

Environment

The Kenton County Comprehensive Plan is comprised of nine elements. Recommendations and associated tasks for implementation have been developed for each element to implement the Goals and Objectives that serve as the foundation for the plan. The recommendations were derived after extensive public discussions, discourse and dialogue and are based on research which includes local data as well as national trends. They explore different facets of the county's physical development as well as its economic and social well-being and provide a roadmap for implementation. The Environment element identifies policies that guide decision-makers to find an appropriate balance between development and preservation of the County's natural resources.

There are many different characteristics that make up the environmental element of the Comprehensive Plan. Research and public discussion indicates that the environment plays an important role in the economic competitiveness and quality of life within Kenton County. These recommendations are important because they seek to continue the discussions about the role and value of natural resources and the need to strive towards an appropriate balance between preservation and development. Click on the main headings below to learn more about the environmental recommendations for the plan.

1. Recommendation:

Facilitate community-wide discussion to determine the appropriate balance of development and preservation within each sub area.



Associated Goal & Objective:

Goal 8

Tasks:

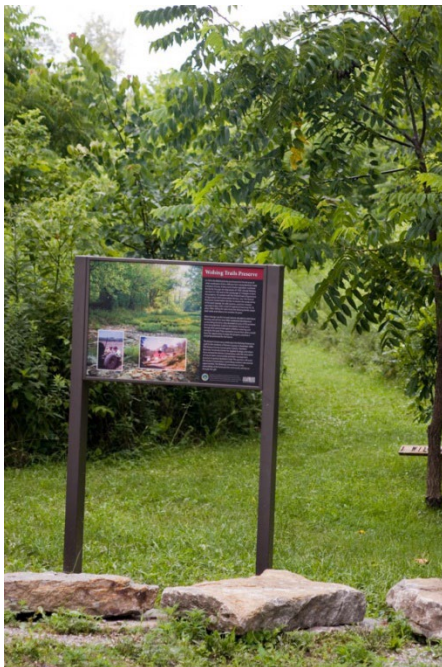
1. Inventory and prioritize land that is identified as a natural resource that has significance to the community.
2. Promote flexible regulations for development that ensure protection of the county's natural resources.
3. Review current regulations (both development and preservation) within each of the four sub areas as appropriate.
4. Encourage the use of conservation easements, purchased development rights, transferred development rights, and acquisition to conserve natural resources.

Basis:

There is varied public opinion about the appropriate balance between development and preservation. Comments from the community as well as from different stakeholders indicate a desire to see both. The research report documents the physical constraints that make certain portions of the county challenging to develop. However, land that offers desirable views of the city or similar appeal, lends itself to development due to potential high rates of return.

2. Recommendation:

Pursue and promote multifaceted approaches to preserving natural resources.



Associated Goal & Objective:

Goal 8 – Objective A

Tasks:

1. Research incentive based programs to encourage local governments to engage in watershed-based regional planning and water quality oriented best local land use practices.
2. Assist stakeholders in adapting development techniques for the protection and utilization of natural resources.
3. Promote best management practices such as integrated stormwater management efforts and low impact designs to improve the health of watersheds.
4. Consider the physical and economic impact of increased impervious surface and its effect on elevating ambient air temperature.
5. Identify feasible measures to reduce impervious surface and alleviate impacts of impervious surface with best practices such as increased tree canopy or low impact designs, including managing runoff to prevent stream bed and bank erosion.
6. Update the tree canopy data and ensure other environmental geographic data is maintained and remains relevant.
7. Encourage developments that include alternative forms of energy such as solar and wind.

Basis:

Kenton County has a wealth of natural resources which are valuable in a number of ways. Public comments have indicated that it is important for these resources to be protected; however, the need to protect these resources will need to be balanced with the development needs of the community. This balance will require careful consideration of both regulatory and non-regulatory approaches.

3. Recommendation:

Assess the feasibility of a county-wide park system as it relates to economic competitiveness.

Associated Goal & Objective:

Goal 7 – Objective A

Goal 7 – Objective B

Goal 8 – Objective B

Tasks:



1. Work with regional entities to assess the need for recreational activities for different generations and those with disabilities throughout the County.
2. Assemble a county-wide working group to determine the value of establishing a well-connected and complete system of parks and recreational opportunities throughout the County.
3. Perform a county-wide facility needs assessment to identify gaps and overlaps in the system and make recommendations to fill what gaps may exist.
4. Incentivize the protection of quality open space that is well connected and accessible.
5. Support multi-use paths as viable connector options between existing parks, open space, and neighborhoods.

Basis:

Public comments have indicated that many would like to see the linking of Kenton County's public parks into a complete system spanning the entire county. Research indicates that there are many environmental, social, and economic benefits associated with a complete linkage of parks and recreational facilities.

4. Recommendation:

Pursue and promote varied approaches for the safe development and preservation of hillsides.

Associated Goal & Objective:

Goal 8 – Objective A



Safety:

This deals with safety aspects of development on hillsides and encompasses geotechnical recommendations, grading and infrastructure.

Careful consideration should be given to the following conditions to ensure public health, safety and welfare:

1. When development is proposed on sites on hillsides that have a known history of pre-existing slippage conditions.
2. When cuts and fills have the potential to significantly alter the topography of the site.
3. When the proposed final slopes for a development is greater than a certain percentage.
4. When the proposed development is in close proximity to streams which creates a potential for hydromodification.

Land Development:

This deals with two aspects of conservation – true preservation which means preservation of hillsides in their natural state and the concept of conservation in conjunction with, not in lieu of, development.

1. Collaborate with the local development community and local land preservation organizations to encourage the preservation of hillsides.
2. Evaluate options for developing a funding mechanism that could assist in the purchase of hillsides for preservation.

3. Provide the option for an alternative form of development with flexible guidelines that could allow both the proposed development in conjunction with land to be conserved in its natural state.

Flexible Design:

This deals with site design aspects as it relates to achieving a balance of development and preservation.

1. Provide the option for an alternative form of development with flexible guidelines that could allow proposed development to occur in conjunction with land to be conserved in its natural state. One objective of the flexible guidelines is to provide development at the same density as would otherwise be allowed within the development as there would be without the element of conservation.
2. Work with stakeholders in the community to create incentives that would encourage this type of development.
3. In order to provide an opportunity for better design on hillsides, greater flexibility in certain elements of site design such as building setback to minimize grading and height should be considered.
4. Explore the potential for Purchase of Development Rights on hillsides.

Basis:

Due to the varied topography within the County, communities are often faced with development challenges with respect to hillsides. While development on hillsides can often produce high property values due to viewsheds, developing in these areas can cause hillside slippage and drainage issues, often affecting neighboring properties if not pursued in a safe manner. The Hills Project was conducted to begin community discussion on the opportunities and challenges of developing and preserving hillsides.