

Future Land Use

Sound and responsive land use is vital to the well being of both residence and the natural landscape of Fayette County. In order to be proactive to the current and future land use needs within the County, a Future Land Use Plan is an imperative component to the overall Comprehensive Plan. In order to guide development both in the present and for the long term, the Future Land Use Plan must be based on a solid analytical framework. The analysis of the County, its current land uses, historic land uses, environmental constraints, public facilities, recreation, and cultural facilities to name a few, was first conducted to better understand the current use of the County. This initial analysis led to the development of nine specific future land use definitions, listed below. These nine definitions, coupled with the County analysis, became the backbone for the development of the Future Land Use Plan as seen in this document.

The following nine future land use terms were developed to provide the most concise and proactive land use categories for the preservation, conservation, development, or reuse of lands within the County.

EXISTING BUILT AREAS

Contiguous areas that are currently used for an activity or are occupied by a structure or built object. These uses include residential, multi-family residential, commercial, highway commercial, institutional, industrial, and light industrial uses.

FUTURE GROWTH AREAS

Areas that are best suited for future development to occur. Contiguous areas that have favorable topography, no steep slopes or environmental constraints, access to public utilities including sanitary and water, areas that have, or will have, adequate transportation access and areas within Enterprise Zones.

RURAL VILLAGE

The Rural Village Areas are generally pockets of small isolated settlements in a rural setting that may include a variety of uses such as residential, commercial, and neighborhood commercial.

COMMERCIAL CONSERVATION AREA

Commercial conservation areas are lands currently owned for specific mineral or timber production. These uses may include mineral extraction, coal extraction, stone extraction, timber reserve, or oil and gas fields.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Contiguous areas of land that have historically been devoted to agricultural production and are best suited for continued agricultural production based on soil quality and topographic limitations.

LAND RECLAMATION AREA

Fayette County was a world leader in coal and coke production for nearly 100 years. This period of industrial progress now leaves a notable blemish on the County landscape. The land reclamation area is a tool to target specific sites within the County that are severely degraded due to either mine dumps, strip mining operations, quarry operations, landfills, junkyards or brownfields.

RECREATION/CULTURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREA

This area includes lands dedicated to either public recreation or conservation and may include parks, state game lands, state forests, state parks, preserves, historic or cultural sites, and tourist oriented sites.

RESOURCE PRESERVATION AREA

The resource preservation area focuses on areas in the County that should not be developed on a large scale due to an environmental constraint including steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, important forested areas, or unique natural features.

RURAL CONSERVATION AREA

Includes predominantly rural areas not incorporated into any of the above mentioned areas.

At the end of this chapter are community profile sheets for the forty-two municipalities within the County. These sheets offer verbiage regarding the character of the municipality and a breakdown in percentage of each land use contained within that the municipality. The Community Profile Sheets are a tool to be used in conjunction with the Future Land Use Plan in order to help paint a clearer picture of the future land use within each municipality. It should also be noted that the following ten municipalities maintain individual zoning and comprehensive plans: City of Connellsville, City of Uniontown, Connellsville Township, Henry Clay Township, Ohiopyle Borough, Perryopolis Borough, South Union Township, Stewart Township, Washington Township and Wharton Township. The Future Land Use Plan prepared by Fayette County reflects the vision of the County only and is not shared by any elected official, board, or resident within any of the ten listed municipalities. Please refer to a zoning map, future land use plan, or comprehensive plan for an accurate depiction of land use within these ten listed municipalities.