



HOPKINS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Public Involvement

C

APPENDIX **C**

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

[INSIDE THIS CHAPTER]

This chapter documents the public engagement process used in gathering concepts, ideas and comments from the community.

- Planning Committee Meetings
- Public Meetings & Workshops
- Meeting in a Box
- Adoption Hearings
- Other Public Outreach



■ During the plan's development, many opportunities for the public to engage with the process were extended. The public was asked to participate by providing input on their ideas and comments on their desired future for Hopkins County. Public input is crucial in securing adoption and future implementation of the plan – especially in a plan that encompasses the many unique cities and communities within Hopkins County.

Public input was collected by several methods of facilitation including, four Planning Committee meetings, five public meetings and workshops, seven HCJPC facilitated “Meetings in a Box” with community interest groups, key person & focus group interviews and online surveys. Each form of public involvement included the facilitation of a variety of exercises to capture the community's vision for the future.



Photo: Planning Committee meeting

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

A Planning Committee of 21 members (listed in the opening of this document under Acknowledgements), representing a cross-section of the community's residents, government and local organizations and business owners, was formed to guide the planning process and overall direction of the comprehensive plan.

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING #1- October 3, 2013

The purpose of the first meeting was to introduce the planning process, establish key roles, review the existing conditions, and begin to collect input on what concepts should be included plan's vision. The Planning Committee began to share their ideas about the future of Hopkins County through three exercises, summarized below.

1) Visioning Exercise: "What's Your Vision?"

The following open ended questions were presented for comment.

The most important issue facing Hopkins County is...

- Jobs / Economic Development – Lack of job growth, lack of diverse employers, business attraction and retention
- Education – Increasing the education level, library
- Land Use – Underground mining land reclamation, growth along I-69
- Aging Population – Retaining young adult population, attracting new residents,

Hopkin's County's greatest asset is...

- Education – Madisonville Community College, K-12 education system
- Location – Located on I-69, river, road and rails, central U.S. (logistics)
- Natural resources – coal enhanced economy
- Community - Friendly, relaxed people, small town feel with city benefits, Community pride
- Amenities/Services – Parks, open land, healthcare

If I could build one thing in Hopkins County it would be...

- Entertainment – shopping mall, dining and restaurants, family entertainment facilities, sports facilities
- Education – library with technology center, youth or learning center
- Transportation – connected park ant trail system, expanded airport and flights, connector roads
- Business – research and development center, manufacturing, food market, tourism destinations

2) Issues Exercise: “Is this Hopkins County?”

An issues exercise allowed the Planning Committee to identify what businesses, amenities, and features they feel are most important to them and which they would like to see when thinking about the future of Hopkins County. They were asked to circle the words that are very important to them, mark a line through those that they would not like to see and do nothing to words or phrases that they felt indifferent toward.

MOST DESIRABLE FEATURES								
Feature	Want	Do Not Want	Feature	Want	Do Not Want	Feature	Want	Do Not Want
Manufacturing	27	0	Light-Industrial	20	0	Parks & Open Space	18	0
Library	25	0	Bike/Outdoor Recreation Shop	20	0	Farmers Market	18	1
Tourist Attractions	23	0	Hotel/Motel	20	0	Sidewalk Cafes	17	1
Greenway or Multi-Use Trail	22	0	College/University	19	0	Distribution/Warehouses	17	0
Community Branding / Identity	22	0	Fine Dining	19	1	Shopping Mall/ Lifestyle Center	17	2
Locally Owned Stores	20	0	Improved Streetscape	18	0	Live Entertainment	17	1

SOMEWHAT DESIREABLE FEATURES						LEAST DESIRABLE FEATURES		
Feature	Want	Do Not Want	Feature	Want	Do Not Want	Feature	Want	Do Not Want
Chain Retailers	16	0	Medical Campus	14	0	Parking Garages	6	8
Single-Family Homes	16	1	Movie Theater/Entertainment Ctr.	14	1	Gated Neighborhoods	6	6
Churches	16	2	Antique Shops	14	1	Strip Shopping Centers	8	5
Highway Signage (Directional)	15	0	Performing Arts Theater	14	1	Skate Park	5	5
Heavy-Industrial	15	1	Specialty Arts/Artisan Shops	13	0	Rock/Stone Quarries	0	5
Youth Sports Fields / Complex	15	1	Gateway Feature	13	1	Liquor Stores	1	4

3) Strengths and Opportunities

In this exercise, the Planning Committee was asked to identify strengths and opportunities for each topic of the plan. Comments were recorded on large flip charts to begin to frame the issues.

TOPIC	STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
Land Use	Lots of land	More recreation, stabilize neighborhoods, housing for elderly, patio homes, lifestyle neighborhoods,
Transportation	Easy access	Bike facilities and connections, move railroad, better connectivity, west loop/bypass, convert back to two-way streets, college entrance
Facilities & Utilities	Post-secondary –shovel ready	Aged school facilities, growth to north needing sewer capacity to increase, water pressure is low in areas, Earlington – bad I&I issues, Nortonville – water project needed, Dawson – need sewer upgrades
Housing & Neighborhoods	Cost of ownership is low, SR 25, amount of land	Need more sidewalks and gutters, community position for developments
Economic Development	Central location, airport – new runway, building stock with rail access, workforce development,	Need more retail, distribution center, old mining activities reduce land use, AIT program - NSF
Character	Nice areas, friendly folks	Need better connections, gateways, streetscapes, wayfinding
Parks & Open Space	Dawson Springs	Trails, more parks, large-scape park with 50 mile loop trail, connected parks, reclaimed mines, connect to regional

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING #2- November 19, 2013

The second Planning Committee meeting discussed input received at the first round of public meetings and the first Planning Committee meeting. It also presented the draft vision, goals and objectives. The majority of the meeting consisted of a working session to refine the vision, goals and objectives.

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING #3- January 16, 2014

The third meeting consisted of reviewing all the draft elements of the plan. Each element of the plan was discussed in detail and comments were recorded for future revisions to be made. Elements reviewed and discussed included:

- 1) Existing Land Use
- 2) Future Land Use & Expansion Areas
- 3) Transportation
- 4) Facilities & Utilities
- 5) Economic Development
- 6) Housing & Neighborhoods
- 7) Community Identity
- 8) Parks & Open Space
- 9) Environmental



Photo: Planning Committee Meeting

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING #4- July 17, 2014

The final Planning Committee meeting was focused on reviewing the draft plan including the action steps. Revisions were discussed and made prior to the adoption process.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUPS

The key persons from departments within the local governments and organizations were interviewed individually and in focus groups for input from an individual perspective or on a specific issue during the day of October 29, 2013.



Photo: Speaking with Focus Group

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Local Government

- Mayor of Dawson Springs – Jenny Sewell
- Mayor of Earlington – Mike Seiber
- Mayor of Hanson – Charles Young
- Mayor of Madisonville – David Jackson
- Mayor of Mortons Gap – Frank Stafford
- Hopkins County Judge Executive – Donald E. Carroll
- Madisonville Zoning Administrator – Debbie Todd

Community Members

- Hanson business owner – Teresa Anthony

FOCUS GROUPS

Public Safety

- Hopkins County Fire Chief – Darwin Rideout
- Hopkins County Sheriff – Jeremy Crack
- Hopkins County EMA – Frank Wright
- Hopkins County EMA – Nick Bailey
- City of Madisonville Police Department – Wade Williams
- Medical Center Ambulance Service – Jon Luck
- City of Madisonville Fire Department – Ray Wyatt
- City of Madisonville Fire Department – Steven K. Stohltz

Transportation

- Hopkins County Schools – Marci D. Cox
- KYTC District 2 – Kevin McClearn
- City of Madisonville Airport Board – Dr. Joseph E. Roe
- City of Madisonville – Bill Jackson
- Pennyriple Area Development District – Craig Morris

PUBLIC MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

Community feedback is essential to making a plan relevant to the local conditions of Hopkins County. Not only do these meetings give an opportunity for new ideas and issues to be expressed and considered, but they also serve the purpose of confirming and reviewing previous input. Two rounds of public meetings were held during the planning process.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1, #2, #3 - October 28, 29, Nov. 7, 2013

Participants attending these public workshops were given a short overview presentation on the county's existing conditions followed by three exercises to gain feedback.

1) Future Land Uses

Participants were asked to use markers to color a map of Hopkins County according to where they thought each land use should be located in the future

2) What's the most important Issue?

This exercise asked individual participants to list what they considered to be the most important and pressing issue for each plan element.

- Land Use
 - Identify new growth and development areas
 - Preservation of Agricultural land
 - Commercial & Industrial development
 - New residential
- Transportation
 - Shuttle system
 - Sidewalk improvements
 - Road improvements
 - Traffic congestion
 - Address the impacts of I-69
- Utilities & Public Facilities
 - Sewer and water capacity upgrades and maintenance plan
 - Expand existing service into county
 - Sports Complex & Library
- Environmental
 - Underground Mine Lands
 - Development in the Floodplain
 - Water pollution
 - Wetland management
- Economic Development
 - Industrial / Commercial job growth
 - Diversify employers
- Housing & Neighborhoods
 - Increase rental properties
 - New single family residential
 - Renovate deteriorating homes
 - Neighborhoods Signage
- Community Branding & Identity
 - Develop entry point branding
 - Focus on tourism
 - Address signage from I-69
- Parks & Recreation
 - Connect the existing parks with neighborhoods
 - More park land
 - More biking and walking paths

3) Extra, Extra, Read All About It!

A mock front page of a newspaper 20 years in the future was presented and participants were asked to write the headlines, draw pictures or author stories as if they were the newspaper editor. A sample of responses to the mock newspaper headlines include:

Hopkins County Success: The County continues to grow as a...

- Major industry attractor, now home to many major factories thanks in part to I-69.
- A components supply hub
- Leading healthcare provider
- A regional education leader
- Outdoor tourism destination
- Retirement Community
- Alternative to busy city living
- Largest shopping destination in Western KY

Top rated jobs & industries in Hopkins County continue to be...

- School System
- Healthcare
- Industrial
- Utility Provider
- Tourism and Recreation Sites
- Commercial
- Mining

Focus on Hopkins County: New Highlights in the Community over the Past 20 years...

- New park land opens on reclaimed underground mine lands
- Distribution centers moves in
- Community College graduating local business owners
- New Hospital facilities open
- Parks and neighborhoods more connected by new greenways and trails
- Hopkins County Industrial Park opens
- Beautification and green space preservation efforts continue
- New shopping and entertainment complex opens



Photo: Public Open House

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1 & #2 – March 6, 2014

The first meeting was held as an open house during the day with a focus on receiving civic organization feedback. Participants could discuss issues one-on-one with HCJPC staff and the consulting team. Multiple large format boards with the vision & goals and all plan elements were displayed with questionnaires for feedback.



Figure: Public Open House setup

That evening a second meeting was held again as an open house focused on general public input. Participants were participants could discuss issues one-on-one with HCJPC staff and the consultant team. Multiple large format boards with the vision & goals and all plan elements were displayed with questionnaires available for feedback. Elements reviewed and discussed included:

- 1) Vision & Goals
- 2) Existing Land Use
- 3) Future Land Use: Expansion Areas
- 4) Future Land Use: Dawson Springs
- 5) Future Land Use: Earlington
- 6) Future Land Use: Hanson
- 7) Future Land Use: Madisonville
- 8) Future Land Use: Mortons Gap
- 9) Expansion Areas
- 10) Transportation: Existing & Proposed
- 11) Facilities & Utilities: Existing & Proposed
- 12) Economic Development
- 13) Housing & Neighborhoods
- 14) Community Identity
- 15) Parks & Open Space
- 16) Environmental

OTHER PUBLIC OUTREACH

Other public outreach methods were used to accompany the community input gathered through traditional means. Three methods, one in-person and two online, were utilized in Hopkins County. A “Meeting in a Box” toolkit developed by the consultant was given to the community, allowing community lead meetings to take place. The two online methods including using the HCJPC website and administering an online survey.

MEETING IN A BOX

The “Meeting in a Box” toolkit facilitated additional public input through seven additional meetings. A set of presentations, facilitator guides and participant exercises were developed for use in multiple group meetings with the public and community interest groups. Meetings were facilitated with the Earlington Civic Club, Lions Club, Realtor Association, TRC (environmental permitting), Rotary Club, Kiwanis, and Farm City.

WEBSITE

The public was also kept informed of the current status of the planning process via the HCJPC website (www.HopkinsCountyPlanning.org). A draft of the plan was also available online for public review.

Hopkins County Joint Planning Commission

office (270) 825-4457
fax (270) 825-5019

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You can help by completing this survey. Click [SURVEY LINK](#) to continue...

Do you have ideas for how Hopkins County should grow? Where should new development be located? Are there issues relating to transportation, land use or housing in Hopkins County? The County needs your help! Hopkins County is currently working on a comprehensive plan that will identify goals, policies and action steps to guide development and growth for the next 20 years.

The comprehensive plan is driven by public input and the planning commission needs your ideas, comments and feedback. They need Hopkins County residents, business owners, workers and visitors to help identify issues and tell us what you would like to see in the future. Please come and share your ideas during one of three public workshops.

- October 28, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
Hopkins County Central High School (6625 Hopkinsville Road)
- October 29, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
Madisonville North Hopkins High School (4515 Hanson Road)
- November 7, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
Dawson Springs High School - Hard Work Cafe (317 Eli Street)

[Comprehensive Plan Flyer](#)

Figure: Screenshot of the HCJPC website news notification website

ONLINE SURVEY

An online survey developed to gain insight into the strengths and needs of the county. In total, 517 responses were submitted. A summary of the responses are summarized below.

Where do you live?	Responses	Percent
Madisonville	311	60%
Hopkins County (not within a city)	45	9%
Dawson Springs	36	7%
Hanson	33	6%
Manitou / Nebo	23	4%
Other	23	4%
Nortonville	15	3%
Mortons Gap	10	2%
Earlington	9	2%
White Plains	7	1%
St. Charles	5	1%

Where do you work?	Responses	Percent
Madisonville	331	64%
Do not work	97	19%
Outside Hopkins County	27	5%
Hopkins County (not within a city)	21	4%
Dawson Springs	12	2%
Hanson	8	2%
Earlington	6	1%
Manitou / Nebo	5	1%
Mortons Gap	3	<1%
Nortonville	3	<1%
White Plains	1	<1%
St. Charles	0	0%

What is your primary reason for living in Hopkins County?	Responses	Percent
Native / Family Ties	345	72%
Proximity to Job	116	24%
Quality of Life	40	8%
Rural lifestyle	39	8%
Cost of Living	16	3%
Good School System	12	3%
Low Taxes	5	1%

What three words you would use to describe Hopkins County to someone else?

- Friendly
- Small Town / Close Knit / Rural
- Safe / Low Crime
- Location

- Quiet / Peaceful
- Family / Family Ties
- Coal / Agriculture
- Great People / Caring
- Lack of Entertainment / Restaurants / Activities

What percentage of your entertainment (movies, social activities, eating out) spending is done in Hopkins County?	Responses	Percent
More than 60 percent	157	31%
40 to 60 percent	130	25%
20 to 40 percent	97	19%
10 to 20 percent	71	14%
Less than 10 percent	58	11%

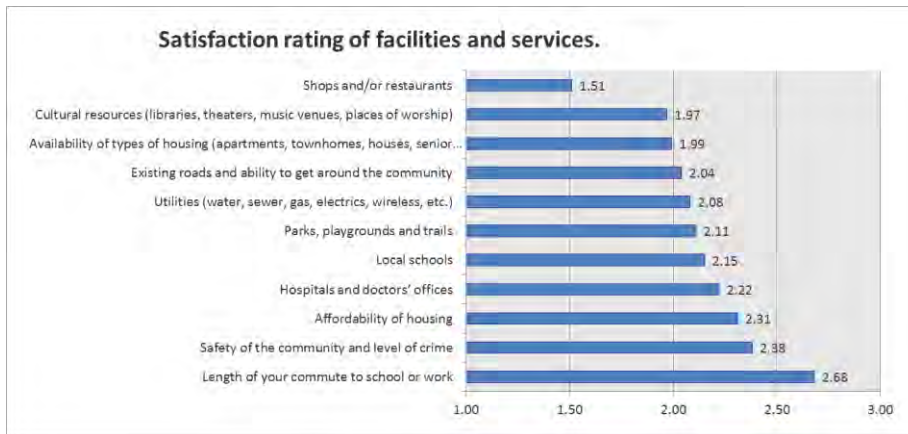
What percentage of your major purchases (clothing, furniture, appliances, home improvement) is done in Hopkins County?	Responses	Percent
More than 60 percent	139	27%
40 to 60 percent	124	24%
20 to 40 percent	103	20%
10 to 20 percent	69	13%
Less than 10 percent	77	15%

The most important issue facing Hopkins County is...	Responses	Percent
Jobs	160	36%
Government	74	17%
Business Attraction / Expansion	72	16%
Education	37	8%
Natural Resources	29	6%
Identity	23	5%
Public Healthy	22	5%
Retail	15	3%
Entertainment / Community Activities	15	3%

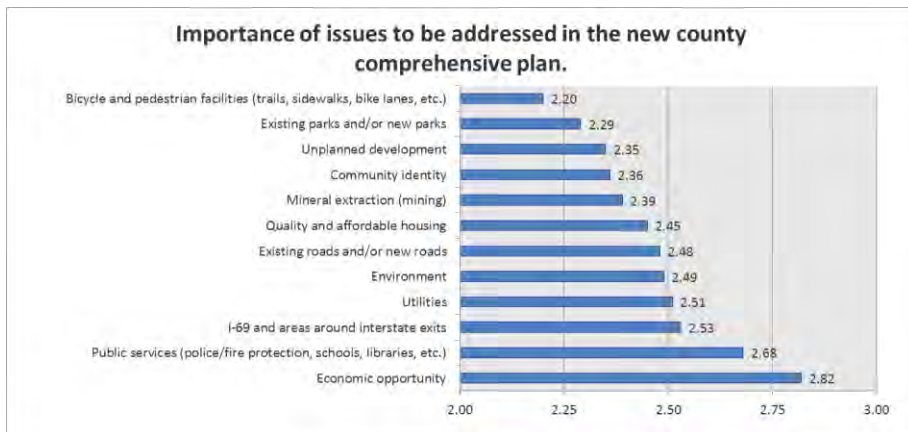
Hopkins County's greatest strength/asset is...	Responses	Percent
People	91	27%
Location	47	14%
Identity	41	12%
Natural Resources	37	11%
Education	29	8%
Transportation	23	7%
Community Partnerships	23	7%
Community Facilities / Services	19	6%
Workforce	16	5%
Medical	16	5%

If you could build one thing in Hopkins County, it would be...	Responses	Percent
Retail (Shops/Mall)	68	22%
Dining	41	13%
Sports Facility	41	13%
Industry	38	12%
Library	34	11%
Educational Facilities	21	7%
Youth Facilities	21	7%
Entertainment Facilities	19	6%
Transportation	15	5%
Trails / Greenway	10	3%

Rate your satisfaction with the following within Hopkins County: (1 – Not Satisfied; 2 – Somewhat Satisfied; 3 – Very Satisfied)



Do you see the following as issues of concern in Hopkins County? How important do you feel it is for the new county comprehensive plan to address each of the following? (1 – Not Satisfied; 2 – Somewhat Satisfied; 3 – Very Satisfied)



Please give us any other comments about the future growth and development of Hopkins County!

- Improve Jobs / Employment / Industry
- More Shopping / Restaurants
- Need Education / Library
- Importance of Long-Term Planning
- Need Unity / Work Together
- Build upon Medical Care / Facilities

PUBLIC ACCESS TELEVISION

A one-hour interview with the consultant team was televised on local public access television in which the plans elements and vision & goals were discussed.

ADOPTION HEARINGS

The Hopkins County Joint Planning Commission held a working session with each member community to review and revise the Plan goals and objectives. Following this, a public hearing for adoption was held before each governing body to adopt the goals and objectives according to KRS 100 on the following dates:

- Hopkins County Joint Planning Commission – April 24, 2014
- Hopkins County Fiscal Court – June 24, 2014;
- City of Dawson Springs – June 16, 2014;
- City of Earlington – June 10, 2014;
- City of Hanson – June 23, 2014;
- City of Madisonville – June 16, 2014;
- City of Mortons Gap – June 4, 2014.

A public hearing to adopt the plan elements was held before the Hopkins County Joint Planning Commission on October 23, 2014.