

Horizon 2020 – Environmental Chapter (Chapter 16)

Expanded Outline with future discussion topics

*(Items in **purple** are public comments that resulted from the November 19, 2008 Planning Commission meeting that staff and the CPC will take into consideration as the chapter is drafted. Draft language is in Black)*

Section I: Overview and Strategies

Overview:

Douglas County has a rich and valuable environmental heritage that is characterized by a variety of environmental and natural conditions. Prairies, rivers, forests, wetlands, and other natural areas provide scenic beauty, recreation, natural habitats, and opportunities for interpretation and education. Natural areas are an important component of the quality of life for residents and the need for protection of these natural areas is an important component in planning for growth and development in Douglas County.

- mention the intrinsic value of certain natural conditions in providing ecosystem services or in providing guidance for the relative suitability of different kinds of development. Environmental quality and suitability is quantifiable, and with a research institute like KU on the hill, planning and development decisions can be based on scientific information. Ideally, we could and would incorporate environmental functioning in all planning efforts and embrace land development that maintains or improves environmental functioning.
- Add “stream corridors” at the beginning list of the 2nd sentence
- Add “high quality agricultural land” to beginning of 2nd sentence
- Add “sustainable food supplies” to 2nd part of 2nd sentence

In addition to natural areas, other important environmental facets contribute to the overall health of the environment and community. Sustainable, low-impact development is recognized as an ever increasing and important part of an environmental preservation plan. Air quality, waste management, and resource management all contribute to protecting the health of our environment, as well as the personal health of the residents of Douglas County.

- make sure to establish a connection between environmental health and economic health
- add clean water to the list at the beginning of the last sentence
- **Alternate Overview language suggested:** "Douglas County has a rich and valuable environmental heritage replete with rivers, forests, wetlands, a few scattered virgin prairies, and other natural areas. Coupled with vast acreage of rich farmland, Douglas County boasts scenic beauty, recreation opportunities, as well as natural habitats for study and appreciation. All these natural resources greatly enhance the quality of life for Douglas County residents. The need to protect them is an important component in planning for growth and development in Douglas County. While land development is important to economic vitality, natural resources and climate protection are increasingly recognized as equally important to the health and vitality of the community and must be protected for future generations."

Strategies:

Consider the impact upon environmental and natural resources in all planning efforts, including balancing private land rights, land development, and environmental considerations.

- Though this portion of the document is a broad brush stroke, use of the word "consider" might be counterproductive in setting up definable goals, policies, decision-making standards, and monitoring later. It may seem like a small gesture, but if the intention of the Strategies Section is to define ways in which the values outlined in the Overview are included in planning, a word stronger than "consider" might be appropriate. Some suggestions: account for impacts, include quantifiable impacts.
- Again, it might seem small but use of the phrase "environmental considerations" rather than "environmental quality", "ecosystem functioning", or "ecosystem services maintenance" might hamstring later efforts to quantify the existing conditions and forecasted future outcomes used in decision making.
- Make sure there really is a true balance between land development and environmental considerations
- **Alternate Language suggested for first strategy:** "Consider the impact upon environmental and natural resources in all planning efforts,

including balancing the need for land development with reduction in green house gas emissions as outlined in the City's Climate Protection Plan"

Promote sustainable and efficient management of water, land and habitat resources.

- Though it would be inappropriate to do so here, at some point the terms "sustainable" and "sustainability" will have to be defined. They can be nebulous terms meaning many different things when discussing environmental, social, and economic indicators. In the interest of defining specific and explicit goals, use of the word might want to be avoided, reduced, or buttressed with strong definitions.)
- Sustainable is too broad a term.
- Please define sustainable.

Establish effective incentives for natural resource preservation, sustainable development and waste management.

- **Add to end of third strategy: in compliance with the City Climate Protection Plan**

Develop educational programs to foster community awareness of and support for the protection and enhancement of natural areas, efficient use of natural resources and waste management.

Encourage environmental policies and programs to secure the communities future economic, ecological and human health.

- Change "social health" to "human health" **(Complete)**

Section II: General Information (General description of topics covered listed below under goals, species identification, area identification, definitions, etc.)

Section III: Goals

Goal 1: Water Resources and Management

Policy 1.1 Watershed

Policy 1.2 Surface Rivers, Streams, Creeks, and Lakes

Policy 1.3 Wetlands

Policy 1.4 Sub-surface Water Resources

Policy 1.5 Floodplain

Policy 1.6 Stormwater Management

Public Comment Topics for Consideration:

- Add stream corridors as a sub-topic
- Protect drainageways
- Protect Watersheds
- Watersheds and their importance as a planning element
- Split stormwater management into water quantity and water quality
- Establish Stream Buffers

Goal 2: Land Resources and Management

Policy 2.1 Soil

- a. Topography and Slope
- b. Prime Agricultural Farmland

Policy 2.2 Woodlands

Policy 2.3 Native Prairie

Policy 2.4 Natural Habitats (Plants and Animals)

- a. Wildlife Corridors
- b. Endangered Species

Policy 2.5 Scenic Vistas

Policy 2.6 Open space

Public Comment Topics for Consideration:

- Preserve steep slopes
- Preserve forests
- Add Riparian areas
- Endangered species should be called sensitive species
- Establish local and regional food supply
- Think from an agricultural prospective

Goal 3: Air Resources and Management

Policy 3.1 Ambient Air Quality

Policy 3.2 Indoor Air Quality

Public Comment Topics for Consideration:

- Pollution from coal plants
- Climate Change
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Address indoor air quality
- Split into climate change or global warming and air pollution
- Split by ambient air quality and indoor air quality **(Complete)**

Goal 4: Resource Management

Policy 4.1 Resource Management

- a. Natural Resources
- b. Conservation of energy, water and other natural resources

Public Comment Topics for Consideration:

- Split into Resource and Waste Management into two goals **(Complete)**
- Water irrigation – No new regulations, or no onerous regulations
- Address both the Mayer's Climate Protection Task Force and the Peak Oil Task Force in the chapter
- An increase in renewable energy will lead to an increase in local jobs

Goal 5: Waste Management

Policy 5.1 Reduction, Reuse, Recycling, and Disposal

- a. Solid Waste Management
- b. Hazardous Waste Management

Public Comment Topics for Consideration:

- Split into source reduction and waste diversion
- Breakdown the types of recycling

Goal 6: Human and Built Environment

Policy 6.1 Human Environment

- a. Pollution (Noise, Light)
- b. Healthy and Active Living

Policy 6.2 Sustainable Development

- a. Transportation and Transit
- b. Green Building

Public Comment Topics for Consideration:

- Don't mention specific "Green building" programs by name , i.e. LEED **(Complete)**
- add to 6.1 b "healthy and active living" **(Complete)**
- Incentivize green building, but don't mandate it
- Look into energy efficiency
- Look at the NHBA Green Home program
- TDR's – Transfer of Development Right's
- Provide a simple way for landowners to opt out of future development
- Encourage individual innovation in sustainable living
- Don't allow land to be disturbed or fill added before all development is ready to proceed

Goal 7: Education and Outreach

Policy 7.1 Public Education and Outreach

Policy 7.2 Elected Official's Education

Public Comment Topics for Consideration:

- Either add policies to also provide education to the schools, industries and businesses, or lump them all under one policy.

Misc. Public Comment Topics on Outline for Future Consideration:

- Reference the business Community
- Change perception on unbuilt environment (can be farmground)
- Balance economic issues with environmental issues
- Please keep personal property rights in mind and do not enact further new regulations
- Strong section on sustainability: ensuring sources of food and water for future generations, sustainable technology, sustainable agriculture and future food production