



Public Works
600 Scott Boulevard
South Hutchinson, Kansas 67505
620-694-2976
Don Brittain, Director

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will commence at the Reno County Public Works Facility located at 600 Scott Boulevard, S. Hutchinson, KS 67505 commencing at **4:30 pm on Thursday, November 18, 2021.**

At the above time and place, the Reno County Planning Commission will consider **Case Number 2021-12**, a request to amend the November 13, 2018, adopted Reno County, Kansas Comprehensive Plan by updating portions of Chapter 7 and 9 related to wind energy conversion systems under the titles of *Residential Land Uses, Other Special Land Uses, and Goals for Housing, Objective #7.*

The text amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are available for inspection Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Reno County Public Works Facility located at 600 Scott Blvd., South Hutchinson, KS 67505 and can be reviewed online at www.renogov.org under County Spotlights.

All interested parties may appear and be heard at the public hearing listed above. Parties with questions pertaining to the text amendments, or who wish to view the case file, or who may need special assistance may contact the Reno County Public Works Department - Planning & Zoning Division at 620-694-2978. Written comments may be submitted to the address noticed above or by email to mark.vonachen@renogov.org. The public hearing, once commenced, may be continued by the Planning Commission to a later date and time if deemed necessary.

Mark Vonachen, Secretary
Reno County Planning Commission

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

The Residential Land Use designation is considered primarily for single-family residential uses and should generally be confined to the immediate environs surrounding many of the cities within the County, as well as designated areas around Cheney Reservoir and areas within the northeast and southeast quadrants in the County. As previously noted, other residential development patterns within Reno County have been disjointed and very scattered throughout the years and continue to be so. This practice has resulted in an intermingling of residential and agricultural land uses that present the potential for the problems discussed earlier in this Chapter.

The underlying planning principles provide for the provision of housing opportunities which promote a continuation of a high quality of life and the creation of housing developments to encourage a healthy living environment in the rural areas without inappropriately encroaching into agricultural areas or threats from other non-agricultural land uses. People who invest in housing within the rural areas of Reno County should be afforded protections from outside impacts that might reduce the value of those investments through a judicious application of appropriate Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, as well as other locally adopted codes and standards. Proposals for housing at a density higher than single-family are not considered suitable for the rural areas and should be strongly encouraged to locate within the incorporated cities.

COMMERCIAL LAND USES

The County's existing Commercial Land Uses are shown on Figure 31 and do not comprise a large number of properties within the unincorporated areas. The goals within this plan should not be construed as prohibiting commercial development within the rural areas of Reno County. To the contrary, many commercial activities are often more appropriately located in the rural areas, such as quarries, landfills, salvage yards, bulk agricultural and petroleum products, and the like. Within the Zoning Regulations, commercial uses are considered Conditional Uses and require separate approval.

The underlying planning principles provide for the provision of commercial uses that are appropriate for the location and demands of the individual project. Also, the desire is to integrate the commercial uses within the community in a manner to provide the highest level of accessibility to the general populace with the least amount of development impact. Hence, the Plan intends to encourage the commercial development only in those areas where a combination of transportation services and other supporting public services exist or can be reasonably provided. As such, commercial development should be targeted to the primary road system within the County and near the incorporated cities.

Occasionally, commercial uses are very individualized and require the approval of a conditional use permit for its specific location. This is usually because a proprietor wishes to conduct the business at their "home," and the use does not qualify as a "home occupation" under the Zoning Regulations. The present regulatory process to consider these locational uses is deemed appropriate, and the process should not change. These have been, and will continue to be; a case-by-case issue decided based on the conditions present in each request.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

Industrial Land Uses are treated in the same manner as commercial land uses. Again, these uses are not shown in a "generalized" manner on a standard "Future Land Use Map" due to the fact the zoning regulations do not intend to tie these non-residential uses to any specific area within Reno County. The underlying planning principles provide for the provision of industrial uses the same as for commercial uses and should be located and considered under the same criteria.

MAJOR ROAD PLAN

The major roads within the planning area will remain the state and federal highways, and all of the section-line roads. The classification of these roads is established by the various governmental units responsible for the operation and maintenance of their respective roads. The purpose of making all these roads "major roads" is to assure the County the ability to maintain appropriate setbacks of new construction to protect the future right-of-way needs of those roads for future uses.

OTHER SPECIAL LAND USES

The most significant “other special land uses” Reno County may face in the future are proposals for the construction of large “Wind Energy Conversion Systems,” commonly known as “wind farms.” The location of these facilities should be left to the open marketplace and investment decisions of the developers of such systems to determine the most acceptable locations, with the County retaining the final decision through the conditional use permit approval process. These special land uses are typically consistent with all other “non-agricultural” and “non-residential” land use decisions under the Zoning Regulations.

The anticipated ongoing changes in technology, coupled with policy changes at the state and federal level, will dictate the future development of these systems more than anything that could be done at the local level; short of a “prohibition” of the development of such facilities. The County may seek an expanded study of the potential impacts these facilities could impose on any area of Reno County, and whether to adopt additional zoning standards for their management or prohibition. Prohibition may be necessary to protect the development of future urban areas and existing and future suburban area population bases, particularly in Eastern Reno County. The K-96 Corridor may also be preserved for future urban development with a prohibition. The process to evaluate an application for a Conditional Use Permit for a Wind Energy Conversion system could take months to complete, and a potential moratorium on the development of wind farms could be considered by the County. The same general policies regarding any potential “commercial solar energy systems” or “solar panel farms” should apply as noted for the wind farms above.

As previously stated, some heavy commercial and industrial uses, such as quarries, salvage yards, and similar projects, are more appropriately located in rural areas and away from concentrations of people in residential neighborhoods or incorporated cities. The establishment of these activities require a conditional use permit under the present Reno County Zoning Regulations, and no change to that policy is proposed at this time.

CONCLUSION

While the Plan does not create a traditional “Future Land Use Plan Map” to show where new development is expected to occur, the intent of this Plan is to allow the existing practice of using conditional use permit to determine the appropriateness of projects within the rural areas of Reno County. The pace and priority of when and where new development will occur will be dictated more by the open marketplace and the risks taken by private investors and developers in the coming years. The role of Reno County will remain one of seeking opportunities to assure that new developments occur to the benefit of all affected property owners.

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The most significant planning implication is the creation of expanded tools to address the rural lot creation that does not result in loss of support for the value of the land management tools of the land use regulations. This is to protect the public interests and avoid potential costs in the future.

- **OBJECTIVE 6:** Recognize the use of manufactured homes as an affordable housing solution for many people and seek to locate these units in appropriate locations within the County. By law, zoning regulations will accommodate the location of residential-designed manufactured homes throughout the County. The placement of manufactured homes not meeting the residential-designed standards should be sited within established manufactured home parks or on suitable sites in the rural areas.

TIME FRAME: On-going.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES: Reno County, all cities, realty companies, lenders, builders and developers.

- **OBJECTIVE 7:** Promote low-density rural housing within the Reno County. Seek and add zoning protections from incompatible land uses for residential development within the high-growth areas in the northeast and southeast quadrants of the County and encourage properly designed rural subdivisions that are supported by adequate infrastructure for residential projects with higher densities and multiple lots.

TIME FRAME: On-going.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES: Reno County.

- **OBJECTIVE 8:** Encourage the use and limited expansion of existing rural water districts and sewer districts where capacity exists.

TIME FRAME: On-going.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES: Reno County.

- **OBJECTIVE 9:** Discourage the development of any new water or sanitary sewer improvement districts in the County.

TIME FRAME: On-going.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES: Reno County.

- **OBJECTIVE 10:** Seek to turn the management of The Highlands water and sewer districts to the City.

TIME FRAME: On-going.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES: Reno County and the City of The Highlands.

GOAL FOR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 1: PROVIDE AN EFFICIENT AND SAFE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM DESIGNED TO MOVE PEOPLE AND GOODS WITHIN AND AROUND THE COUNTY.

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Promote improvement to traffic flows within and through the County by proper use and development of all the road types.

TIME FRAME: On-going.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES: Reno County.

- **OBJECTIVE 2:** Promote the development and use of alternative modes of individual and mass transportation and the infrastructure necessary to support the same within the County.

TIME FRAME: On-going.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES: Reno County, all cities, Kansas Department of Transportation.