

# Planning Matters

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## Planning Commission Elects New Officers for FY 2010

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Each June, the Planning Commission must elect its officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer) for the next fiscal year. Each officer serves a one (1) year term. At its June 23rd meeting, however, the Planning Commission approved to retain its existing officers through and hold its election of officers at the July 28th meeting and to allow the entire Planning Commission to serve as the Nominating Committee. At its July 28th meeting, the Planning Commission held a lengthy discussion about the role, duties, and responsibilities of each officer position and elected the following officers:

- Chairman— Todd Johnson
- Vice-Chairman— Mary Ellen Marquess
- Secretary-Treasurer— Mark Mathis

Todd Johnson succeeds Mike Zoeller as Chairman, and Mary Ellen Marquess succeeds Linda Wells as Vice-Chair. Mark Mathis was re-elected as Secretary/Treasurer. Mike and Linda both will continue as members of the Planning Commission. Mike represents Magisterial District #1 (southern Nelson County, New Haven, New Hope) and has

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## Planning Commission Approves FY 2009 Financial Report & FY 2010 Budget

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At its regular monthly meeting on July 28th, the Planning Commission reviewed and approved its year-end financial report for Fiscal Year 2009 and approved an amended budget for Fiscal Year 2010.

Fiscal Year 2009 Financial Report highlights include:

### Revenues

- Fees/charges for services decreased 29.86%, from \$100,748 in FY 2008 to \$70,668 in FY 2009.
- Fees/charges for services were lowest since FY 1998.
- Carryover revenues from FY 2008 to FY 2009 decreased 57.9%, from \$14,719 in FY 2008 to \$6,199 in FY 2009.
- Local government contributions increased 3.17%, from \$136,248 in FY 2008 to \$140,571 in FY 2009.

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## Plans & Their Functions by Christopher J. Duerkson, C. Gregory Dale, FAICP, and Donald L. Elliott, FAICP

*This article appeared in the Spring 2009 issue of The Commissioner. Those interested in subscribing to the publication may go to <http://www.planning.org/thecommissioner/index.htm>. Used with permission of the American Planning Association.*

With local government finance under pressure, many cities and counties are being forced to ask themselves “what kind of planning do we really need right now—and how much can we afford?” For some communities that will mean pursuing targeted planning efforts rather than a complete update of their comprehensive plan. With that in mind, the excerpt below covers the wide variety of plans available to address local planning priorities.

Your local government should continually strive to develop and maintain its own coherent planning program. Imperfect as it might be, there

is a community planning system or program that is trying to identify and pursue what the community aspires to become. At its best, a local community planning program has multiple elements that work together in a coordinated fashion. It may be helpful to consider three different categories of planning tools to help navigate the planning landscape: plans, regulations, and initiatives. Each of these is discussed separately below.

### **Types of Plans**

There are many different types of plans that local governments can prepare

and adopt as part of their overall planning program. Among others, these include the following:

### **Comprehensive Plan**

The comprehensive plan should be the central organizing umbrella under which other plans, regulations, and initiatives exist. The comprehensive plan should establish an overall vision for the community and include a plan for physical growth, development, and preservation of the land within the planning area. It should also show

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## Financial Report & Budget (continued from page 1)

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### Expenditures

- Personnel expenses decreased 5.53%, from \$165,906 in FY 2008 to \$156,726 in FY 2009.
- General operating expenses decreased 27.59%, from \$68,485 in FY 2008 to \$49,588 in FY 2009.

Since the beginning of FY 2007, the Planning Commission has experienced a significant decrease in residential and commercial development activity. Over the last 3 years, applications for zoning compliance permits, zone changes, conditional use permits, variances, and subdivisions have significantly decreased, thereby resulting in a 48% decrease in fees/charges for services collected and 76% decrease in excess revenues available

to carry over each fiscal year.

To offset the significant decreases in revenues collected, the Planning Commission has diligently monitored its financial status and has implemented significant cost-savings measures over the last 3 years. These cost-savings efforts, including staff layoff and hour reductions, have resulted in only a 6% increase in the required local government contributions over the last 3 years.

### FY 2010 Forecast & Budget

The Planning Commission is hopeful that development in Nelson County will improve in FY 2010. Although optimistic, the Planning Commission will start the new fiscal year without

carryover revenues from FY 2009 and will be faced with a 5% increase in expenses from last year. The Planning Commission will continue its cost-savings measures during FY 2010. However, without carryover revenues from last year and with additional expenses, the Planning Commission foresees a 6.6% increase in local government contributions.

FY 2010 budget highlights include:

- 20% increases in employer health insurance premium and retirement contribution;
- 4% increase in liability insurance premium; and,
- 9.5% increase in fees/charges for services.

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## Plans & Their Functions (continued from page 1)

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how different parts of the community—such as land use, transportation, and other community facilities, housing, parks and open space, natural and cultural resources, economic development, and others—tie together.

### Special Geographic Area Plans

Many local governments prepare plans to supplement the comprehensive plan and focus on particular geographic areas of the community. These typically apply to locations that have special needs or conditions requiring a more detailed analysis than the comprehensive plan can provide. For example, many jurisdictions have downtown plans, corridor plans for key scenic or travel corridors, neighborhood plans, special business district plans, and plans that apply to special environmental areas.

### Transportation Plans

Most communities consider transportation plans one of the most important elements of a local planning process. Transportation facilities, including

highways and roads (and often bike-ways and trails), are major influences on the future growth of virtually every jurisdiction. One reason for this emphasis is that traffic congestion is a very direct negative impact of poorly planned growth, and it appears at or near the top of the list of citizen concerns. An increasing number of cities, counties, and neighborhoods recognize that while transportation facilities are generally planned to accommodate growth, they can also be used as tools to help shape growth and development. Transportation investments can be used proactively to help manage future growth as well as to relieve current congestion.

### Economic Development Plans

Nearly all communities are concerned about their long-term economic health. Fostering a climate in which existing businesses can thrive, and in which new businesses and relocation firms are welcomed, is an important community value. Planning programs generally recognize the importance of a strong and diverse economic base to

provide a strong fiscal foundation for the city or county government and to provide increased economic opportunities for local residents. Economic development plans are an important element of, or supplement to, a comprehensive plan.

### Public Facility Plans

Along with transportation facilities, the location of sewer and water infrastructure and other public facilities is a major factor in growth and development. However, it is surprising how few local governments actively coordinate infrastructure planning with land-use planning. In many cases this is because utility planning is operated as an “enterprise” and is controlled by an independent or semi-independent agency only marginally related to city or county planning functions. Nonetheless, many local governments are increasingly using their investments in sewer and water infrastructure tools to help shape growth.

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## Plans & Their Functions (continued from page 2)

### Capital Improvement Plans

As a supplement to long-range transportation and infrastructure plans, capital improvement plans (CIPs) identify specific capital-improvement investment needs relative to the annual budgeting process. While transportation and infrastructure improvement plans identify long-range needs tied to land-use forecasts, CIPs are shorter term plans that link the local budgeting and spending process to those long-range plans.

### Fiscal Plans

Many communities recognize the importance of actively planning for and promoting fiscally sustainable land-use patterns. For example, citizens often claim that single-family residential growth “does not pay for itself”—that is, the taxes it generates do not offset the increased costs of providing governmental services to the new homes. Although this may not be true in your city or county, it reflects the different costs and tax revenues generated by different land uses. Some land uses create net fiscal deficits, and some land uses create fiscal surpluses. Most local governments must balance those surpluses and deficits to remain solvent, a necessity that influences the planning process very directly. Every planning jurisdiction is different, however, and the only way to understand this issue comprehensively is through a fiscal impact analysis.

### Parks and Recreation Plans

Many cities and counties engage in strong parks and recreation planning because adequate park facilities and recreational opportunities are basic government services value by residents. Parks and recreation plans typically provide for different types of parks, including community parks, local parks, and neighborhood parks, and are often based on an existing or preferred ratio of parkland to population. Increasingly, parks and recreation plans address not only the size and location of these facilities but how they will be used—for example, for

passive recreation or for active ball fields, for day use only or for weekend and evening events.

### Pedestrian and Trails Plans

It is common to find local governments to have adopted separate plans identifying a network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Pedestrian and trail plans typically involve a combination of separate trails or paths, sidewalks, and public streets to achieve a pedestrian network. In principle, pedestrian and trail planning should be closely coordinated with both the parks and recreation plan and the transportation plan discussed above, but that is sometimes not the case. In addition, pedestrian and trail plans should also be coordinated with open-space plans and natural-resource preservation plans, discussed below.

### Open Space Plans

Many local governments have identified the need for a comprehensive planning strategy for the preservation of open spaces and have developed and adopted separate open-space plans. These can often involve very strategic thinking; is it better to focus resources on the most important open spaces, or the largest ones, or those most at risk of loss through development? Open-space plans can often be combined with natural-resource protection plans and parks and recreation plans. The identification and implementation of a comprehensive open-space system is an important planning function in many communities.

### Natural Resource Protection Plans

There are a variety of natural resources that can be addressed through natural resource protection plans, including water quality, air quality, and wildlife and vegetation protection, among others. Most local residents recognize that both their quality of life and the public health and safety are closely tied to a clean natural environment. In some cases, state or federal laws influence these plans—for example, by requiring

that local governments provide some way for oil, gas, or mineral resources to be extracted from the ground, or by requiring that wetlands be treated in a specific way, or by requiring that cities intercept polluted runoff before it enters streams and rivers.

### Housing Plans

The desired mix of housing and the need to provide housing opportunities to a diverse population are typically addressed through separate housing plans. Many cities, counties, and townships are interested in addressing the affordability of housing, and their plans define both what that means and how they want to accomplish it. Other communities are focusing more directly on the issue of “lifespan” housing—that is, on providing a range of housing options for young adults, young families, maturing families, empty-nesters, retirees, and senior citizens. The federal government requires a “Consolidated Plan” with a heavy housing element for cities to be eligible for certain types of federal funds, a condition that often means that housing is treated as a planning topic in its own right.

### Redevelopment Plans

Jurisdictions with older areas that have experienced disinvestment often draft plans identifying strategies that will promote reinvestment and stabilization of the areas. It is particularly challenging to encourage reinvestment or redevelopment in areas that the free market has largely left behind, and many states require a firm planning foundation before allowing local governments to use some of the more powerful tools to help these areas—for example, eminent domain.

### Initiatives

A good local planning program typically includes other proactive initiatives to supplement plans and regulations. Keep in mind that land-use regulations such as zoning and

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## Plans and Their Functions (continued from page 3)

subdivision are usually reactive, meaning that they come into play only when someone purposes to do something.

As long as property owners keep using a property as they have in the past, zoning and subdivision regulations rarely require them to change their use of the land or the buildings on it. Most local planning programs involve additional activities that go beyond plans and regulations. The following are typical examples of planning initiatives.

### Open Space Acquisition

It is common for neighborhoods and residents to identify open space preservation as an important community goal in the comprehensive plan. Although substantial open space can be preserved through the development review process, many local governments have identified the need for a more comprehensive mechanism to preserve open space on a permanent basis. Initiatives may therefore be undertaken to educate property

owners and work with them to donate scenic easements or to otherwise preserve land, or to adopt taxes, fees, or other long-term dedicated funding sources for open space acquisition and maintenance.

### Infrastructure Financing Tools

Many communities, particularly those facing high-growth pressures, have developed tools to improve the financing of public facilities. Usually these efforts are designed to ensure that new growth “pays for itself”-i.e., that the public facility and service demands created by new growth are accompanied by adequate revenues to fund those services. Tools such as impact fees and special assessments are often developed as planning initiatives to pursue that goal.

### Economic Development

Economic development programs are an integral part of local planning. Having a healthy and diverse economy that provides employment opportunities for residents and that generates positive

tax revenues is often a core community planning value. For that reason, many cities, counties, and townships fund aggressive economic development activities that include business expansion, attraction, and retention efforts; incentives to attract new businesses; and even the development of business parks.

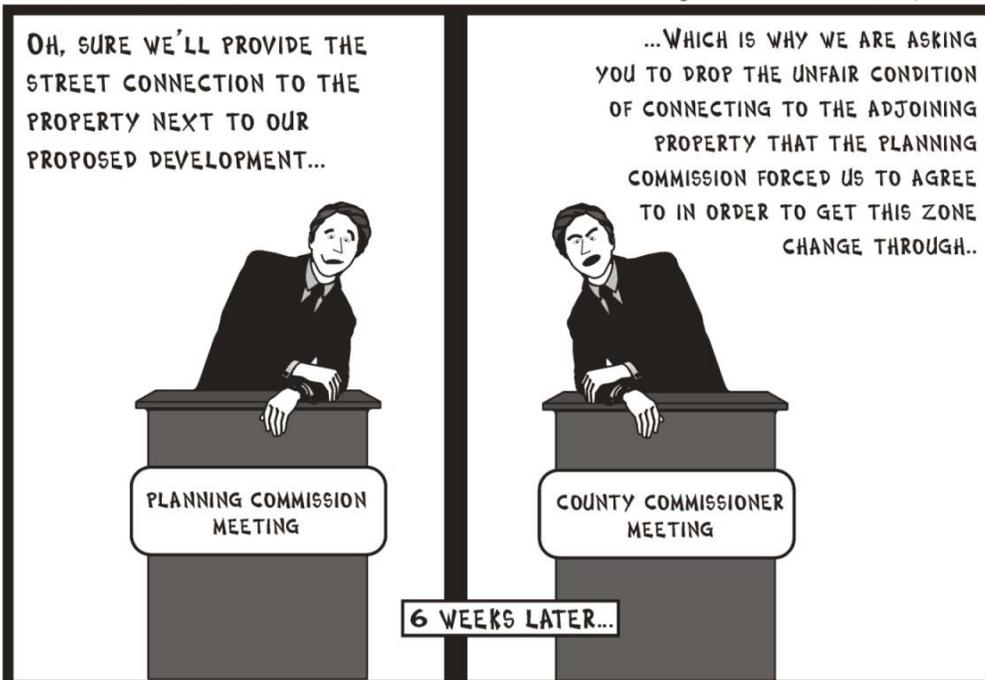
### Strategic Utility Extension

Utilities are often a major determinant of the location and amount of new growth, and many local plans recognize that control of the location and nature of utilities is a strong planning tool. While communities often see their role as providing infrastructure in response to market forces, others use their ability to invest in infrastructure as a tool to shape growth. A local government may decide to invest in infrastructure such as sewer or water to encourage certain types of growth in certain areas-or decide not to invest in order to discourage development in other areas.



## URBANE PLANNING

by Robert A. Jonas, AICP



### About Urbane Planning and

**Robert A. Jonas, AICP:** Bob Jonas is planner with the Boone County Planning Commission. Since 1993, Bob has worked as an urban planner, and he has been exposed to a wealth of unusual and frustrating situations probably shared by many planners. In response to some of his experiences, he began drawing editorial cartoons to vent his frustrations. The cartoons are titled “Urbane Planning” as a play on the profession of urban planning. The word “urbane” means “refined or polished,” which is not normally used to describe the planning profession or situations planners face. Bob hopes fellow planners can relate to and have a laugh at the experiences depicted in Urbane Planning.

Where the real power of planning resides.

Jonas@one.net

## Zoning Compliance Permit Analysis

January - June 2009

	City of Bardstown		Nelson County		Total	
	Permits	Est. Cost (\$)	Permits	Est. Cost (\$)	Permits	Est. Cost (\$)
Agricultural Structures	0	\$0	32	\$300,818	32	\$300,818
Agricultural Additions	0	\$0	1	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
<b><i>Agricultural Subtotal</i></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>\$305,818</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>\$305,818</b>
Accessory Additions	0	\$0	6	\$12,300	6	\$12,300
Accessory Structures	34	\$112,450	100	\$833,436	134	\$945,886
Demolitions	1	\$0	1	\$0	2	\$0
Manufactured Homes, double-wide	0	\$0	3	\$218,350	3	\$218,350
Manufactured Homes, single-wide	0	\$0	8	\$112,002	8	\$112,002
Manufactured Home Additions	0	\$0	1	\$3,500	1	\$3,500
Multi-Family Dwellings (7 units)	0	\$0	1	\$425,000	1	\$425,000
Single-Family Additions	9	\$96,050	37	\$1,072,588	46	\$1,168,638
Single-Family Dwellings	17	\$1,940,000	54	\$6,914,144	71	\$8,854,144
Single-Family Alteration/Remodeling	10	\$232,000	16	\$364,349	26	\$596,349
Townhouses/Condominiums (2 units)	1	\$120,000	0	\$0	1	\$120,000
Townhouses/Condo Alteration/Remod.	1	\$58,000	0	\$0	1	\$58,000
<b><i>Residential Subtotal</i></b>	<b>73</b>	<b>\$2,558,500</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>\$9,955,669</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>\$12,514,169</b>
Commercial Additions	1	\$550,000	0	\$0	1	\$550,000
Commercial Alteration/Remodels	6	\$1,158,700	3	\$7,000	9	\$1,165,700
Commercial Demolitions	2	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$0
Commercial Structures	3	\$25,000	2	\$315,000	5	\$340,000
Commercial Tenant Fit-Ups	3	\$12,000	0	\$0	3	\$12,000
<b><i>Commercial Subtotal</i></b>	<b>15</b>	<b>\$1,745,700</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>\$322,000</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>\$2,067,700</b>
Industrial Accessory	2	\$105,000	0	\$0	2	\$105,000
Industrial Additions	1	\$200,000	0	\$0	1	\$200,000
Industrial Alterations/Remodels	0	\$0	1	\$100,000	1	\$100,000
Industrial Structures	3	\$270,000	0	\$0	3	\$270,000
<b><i>Industrial Subtotal</i></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>\$575,000</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>\$675,000</b>
Public Structures	0	\$0	2	\$2,700	2	\$2,700
Public Structure Additions	1	\$6,681,217	0	\$0	1	\$6,681,217
Telecommunication Acc. Structures	0	\$0	1	\$15,000	1	\$15,000
<b><i>Public Subtotal</i></b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$6,681,217</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>\$17,700</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>\$6,698,917</b>
<b>Total Permits Issued</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>\$11,560,417</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>\$10,701,187</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>\$22,261,604</b>

## Joint City-County Planning Commission of Nelson County

*Serving the Cities of Bardstown, Bloomfield, Fairfield, & New Haven and Nelson County*

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### Planning Commission Staff

Janet Johnston, AICP, Director  
Cindy Pile, Administrative Assistant  
Phyllis Horne, Receptionist/Clerk  
David Hall, Preservation Administrator  
Pen Bogert, Preservation Administrator  
Mike Coen, Legal Counsel  
Alicia Brown, Court Reporter

### Planning Commission

Kenneth Brown, City of Bloomfield  
Theresa Cammack, Nelson County (#3)  
Wayne Colvin, Nelson County (#5)  
Andy Hall, City of New Haven  
Fred Hagan, City of Bardstown  
Todd Johnson (Chair), City of Bardstown  
Mary Ellen Marquess (Vice-Chair), City of Fairfield  
Mark Mathis (Secretary/Treasurer), City of Bardstown  
Carolyn Welch, Nelson County (#4)  
Linda Wells, Nelson County (#2)  
Mike Zoeller, Nelson County (#1)

# denotes Magisterial District

## In Memory

Mr. Gam Hurst passed away May 27, 2009. Mr. Hurst served as a Planner Commissioner representing Magisterial District #4 (Cox's Creek, Deatsville, Samuels) from February 22, 1983 to February 24, 2004, 21 years.

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### Election of Officers (continued from page 1)

served on the Planning Commission since 1981. He served as Vice-Chairman from 1981 to 1988 and as Chairman from 1989 to 2009. Linda Wells represents Magisterial District #2 (southeast Nelson County, Woodlawn, Botland) and has served on the Planning Commission since 1992.

#### About the New Officers . . .

##### **Todd Johnson, Chair**

For the past 14 years, Todd has been employed in the automotive industry, and the last 5 years, he has worked as a Senior Account Manager with Tower Automotive. His wife, Lee Margaret, their four children, and he reside in the Bardstown Historic District. In the early 1970s, Todd and his family moved from Dayton, Ohio to Bardstown after Todd's father took a job in Elizabethtown. Todd received a Bachelor of Arts in political science and economics from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and has completed 15 hours towards a Master of Public Administration at the University of Louisville. About his election as Chair,

Todd said, "The Planning Commission is made up of talented, thoughtful people. I am truly honored to have been nominated and elected Commission Chair by such a strong group of community minded individuals. We all appreciate the work that Mike Zoeller has accomplished during his tenure as Chair and look forward to his continued, active contribution to the Commission. I look forward to continuing the good work of the Planning Commission in this new capacity."

##### **Mary Ellen Marquess, Vice-Chair**

Appointed in February 2007, Mary Ellen says she serves on the Planning Commission "to work for the betterment of the community and quality of life for all." Mary Ellen has lived her entire life in Fairfield. She graduated from St. Catherine Academy and worked 20 years as a USPS rural mail carrier for the Cox's Creek Post Office. She also served as Mayor of the City of Fairfield. Today she manages Rogan Mobile Home Park in Bardstown. Her husband, William, is retired and serves on the Fairfield Board of Adjustment.

They have 5 children and 11 grandchildren.

##### **Mark Mathis, Secretary-Treasurer**

With the exception of his years in school, Mark has lived in Bardstown and Nelson County his entire life. He is the President of Mago Construction Company and attorney in private practice. Mark graduated from Bardstown High School, and he received a Bachelor of Business Administration from University of Kentucky and Juris Doctor from the University of Louisville School of Law. His wife, Debi, is a volunteer, and they have 3 children. Appointed in 1990, Mark has served as Secretary-Treasurer since 2000. He also serves as Chairman of the Bardstown Board of Adjustment. He says, "I serve as a Planning Commissioner because I live, work, and raise my children in this community, and therefore, I want it to be a better place all around. Our community is unique and needs to maintain its uniqueness while at the same time balancing future growth. I serve to give something back to Bardstown and Nelson County."