



Rural Crossroads

DIRECT DEVELOPMENT TO RURAL CROSSROADS AND DEVELOPMENT CORRIDORS

Given Knox County’s projected population growth, it is reasonable to expect some of the non-residential growth will come to East Knox County. When we asked the community to identify potential development sites, they identified the crossroads areas of Strawberry Plains and the Carter Community and Four Way In. They named Asheville Highway and Andrew Johnson Highway as development corridors.



Development Corridors

Each development area identified in the East Knox Community Plan was also identified in the East County Sector Plan, which also identifies the Holston River Gateway, the Brakebill Road Area, and the Marbledale Quarry Area.

The goals and strategies in the East County Sector Plan align with the Strategic Vision for the East Knox Community Plan and won’t be repeated here. In addition to the East County Sector Plan goals and strategies, we recommend the following actions to enhance planning for the rural crossroads and development corridors.

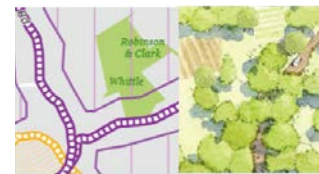
ACTIONS:

1. The Sector Plan suggests a vision for the Carter area. **Develop vision plans**, which define the distinct character and form, for each crossroads district and development corridor.
2. **Incorporate market studies** with the area vision plans to determine the economic potential for retail and housing development.
3. In rural areas, the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians can be overlooked. Adopt a Knox County **complete streets policy** to ensure that bicyclists and pedestrians are considered in road projects.
4. **Adopt zoning tools** that promote connectivity and walkability (street design, sidewalk requirements), compact development, retail mix (variety of uses), open space requirements (village greens, pocket parks, cluster development), appropriate parking, design standards, and mixed uses (residential and non).

5. Adopt zoning regulations applicable to the development corridors that **promote access management** (minimizing the number of driveway access points along busy roads) by limiting curb cuts/entry points and requiring connectivity between development projects.

IMPLICATIONS:

The rural crossroads and development corridors are a hodge-podge of zoning districts, including portions that are in the agricultural zoning district. Since rethinking the County’s agricultural zoning district is a top priority, MPC has the opportunity to rezone property to a more appropriate zone as identified in the East County Sector Plan. In this case, property owners may see the rezoning as gaining additional property rights while others may be concerned about development encroaching into the rural areas. COSTS: consultant costs for vision plans and market studies, staff time.



Rural/Scenic Corridors

MAINTAIN THE RURAL EXPERIENCE THROUGH RURAL CORRIDORS

Driving or bicycling through East Knox County offers scenic views, access to Seven Islands Birding Park, and to French Broad River access points. The community values their rural roads; the preference in the Community Plan and the East Sector plan is to conserve the scenic qualities of the corridors, particularly the natural landscape and setting of historic buildings.

The East Sector plan recommends (and this plan reiterates the need for) two strategies to maintain the character of the rural roads: the need for low density zoning districts near the scenic roadways and an overlay district to address aesthetics. We recommend these additional actions to maintain the character of the rural roads:

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ACTIONS:

1. Develop a driving/bicycling route map (print and online) to identify experiences along the roadways (e.g. Seven Islands, a church tour, farm stands, artist studios, historic structures, etc.).
2. Evaluate where Tennessee state scenic corridor designation may be applicable.
3. Formalize bicycling routes with “Bicyclists May use Full Lane” signage.