

# Scott County Comprehensive Plan

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## **CHAPTER 2: VISION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES**

Within Scott County, there is overwhelming support for farmland preservation in concert with an emphasis for land development to be located within municipalities. A Vision Statement has been formulated to capture the future view Scott County residents expressed through the public input process and in working with the Technical and Advisory Committees as well as the Planning Commission. A vision is a clear statement of what a county wants to become.

*“Scott County will be distinguished as a governmental leader by protecting its farming heritage and preserving its agricultural land within the unincorporated areas, by protecting its critical resource areas and promoting economic vitality within the County, and by fostering intergovernmental cooperation and applying well-defined land use policies.”*

### **County Goals**

Goals articulate this vision by setting the direction for Scott County as it changes over time. The Scott County land use goals are to:

- **Protect and conserve the natural, human, and economic resources** which are the basis of the agricultural economy and rural lifestyle of the Scott County.
- **Ensure orderly and efficient growth** of residential, commercial, industrial, public, and semi-public land uses while maintaining the general welfare of County residents.
- **Ensure a decent home and suitable living environment** for all families, present and future, living in Scott County.
- **Encourage cooperation and communication** among the County, other units of local government, and the general public to improve human development, economic development, and ecological preservation.

### **Land Use Objectives**

Objectives provide the framework to reach the county goals. For Scott County, the land use objectives work to ensure orderly and efficient growth while balancing the welfare of its residents.

**Objective 1.** Encourage the majority of future growth to occur within the boundaries of existing cities where adequate public services can be provided.

**Objective 2.** Encourage growth beyond municipal boundaries to locate on marginal agricultural and stable environmental land in locations identified by the Future Land Use Map.

**Objective 3.** Discourage development from locating on productive agricultural soils and other agricultural area when in conflict with efficient farming practices.

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**Objective 4.** Encourage the County and local governments to develop mutual agreements on preferred patterns of development, thereby enabling jurisdictions to operate with complementary growth policies.

**Objective 5.** Maintain a Future Land Use Map to graphically illustrate where the general areas for residential, commercial and industrial development within the unincorporated areas of Scott County may be appropriate and where areas are expected to be preserved for farmland, conservation or natural areas or recreation.

**Objective 6.** Review large scale industrial development opportunities by addressing such developments with separate policies. The purpose of these policies would be to establish guidelines in order to both take advantage of the significant economic benefits such developments would create for Scott County and the Quad Cities region. But also to address and minimize the significant environmental and public infrastructure impacts such developments also could be anticipated to create.

## ***Land Use Policies***

These objectives will be supported by specific land use policies. These policies will be used to evaluate land development decisions in Scott County and weigh whether changes are consistent with the vision, goals and objectives.

- Scott County recognizes and accepts that normal agricultural and environmental nuisances occur with rural living.
- While Scott County encourages development to locate within cities, the following are guidelines for reviewing proposed new development in the rural unincorporated area of the county:
  - in compliance with the adopted Future Land Use Map
  - on marginal or poor agricultural land
  - with access to adequately constructed paved roads
  - where public and/or private facilities and services are present or planned, including water, sanitary sewer systems, schools and parks; and in areas near existing employment centers and commercial areas, to discourage sprawling and unplanned scattered development
  - where it is least disruptive of existing agricultural activities
  - in areas of stable environmental resources
  - where it is sufficiently buffered from other less intensive land uses
  - where it can be shown that there is a recognized need for such development
  - where it can be developed in an efficient and compact manner
  - where the development will be supportive of energy conservation

## **Exception to address large scale industrial development opportunities**

- While Scott County anticipates that the majority of new industrial development will locate within the cities or be reviewed under the above established guidelines. Scott County also recognizes that there are rare opportunities for large scale industrial

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development for which the size and scope of the projected positive economic impact on the Quad Cities region outweigh the benefit of preserving prime farm land on which such a development would locate. Such large scale industrial developments shall be reviewed under the following considerations:

- where it can be shown that there is a recognized need for such development to locate outside of city limits in unincorporated Scott County
  - when adequate site design and technical information has been submitted and reviewed to address and limit the impacts of the development on the adjacent and surrounding property
  - where there is adequate road and highway and/or rail to handle the existing and anticipated additional traffic such development would generate or the resources to upgrade those facilities to meet those needs
  - where there is adequate infrastructure for utilities to serve the needs of such a development or the resources to upgrade those facilities to meet those needs
  - where the economic benefits to the Quad Cities region due to the size of development, the type and number of jobs created, the amount of capital investment and other factors are deemed significant enough that the project merits approval under these guidelines.
  - While it is difficult to predict the nature and scope of such large scale industrial development, these policies are intended for such opportunities that would require a significant amount of land for both the development and buffer areas, the jobs created would be high quality, and the majority at or above 100% of the laborshed wage, the capital investment would result in a 2.5% or greater increase in the taxable value of industrial land in Scott County or any combination of one or more of these factors.
- Scott County does not intend for these considerations to be used to allow smaller scale commercial or industrial developments. Such developments would continue to be reviewed under the established guidelines for such land uses.

The County will take these general land use policies and apply more specific criteria as part of the land development review process. Refer to Chapter 10 Strategies for Implementation on these suggested revisions or clarifications.

## ***Other Objectives in Scott County***

Although the primary emphasis of this Comprehensive Plan is to guide how land will be utilized in Scott County, there are components of a comprehensive plan that address other aspects of county facilities and services in addition to land use. The following goals and objectives provide a framework for decision-making by Scott County officials for these other aspects of county governance.

## ***Environmental Objectives***

These objectives work to protect and conserve the natural, human and economic resources that are the basis for the County's physical setting.

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**Objective 1.** Discourage new development on soil types with severe constraints or over vulnerable geologic areas to protect water supplies and to ensure proper wastewater treatment. The development must also comply with sedimentation and soil erosion control regulations.

**Objective 2.** Encourage that all new developments be designed to create a minimum disturbance to natural drainage patterns, natural landscape, wildlife and habitat, vegetation, and the ability of the land to absorb rainfall and prevent erosion.

**Objective 3.** Ensure that all new developments address storm water retention capacity displaced by that development. Whenever possible, retention areas should be set aside for recreational use.

**Objective 4.** Develop risk assessment for vulnerable public facilities related to natural and man-made hazards and plan for reducing these potential unintentional and intentional risks.

## ***Parks, Open Space and Conservation Area Objectives***

Combining the second and third county goals, these objectives work to ensure that existing and future parks, open space and conservation areas and programming for these areas are meeting the needs of the residents and offer opportunities for visitors to the county.

**Objective 1.** Utilize the Conservation Board strategic plan to guide maintenance and development initiatives for County parks and conservation areas.

**Objective 2.** Encourage new trends in recreational and physical activity within the Scott County.

**Objective 3.** Encourage open space for active or passive recreation within residential subdivisions.

**Objective 4.** Work cooperatively with other jurisdictions on issues related to a countywide trail plan.

## ***Transportation Objectives***

To facilitate orderly and efficient growth, an effective and safe transportation network is needed. It should encourage a variety of modes of transportation to make possible the movement of goods and people.

**Objective 1.** Provide a clear traffic hierarchy of arterial, collector and minor streets to connect existing areas to new developments.

**Objective 2.** Maintain the existing roadways to ensure good condition and safety. Improve street system by upgrading existing roads in accordance with County Engineer Criteria.

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## ***Other Facilities/Services Objectives***

The following objectives serve goals three and four by addressing a suitable living environment and encouraging cooperation and communication with other jurisdictions that may provide infrastructure or services to new developments in unincorporated Scott County.

**Objective 1.** Ensure proper maintenance of existing county facilities.

**Objective 2.** Assure that the existing facilities and services are not burdened by new development.

**Objective 3.** Promote compliance of rural addressing standards for all rural residences to ensure that emergency service providers are able to locate homes in an efficient manner.

**Objective 4.** Collaborate with emergency service providers to establish standards regarding water supply and availability with which future developments must comply.

## ***Administration Objectives***

Operating county facilities and services in an accountable manner and encouraging positive public relations with residents and other organizations work to support all four county goals.

**Objective 1.** Maintain and review administrative, management and personnel capacity for effective support and implementation of county activities.

**Objective 2.** Prepare and maintain an annual budget that implements county operations in a cost effective manner.

**Objective 3.** Encourage public involvement in county activities and seek ways to involve residents in policy-making and decisions on land use, county facilities and services.

**Objective 4.** Pursue a variety of revenue sources and/or cooperative arrangements with other agencies/governments to offset expenditures including but not limited to grants, user and impact fees, tax increment financing, development rights transfers, joint purchasing, mutual aid or equipment use, etc. and examine ways to reduce costs and increase fund balances for county facilities and services.

**Objective 5.** Maintain communication with local, state and federal governments in Scott County through conversations, meetings, associations, memberships or other forums that promote cooperation and effective county operations.

## ***Economic Development Objective***

Objectives for economic development reinforce all four county goals to ensure orderly and efficient growth, protecting resources and assets, ensuring suitable living and encouraged cooperation and communication among development leaders.

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**Objective 1.** Promote a diverse regional economy and quality of life opportunities.

**Objective 2.** Enhance public-private partnerships to address economic development in the region.

**Objective 3.** Ensure appropriate infrastructure to support business retention and expansion.

**Objective 4.** Support programs that invest in the human capital through education, mental health and training opportunities.

## ***Industrial Development Objective***

These objectives for industrial development recognize the cooperative nature of attracting such development to the Quad Cities region. Scott County will continue its policies of preservation of prime land and encouraging development to occur within the established cities. Industrial development of significant size and economic impact in the unincorporated areas could be an exception to these guidelines and would be reviewed using the objectives established as separate and distinct land use policies for such industrial development.

**Objective 1.** Work in cooperation with other local governments and business attraction organizations to create and maintain a cultural and business climate in the Quad Cities region to retain and attract primary jobs and industries.

**Objective 2.** Periodically review the Future Land Use Map to identify areas in proximity to major highways and interstates that would be appropriate for industrial developments.

**Objective 3.** Amend Zoning Ordinance to establish a large scale industrial floating zone to allow for consideration of such development that would be reviewed under the land use guidelines for such large scale industrial developments.