14D. Official Mason County Land Use Map

## **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

Several environmental quality issues were raised in the Community Assessment: 1) inadequate sewage disposal, 2) solid waste disposal, including problems of litter and illegal dumping, 3) nuisances, 4) protection of green space and open areas, and 5) watershed management, including problems of flooding and soil erosion.

### **SEWAGE DISPOSAL**

The Soil Survey points out that a large percentage of land in the County has severe restrictions for septic tanks and absorption fields. In other words, the vast majority of soils are unsuitable for sewage disposal by septic tanks.

As feasible, City sewer services should be extended to targeted development areas, and to those areas where present septic tank systems are not functioning adequately. In addition, other sewage disposal options should be examined for potential use in the County.

### **SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL**

Public agencies should continue to hold community awareness programs on the need for keeping the County free of litter and illegal dumping, as well as hold annual cleanup programs.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Protecting the environment and minimizing negative impacts is one of the goals of local governments. The natural environment is the base upon which human activity takes place. It is desirable to use natural resources wisely and efficiently. It is also in the best interest of the community that a portion of the natural landscape be retained as greenspace, protected from undesirable development. There are a number of tools or techniques that can be used to conserve and protect the natural resource base:

1. Establishment of Conservation Easements – This is a legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified conservation organization that provides long-term legal protection for the natural or historic features of a property. Six Agricultural Districts are located throughout the unincorporated areas of Mason County.

2. Creation of a Land Trust – A land trust is a private, non-profit organization that protects natural and cultural resources through land acquisition, conservation easements, and education.
3. Donations – This involves the transfer of land to a conservation organization in the form of a charitable gift from the property owner.
4. Outright Purchase – This method is referred to as “fee-simple acquisition” and involves the purchase of land by the government or a non-profit organization to protect it from future development.
5. Land Banking – In this approach, the local government acquires, holds, and subsequently releases land for controlled development or for conservation purposes. Open space is thereby protected by acquiring and temporarily holding land, placing permanent conservation restrictions on it, and reselling it, sometimes at a profit.
6. Purchase of Development Rights – This method allows for government to acquire the development rights to farmland in order to keep it in agricultural use.
7. Transfer of Development Rights – This is a technique for guiding development away from sensitive areas and toward areas that can better handle it through the transfer of development rights from one area to another.
8. Agricultural/Large Lot Zoning – This is a method for protecting agricultural land by stipulating minimum lot sizes or limitations on non-farm uses. It may require that each new house be constructed on a minimum number of acres, generally at least five or more.
9. Right to Farm Law – This legislation (KR413.072) protects a farmer from nuisance lawsuits and from local ordinances that might hinder normal farming practices.
10. Agricultural Districts – This approach allows a farmer or farmers to voluntarily create an agricultural district of at least 250 contiguous acres of land in agricultural use which protects the area from annexation, and requires state agencies to mitigate the impacts of state projects in that area.

In addition, greenspace or sensitive environmental and cultural sites can be protected through the use of required landscape buffers. Landscape provisions can be added to the zoning ordinance or subdivision regulations to require the retention or addition of plants in conjunction with development proposals.

## WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

The Maysville/Mason County Zoning Ordinance provides for a Flood Prone Overlay District, which is designed to protect certain areas that have been designated as being subject to periodic flooding. One of the major problems related to local flooding is the cumulative effect of developed areas coming in upstream without proper considerations being given to the impact downstream. The Planning Commission should create incentives for subdivisions and developers, which utilize best management practices for water conservation and environmental protection, such as using permeable instead of impermeable surfaces.

## SOIL EROSION

The Soil Survey points out that the major management problem for soils in Mason County is erosion. This problem applies to 134,296 acres of land, which constitutes 87.1% of the total land in the County. Structural development should be confined to those areas where the slope does not exceed 20%. About one-third of the soils by acreage have slopes that are too steep for most structural development, as demonstrated in Table 18.

<u>Slope Category</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent</u>
12 to 20%	16,220	10.3
20 to 40%	30,200	19.2
30 to 60%	<u>6,510</u>	<u>4.1</u>
	52,930	33.6

Table 18. Percentage of Soils by Slope Categories.

The Zoning Ordinance includes provisions for a Conservation Overlay District designed to protect environmentally sensitive areas, especially those identified to be steeply-sloped. Existing requirements for managing soil erosion in the subdivision regulations appear to be adequate. More strict enforcement of these guidelines should help to reduce the extent of the problem.

The provisions for reviewing environmental issues in the zoning regulations should be extended to the unincorporated areas of the County.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### HISTORIC OVERVIEW

In the Community Assessment, the richness of historic resources in Maysville and Mason County was listed as one of the major community assets. The historic record goes back to the late 1700s when the town of Washington, which at the time was in Bourbon County, was created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1786. The following year, the port of Limestone and the town of Charleston were established. Shortly thereafter, Washington residents petitioned for a division of Bourbon County, and Mason County was created.

Native Americans had long occupied the area, and with the arrival of new settlers, there were occasional skirmishes. Despite these conflicts, the small settlement of Limestone quickly became a busy port on the Ohio River. In 1789, 30 flatboats per day arrived at Limestone. By 1793, the original inhabitants had withdrawn from the area, and a stream of settlers began pouring into the area. A postal road was constructed in 1794, which connected Limestone with both the Bluegrass area and with Pittsburgh. With this improvement, regular mail service became available.

Early settlers included Scots-Irish, Germans, and English people, who came down the Ohio River from source areas largely in the Mid-Atlantic and Virginia. Most were intent on earning their living by raising crops and livestock. Limestone was a major disembarkment point for settlers moving south into the Bluegrass area. In 1790, Washington already had a population of 460, second only to Lexington in size among Kentucky's settlements. By 1810, Washington had grown to 815, while Maysville's population reached 335. In that same year, there were seven communities located in Mason County with a combined population of 1,388, including Washington, Maysville, May's Lick, Charleston Bottoms, Germantown, Lewisburg, and Williamsburg, which is now Orangeburg. (Note: Most of this information is taken from Mason County, Kentucky: Historic Sites Survey Summary Report, by Gibson Worsham, 1990).

Slavery was a fixture in Mason County from the earliest settlements. There were 229 slaves in in Mason County 1791. The hemp boom between 1830 and 1850 made Maysville the 2nd largest hemp port in the world, and by the 1860s, Mason County

was 12<sup>th</sup> among Kentucky's counties in total slave population. People in the County were divided over the slavery issue and fought on both sides during the Civil War. In the postwar years, freed blacks settled in several of the County's towns where their descendants are still found today.

Roads were improved, rail connections were completed, and Mason County continued to grow and prosper. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the strong agricultural base, with tobacco as the dominant crop, was giving way to a more diversified economy, with Maysville becoming the focal point of manufacturing, trade, and services. Today the City and County function as the growth center for a seven-county trade area.

The Statement of Goals and Objectives dealing with historic preservation stress six primary themes:

1. Comprehensive protection of historic sites and structures (largely completed, with some work ongoing)
2. Support of the preservation programs in Maysville and Old Washington
3. Protection of historic areas, including those outside of the historic districts
4. Adequate review of historic values in all development proposals
5. Better use, promotion, and marketing of historic resources
6. Encouragement of maintenance and preservation by property owners

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

As of 2016, Maysville and Mason County still have many visible reminders of their long and interesting history. Since the 1970s, hundreds of historic sites have been researched. In the most recent countywide architectural survey in 1990 by Gibson Worsham, approximately 500 rural sites were surveyed, which provided detailed information on structures, including construction, materials used, number of stories, floorplans, functions, architectural and decorative styles, quality, and age. According to Dr. Orloff G. Miller, 30 percent of contributing historic structures in Old Washington have been depleted since 1990.

The 1990 survey listed some 50 additional sites to be added to the existing National Register properties in the County. The survey also included six proposed or expanded

districts being added to the inventory of historic resources, excluding archaeological and Maysville sites.

## RENAISSANCE AND MAIN STREET PROGRAMS

Maysville was one of five pilot Main Street programs established in Kentucky in 1979. As state funding became more available, Main Streets shifted their focus to a "rebirth." With that, the Renaissance Program in Maysville was established in 1998. The City entered the program as a Silver community and was elevated to Gold status in 2001. The City's program focused on restoration and revitalization within the historic core downtown business district. The City received \$1.1 million to make improvements to the streetscape in downtown Maysville, including underground utilities, removal of overhead wiring, sidewalks, and street lighting. Old Washington entered the Renaissance Program in 2000 at the Silver level, making Maysville the only community in Kentucky with two Renaissance Programs. Washington received \$450,000 for their streetscape improvements.

In June 2010, the City of Maysville retired a very successful locally-funded façade program. Twenty-three façades were completed within the Renaissance District within a four-year period using locally-funded 50/50 match program. In 2014, the City initiated another façade grant program which included 20 projects and an approximate public and private reinvestment of \$350,000 in the Renaissance District.

In 2016, the Renaissance Program shifted back to a focus on "Main Street." The current Maysville Main Street is an accredited program within the National Main Street Center. Accredited means that the program meets the 10 standards established by National Main Street. The Main Street Board is composed of 13 members, who represent various civic and non-profit entities, as well as business and property owners in the Main Street District. The Board focuses on the National Main Street Four Point Approach: Organization, Design, Economic Restructuring, and Promotion.

## PROTECTING AND PRESERVING HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Maysville's historic preservation program was initiated in 1990 with the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the creation of the Maysville Board of Architectural Review, which is now the Maysville/Washington Board of Architectural Review, and the establishment of the Maysville Historic District and Old Washington Historic District. The guidelines for historic preservation are included in the

Maysville Zoning Regulations and give the Board of Architectural Review broad powers in dealing with these issues. Historic Overlay Districts have been designated for part of Maysville's Downtown area and for Old Washington. The zoning ordinance also provides a special zone for Oldtown Residential uses and a Historic Overlay District, as well as a Historic Preservation Committee for Mason County. This committee would operate in the same fashion as Maysville's Board of Architectural Review. The Mason County Fiscal Court should establish this committee to help protect the valuable historic resources in the unincorporated areas of the County.

One of the problems of historic preservation review is the tendency to treat these concerns lightly and to allow changes to take place before the appropriate agency has had an opportunity to have a meaningful input into the process. In early 2006, the Board of Architectural Review met to make changes to the historic district ordinance. Eventually, the City approved the changes, which included splitting the ordinance into a section for downtown Maysville and a section for Old Washington. In 2009, regulations were put into place in order to better preserve Old Washington, yet still allowing for economic development to take place in downtown Maysville.

Another problem is the disparity of historic preservation efforts between the City of Maysville Old Washington Historic District and Greater Old Washington. "Greater Old Washington" was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. The area in the NRHP district encompasses much more than the land within the borders of the City of Maysville's Old Washington Historic District, spanning roughly from Clarks Run Road to Duke of York Street, and from Lowe Drive to Glendale Drive. Unfortunately, the Maysville/Washington Board of Architectural Review only has jurisdiction over land within the City's two historic districts and historic landmarks. Although the regulations added to the historic preservation zoning ordinance in 2009 documented relationships between inlots and outlots in Greater Old Washington, outlots are typically outside the Old Washington Historic District, and the historic preservation zoning ordinance is not applicable to them. However, it is desirable to attempt to redirect incompatible commercial and residential development away from Greater Old Washington, to create both a physical buffer and "viewshed" protections. Most outlots are not zoned for commercial land uses, which could be seen as unsympathetic development within Greater Old Washington. The Mason County Joint Planning Commission should take into account historic preservation when considering map amendment applications for land within Greater Old Washington to prevent encroachment of unsympathetic land uses.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND HERITAGE TOURISM

Heritage Tourism is defined as travel that is motivated by interest in the historical aspects of a given place. It is part of the larger cultural tourism picture. The rise of heritage tourism as a major component of travel and tourism development is related to more travelers being better educated, more affluent, staying closer to home, and desiring a higher quality experience.

History is one of the most valuable resources that Maysville and Mason County have to offer to its residents and to visitors from an extensive market area. Some of the most important historic attractions in the community include the following:

- Old Washington
- Kentucky Gateway Museum Center
- National Underground Railroad Museum
- Limestone Landing and Floodwall Murals
- Downtown Maysville Historic District
- May's Lick
- Bank of Maysville
- Old Mechanics Row
- Washington Opera House
- Phillips' Folly
- Pioneer Graveyard
- Rosemary Clooney's Childhood Home
- Russell Theatre
- Simon Kenton Bridge
- Dover Covered Bridge
- Valley Pike Covered Bridge
- Harriet Beecher Stowe Slavery to Freedom Museum
- Mefford Station
- Minerva Baptist Church
- Germantown
- Pogue House Micro-Distillery
- Albert Sydney Johnston House
- Colonel Young Cabin
- Cox Building

- Washington Hall
- Cedar Hill
- Federal Hill

In addition to these sites, several historic events are reenacted as part of the larger festivals, and special events, which were discussed earlier. These events draw thousands of people into the County each year. There needs to be an adequate mechanism in place to better measure the magnitude of tourism impact on the local economy and other community systems.

## OLD WASHINGTON

The Old Washington Historic District is part of the larger Washington community, which merged with the City of Maysville in 1991. As mentioned previously, the original settlement of Washington was established in 1785. The community today is much like it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The uniqueness of Old Washington is not found only in its architecture, but in the overall character of the community. It is one of the only places in the country where 18<sup>th</sup> century Frontier period cabins survive next door to gracious early 19<sup>th</sup> century Federal townhouses. It is also the site of important historic events and was linked to a number of dignitaries in its early development. An illustration of the main features of Old Washington is presented in Figure 15.

# A Hearty Welcome to OLD WASHINGTON Kentucky

**Historic buildings**  
Buildings open to public  
Museums on tour from Visitor's Center  
Re-erected log cabin  
Restrooms

**28 DOCTORS HOUSE, c. 1810,** is north element of the row structure. For over a century, physicians lived here (Physician residence)

**29 PAYTON EVANS HOUSE, c. 1800,** home of James Payton, a lawyer and abolitionist

**1 EARLY RESIDENCE, 1847,** built by George Swoward

**2 SIMON KENTON SHRINE** one of the original 1790 cabins

**3 VISITORS CENTER (THE CANE BRAKE)** one of the original 119 cabins of 1790

**4 EARLY LOG BUILDING** re-erected as public restroom facility

**5 EARLY STRUCTURE, c. 1850,** board and batten, double house

**6 EARLY STRUCTURES,** dating from 1800

**7 EARLY LIMESTONE HOUSE,** frame erected by Dr. Wm. Golobn prior to 1799

**8 ROW HOUSES, c. 1795,** examples of very early frame row structures

**9 FIRST BRANCH BANK** in Northern Kentucky, 1800. Under license from Bank of Maryland, oldest bank in KY

**10 WASHINGTON HALL,** built in 1820 as a grand hotel in hopes of keeping the county seat in Washington

**11 CATTON HOME, c. 1800** was in part originally a tavern

**12 TAYLOR HOME, c. 1800**

**13 ORIGINAL FRAME BUILDING,** mid - 1800's

**14 COMBESS-RESLER RESIDENCE, c. 1800,** boasts a well and unusual arch supports in the basement

**15 EARLY LOG BUILDING** re-erected as Washington Baptist Chapel in the Cemetery where early settlers and Revolutionary soldiers are buried

**16 GEORGE WOOD HOUSE, c. 1795,** oldest brick structure in Washington. Wood was one of the founding fathers of Washington

**17 CEDAR HILL, 1807** built by John Charlton who served with Gen. Win. Henry Harrison and was a two-term U.S. Congressman. Presidents Harrison & Grant, Lafayette, Henry Clay & John C. Calhoun visited here (Now a private residence)

**18 EARLY STRUCTURE, c. 1800's**

**19 GABLED STRUCTURE** good example of Gothic Revival architecture, c. 1850

**20 FOX-BICKLEY RESIDENCE, c. 1785,** originally home of Arthur Fox who with Rev. Wm. Wood laid-out the town of Washington in 1786

**21 FEDERAL HILL, 1800,** built by Capt. Thomas Marshall, brother of U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall (Now a private residence)

**22 MEFFORD'S STATION, c. 1787,** Cabin contains planks from flat-bed that carried Mefford and his family to Limestone

**23 ORIGINAL EARLY LOG STRUCTURE** (Now a private residence)

**24 SITE OF FIRST POSTAL STATION** (West of the Alleywayes (1789))

**25 MURPHY-LASHBROOKE HOME, 1805,** built by Wm. Murphy, Washington's second postmaster

**26 BRODRICK'S TAVERN, 1794,** the first tavern license in Washington was granted to David Brodrick

**THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SOUTH, 1848.** Prior to the Civil War, strong sentiments split the Methodists into M.E. Church North and M.E. Church South (Now known as the Old Church Museum)

**31 TAYLOR-MORRIS HOUSE, c. 1830,** was originally built as a house and store for Elizabeth Forman and her husband, Robert Taylor

**32 OLD LIMESTONE COURTHOUSE SITE.** Original limestone building erected by Lewis Craig in 1793

**33 MAULBURY SCHOOL BOARDING HOUSE, c. 1810,** drew its students from Kentucky & surrounding states

**ALBERT SIDNEY JOHNSTON HOUSE, c. 1797,** birthplace of famous Confederate General. His death at Shiloh, April 6, 1862, said to be military turning point of the Civil War.

**35 PILLSBURY SCHOOL, c. 1812,** was alma mater to many prominent Washington citizens

**36 EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY STRUCTURE** once housed a grocery

**37 WASHINGTON MEETING HOUSE, 1840,** originally built as Washington Christian Church. Now contains public meeting room & public restrooms (Preservations: Visitor's Center)

**38 BRICK STRUCTURE, c. 1795,** construction smokehouse and fortification for Indian attacks

**39 MARSHALL KEY HOUSE, 1807** Now Harriet Beecher Stowe Slavery to Freedom Museum

**40 PRESBYTERIAN MANSE, 1873,** lovely example of Victorian

**41 WASHINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1870,** Gothic Revival structure, sanctuary of pressed tin coverings on wall & ceiling

**42 BAYLESS-TAYLOR HOUSE, 1802** very early brick home built by Capt. Benjamin Bayless

**43 FRAME STRUCTURE, c. 1940,** originally built as a feed mill

**44 THESE EARLY LOG STRUCTURES** have been re-erected as the WASHINGTON POST OFFICE & a private business

**45 HAVENS CHAPEL, 1941,** original structure erected in 1882. Active church today. Notes original reproduced wells throughout Washington

Figure 15. Map of Old Historic Washington.

Information in this portion of the Comprehensive Plan is drawn largely from four reports:

In 1975, a major study of Washington was completed by John Walden, and Vogt, Sage & Pflum Consultants. The study includes an historic area analysis, design analysis, land use analysis, land use plan, and economic development strategy. In addition, it contains a survey of the historic buildings and an extensive appendix of other related historic documentation.

In 2000, a Market Study of Old Washington was completed by RM Associates, Inc. in conjunction with an application for designation as a Silver Level Community. The study includes an analysis of the market served by Old Washington, as well as recommendations for changes to the community in keeping with the results of visitor surveys and on-site observations by the consultant.

More recently, the volunteer community preservation group, Old Washington Inc., in cooperation with the Mason County Fiscal Court and the Maysville Tourism Office, created the *Old Washington Community Plan* in 2007 (Miller 2007). The Old Washington Community plan defines resources, current conditions, and short- and long-term threats to the community, and reviews the tools available for preservation, advanced proposals for enhancing residential and visitor amenities, and articulates an action plan. The plan in its final form was the result of a series of public meetings and over two years of volunteer expertise. The plan is on file at the Maysville Municipal Building for review and research.

## OLD WASHINGTON HISTORIC DISTRICT ARCHITECTURAL STUDY

In 2013, a comprehensive study of all properties in the Old Washington Historic District was compiled. This study defines the historic significance of each property by historical content. It also included landscape features that defined the district (Miller and Miller 2013).

## ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

There should be one group overseeing the promotion and development of historic Old Washington. In the past, there have been several organizations formed to guide the future of the community, sometimes with significantly different views on what future

policies and programs should be carried out. Old Washington, Inc. would appear to be the most likely group to be given this task.

In addition, there is a need for the shopkeepers to work together in terms of days and hours of operation, as is feasible. Tourists who visit the site during normal working hours expect all shops to be open.

While volunteers have done an excellent job in taking care of the many needs of visitors, there needs to be a salaried employee in charge of daily operations, who would be available on-site at least on a part-time basis to deal with problems that arise and to manage the overall affairs of the district.

The City needs to consider providing additional financial support to Old Washington in light of its historic significance and its contribution to the local economy. It is a unique historic place that is a significant resource to the community.

## THE MIX OF GOODS AND SERVICES

The present mix of goods and services, being offered in Old Washington, consists largely of the following items:

- Antiques & Collectibles
- Crafts
- Fine Art & Prints
- Fine & Costume Jewelry
- Historic Books
- Vintage Style Lamps & Accessories
- Furniture
- Gifts
- Notecards & Postcards
- Pottery
- Glassware
- Tours & Information

The aforementioned Old Washington studies demonstrate that art, antiques, tours and information attract the most visitors. The majority of visitors are satisfied with the present mix of goods and services. Twenty-five percent of visitors expressed an interest in a greater variety of shops, with specific mention of wanting restaurants and

more antique shops. Most of the visitors surveyed were either regular visitors to the area or first time visitors. The addition of new attractions is an important consideration.

An overwhelming majority of visitors said they would not want to see new businesses or attractions in Washington that would take away from the quality of the site and its values. Several comments pointed out the need to keep out fast-food places, flea markets, and similar ubiquitous activities that attract a different clientele. There was also a concern of over-commercializing by adding too many new businesses.

The interest in history and its values as represented in the old buildings, the architecture, genealogy, costumed tour guides, special historic events, and related activities was by far the single most important purpose for people coming to Old Washington. A significant number of visitors wanted to see more living history through historic re-enactments, more historic memorabilia, and more shopkeepers and volunteers in costumes. A number of visitors were disappointed with the limited amount of time that some of the shops were open, and the late starting time for some of the special events.

## SITE ENHANCEMENT

In 2008, the Board of Architectural Review tried to expand the boundary of the historic district to further protect the core of Old Washington. This attempt was unsuccessful as numerous residents in the area opposed the expansion. Nonetheless, the Board was successful in implementing new protection measures to the zoning ordinance. The following measures were adopted:

1. Update of the design review guidelines;
2. Limitations on the subdivision of existing parcels in the district;
3. Acknowledgement of the original inlot/outlot boundaries in planning decisions;
4. Distinguished construction standards for in-lots and out-lots;
5. Requirement that rezoning requests will be reviewed jointly by the Planning Commission and Board of Architectural Review, and **MUST** be accompanied by a development plan;

6. New construction on a previously built-upon lot must be the same or similar to the demolished or destroyed structure or original structure(s) on site;
7. Requirement that the Board's Administrative Official to survey all properties in the district once a year, and prepare a report on those properties being neglected.

The Board, along with existing preservation groups, should continue to make strides in enhancing the overall aesthetics of Old Washington.

## PROMOTION AND MARKETING

Old Washington is the single most important travel and tourist attraction in Mason County. The number of visitors to the site each year is unknown, but estimates range from 15,000 to 25,000. The majority of these people come from Mason and surrounding counties, and the nearby metropolitan areas of Lexington and Cincinnati. Almost every state in the United States is represented, along with several foreign countries. Of those visitors surveyed, almost all were favorably impressed by their experience, and were repeat visitors.

Some visitor suggestions made include: Provide more information on special events, keep regular visitors posted as to scheduled events, do more advertising in newspapers, magazines, and on the Internet, including state official websites, etc. that cover out of the area. Additional marketing and promotional activities should be targeted to those areas that are the sources for the majority of visitors, such as the Target Markets of Mason and its surrounding counties, Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky, Lexington, Dayton, Louisville, and Ashland, as well as to the interests expressed, which include history, antiques/crafts, genealogy, slavery, architecture, and to tour groups, such as riverboats, school groups, senior citizen groups, etc.

Four of the Target Market newspapers are included in the top 100 newspapers in the U.S. in total circulation: The Louisville Courier Journal, Cincinnati Enquirer, Dayton Daily News, and Lexington Herald-Leader. These four newspapers cover almost all of the Primary Market Area. With a population in excess 4.1 million, these newspapers reach over 2.3 million readers on a daily basis. The focus on advertising should be directed toward these metropolitan areas, especially in regards to special events. This focus should shift more to online advertising with an increase in internet usage, including online print and social media, due to the imminent decline in print media.

The single-most important special interest group to be targeted is that of Historic Interests. These groups could be reached through promotional materials mailed to historic organizations in Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and other states with high visitation rates. Historic groups can also be reached through leading historic magazines such as American Heritage, American History, America's Civil War, and Preservation Magazine; these periodicals have circulations of 160,000, 46,000, 27,000, and 300,000, respectively.

## TRACKING VISITORS

In order to better meet the needs of visitors in terms of marketing, promotional information, etc., and to more effectively measure the success of Old Washington, the Visitor's Register needs to be modified to provide more information in a format that will be easier to use in future studies.

## DOWNTOWN MAYSVILLE

Downtown Maysville is an historic district situated along the banks of the Ohio River. It is a relatively small and compact area of land, situated largely between the Ohio River on the north, the south side of Third Street on the south, Wall Street on the West, and Limestone Street on the east. The Main Street District boundary includes this area as well as additional properties to the east. Downtown Maysville consists of a mixture of commercial, residential, and public/semi-public land uses. It is not only an attractive business center, but also is a focal point of much of Maysville's early history.

In 1999, a Downtown Market Study was conducted for the City of Maysville by McGlothlin Marketing to serve as a basis for future economic development in the downtown Maysville area. Many of the suggestions have been implemented, and the City should continue to pursue the following ideas:

1. Form a business development team with the goal of adapting industrial recruiting materials and methods to the businesses.
2. Expertise is required in four areas: Industrial development, local business development, marketing, and internet/web development.

3. Promote available space. An inventory of all vacant space should be maintained and information made available to realtors, developers, builders, and the general public.
4. Target entrepreneurs outside the community. Promote downtown Maysville as a business site through a dedicated website and public relations materials to magazines such as INC and Fast Company. Stress Maysville's high quality of life, high speed data capability, and available space.
5. Improve downtown aesthetics. Use existing laws and regulations to enforce owner upkeep of buildings and property. Aggressively apply safety, health, and public nuisance laws to improve downtown appearance and cleanliness.

Within the City of Maysville, the area presently occupied by a number of large tobacco warehouses – known locally as the East End – is also in need of revitalization. Some of these buildings stand idle, while others are underutilized. In light of the decline in tobacco farming, it is likely that further deterioration will take place in this area. The City needs to develop a plan that would examine some options for redevelopment of this area, including the use of open space and the creation of parks. Some of these structures are sound and suitable for renovation into useable commercial or industrial facilities. This concept could be expanded to include an entrepreneurship training center. There is adequate public infrastructure in place to support new residential, commercial, or industrial development, thereby reducing the demand for development of raw land and new public infrastructure out on the fringes.

## **RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS**

Mason County agriculture has long been dependent upon tobacco for most of its revenues. With recent declines in tobacco production and purchasing, the County is forced to look to other sources for income. In keeping with the requirements of the legislation, a County Agricultural Development Council, consisting of nine members, has been formed to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Evaluate the needs of the local agricultural economy;
2. Complete a comprehensive farm plan that will identify those programs that are best suited to support the County's agriculture; and
3. Assist local applicants in preparing proposals to spend County funds to be submitted to the State Board.

Tobacco farmers will be given priority in this program, with both small and large farmers having equal access to the funding. Counties can use these funds for the following uses, which is not a comprehensive list:

- Low (or no) interest venture capital loans;
- Grants for local agricultural economic development projects;
- Grants for water line extensions; and
- Transition assistance to another farm enterprise or off-farm employment

Counties may use these funds in multi-county regional projects or to match state or federal programs. Individuals, groups, educational institutions, government entities, cooperatives, and other agriculturally related entities are eligible for funds. In addition to the funds that are set aside for Mason County, the State Agricultural Development Board oversees the tobacco settlement funds that are to be used for statewide projects. The local Agriculture Development Council has a prepared and recently-updated comprehensive plan.

It is also recommended that an Agriculture Task Force be appointed on an as-needed basis by the County Judge/Executive. Input will be gathered from citizens of the local agriculture community, including input from other agencies, such as the Agriculture Extension Office, Mason County Conservation District, USDA-Farm Service Agency, and Mason County Farm Bureau.

The following strategies are being proposed:

1. An Agricultural Task Force will be established on an as-needed basis to oversee the implementation of strategies as spelled out in the Comprehensive Plan. This group could coordinate its efforts with the local Agriculture Development Council.
2. Continue to work with the existing Rural Entrepreneurship Program.
3. Develop policies and programs to protect and retain land that is considered valuable or that has soils of prime or of statewide importance. Selected options may include the creation of Agricultural Districts and the establishment of Conservation Easements.

4. Upgrade and expand the activities of the local farmers market.
5. Encourage the revitalization of rural communities as part of the economic development and land use management strategies included in the Comprehensive Plan.

## AGRICULTURAL MISSION STATEMENT

“The rural farm sector of Mason County wants farming to remain a vital part of the rural economy. This council recognizes the proud farmers who wish to make a stand together to live in a community where agriculture is a valued part of community life. We want everyone to have the opportunity to farm profitably while using environmentally-sound farming practices. Recognizing that landowners want this governing body to be responsive to the needs of the Mason County farming community. As a group of farmers and agri-businesses, they have been given a once in a lifetime opportunity to invest in the future of agriculture in Mason County. It is our goal to promote agriculture for current farmers and future generations.”

The following primary themes are derived from the Mission Statement above:

- Retention of farmland as an economic factor
- Value the quality of life of the farming lifestyle
- Opportunity to make a profit
- Environmental responsibility
- Local governmental support
- Opportunity to invest in agriculture
- Agricultural promotion
- Farming as a sustainable activity

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Mason County Agriculture Task Force’s proposals for actions in meeting future farm needs in Mason County are described below. These categories parallel those that are proposed by the state for funding both at the county and state levels through the Agriculture Development Council.

1. Retention and enhancement of those elements of the farm economy that are viable (development of established agricultural sectors):
  - Continue to support tobacco farming while exploring ways to improve upon production and new markets for tobacco products.
  - Add value to livestock production through more efficient management and marketing strategies.
  - Increase forage production through the control of noxious weeds, rotational grazing and renovation of pasture land.
  - Develop a program for land use management and retention of valuable farmland.
  - Improve upon the removal and disposal of dead animals either through the dead animal removal program or an approved composting facility or other approved means of disposal, such as on-site burial, to protect water quality.
  - Support Kentucky HB 529 in the protection and development of rural water supply for the long-term effect in meeting the demand for a growing and profitable agriculture community.
2. Diversification/Expansion of the farm economy (new and emerging agriculture):
  - Investigate the potential for new farming opportunities to include new crops, livestock, horticulture, wildlife and aquaculture.
  - Expand agriculture production into areas presently being underutilized.
3. Rural/Agricultural Capacity Building (value-added/entrepreneurship):
  - Provide educational assistance to rural young people to help better prepare for future farming options, or to change to other careers.
  - Assists farmers in their efforts to start new rural/agricultural businesses.
4. Attraction of New Businesses and Industries (value-added processing):
  - Seek to attract new businesses and manufacturers to the County that have a connection to the farm economy.
5. Networking/Leveraging:
  - Work with surrounding counties in establishing regional programs, facilities and markets, and seek to leverage local funds with state and federal funds.
  - Work with other surrounding counties to develop regional options that will benefit the agricultural economy.

6. Developing Market Infrastructure:
  - Establish a Multi-Purpose Farm Marketing Center.
  - Continue to support and improve the farmer markets, encourage the local food movement similar to a “Farm to Table” event.
  - Improve upon marketing skills of local farmers, and seek additional on-site marketing expertise from the state.

The individual plans and projects submitted by farmers and groups serve as the strategies for implementing the goals and objectives of the farm plan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

The following information summarizes the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan together with the proposed time lines for implementation, and an indication of the agency that has primary responsibility for initiating action.

### **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE**

<u>PLAN COMPONENT</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE</u>	<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>
<b>Transportation</b>		
Repairs to Simon Kenton Bridge	Ongoing	State/City
Relocation of Hwy. 68 (South Loop)	2020	State
Scoping Study-- widening of AA Hwy from Lewis/Greenup Co line through Bracken Co.	Ongoing	State
Major widening of AA Hwy West to KY 435 near Fernleaf	2016/2017	State
Widening of KY 1448/Maple Leaf Road, from US 62 to AA Hwy	2016/2017	State
Runway/taxiway improvements at Fleming/Mason Co. Airport	Ongoing	Federal

## **Economic Development**

Attract new industries to Maysville/Mason Co.	Ongoing	Industrial Auth. City/County
Attract new businesses to Maysville/Mason Co.	Ongoing	City/County
Retention/Enhancement of Special Events	Ongoing	Tourism
Renovation/reuse of tobacco warehouses	Ongoing	City
Promote Maysville/Mason Co. as Regional Growth Center	Ongoing	City/County
Secure state/federal funding for economic development	Ongoing	City/County/BTADD
Continue support for 2025 Plan	Ongoing	City/County/Ind. Auth.
Ensure Maysville/Mason County broadband access costs are competitive to other areas by fostering a “Last Mile” solution that exploits KentuckyWired availability expected in 2018	By 2018	City/County

## **Public Facilities & Services**

Continue extension of water lines to unserved areas (as feasible)	Ongoing	City/County
Separation of combined sewers in downtown Maysville	2011-2017	City
Repairs/Maintenance to floodwall	Ongoing	City
Continue efforts to assist, from a land use standpoint, the fight against illegal drugs	Ongoing	City/County
Continue upgrading of landfill operation	Ongoing	City/County

Continue upgrading of police, fire, and emergency services as determined by demand	Ongoing	City/County
Continue upgrading of educational facilities and programs	Ongoing	City/County/State
Increase visibility on the internet	Ongoing	City/County
Increase employee training in the use of computers and related technology	Ongoing	City/County
Enhanced training for planning boards	Ongoing	Staff
Expand Maysville/Mason Co Recreation Park	Ongoing	City/County
Develop Riverfront Marina/ Recreation area	Ongoing	City
Expand County parks as needed	Ongoing	County
<b>Housing</b>		
Continue to make improvements in public housing programs	Ongoing	City/County
Encourage "in-filling" of houses on vacant lots	Ongoing	City/County
Continue to eliminate substandard housing through codes programs	Ongoing	City/County
Revitalize Habitat for Humanity housing program	Ongoing	City/County
<b>Land Use and Environment</b>		
Revise Subdivision Regulations to better meet City/County needs	Ongoing	City/County
Extend city sewer services to targeted development areas	Ongoing	City/County
Continue and expand citizen awareness	Ongoing	City/County

regarding waste disposal, littering, etc.

Establish programs such as Conservation Easements, PDR/TDRs, Land Trusts, etc. to protect the environment and retain green space	Ongoing	City/County
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Enforce existing guidelines to protect environmentally-sensitive areas (maximum slopes, soil erosion, Conservation Overlay Districts, etc.)	Ongoing	City/County
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Ensure that environmental issues are properly addressed in all development projects	Ongoing	City/County
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Support efforts for local regulations that prohibit the Mason County Landfill from accepting any hydraulic fracturing waste-byproduct, wastewater, liquid compounds, or any other material resulting from any fracturing and/or fracking operations whatsoever.	Ongoing	County
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**Historic Preservation**

Ensure that historic issues are addressed in all land use changes and development projects, including those outside the historic districts	Ongoing	City/County
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Seek funding for historic preservation projects in Old Washington, downtown Maysville, and in rural areas	Ongoing	City/County
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**Old Washington**

Improve management of historic/ tourist resources	Ongoing	City (Tourism)
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Seek funding for site improvements	Ongoing	City
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Continue marketing/promotion program	Ongoing	City
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**Downtown Maysville Area**

Recruit new compatible businesses to occupy vacant spaces in the downtown Maysville area	Ongoing	City/Chamber
Develop more dwelling units and make downtown Maysville more livable	Ongoing	City/Chamber
Convert upper-floor spaces into apartments and office space	Ongoing	City/Chamber
Attract additional restaurants and evening entertainment	Ongoing	City/Chamber
Provide tax incentives, grants, and professional design assistance in renovation/revitalization of storefronts	Ongoing	City/Chamber
Seek funds for riverfront improvements, floodwall, murals, etc	Ongoing	City/Chamber
Enhance downtown as an attraction through signage, streetscape improvements, better parking, etc.	Ongoing	City/Chamber

**Rural and Agricultural Areas**

Establish programs to promote retention of valuable farmland	Ongoing	County
Develop a program to revitalize small rural farm communities	Ongoing	County
Establish markets for grain products/produce	Ongoing	County

Note: The agencies indicated in the right hand column are considered to be the agencies with primary responsibility for carrying out a particular component of the Comprehensive Plan. This is not an exclusionary listing. There are many other agencies, organizations, and individuals that will play important supporting roles in seeing that these recommendations are implemented.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Maysville and Mason County are faced with many challenges. Some problems are long-standing, others are more recent, and others have yet to be identified. However, the community has the necessary resources to meet any challenges and to create a better future for all of its citizens. The critical point is whether or not the community has the will to improve its fortunes.

In reflecting back upon all that has been discussed in the Comprehensive Plan, there are seven crucial ideas:

1. **Think Regionally** – Maysville and Mason County presently serve as the growth hub for a seven-county region. There is great potential in building upon this focus;
2. **Look to the River** – the Ohio River is an underutilized resource from both economic and recreational perspectives;
3. Work to **Revitalize the community** – do not allow existing assets to deteriorate;
4. **Preserve and Promote History** – the community has an outstanding historic foundation;
5. **Be Innovative** – encourage local citizens to be creative, to think outside the box, to move in new directions;
6. **Millenials and Baby Boomers** – provide the appropriate amenities, including housing, entertainment, recreation, etc. to retain the younger generation while simultaneous ensuring the needs for the older generation are met;
7. **Drug Rehabilitation** – it is a fact that drug addiction is a major problem in the area, and all entities who have a stake in Maysville and Mason County should work together to plan for facilities that can assist in the problem.

This Comprehensive Plan is designed to be a general reference point for guiding future public actions in Mason County. Local governments will need to work together to insure that public resources are used wisely and efficiently, and that the best interests of the community are represented. This Plan is a beginning, to be revised

and improved upon on a continuing basis. It proposes some fundamental changes in the way Maysville and Mason County have operated in the past.

We cannot easily forecast what the future might bring, but we can continue to learn from the past, study and better understand the present, and use this knowledge to prepare for the future. It is with these thoughts in mind that the Comprehensive Plan will move from the drawing board to reality.

## REFERENCES

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2015-2016 Mason County Comprehensive District Improvement Plan

Numerous interviews were conducted with officials from City, County, regional, and state offices, as well as with local citizens. Select information was gathered from the Internet from a variety of sources.

## **APPENDIX**

1. Mason County Population Quick Facts, U.S. Census Bureau
2. Maysville and Mason County Community Profile, Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development
3. Mason County Farm Statistics Summary
4. Maysville/Mason County Industrial Development Authority 2025 Plan
5. Maysville-Mason County Area Chamber of Commerce Report for 2016
6. Business Retention & Expansion Program Report, June 2016