

*CITY OF NEWPORT, KENTUCKY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN*

December 2015



# Table of Contents

---

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan.....	1
History.....	1
Issues and Opportunities .....	4
<b>Planning Foundation .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Demographic Profile.....	7
Existing Land Use .....	10
Historic Resources .....	12
Environmental Conditions .....	12
<b>Goals and Objectives .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Land Use Plan Element .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Future Land Use Categories .....	19
Development Strategies.....	22
<b>Special Area Plans.....</b>	<b>28</b>
City Center Development Plan.....	28
CBD Redevelopment and Revitalization (The District).....	32
Northwest Basin Quadrant .....	35

---



## Introduction

---

The City of Newport has experienced tremendous change over the last years beginning with the creation and adoption of the 1989 Comprehensive Development Plan. This change has continued further since the 2000 update of the plan. This change has been a result of a defined vision based on the city's leadership, location, establishments and improved public services.

### **PURPOSE OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

This comprehensive use plan focuses primarily on identifying Newport's overall approach and strategy for growth in the future in compliance with the requirements of the Kentucky Revised Statutes. It assesses the impacts of growth and development on community character and future development opportunities. It promotes orderly development throughout the city, and identifies areas where residential, commercial, and industrial growth is most appropriate. The plan also identifies ways to preserve land while balancing development pressure and the need for a balanced tax base. The intent is that this plan respect basic private property rights and ensure that future regulations will be written in a fair and equitable manner.

The comprehensive plan identifies Newport's goals and objectives, as well as a comprehensive set of policies and plan recommendations (development strategies). It also includes a summary of relevant background information. All of the background information, goals, objectives, and recommendations can be used in the future by the city's decision-makers, property owners, business owners, and even regional agencies, to make decisions based on what the city's desires to be in the long-term future. This plan does not change any laws or zoning regulations as they apply to the city upon adoption. It does provide guidance for future changes that may be made to city policies, laws, and regulations over the next ten years.

### **HISTORY**

Newport has a rich history dating back to the arrival of the first residents in 1789. The purpose of this section is to highlight some of the key aspects of that history as it relates to the physical development of the city. A more in-depth study of Newport's history is provided in *Newport, Kentucky A Bicentennial History*, 1996 by Thomas L. Purvis and others.

In 1807, the construction of the Newport Barracks, considered the first settlement in Newport, providing housing for three regiments of federal soldiers. However, development around this settlement was slow due to steep topography, lack of readily available groundwater, and frequent land disputes. All of these led to a slower development of Northern Kentucky compared to Cincinnati, across the river, which by 1867, was the largest manufacturing city in the country. Areas in Ohio also grew more rapidly because highways and railways were constructed earlier in Ohio than in Kentucky, further spurring Cincinnati's growth. The completion of the Roebling Suspension Bridge in 1866 strengthened the link between Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky and began to spur development south of the Ohio River. As the rail and highway systems developed, it was easier to distribute goods across the river and so Newport, and Northern Kentucky in general, continued to develop as important parts of the larger metropolitan area.



## **NEIGHBORHOODS**

Newport has a number of well-established neighborhoods that residents identify with when talking about where they live and the pride they have in the community. These neighborhoods have been a mainstay in the community over the years and have remained largely unchanged since the last comprehensive plan update. Map 1 illustrates the general boundaries of the existing neighborhoods. Many of the development strategies in this plan make specific recommendations to these neighborhoods.

## **PRESENT CONTEXT**

Since the development of the 1989 Comprehensive Plan, Newport has experienced a great deal of positive development and change. The 1989 plan identified the urban core as an area with development potential and since that time, multiple developments in the core have begun to transform the urban fabric of the city. Some of these developments include the construction of the city's first Class A office building, Riverfront Place, with this serving as headquarters for Heinz Pet Foods and Starkist. Additional development along the riverfront includes a number of restaurants and a hotel. Newport Aquarium opened in May 1999 with Newport on the Levee, an urban entertainment district, opening in the summer of 2001. As of the date of this plan, there are new apartments (Aqua on the Levee) and new hotels under construction along the riverfront to provide for more activity in the area.

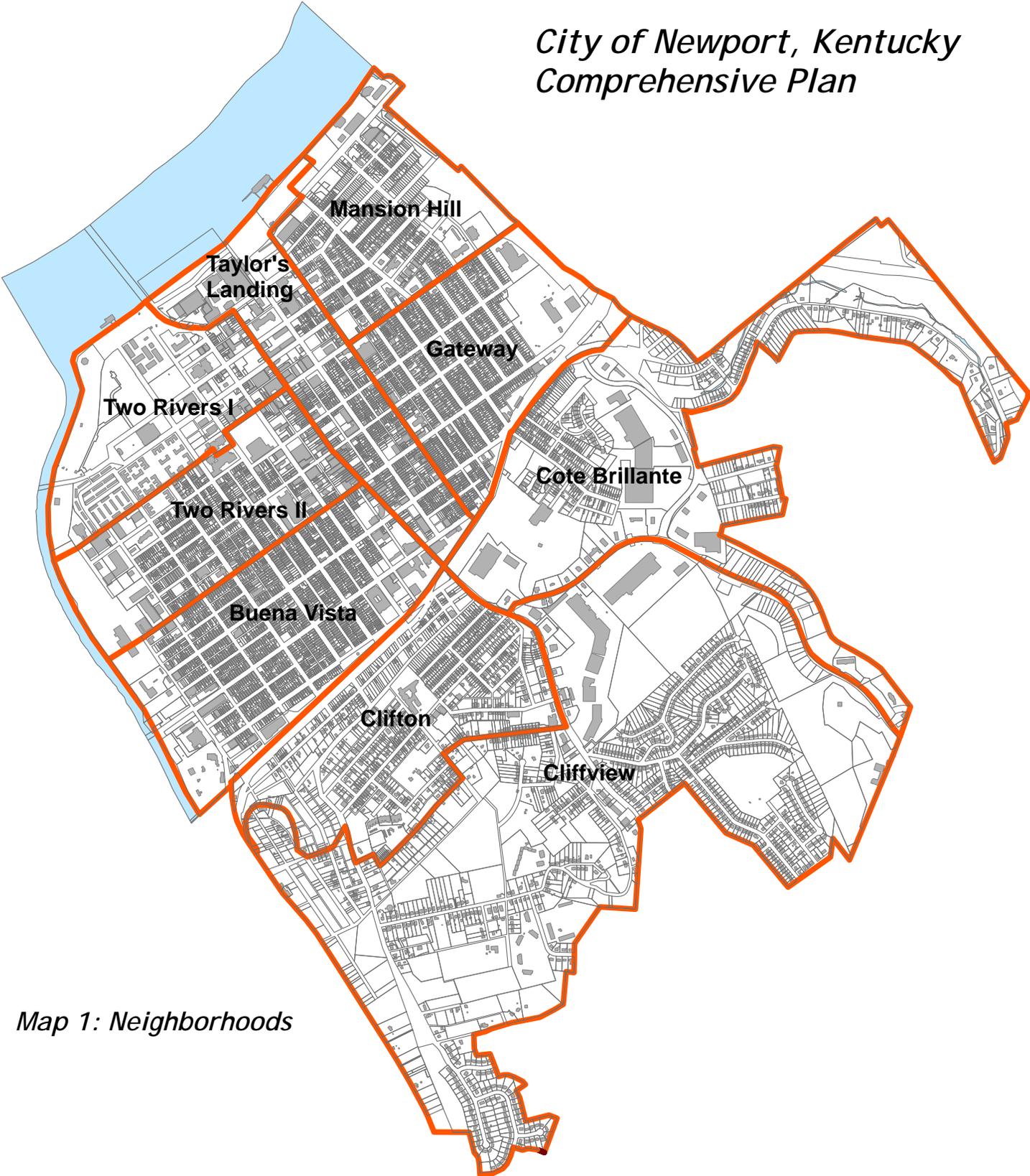
The Monmouth Street Central Business District (CBD), a major component of the urban core, has also experienced positive change as new businesses have relocated to this area. This growth and reinvestment has had the additional benefit of whittling down the number of adult entertainment establishments that once populated the area from the high of approximately 22 establishments to only two still currently in operation. The streetscape project helped breath additional life in the district, spurring even more business growth and renovations.

Other areas of Newport have also experienced growth. The commercial areas in South Newport of significant changed with the addition of Newport Pavilion in the old Cote Brilliante neighborhoods and reinvestment in the Newport Shopping Center that provides necessary services to the local population. From a residential standpoint, the East Row Historic District has continued to experience a substantial amount of redevelopment and rehabilitation that has resulted in substantially higher property values.

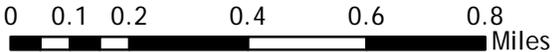
The neighborhoods within the basin area experienced change through rehabilitation and reinvestment of existing structures. Mansion Hill and Gateway have experienced the most change as the city has noted multiple conversions of multi-family units back to their original glory as large single-family structures. The desirability for these structures has caused the property values to greatly increase in these two neighborhoods over the last 5 to 10 years. Similarly, as with the east side neighborhoods, the western neighborhoods of Buena Vista and Two Rivers II have recently begun to experience an increase in rehabilitation efforts.

The Monmouth Street area has experienced some rehabilitation of structures. Many of the businesses have taken advantage of Newport's facade improvement program as well as complete streetscape upgrade, and improved the image of their businesses. Another major change that influenced the city was the concerted effort to eliminate a majority of the adult entertainment establishments in the area. This has aided in the transformation of the area to a more "family friendly" type atmosphere and opened up options for other types of businesses to relocate to Monmouth Street. The Court House Complex near Sixth and Columbia Streets has also experienced expansion and new development of the Juvenile Detention Facility.

*City of Newport, Kentucky  
Comprehensive Plan*



*Map 1: Neighborhoods*





## **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The City of Newport has experienced tremendous change over the last years beginning with the creation and adoption of the 1989 Comprehensive Development Plan. This change has continued further since the 2000 update of the Plan. This change has been a result of a defined vision based on the city's leadership, location, establishments and improved public services.

### **CBD REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION**

The Central Business District (CBD) area, illustrated in Map 3, has changed significantly since the mid 1980's. Once dominated by high crime rates, seedy bars and numerous adult entertainment establishments, the street has begun a major transformation. Where there were once nearly 22 adult entertainment establishments, there are now only two. Some merchants and property owners have been improving their properties and building facades through grants and low interest loans. The appearance of the overall area has greatly improved. In 2002, the City of Newport commenced the five million dollar streetscape improvement project and today the area is full of new shops and restaurants.

In order to help manage development in the area, the city has designated Monmouth Street a Redevelopment Area (K.R.S. 99) as well as a National Historic District.

With all the development that has taken place in this area in the last fifteen years there are still areas in need of improvement. The first of these is the continued study of Monmouth Street from one-way to two-way configuration.

The addition of housing is another opportunity that needs improvement within the CBD. The addition of more housing units in this area will not only benefit retail establishments, but will provide for a more dynamic, fully utilized vibrant commercial district. The construction of Monmouth Row and similar type infill housing development will provide for more commercial infill opportunities. Office type uses, residential uses along with artists' lofts on the upper floors of existing buildings will also help in creating this vibrant area. Historical amenities, transportation network, and diversity of housing stock and retail make this area unique within the City of Newport. Currently the redevelopment area boundaries are concentrated along Monmouth Street. Expansion of the redevelopment area boundaries would allow for additional opportunities such as expanded parking areas and larger development parcels as well as aid in improving deteriorated areas behind existing establishments. This expansion would also improve the access for service and delivery areas behind establishments.

### **DEVELOPMENT NORTH OF FIFTH STREET AND ALONG THE RIVERFRONT**

With the Newport on the Levee and Aquarium developments currently drawing nearly 5 million people a year, the area north of Fifth Street or the Southbank Area has experienced increased development pressures. This is continuing with the development of Aqua at the Levee and the new Aloft Hotel.

Mixed-use development should occur along the floodwall. This development will require careful design considerations including appropriate pedestrian connections and height considerations. These developments should also allow for connections with the riverfront.



Connections between these development areas must also be maximized with Cincinnati and Covington. The conversion of the L&N Bridge (Purple People Bridge) to pedestrian only has aided in linking Newport with Cincinnati. The realignment of Ft. Washington Way in Cincinnati has also greatly improved the traffic flow from the Taylor-Southgate Bridge and Newport. An improved traffic flow towards the south from Cincinnati to the Taylor-Southgate Bridge needs to be improved through the consideration of traffic light retiming/cycling. Improved pedestrian links with Newport's surrounding neighborhoods should also occur in order to provide a more vibrant commercial atmosphere.

Mixed-use developments in the Southbank Area will also contribute to a vibrant urban area. This will be especially important for the former housing authority site. The city has approved a concept plan, proposed by a developer, which will allow this project to integrate well into the area.

### **NEWPORT'S NEIGHBORHOODS**

Providing Newport residents with a good residential environment and sound housing was a priority in the 1989 and 2000 updates of the Comprehensive Plan, and remains one today. There are some unique issues affecting each of Newport's neighborhoods and because of this, redevelopment strategies will have to be unique for each neighborhood.

The Mansion Hill and Gateway neighborhoods, that are both national and local historic districts, have experienced a great deal of reinvestment and rehabilitation. This effort has begun to spill over into the City Center Area (See Map 3.) as well. Neighborhoods on the west side of Newport, specifically Two Rivers I and II and Buena Vista contain solid structures, yet have not experienced much reinvestment or rehabilitation. This will begin to change with development of the Route 8/9 Connector and the economic development anticipated through the transition area.

The Clifton neighborhood has experienced some reinvestment and rehabilitation and it is anticipated that this will continue, especially in view areas. Hillside constraints will continue to affect development in this area. Cote Brillante and Cliffview neighborhoods face the same development constraints due to steep topography.

Very little vacant land remains for new unit construction in the basin neighborhoods of the city. A large portion of new housing in the basin area will have to be developed through renovation and rehabilitation of existing structures. The City Center area of the city has the potential for development of new multi-family units. Development of higher densities of housing in this area will also provide a good mix with the commercial land uses. Similarly, development of housing units above retail establishments in the CBD is also encouraged due to the mix and relationships with adjoining uses.





## **TRANSPORTATION**

There are a number of road projects currently under study or recently completed that will affect the City of Newport. The realignment of Ft. Washington Way has finally allowed for a direct connection to and from the Taylor-Southgate Bridge. Where the access terminated at the intersection with Pete Rose Way the redesign has allowed a direct connection with Broadway Street, with additional connections to Second and Third Street. There is, however, a need to expand upon this connection to allow for a left turn after the Third Street exit from Interstate 71. This will help increase southern vehicular flow across the Taylor-Southgate Bridge. This improvement will become increasingly necessary as new development occurs along the new Route 8/Route 9 connector road.

Another transportation opportunity for the City may be the conversion of Monmouth Street from one-way to two-way from 11th Street to 3rd Street. Continuing study of this issue is encouraged as part of this comprehensive plan.

A transportation issue to be resolved includes improving east-west traffic flow. Access from 1-471 will need to be improved to increase flow to and from developments within the City Center Area. A somewhat related need is the improvement of traffic and pedestrian flow throughout the city and particularly in the connection of neighborhoods with commercial centers. While the residential neighborhoods need to be protected from increased traffic flow through the city, the residents who live in the neighborhoods want to be able to walk or bike to businesses, parks, and other activities in Newport.

One of the biggest transportation opportunities in the near future is the realignment of Route 9 as it moves through the city connecting with Route 8. Realignment will allow the city to maximize development potential on the west side while minimizing any negative impacts on the west side residential areas. This realignment will also help support additional development on the west side of the city.



*Figure A: Illustration of the proposed realignment of Route 9 through Newport.*



## Planning Foundation

A key component of any comprehensive planning strategy should be an understanding of how the city has grown and developed into the community that it is and how the community wants to continue to grow in the future. Accomplishing this task means evaluating how the city has changed historically through an inventory of the existing conditions and trends. This inventory creates a foundation for which the city can use in future decisions related to planning and zoning. This section incorporates general background on the city's population, housing, and economy.

### DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

In order to understand the development pressures and issues facing the City of Newport, it is important to evaluate trends in population and housing over the past few decades. The following is a brief analysis of demographic trends within the city.

#### POPULATION

The City of Newport's population has been experiencing a decline over the last 30 years, similar to many other urban cities, where household sizes have declined and dense neighborhoods redeveloped for other uses. The population decline in Newport is likely to continue with some stabilization as there continues to be reinvestment in several neighborhoods. Table 1 shows how Newport has lost a little over one percent of its population annually for the last two decades while the larger Cincinnati Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has gained anywhere from 0.5% to almost 1.0% of its population on an annual basis in the same time span.

According to population trends suggested by the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, Warren County in Ohio and Boone County in Ohio are both expected to see the most increase in population in the region with estimates of more than 12 percent in population growth between 2015 and 2020 for each county. Hamilton County, Ohio and Campbell County, Kentucky are expected to grow the least with an estimate that Hamilton County will actually continue to lose population and Campbell County will only see approximately 0.1% in growth within the same time span.

Table 1: Total Population

	City of Newport	Campbell County	Cincinnati MSA	Kentucky
<b>1970</b>	<b>25,998</b>	<b>88,704</b>	<b>1,690,234</b>	<b>3,218,706</b>
<b>1980</b>	<b>21,587</b>	<b>83,317</b>	<b>1,753,801</b>	<b>3,660,777</b>
Annual Change	-1.8%	-0.6%	0.4%	1.3%
<b>1990</b>	<b>18,871</b>	<b>83,866</b>	<b>1,844,917</b>	<b>3,685,296</b>
Annual Change	-1.3%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%
<b>2000</b>	<b>17,048</b>	<b>88,616</b>	<b>2,009,632</b>	<b>4,041,769</b>
Annual Change	-1.0%	0.6%	0.9%	0.9%
<b>2010</b>	<b>15,273</b>	<b>90,336</b>	<b>2,130,151</b>	<b>4,339,367</b>
Annual Change	-1.1%	0.2%	0.6%	0.7%

Annual Change = Compounded average annual growth rate  
Data Source: U.S. Census



## **HOUSEHOLDS**

The number of households in Newport has also been in decline with the number declining from 7,845 households in 1980 to 6,975 households in 2000 (-11.1% change). However, that trend switched between 2000 and 2010 when the number of households increased to 7,146. While it may seem initially contradictory that the number of households would increase but the overall population decrease, this is actually a common scenario in recent years as the size of households has decreased with more people living alone. The average household size in 1980 was 2.75 persons per household while in 2010, the number is 2.13 persons per household.

## **INCOME**

In the 1989 update of this plan, income levels in Newport were lower than the rest of Campbell County and the metropolitan area. In 2000, this was still the case. In 1986, the median income for Newport was \$15,400, while in 1998 that figure was \$24,396. In 2000 that figure was \$27,451. In 2012, the figure has jumped to \$34,670. Though this is a substantial increase, it is still well below Campbell County and the metropolitan Medians of \$41,903 and \$44,914, respectively. By 2012, the county figure had risen to \$53,580.

Newport is mainly a low to moderate-income community; however, there are an increasing number of higher income groups that are moving into the area and this is a trend that is expected to continue.

## **HOUSING**

In 1980, single-family detached homes comprised approximately 42 percent of Newport's housing stock while another 41 percent were comprised of dwelling units that were located in structures that contained two to nine units per building. In the 2010 Census, the percentage of single-family detached housing units has increased to over 51 percent while the percentage of dwelling units in two to nine unit buildings has dropped to just under 33 percent. Part of this trend is that there has been demolition of some higher density structures in the city and the development of more single-family housing options. Additionally, there has been construction of new, high-density housing that has, in general, reduced the amount of small-scale apartment buildings and multi-family housing options across the city.

Another factor of housing that is important to consider is the amount of home ownership. Communities always want to maintain high levels of home ownership as it can help stabilize neighborhoods that might otherwise be in transition and instills a sense of neighborhood pride. At the same time, it is still important to have rental housing options as these attract younger populations who are not ready to set up permanent roots as well as providing a choice for households who do not have the financial ability to purchase a house. In 2000, approximately 45% of the occupied housing units were owner occupied and the remainder were rental units. In the most recent Census estimates, homeownership has increased to 48 percent. The Clifton, Cote Brillante, and Cliffview neighborhoods have the highest number of owner occupied housing in the city, while Two Rivers I and II, and Taylor's Landing have the highest number of renter occupied housing. Overall, for the city of Newport, the number of renters vs. owners is about equal as are the number of significantly low income and high-income groups. Still, since the last update of the Comprehensive Plan, the most significant demographic trend was the declining population. Today the most significant trend is the increase in home ownership.

The age of the city's housing stock is, and will continue to be something the community needs to monitor. Figure B illustrates the percentage of housing units based on the decade the structure was constructed and over 55 percent of the housing stock was



constructed before 1940. The positive that comes from that percentage is that the city still has a significant amount of its original, historic housing stock that the city would like to maintain. At the same time, an aging housing stock also means a need for continual property maintenance to ensure that the housing stock remains safe. Newport has been fortunate in that there has been some continual development of new housing over each decade with the least amount of development of new housing in recent years. This is, in fact, reflective on the trend of people restoring and reinvesting in the older housing rather than the demolition of older homes for the construction of new housing.

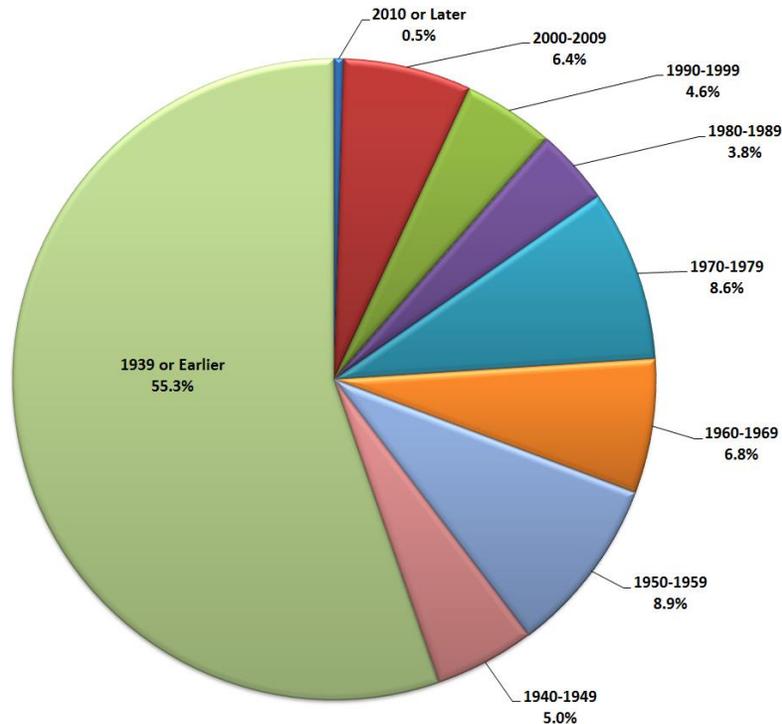


Figure B: Illustrates the percentage of housing units constructed within each decade.

## **ECONOMIC OVERVIEW**

The economic profile of Newport is closely tied to the economy in Northern Kentucky and the greater Cincinnati metropolitan area. The civilian labor force in the Cincinnati Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), including Campbell, Hamilton, Boone, Kenton, Warren, Clermont and Dearborn Counties, increased 7.4 percent, from 676,000 to 726,700, between 1980 and 1987. As of the beginning of 1998, the Cincinnati MSA had a total employment of just over 831,000 workers. In 2000, the total workforce had reached 1,011,719.



## **EXISTING LAND USE**

The City of Newport is a densely populated and densely built community. The generally flat and very dense basin area from the floodwall along the Ohio River to the foot of a ridge along the C&O rail lines is the oldest section of the community with the oldest residential and commercial structures in the area. The southern portion of Newport, from the top of the ridge to the southern boundary of the city, developed in later years primarily due to the severe topography in the area. The southern portion of Newport is less densely populated and is primarily residential with some more suburban scale commercial uses dominated by the Newport Shopping Center, the Newport Pavilion, and similar commercial uses along Monmouth Street.

### **RESIDENTIAL USES**

The residential areas of Newport are located within the nine neighborhoods illustrated in Map 1 with six neighborhoods in the basin and three in the southern portion of Newport. The housing stock in the basin is a mixture of single family, duplex, and multi-family units. Single-family stock is concentrated in the Buena Vista neighborhood at the southwest corner of the basin. These structures are compact one, two, and two and a half story buildings on small lots. Additionally, the area has two-family and a few multi-family structures. Recently, this area has seen increased investment and increased property values.

The Gateway and Mansion Hill neighborhoods on the eastern side of Newport have also experienced increased redevelopment and reinvestment. These areas have more mixed residential structures. The buildings in these neighborhoods are some of the largest residential structures in the entire city. While many of these buildings were large, single-family homes, previously converted into two-family and multi-family units, there has been a recent trend of converting these same structures back to their original single-family configuration. This has also contributed to a significant increase in property values and is a reason why there is more of a decrease in population than housing units in neighborhoods with few demolitions. Both of these neighborhoods are designated local and national historic districts.

The Two Rivers I neighborhood is largely comprised of multi-family dwellings with a predominant landowner being the Newport Housing Authority. The Housing Authority is currently seeking Hope VI funding in order to relocate the existing residents in the other neighborhoods of Newport to serve a two-fold mission. First, it will improve on incorporating the residents into the overall community fabric rather than isolating them in a single location. Second, it will also allow for more appropriate development to occur in this location, as it would be better suited for a mixed-use development rather than a singular residential use. The Two Rivers II neighborhood contains a mixture of residential types, intermixed with small commercial and industrial uses. This neighborhood has not experienced as much reinvestment as other neighborhoods resulting in a housing stock that is has deteriorated substantially over the last few decades.

The Taylor's Landing neighborhood is similar to Two Rivers II, with a mixture of residential housing types and small-scale commercial uses. Saratoga Street has small concentrations of single-family structures, but the area is generally comprised of multi-family housing structures dispersed throughout a commercial core. The most recent development included a new multi-unit senior housing facility at the corner of Eighth and Saratoga Streets.



The southern portion of Newport, including the ridge tops, is primarily residential and is a location where topography is a limiting factor for development. The Cliffview area in the southernmost portion of Newport has a suburban character with single-family units on some of the largest lots in the city. This area is less dense due to the traditionally suburban subdivision layouts and the steep topography of the area. The Clifton neighborhood is a predominately single-family land use of smaller lots with a limited number of two family and multi-family structures. The Cote Brilliante area is also predominately single family with a cluster of two-family structures along Tenth Street. Cote Brilliante also contains a number of new, high-end residential developments. The Wiedemann Hill and Estates at Wiedemann Mansion are both high-end residential developments with prices ranging from \$700,000 to over \$2,000,000.

### **COMMERCIAL LAND USES**

Until recently, the Monmouth Street Central Business District (CBD) and the Newport Shopping Center were the principle concentrations of commercial land uses within the city. Newport on the Levee has added a significant amount of new commercial space to the city that is tied into the entertainment industry. This development, located in the Third Street Redevelopment Area, added approximately 390,000 additional square feet of commercial space to Newport. Commercial development has also increased along York Street, Fourth Street, Fifth Street, and Sixth Street, albeit at a smaller scale. There has been additional spin-off development from Newport on the Levee as well as larger, regional development that includes Newport Pavilion.

The Newport Shopping Center and Newport Pavilion is a community shopping center with larger retail stores and other retail establishments. The center has created spin-off development in the form of retail and fast food establishments along Monmouth Street and Carothers Road. All of this development has been largely suburban in character where the uses are highly auto-oriented with large, off-street parking areas, drive-through establishments, and large, single use buildings dedicated to commercial or office uses.

The Monmouth Street CBD extends north/south along Monmouth Street from Third Street to Eleventh Street. The retail establishments along Monmouth Street are primarily small, locally owned establishments of convenience stores, restaurants, specialty retail shops, furniture stores, financial institutions, offices and entertainment establishments. Unlike the Newport Shopping Center, the commercial uses in the CBD are in mixed-use structures where office or residential uses can be located on upper floors in an urban setting. Vacancies in many of the structures along Monmouth have created its share of problems in the area. Some of these are in the form of complete vacancy of a building to vacancies in the upper floors of many structures. Parking in the area is located on the street as well as in city lots and behind establishments.

Like many other historic, urban cities, Newport also has a number of retail uses that are dispersed throughout the residential neighborhoods. Most of these uses are small, locally owned bars, restaurants and convenience stores.

### **INDUSTRIAL USES**

Industrial uses are primarily located in the south and western part of the basin area. The largest concentration of industrial uses is located along Licking River where the Newport Steel site is located. In the 2000 update of this comprehensive plan, the City had targeted an industrial redevelopment site between Sixth Street and Ninth Street east of Brighton Street. Although the industrial park stops at Ninth Street, the industrial use continues south to the Licking Valley Girl Scout Bridge (12<sup>th</sup> Street) along Licking Pike.



Other industrial uses are scattered throughout the basin, concentrated along the Monmouth and York Street corridors. The area between Washington and York Streets forms a small cluster of industrial uses, including the dairy site and several smaller industries.

### **RECREATIONAL AND OPEN SPACE**

This item is covered in detail under the Recreational Master Plan.

### **VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED LAND**

The high-density development pattern in Newport provides very little vacant land in the basin. The largest tract of vacant land is located in the industrial redevelopment site along the Licking River. The majority of vacant parcels in the basin are located in the core area between York Street and Washington Avenue. There are also many parcels along the Fourth and Fifth Street corridors that are vacant or underutilized. Some of the commercial buildings along Monmouth Street are also either vacant or underutilized.

The southern portion of Newport has undeveloped tracts; however, steep topography and soil conditions make development of these tracts difficult.

## ***HISTORIC RESOURCES***

The basin area of the city has a rich stock of historic structures. There are currently six National Register historic districts in Newport; up from only two (Mansion Hill and East Newport) in 1989. Since then, the city has received designations for the York Street Historic District as well as the Monmouth Street Historic District, in 1995 and 1996 respectively. The Cote Brillante neighborhood was the fifth district, established in August 2005 followed by the Newport Courthouse Square in 2010. While the districts encompass large areas of properties that have a unique historic character, the city also has a number of individual structures that are historically significant. In 1989, eight structures were listed on the National Registrar. Today this number has increased to ten and the city would like to work to increase this number as a part of its historic preservation efforts. Further analysis of other areas of the basin and hillside neighborhoods may indicate future districts.

## ***ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS***

Newport's ideal location and natural amenities have created numerous development pressures. Continued urban growth has created pressures for development of steep slopes and floodplains where there are potential hazards from landslides and flooding. For these reasons, it is important to understand the impact of these environmental conditions on existing and future investments.

### **FLOOD PLAINS**

Flood plains exist along the Ohio River on the northwest side of the city, along the Licking River on the southwest side and along Woodlawn Creek on the northeast and eastern sides. Floodwalls along the Ohio and Licking Rivers protect existing development from what are referred to as 100-year flood events, which are flood levels that have a one percent probability of occurring each year.

During the 1989, update of the Comprehensive Plan, no development had occurred within the flood plains of the Ohio and Licking Rivers other than roads, bridges and



floodwalls. Since then, development has occurred north of the floodwall and east of the Daniel Carter Beard Bridge (I-471). These developments were constructed above the base flood levels either by elevating the entire structure or constructing occupied portions of the structure on top of a parking structure that can accommodate any rising floodwaters.

## **HILLSIDES**

The demand for housing, particularly with a view of the Ohio River and the City of Cincinnati, has increased over the years, increasing the development pressures on the city's steep slopes ridge tops directly south and east of the railroad lines, generally in the Clifton, Cliffview, and Cote Brilliante neighborhoods. Many of the hills in Newport are too steep to handle development, even with modern engineering technologies. An adequate drainage system is necessary to prevent saturation of the soil. Additional precautions are necessary including the prohibition of fill placement on steep slopes, disturbance of the bottom portion of the toe of the slope, and the construction on fill areas near steep slopes. These measures make construction costly and do not guarantee elimination of the potential hazard to structures and residents but they are necessary to accomplish the city's goals for future development. While the less steep slopes (under 15 percent slope) are slightly better suited to development due to a reduced potential for landslides or erosion, the most suitable land use for the hillsides are undeveloped uses, such as woodland, open space and recreation.

The upland ridge tops are, for the most part, better suited for development except in areas where soils exhibit a high shrink-swell potential, shallowness, and wetness. These restraints can be overcome by draining surface and ground water away from structures by building structures without basements and by backfilling around foundations with material that has low shrink-swell potential and good drainage characteristics. In some cases, the cost of these measures and continuing maintenance needs may make construction unfeasible.

Little vacant land exists on the relatively level terraces above the Ohio and Licking Rivers. Heavy development has changed the character of the natural soils; therefore any development that occurs in this area should be preceded by a site-specific soil investigation to determine whether limitations exist.

## **SOILS**

The urban boundary of the City of Newport contains five major soil types. The area within the basin is urban and due to this, soils have been extensively cut and filled. This area is densely developed and much of the soils are covered by development.

The southern portion of Newport is Eden silty clay loam. This is the predominant soil type on hillsides with slopes in the range of 12 to 35 percent. These soils severely limit most development because of steepness and the high potential for slippage. Because Eden soils predominate on hillsides, they are associated with landslides.

Narrow upland ridges in the area are characterized by Faywood silty clay loam on slopes of 2 to 12 percent. Faywood soils are severely limited for development because of high shrink-swell potential, shallow depth to bedrock and slopes. Negley soils have slight limitations for most development except where slopes are Steep enough to become a moderate limitation.

Broader ridge tops in this area are predominately Nicholaon silt loam on zero to six percent slopes. These soils are moderately limited for developed uses by moderate shrink-swell potential and a seasonal high water table at two to three feet.



South and east of the railroad tracks, slopes range from 2 to 12 percent on the ridge tops and 35 percent or greater on the hillsides. Part of this area is predominately underlain by limestone bedrock of the Grant Lake and Fairview Formations. The remainder is underlain by bedrock of the Kope Formation, which is 75 percent gray shale with imbedded thin layers of limestone. This bedrock formation is subject to slumping or land sliding, particularly when the drainage is poor, allowing the underlying material to become saturated. Although landslides occur under natural conditions, the hazards greatly increase with development that cuts the base of slopes, removes vegetative cover, reduces natural drainage or loads the upper portion of slopes.

The gray shale of the Kope Formation weathers to a plastic clay mass, which is highly unstable. Further, the embedded shale and limestone are impermeable to water. Water percolating through the soil reaches the bedrock, and then flows along the soil-bedrock contact, lowering the bearing strength of the soil. When the soil becomes saturated, its weight is greater than the forces holding it in place, and the slide occurs. Generally, plant roots help anchor the soil, but slides have also occurred on forested slopes.

### **ECOLOGY**

In much of the city, development has eliminated natural habitat for vegetation and wildlife. The species present include those introduced by humans and those that are naturally adaptive to human activities. Vegetation includes grasses, lawn and garden varieties, landscaping plants, weeds and trees of all types. Wildlife consists of birds, raptors, insects, rodents and other small mammals.

The less developed areas, including steep hillsides, riverbanks and flood plains, provide a natural habitat for a greater variety of plants and animals although the pressures of urbanization still reduce the number of individuals and the diversity of species. The City has no designated nature preserves or unique habitat areas.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The City of Newport is connected to the City of Cincinnati by three bridges (Taylor-Southgate Bridge, the L&N Bridge (Purple People Bridge), and the Daniel Carter Beard Bridge). Newport also has two bridges that connect the community to the City of Covington at Fourth Street (Veterans Memorial Bridge) and the Licking Valley Girl Scout Bridge (12<sup>th</sup> Street), which links Twelfth Street in Covington with Eleventh Street in Newport.

The Interstate system that serves the region, Interstate 75, Interstate 71, Interstate 275 and Interstate 471, is linked to Newport through three exits from 1-471 on the eastern portion of the City. The Interstate 471 system connects downtown Cincinnati to Interstate 275 south of Newport.

A transportation consultant's study of Newport in 1997 indicated an increased amount of traffic moving east and west through the city since counts were last taken in 1989. The most significant increase has occurred along Sixth Street through East Row to and from the City of Bellevue. In 1989, there were 7,900 vehicles daily along this collector; by 1998, the number of vehicles increased to 9,700. It is important to note that there are no changes proposed for Sixth Street in this area. The present configuration provides the least amount of negative impact on the neighborhood and serves to divert traffic flow to the realigned Third Street.



Traffic along the western portion of Fifth and Fourth Street, during the same period of time, has decreased. In 1989, approximately 11,000 vehicles per day traveled to Covington, with 11,200 vehicles traveling from Covington to Newport. In 1998, roughly 8,800 vehicles traveled from Newport to Covington on a daily basis, while 9,200 traveled from Covington to Newport. Though the number of trips has decreased slightly, the trend continues to illustrate more vehicles travel from Covington to Newport than from Newport to Covington. This is an interesting situation given the configuration of the Fourth Street Bridge with two lanes heading west and one lane heading east.

The north/south traffic flow in Newport still contains the highest volumes of vehicles with Monmouth Street leading the way with approximately 11,900 vehicles per day. Interstate 471 handles over 57,000 vehicles per day with that number increasing as the eastern suburbs of Hamilton County continue to develop.

Analysis of the traffic counts for the basin area also demonstrates that on an average daily basis, more than 5,000 vehicles enter Newport than leave. The approximate number of vehicles entering is 56,200 a day while those leaving are approximately 50,800 vehicles.

In addition to vehicular traffic, the city strives to provide safe access for pedestrian and bicycle transportation including the provision of sidewalks and access to a rental bike company within the city.



## Goals and Objectives

---

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to help guide the future development, redevelopment, and revitalization of the community over the next 10 to 20 years. Central to that guidance are the goals and objectives, which form the foundation of a long-term vision for Newport. The City has established the following statements of goals and objectives in compliance with the requirements of Section 100 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes. The following are general definitions for goals and objectives:

- A **GOAL** is a desired end state or target that, if pursued over the long term, will contribute to the attainment of the community vision.
- An **OBJECTIVE** is a more specific (and often measurable) desired short-term end, or benchmark, that in conjunction with other objectives can cause the achievement of the goal.

***Goal 1: The Central Business District/Renaissance Area will be redeveloped and revitalized.***

1. Expand the Monmouth Street Redevelopment Zone.
2. Continue to attract service and specialty retail businesses to fill vacancies along Monmouth Street.
3. Promote the utilization of upper floors in existing buildings.
4. Continue expanding the façade improvement program.
5. Promote better circulation patterns along Monmouth Street to address the needs of businesses and visibility while preserving the existing parking conditions.
6. Strengthen the connection between the Central Business District and Newport on the Levee.
7. Require that infill development use appropriate urban design principles.
8. Improve access to encourage deliveries behind retail and service establishments along Monmouth Street.
9. Establish a parking facility/intermodal facility.
10. Pursue businesses as identified in the 2004 Renaissance District Marketing Study.
11. Potentially reinstitute the Main Street Program, which encourages cooperation among the merchants.
12. Promote development that encourages a balance between the community's needs and those of our visitors.
13. Promote development that encourages a balance between tourist needs, business needs, and the community needs.
14. The city will embrace and encourage development between the riverfront and the Renaissance areas.
15. Create a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District in this area.
16. Promote technology and high-tech development through marketing and the expansion of technology infrastructure.



**Goal 2: The city will encourage continued riverfront redevelopment.**

1. Encourage mixed-use development north of Fifth Street between the Licking River to Newport on the Levee, adjacent to the floodwall.
2. Develop and encourage public access and recreational use of the riverfront.
3. Strengthen pedestrian links between the neighborhoods and the major activity areas of the city.
4. Strengthen pedestrian links between Newport, Covington, and Cincinnati across the Taylor-Southgate and Fourth Street Bridges as well as the L&N Bridge (Purple People Bridge).
5. Strengthen pedestrian links between riverfront development and the CBD.
6. Maintain functional operation of the levee for flood control.

**Goal 3: Newport's existing neighborhood integrity and improved housing opportunities will be ensured through rehabilitation and new investments.**

1. Establish traffic patterns that minimize disruption of residential areas.
2. Promote development of multi-family housing in the City Center Area where appropriate and through encouraged participation of the surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Encourage development of dwelling units above business establishments in the CBD.
4. Encourage appropriate, contextual residential infill on vacant parcels throughout the city.
5. Develop a full market range of housing opportunities throughout the city, as appropriate.
6. Encourage rehabilitation and maintenance of existing structures, especially those in historic districts.
7. Develop residential sites in southern Newport that are sensitive to environmental and hillside conditions.
8. Continue to provide affordable and low-income housing options, especially for senior citizens, throughout the city and especially in areas where such options are not available.
9. Encourage aggressive zoning code enforcement coupled with targeted maintenance assistance for owner-occupied housing.
10. Develop neighborhood-scale recreational open spaces, especially in those neighborhoods that have minimal access to park and recreational facilities.

**Goal 4: Circulation within the basin area will be improved.**

1. Provide better traffic flow and improved pedestrian access throughout the commercial areas.
2. Discourage use of residential streets for through traffic.
3. Improve access from 1-471 to Dave Cowens Drive.



4. Develop east/west traffic arterials.
5. Survey local businesses about their desire or concerns about converting Monmouth Street from a one-way street to a two-way configuration.
6. Finalize construction of the north/south connector from Licking Pike to a new Route 8 connection near the Veterans Memorial Bridge.

**Goal 5: The city will preserve its valuable natural and historical resources.**

1. Identify and preserve National Register properties and districts, to the maximum extent feasible.
2. Develop local historic designations and landmarks, as appropriate.
3. Discourage any development of land with slopes greater than 15 percent or areas prone to erosion or flooding.

**Goal 6: The city will encourage redevelopment and reinvestment of the commercial areas in South Newport while protecting the integrity of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.**

1. Implement access management to ease traffic congestion.
2. Promote appropriate design principles in terms of landscaping, buffering, and signage for commercial projects.
3. Encourage high volume recognized anchor retail tenants.
4. Continue to implement streetscape improvements along Carothers and Monmouth Street corridors.

**Goal 7: The city will promote sensitive industrial development**

1. Identify industries that support and complement the surrounding land uses.
2. Define areas for future infill of small industrial users.
3. Promote new development of research and development facilities.

**Goal 8: Enhanced aesthetics will be sought for all development in Newport.**

1. Replace overhead utilities with underground lines, where possible.
2. Improve streetscapes throughout the city, where needed and in connection with future transportation improvements, as may be appropriate.
3. Encourage a greenbelt corridor between Fourth and Fifth Streets, west of Monmouth Street to the Licking River.
4. Encourage a greenbelt streetscape corridor along 10th Street between Park and Monmouth.
5. Improve Carothers Road streetscape from Newport Plaza to Monmouth.



## Land Use Plan Element

---

The future land use plan identifies the broad land use categories the city envisions for different neighborhoods and activity areas. The plan divides the city in land use categories that are much broader than zoning with the intent of providing some guidance to future development with the ability to be flexible to provide for a mixture of uses.

### ***FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES***

---

With the understanding of the need for flexibility and understanding that specific criteria and regulations for development will be included in the zoning ordinance, the following definitions are included to aid in interpreting the land use plan:

#### **LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

Low-Density Residential areas generally include single family and two-family houses that are one or two stories high. New development in these areas would be limited to single family homes or two-family homes. Conversion of existing structures to single family would be encouraged. Densities in this area would generally be below 10 units per acre. New residential developments under this classification should be discouraged at densities above seven units per acre.

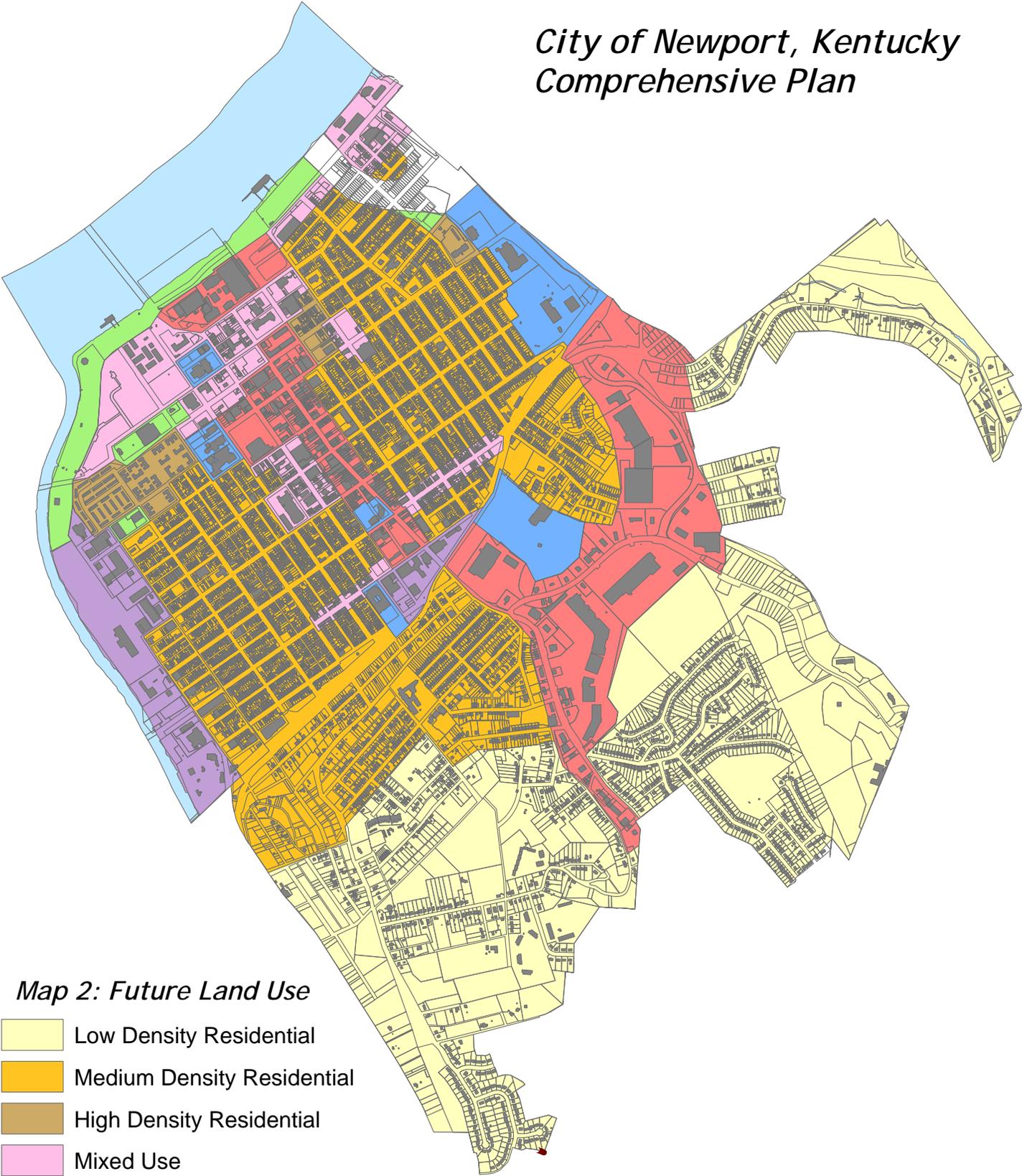
#### **MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

Medium-Density Residential developments permit a range of residential development types including single family, two-family and three-family units. These areas may also include townhouses and a limited number of larger structures where the land area and building size would accommodate the required parking and ample unit sizes. New development, redevelopment and rehabilitation in these areas would mirror existing uses closely. Conversion of structures would be appropriate only when the size of the structure and the land surrounding it allow such renovation. In-fill development would be appropriate as single family, two-family, three-family or as row-house structures. New larger apartment buildings would be discouraged. Densities would range from approximately 10 to 20 units per acre.

#### **HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

High-Density Residential areas generally include three-family, townhouse and multifamily structures. Limited ancillary retail or office uses may also be appropriate. New development would be encouraged as townhouses or apartment/condominiums on in-fill sites. Rehabilitation of existing larger structures (retail, institutional and residential) would be encouraged as residential space. Single-family residential and large-scale commercial development would be discouraged. Densities would be above 20 units per acre.

# City of Newport, Kentucky Comprehensive Plan



**Map 2: Future Land Use**

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Open Space
- Public

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles





## **COMMERCIAL**

Commercial uses generally include service establishments, furniture stores, grocery stores, clothing and apparel shops, financial institutions (such as banks and savings and loans) and small-scale office uses (such as real estate offices). The Monmouth Street Business District, Newport Pavilion, Newport Shopping Center, and the Newport on the Levee development are the main commercial areas of Newport.

## **MIXED USE**

Mixed Use development includes a combination of residential, commercial and office uses. New developments in mixed-use areas would be constructed as coordinated, unified projects and would integrate proposed uses appropriately. Rehabilitation and in-fill projects would be limited to residential, commercial or office uses, or a combination of these uses. Existing commercial, residential and office properties are appropriate. The intensity of these types of projects may differ throughout the City. Zoning provisions modified or enacted subsequent to the Comprehensive Plan will need to consider special site related requirements for mixed-use areas. These special site related requirements should address landscaping buffers between uses of different intensities or different uses, parking requirements tailored to mixed-use areas, and transitional uses-by-right in mixed areas.

## **OFFICE**

Office uses generally include a range of professional offices such as doctors' offices, lawyers' offices and corporate offices. A limited amount of small-scale commercial uses may also be appropriate. Public office buildings are also appropriate.

## **PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC**

Public and Semi-Public uses include public facilities such as schools, government offices and safety facilities, medical facilities, universities and recreation facilities.

## **PARKS, RECREATION, AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

Parks, Recreation, and Public Open Space areas include public and private green space, plaza space or special recreational uses such as pools, ball fields, tennis courts, golf courses and docking facilities.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

Industrial uses include manufacturing, production and packaging operations. Also included in this designation are research and development and laboratories.



## **DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

The purpose of the comprehensive plan is to provide a flexible set of guidelines and policy statements that will work with the city's zoning code and other ordinances to guide future development and redevelopment in a positive way. The Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinance work together where the Comprehensive Plan establishes general policy, and the zoning code designates specific land uses and dimensional requirements. The terms used in the Comprehensive Plan are intentionally flexible to allow the community to decide, within a given framework, what is appropriate in terms of development.

### **CITYWIDE STRATEGIES**

There are a number of strategies that are not specific to any single neighborhood but rather benefit the entire community by either furthering citywide efforts, such as parks and greenspace, or providing support to the wide demographics of the community.

- Work with the Safety Net Alliance to identify opportunities to centralize social and public services that may be accommodated in churches or other public uses. The services are important but they sometimes take place in buildings where they are not appropriate (e.g., temporary housing in a church) and/or they may be duplicated by multiple providers.
- Evaluate traffic calming techniques for major roadways such as 10th Street on the east side and 11th Street on the west side. These techniques will continue to allow smooth traffic flow while increasing pedestrian safety along these same corridors that serve as major connections between neighborhoods and activity areas.
- Refine the Planned Unit Development (PUD) requirements to ensure that the city has proper standards for the control and design of development on moderate to steep slopes and in the flood hazard areas. This tool provides a developer with more flexibility in building what the market will demand while protecting valuable resources. Even with the additional review provided by a PUD, great care must be taken with any development on steeper slopes or in flood hazard areas.
- Establish standards to minimize soil disturbance and require immediate re-vegetation where construction on steep slopes is necessary.
- Work with local and state building codes to provide increased flexibility for renovation of structures of historical significance to allow for reinvestment without having to meet the current rigid building codes designed for modern buildings. Examples of flexibility might include alternative approach to fire suppression beyond whole building sprinklers or waivers for certain standards not strictly tied to life safety issues..
- Evaluate structures throughout the city that might be deemed historically significant and the specific tools needed to protect such structures. In some cases, basic citywide historic preservation standards may be appropriate whereas if there are areas with a concentration of historically significant structures, the city may consider the creation of a historic overlay zoning district. An additional tool to consider is the creation of a conservation district for blocks or neighborhoods that might not rise to the level of a true historic district but have qualities that should be protected.
- Provide consistent enforcement of property maintenance codes to protect neighborhoods from disinvestment and ensure the long-term stability of neighborhoods.



## **COMMUNITY FACILITY STRATEGIES**

- Update the citywide parks master plan to ensure full utilization of the existing parks and that they are accessible to all citizens. As part of this effort, the city should also evaluate the location and size of greenspace areas throughout the city to ensure that these passive green areas are spread out across the city, particularly in the older, urban neighborhoods located within the basin.
- Continue to look for ways of providing recreational access to the Ohio and Licking Rivers, particularly for the neighborhoods that border the Licking River and all the riverfront activity areas.
- Work to make sure that the police and fire services strive to meet or exceed national standards for protection and response.

## **TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES**

- Monitor and reevaluate the traffic flow (vehicular and pedestrian) throughout the city upon completion of the major transportation improvements in Newport identified in this plan, to ensure there is safe access to all neighborhoods and connectivity between the major activity areas. This evaluation should include, but not be limited to, the riverfront areas, Central Business District, and the southern commercial areas.
  - This evaluation should specifically analyze the area around the I-471 ramp at Route 8.
  - This evaluation should also address crosswalks and general pedestrian safety.
  - In the long-term, work with regional agencies on any potential opportunities related to the future Cincinnati Streetcar system including provided transit access to the streetcar hub.
- Limit direct access off the reconfigured Third Street to maintain the improved traffic flow. Access for any redevelopment should take place along the north/south streets, whenever possible.
- Undertake plans for a new bridge connecting with Covington to maintain good flow between the two cities and to enhance the impact of the Route 9 /Route 8 connector.
- Plan for a new exit ramp to Route 8 (Dave Cowens Drive) to handle increased capacity from southbound I-471. The current configuration, along Park Avenue, will no longer allow for proper stacking distance of vehicles. This will become a potentially dangerous situation as cars back up onto I-471 southbound lanes. Any design solution for this new ramp concept should exercise extreme care in minimizing disruption to any residential neighborhoods.
- Reconfigure Route 9 to better serve increased commercial traffic, while also minimizing disruption of neighborhood areas. This improvement will move the traffic flow away from the center of the Buena Vista neighborhood, minimizing disruption and maximizing safety. Relocation of Route 9 will also allow for optimum access to sites/parcels within the industrial area. This realignment will also provide an opportunity to improve the connection to Route 8. Design considerations will need to be exercised to provide the greatest aesthetic possible for this connector roadway, especially in terms of underground utilities and streetscaping.



- Continue to evaluate changing Monmouth Street to a two-way configuration in line with trends for successful “main streets.” One major benefit is the slowing of traffic flow, which provides more safety to pedestrians in the area. The generation of more pedestrian activity is vital to the success of commercial businesses along Monmouth Street. Increased visibility for property owners and business owners is another benefit of conversion. The one-way street network in the Monmouth Street area makes for difficulty for motorists seeking a particular business establishment. If one is not sure of the exact location, they are forced into navigating one-way streets until they can return to Monmouth Street. This configuration will also allow patrons of the Newport on the Levee development to freely travel to the District.

## **RESIDENTIAL/NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGIES**

Newport is a community that continues to evolve as witnessed by the fact that the city is simultaneously dealing with new residential development, renovation of existing housing units, and the construction of infill housing, all of which raise different issues. Additionally, each of the city’s neighborhoods is very unique and require targeted activities to maintain stability. While the land use plan element, presented earlier, defines the location and density of future development, the following are broader development strategies related to housing and neighborhoods in Newport.

- Encourage the diversity of housing types and values through the appropriate siting of new residential construction. New construction in and around Taylor’s Landing should be higher density, owner and rental units, to complement and support the surrounding commercial uses whereas residential construction in the Two Rivers II and Buena Vista neighborhoods should be lower density, detached housing within mixed price ranges.
- Focus lower intensity residential uses in southern Newport where existing environmental conditions prohibit intense development from a safety standpoint. The lower intensity development is also conducive to the development of owner-occupied housing ideal for growing families, again, promoting the creation of diverse housing choices.
- Require that any higher density developments and multi-family projects that will benefit from hilltop locations and views of the Ohio River be developed through the use of the PUD procedure. The locations for these types of projects are not specifically located on the land use map because they should be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Establish neighborhood compatibility standards for new infill development that will ensure any construction will reflect the predominant architectural style, scale, density, and massing of surrounding properties, where appropriate. Neighborhood compatibility is especially necessary in historic neighborhoods where new construction or additions should reflect historic architectural styles.
- Consider undertaking additional events or programs, such as Rehabarama and Beyond the Curb, to demonstrate the benefits of structural rehabilitation over clearing and new construction. This highly successful promotion may still be applicable to other neighborhoods as well as basin area commercial zones.
- Encourage the renovation of upper floors in the Central Business District to accommodate residential uses to provide 24-hour activity in the District as well as different housing choices.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of vacant, non-residential (e.g., churches, schools, industrial buildings, etc.) uses in existing neighborhoods.



### East Side Neighborhoods

- Develop standards for accessory garages along alleys to encourage the creation of garages while minimizing the need for variances or special review procedures. This strategy will help encourage more off-street parking opportunities in an area where parking is currently adequate but there is a need to prevent the elimination of any additional parking spaces.

### West Side Neighborhoods

- Establish a land-banking program that will allow the city to assemble multiple vacant lots for future redevelopment in accordance with the land use plan.
- Strengthen the existing zoning to ensure that any mixed use development or other nonresidential development is focused in the northernmost area of this area while the remainder of the area is restricted to primarily single-family uses.
- Eliminate the potential for heavy manufacturing uses by mandating all business activities be maintained within an enclosed building and incorporate strong design guidelines for any nonresidential uses to ensure they blend into the residential character of the area without creating public nuisances (e.g., loud noises, extensive outdoor lighting, poor buffering between uses, etc.).
- Maintain and enhance pedestrian connections to the riverfront, Monmouth Street, and the nearby hillside areas.

### Clifton

- Prevent the elimination of any parking spaces, on- or off-street due to the existing difficulties in parking within this area.
- Continue to maintain strong property maintenance, particularly for homes that are in foreclosure. This neighborhood is relatively stable but has experienced a high numbers of foreclosures that could contribute to deterioration if the city is not diligent with property maintenance enforcement.
- Work with the owners of the Baptist Convalescent Center to identify potential options for the site once the center is vacated. Reuse or redevelopment should be encouraged but not if it creates impacts on existing homes including, but not limited to, an increase demand on parking and access, increased noise, or increases in rental housing in a neighborhood with high owner-occupancy rates.
- Work to establish better pedestrian and bicycle access to surrounding areas both as a way to increase general access but also as a way to minimize the need for additional vehicle parking.

## **NONRESIDENTIAL/ACTIVITY AREA STRATEGIES**

### Riverfront

- Develop design and/or zoning standards and guidelines for development and redevelopment in the Riverfront area to build on the success of existing and proposed developments including Newport on the Levee and Ovation.
  - Parking for major developments needs to be in a garage rather than on surface parking lots.
  - Development should be pedestrian friendly in scale and incorporate active uses on the first floor.



- Require that all utility improvements locate underground.
- Ensure access to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Work to incorporate trail recommendations and guidelines from the Ohio River Trail – Northern Kentucky Riverfront Commons document (August 2011) as part of any new development or redevelopment project to increase connectivity to and within this area.
- Expand the city's wayfinding system to make this area a major gateway into Newport from all directions including from Covington (4th Street Bridge), from Cincinnati (Taylor Southgate Bridge), and from Bellevue and I-471 (Dave Cowens Drive).

### York/Monmouth/CBD

- Continue efforts to maintain a strong occupancy of Monmouth Street buildings while working to increase development and redevelopment opportunities on York Street as part of the larger CBD strategy.
- Encourage the development of higher-end apartments and townhomes around the edges of the CBD to accommodate empty nesters who want to move away from their single-family homes to an area with access to businesses and activity centers and who have higher incomes where they can afford more expensive housing options.

### Southern Commercial Activity Areas

The Newport Shopping Center and Newport Pavilion are two major shopping areas in southern Newport that provide regional shopping opportunities to residents and the surrounding communities. The following strategies are specific to these areas as they continue to evolve.

- Establish redevelopment standards for the Shopping Center (SC) zoning district to ensure that any redevelopment within this area will be in keeping with the new streetscaping and the recent development of Newport Pavilion.
- Consider incorporating provisions to allow for mixed-use development as a redevelopment opportunity for the Newport Shopping Center that might include residential, office, and commercial elements. Establish strong standards for design but incorporate into the SC district so any redevelopment will occur by-right as compared to the PUD option.
- Mandate wide sidewalks along the roadways, adequate signaled crosswalks, and safe traffic circulation for any redevelopment to encourage both pedestrian and vehicular access.
- Continue to implement access management plans as a method of easing traffic flow in the area. To the maximum extent feasible, encourage or require the consolidation of driveway access/curb cuts. Any improvements or consolidation of access points should attempt to incorporate streetscape improvements and plantings.
- Enhance landscaping requirements in the area through the creation of landscaping standards within the zoning code and the promotion of individual landscaping efforts that could be as simple as small planting areas. This will help provide a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere in this area.



### **Industrial Development Areas**

- Work to provide adequate sites for industrial development to maintain a balanced tax base and opportunities for local jobs. This will be difficult due the limited amount of space available in the city, as well as the considerable amount of land needed for this type of use.
- Continue to work towards the redevelopment of the existing Newport Steel site. This tract of land is likely the largest vacant parcel of land within the City of Newport. A reconstructed and realigned Route 9 will greatly increase potential for development of the site and surrounding parcels by providing direct access.
- Continue to allow for industrial development east to Brighton Street as this area represents another reasonable expansion area for industrial users. Some residential units will be displaced, yet all of these housing units are currently negatively affected by the existing industries in the area. Expansion will allow for properly incorporating adequate buffers and barriers that will lessen the impact on the existing residential use. Any new industrial development should be buffered as much as possible from the existing residences by incorporating landscaping and mounding, as well as building layouts and orientation.



## Special Area Plans

---

Over time, the city has undertaken planning efforts for special or targeted areas of the city that require more detailed analysis and strategies than provided by the comprehensive plan. A summary of these efforts are included on the following pages.

### **CITY CENTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The City Center Area is a portion of Newport that is within the "center" of the downtown area. All of the land use designations within this area have been significantly altered since the last update of the comprehensive plan, requiring this special planning effort to address those changes.

#### **DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT**

The development concept for the City Center Area will act as a guide for the location of potential uses while also offering flexibility. This will be a key factor in attracting and controlling future development in the area. The concept plan for the City Center Development Area is based on the premise that a range of diverse yet interdependent activities will create a healthy business and cultural climate, produce a visually exciting environment, and provide an appealing destination for a broad range of the area's citizens.

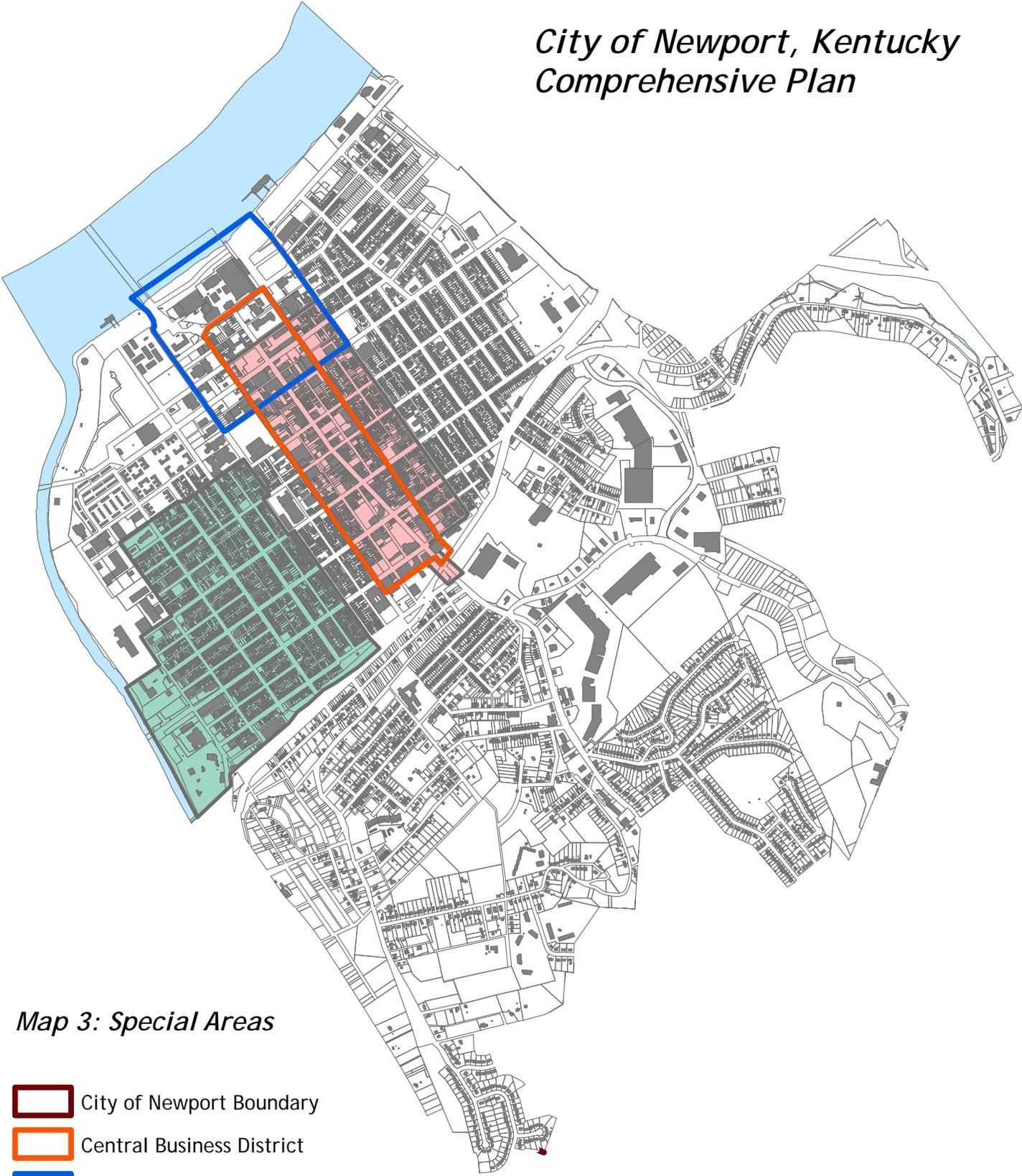
One of the keys to interaction is an interconnected pedestrian system, where the daily face-to-face contact of people during the course of both business and social activities can be accommodated in a safe and attractive manner. The key concepts for the development strategy are as follows:

#### **PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM**

Pedestrian access throughout the development area is of highest priority. As an integral component to the activities of the City Center area, the linkages to, within and through the area are vital to success. The continuation of the Monmouth Street pedestrian link should be reinforced. This link should continue through the area to the riverfront and its attractions. Without adequate updated pedestrian access, the City Center area will lose much of its potential economic viability.

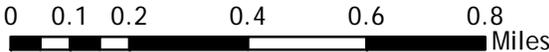
The linkages across the river to Downtown Cincinnati should be fully integrated and exploited. The pedestrian linkages from the L&N Bridge (Purple People Bridge) will need to be reinforced between this bridge and the City Center Area. This remains somewhat true today. Now that the Bridge has been converted and is used by a great number of pedestrians, there is still a need for improvement in terms of development along the Saratoga Street corridor. As is proposed in the following paragraphs, higher density residential is the goal for this area.

# City of Newport, Kentucky Comprehensive Plan



*Map 3: Special Areas*

-  City of Newport Boundary
-  Central Business District
-  City Center Area
-  Northwest Basin Quadrant
-  Renaissance District





## **LAND USES**

Development within the City Center Area should be sensitive to the surrounding areas, especially existing residential neighborhoods.

The eastern portion of the City Center area is suitable for medium to higher density residential uses. This area is bounded by Washington Avenue, Saratoga Street, Sixth Street and Fourth Street. This area will provide a good transition from the residential use of the East Row neighborhood. The scale of this residential development should range from that of the East Row area to a larger scale that would allow for multi-dwelling units and condominium type structures. This proposed residential district is also located near amenities where there is a significant pedestrian population.

Mixed-use development should occur north of Southgate Street to Third Street. This development will benefit from the increased traffic flow of Third Street as well as the high visibility. A mixed use will also provide a transition to the medium density residential uses to the immediate south. Mixed-use development in this area should include a range of uses from dine-in restaurants to small office type establishments. This type of development would also enable a transition to the development area north across Third Street.

Mixed-use development should occur between York, Saratoga, Third, and Fourth Streets. This use will provide a good transition between the Aquarium/Newport on the Levee development to the north and commercial/office uses to the south. It will also allow a good transition from the residential uses to the east. In addition to open space, this mixed-use area should include residential, commercial, and small office type developments. This development area as well as the residential uses to the east will also benefit from the inclusion of open space. This open space would also provide a transitional link between the large-scale developments to the north and south.

Office uses should occur near the World Peace Bell site and develop to the west concentrating along the Fourth and Fifth Street corridors.

Commercial uses should occur to the south and east of the World Peace Bell site. Commercial uses in this area, where possible, should be clustered into larger scale developments as opposed to smaller freestanding type developments.

Public use should continue at the existing Court House and St. Paul's Church parcels. Preservation of these architectural gems should be encouraged.

## **TRAFFIC**

Vehicular access movement through the area is detailed in previous sections as well as the City of Newport's Transportation Study. A more thorough analysis of Monmouth Street is encouraged in light of the continued study of Monmouth Street from one-way to two-way configuration.



## **PARKING**

Additional parking will need to be provided in the City Center area as new developments are proposed. Parking structures should be incorporated under these developments as necessary and when possible.

The implementation of a shared parking program through some type of city or quasi-public agency would relieve the developers of a percentage of their on-site parking requirements. A single organizing agency would also permit a degree of design consistency for the parking facilities and allow them to be landscaped to higher standards so that they become attractive urban spaces/structures in their own right.

Development of parking structures would also provide the opportunity to integrate retail uses at the street level. The integration of retail at the street level will also encourage pedestrian activity.

Shared parking would prevent the phenomenon of isolated buildings surrounded by seas of parking, instead allowing the construction of a more continuous street facade that stimulates pedestrian activity.

Such a parking system works best where the range of users have a variety of activity cycles (daytime office parking becoming night-time entertainment parking), providing better utilization and security over longer periods of time.

Any surface lots in the area should include adequate landscape buffering and fencing.

## **STREETSCAPE**

The citing of individual buildings within the City Center Area must provide a continuity of activity at street level if a vital and exciting pedestrian environment is to develop. Elements to be incorporated, which promote a visually appealing streetscape, include the following:

- Minimize visual obstruction of active retail storefronts from the street.
- Wide sidewalks (10-15 feet minimum) are to be created or maintained consistently throughout the area to accommodate pedestrian circulation, outdoor cafe tables and chairs, food or drink stalls.
- Paved or hard-surfaced public-open spaces are recommended. Ground cover and lawns should be kept to a minimum for practical maintenance reasons. (Avoid a suburban appearance.)
- Shade trees are to be provided in all public areas including parking lots.
- Shrubs are to be used, surrounding surface parking areas, as a screen from street and pedestrian activity.
- Any visible fencing in the area is to be ornamental iron style fencing. This fencing is to be used to surround surface parking areas in addition to any required plant screening.
- Conventional street curb sections selectively replaced with lines of bollards to enlarge the pedestrian domain into streets for special events. (Street markets, antique fairs, concerts, etc.)
- Continuous street facades and maximum close-in building setbacks of 5-10 feet.



- On-site parking located underground, in structures, or hidden behind each building block away from street facade.
- Distinctive street lighting for a special nighttime appearance, and flood lighting of key buildings to outline the boundaries of major public spaces
- "Gateway" elements at the key vehicular entry points to focus attention, and to make a statement about entering a special part of the City. (These could be symbolic gateposts, archways, change in road texture, etc.)

The Newport City Center Study recommends a specific land use and zoning plan for the Study Area. This section provides a mechanism that encourages conformance with this plan while also permitting landowners and developers to pursue alternative development plans through normal review procedures described in the Newport Zoning Regulations.

### ***CBD REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION (THE DISTRICT)***

The Monmouth Street CBD, known hereafter as the District, is a historic business activity area and is an area that the city wants to foster new business growth within that historic context. Due to changes in the area over the last ten years, there has been an expansion of new commercial businesses immediately outside Monmouth Street. In light of these "growing" changes, it is important to redefine and reposition Newport's CBD. Some of the strategies identified for the revitalization of the CBD in the last update of the Comprehensive Plan were implemented and are proving successful. Some of this change is a result of city actions and others are attributed to market timing issues. The primary reasons for success, though, are likely the large-scale change. Many of the strategies outlined ten years ago are still important and should continue now and into the future. Many of these are outlined later in this section. It should also be noted that the recommendations made in this section are not intended to position the District to compete with other shopping districts in the city, but rather to establish the District as a retail and service district that serves Newport residents, the area work force and visitors to Newport.

A major change proposed for the District is the conversion of Monmouth Street from one-way north to two-way. The most successful "main streets" in the country are a two-way configuration. This conversion allows for higher visibility for business and property owners. It also provides for easier vehicular movement, making it more customer-friendly. Conversion also provides for a safer pedestrian environment.

The timing of this vehicular directional change coincides with the implementation of streetscape improvements. The City of Newport recently completed the process of improving the aesthetics of Monmouth Street. These types of changes and improvements have positioned Monmouth Street for increased private investment as well as improving its marketability for new businesses.

Monmouth Street is also a redevelopment area. Yet this redevelopment plan differs from the Third Street Redevelopment Plan. Third Street's Plan was developed under KRS Title 99 as an urban renewal plan, which called for total clearance of the development site before a new development could be built. The Monmouth Street Redevelopment Plan calls for a different approach. Historically, Monmouth Street has been a major commercial center in Northern Kentucky. Because of this, commercial structures were constructed that have given Monmouth Street its individual character. Additionally,



Monmouth Street is a national historic district. In light of this, the redevelopment plan is not based on urban renewal activities, but in terms of rehabilitation and renovation as the primary focus. It has been a number of years since this area was declared a redevelopment zone and in light of the number of changes that have occurred, this study should be revisited and redeveloped accordingly. It is also important to note that as renovation occurs in the District, the historic integrity of the existing buildings should be maintained. Any new in-fill development should also reflect this historic integrity.

In the last update of the Comprehensive Plan, physical deterioration of the District discouraged customers and potential new businesses from coming to the area. Although to a lesser degree, this is still the case today. Efforts to continue to concentrate business activity in the District will result in rehabilitation of vacant buildings and storefronts, renovation of upper floor spaces, and new in-fill development of select vacant parcels. In addition to new uses, repair, maintenance and renovation should continue to be encouraged for existing uses.

The District was originally designed to house dwelling units above the storefronts to encourage a broader mixture of uses. Promoting the District as a place to reside will provide numerous opportunities for new development in the area. Promoting a mixture of activities will provide for a more vibrant District encouraging activity throughout the day, rather than just peak shopping hours. This will also provide a safer environment and lessen the potential for crime due to the increased pedestrian activity. Additionally, commercial establishments gain a new market as new residents move into the District. Residential development in the District will need to provide parking and additional support amenities necessary to create a positive environment.

Another issue affecting the District is the number of structures in need of renovation that are held by speculative owners. Many of these properties are vacant and compounding the problem, overvalued for the existing real estate market. Some of these properties should be targeted for acquisition by the City of Newport, or some type of incorporated "District Development Authority" to insure that these buildings do not discourage recruiting new commercial businesses. This will also contribute tremendous support to existing businesses that are striving to improve their establishments within the District.

The amenities of building stock as well as improved aesthetics will further position the District for new commercial activity. Businesses that are encouraged are those that are specialized and differ from those found at the Newport Shopping Center, or the Newport on the Levee development, and complement the historic character of the area. The size and types of uses should be sympathetic to the existing conditions in the District. Uses in the District should be concentrated and to a large degree, pedestrian oriented.

Connection to the north, with the Newport on the Levee project, will be of utmost importance to the success of continued revitalization of the District. The Aquarium and Newport on the Levee generates approximately 5+ million visitors to the Third Street area. Success for the commercial establishments in the area will depend on the ability to attract a portion of these "customers" into the District. Marketing businesses within the District, at the Newport on the Levee development, will be an important step in enticing patrons to these commercial establishments. It will also be important to promote the District in conjunction with other Newport attractions, such as riverfront development and special events such as the Italian Festival, Newport Motorcycle Rally, Riverfest and all the other events and promotions taking place at the Levee and along the riverfront.

Connection of commercial activity to the southern portion of Monmouth Street will greatly improve with the addition of an anchor type development. Promoting continuous commercial activity from Third Street to Eleventh Street will become easier with the



establishment of larger scale "bookend" anchors. Development at the southern end of the District should be of a commercial/office type that can capitalize on the very high traffic volume and visibility that is generated in the area surrounded by Eleventh, Tenth, York and Monmouth Streets. Care should be taken in the design of development in this area to insure pedestrian access and safety, minimizing conflict with vehicular movement where these streets converge. This anchor centers around the government buildings of the County and City.

### **DISTRICT LAND USES**

The revitalization of the District is focused primarily on commercial uses. Though this may seem a broad category by definition, a broad base of these uses will be necessary for the District to reach its full development potential. As was true in the development of the last Comprehensive Plan, the District should not have the intention of recreating its past function or of competing directly with the Newport Shopping Center, a community general retail center that provides convenience and shopper goods in a moderate price range. Rather, the District should seek to develop its own niche in the retail market.

With respect to an appropriate mix of commercial uses, several potential markets should be considered. These markets include the local neighborhoods, daily work force, riverfront users (both Cincinnati and Newport) and larger specialized markets. The local neighborhood and daily work force markets need convenience and service uses such as drug stores, restaurants, banks and post offices. The regional specialty markets will be attracted to specialized, unique stores such as antiques, book/CD's, art galleries and special clothing stores. Uses that serve the businesses in the area are also appropriate.

The work force market (public employee, bank employees and other office related employees), particularly those in the basin, will use District businesses if they serve their needs, such as lunches and quick errands. This market will also utilize restaurants, brewpubs and entertainment type establishments after business hours. This group is projected to increase as office development in Newport is implemented. Service uses, such as financial institutions, shoe repair and dry cleaners can also serve this market. The neighborhood market has many of the same commercial needs as the work force market.

Inappropriate uses in the District are large space users not retail or service in nature. Some nonconforming manufacturing related users currently exist in the area. These type users would be better served on the western portions of the basin area.

### **PARKING AND LOADING ISSUES**

With the conversion of Monmouth Street from one-way to two-way, there will be a need to address parking and loading zone issues. Parking can still be accommodated on the street; however, fewer spaces will be possible. This will occur when space, currently used for parking, will be utilized for turning lanes. Additional parking can be developed behind existing businesses and in other appropriate vacant parcels along Monmouth Street. A parking study by the University of Cincinnati indicated that currently there is adequate parking for the existing conditions. There simply was a perception of a lack of parking. This will become an issue, however, and additional spaces will need to be added as new commercial establishments move into the area and as new residential units are incorporated into the District. As parking areas are developed in these locations, adequate buffering should be incorporated to minimize any negative impacts on surrounding residential areas. Because of their low visibility and the possible perception that these parking spaces are unsafe, these parking areas may not always be appropriate for customers. They are, however, appropriate for employees of



establishments in the District. Encouraging employees to use these spaces would leave more parking spaces available for customers.

Loading areas will also need to be accommodated as directional flow of the street changes. Businesses that currently have access to the alley on either side of Monmouth Street should utilize this access whenever possible or feasible.

### **NORTHWEST BASIN QUADRANT**

---

The Northwest Basin Quadrant encompasses an approximate area that is bordered by Seventh Street to the south (excluding the industrial area), the floodwall to the north and west and Columbia Street to the east. This area will generate the highest density development in the basin area. It will also see tremendous development pressures due to its location, infrastructure availability, and general access.

This quadrant currently provides the highest density residential development in the City of Newport. Housing units between Fifth Street, Seventh Street and west of Central provide the density complimentary and necessary for the other types of mixed-use development envisioned for the area.

The area bounded by Fourth Street, Fifth Street and Central is designated as open space. This green space should also be incorporated as much as possible towards the east to Monmouth Street. This will serve different purposes for the immediate area and the community as a whole. Currently, there exists no sizable open space in the basin area south of the floodwall for community functions, passive recreation and city festivals. This area would not only help serve this purpose but would also provide a major aesthetic purpose for pedestrians and vehicles moving between Newport and Covington along Fourth and Fifth Street. This area will signal ones' arrival to Newport and immediately convey the City's dedication to and importance of the community. Great care should be taken in the design of this area to reflect a balance between formal and passive spaces.

This open space would also provide an important amenity for the high-density surrounding office and mixed-use development. This type of surrounding development is necessary to assure a vibrant, active urban space. Higher density development will also serve to "enclose" this space, highlighting its importance.

Office development should be concentrated near Fourth and Fifth Streets for a number of reasons. The necessary infrastructure water and sewer lines, utilities, as well as the major east/west existing transportation network, all combine to allow a high density of development. The high degree of visibility to and from this area of the basin provides a prime location for office/ mixed-use projects. The potential to assemble larger developable tracts also increases the prospect of successful economic development.

The existing Newport Housing Authority site north of Fourth Street will experience tremendous change. The Housing Authority is utilizing Hope VI funds to relocate the 202 public housing units into the existing neighborhoods of Newport. Upon relocating the residents, the Housing Authority site will experience a great deal of development pressure.

The Future Land Use Map indicates the site as mixed use. This site would be suited for residential, office and commercial uses. Great care must be taken when developing this area to insure compatibility between these different types of use.



Massing of the site should develop as lower density near the floodwall to higher density as development approaches the office designated Newport property (former Ford dealership site). This stepping back of the floor plans and facades will allow prime views across, and up and down the Ohio River. This massing approach will also allow for prime views from the proposed office designated core to the southeast.

This development concept, and architectural approach, will allow the integration of pedestrian open spaces and overlooks that provide views and a feeling of openness. These pedestrian spaces should be linked to the central office core near Fourth and Fifth Street as well as linked to the Riverwalk system and the riverfront. Extreme care should be incorporated in the development's design to insure adequate access to Taylor Park and other amenities over the floodwall. Pedestrian access to and from the river is of high importance.

Parking for this area should be incorporated under proposed developments, similar to the Newport on the Levee development. Primary access to this type of parking configuration could occur from the recommended realignment of Third Street. Developments in the northwest quadrant should provide structured parking on-site. Where this is not possible, then parking must be provided within the distance dictated by the Zoning Regulations. As developments are constructed in the NW quadrant, surface parking lots should be discouraged.

Parking structures, office buildings, and other developments in this area of the basin should incorporate commercial uses at the street level. This approach will provide for more vibrant activity at the street level, creating a more pedestrian-oriented environment. A standard streetscaping theme should be incorporated in all developments within the area.

Transportation recommendations for this area may need to be implemented in order to support any sizable development. This area will see the connection of Rt.8 to Rt.9. More detailed transportation analysis is recommended as developments for the area are proposed to insure optimum flows and capacities. The current discussion involving a proposed light rail line across the Taylor-Southgate Bridge or the L&N Bridge (Purple People Bridge) will substantially increase the development potential of this area as well as the entire basin of Newport. This alignment would support the proposed densities and uses in the area and conversely development would support the light rail system through increased ridership.