

3.0 Vision & Goals

The adage, “We are limited, not by our abilities, but by our vision,” stresses the impact of a vision on communities. A limited vision will only deliver limited results. One’s desires and thoughts about the future influence the decisions of today. A robust community vision should direct the decisions made by county elected and appointed bodies. Today’s new development has impacts upon Sumner County and the Middle Tennessee region for many decades. Roads, buildings, and other infrastructure can be present for 100 years or more, so the positive and negative impacts of some developments can linger. Therefore, the visioning process for a community as part of a comprehensive plan is a crucial step.

The Sumner County Regional Planning Commission has diligently gathered public input concerning a vision for Sumner County and objectives to support the vision. The vision and objectives build upon the objectives of the Tri-County Transportation & Land Use Study detailed in Chapter 1. Appendix B outlines the strategies undertaken by staff during the *2035 Comprehensive Plan* development process, and Appendix C and Appendix D contain the results of two informal, on-line surveys about Sumner County’s future. These elements of the *2035 Comprehensive Plan* public input process have informed the development of the county’s vision and objectives.



Figure 3-1: Future Growth Issues Discussed at Beech High School



Figure 3-2: Residents at Oakmont Elementary School Change Maps to Indicate Future Growth and Preservation Areas

Through the on-line survey and public workshops, officials heard that Sumner County residents want to maintain the high quality of life that has attracted growth over the past several decades in Sumner County. Residents also enjoy the convenience of living within the greater Nashville area, which attracts a certain quality of employers, businesses, cultural activities, and services. There are also a number of unique characteristics within the communities of Sumner County that residents appreciate such as historical buildings, cemeteries, sense of community, the rural landscape, and winding roads. However, there are also issues with the new growth including traffic congestion, lack of context sensitive development, abandoned buildings, loss of rural lands, noise pollution, lack of planning on infrastructure upgrades, and homogenizing of the community. At the public workshops, residents were asked to identify assets that were important to them locally and regionally.

3.1 Regional Assets

Regional assets are those distinctions and services that Nashville and the region provide to its citizens and to visitors that may work or play within the region. Below are some regional assets that were mentioned during the county's public input opportunities:

- International airport
- Research and teaching hospitals
- Universities and community colleges
- Interconnected and accessible highways and roads
- Availability of utilities
- Regional shopping destinations
- Outdoor recreation opportunities (lakes, state parks, etc.)
- Major business and industrial headquarters
- Professional sports
- Cultural and historical activities (music, museums, historic sites, etc.)

3.2 Local Assets

Local assets are those distinctions that are unique to the community that residents desire to preserve or enhance. There is an expressed fear among residents that some of these local assets could disappear because of continued growth, changing demographics, or economic uncertainties. These assets tend to be more personal in nature.

- Quality of the public school system
- Local businesses
- Scenic drives and views
- Unique local festivals and events (Old Timers Day, Colonial Fair, etc.)
- Community buildings, cornerstones, and historical sites
- Rural way of life
- Working farms
- Sense of community and history
- Streams and creeks
- Churches
- Proximity and accessibility to services

These are a few examples of assets both on a regional and local level that are important to consider in the context of the vision for growth, development, and preservation in Sumner County. The following vision and goals are the basis for decision-making within the *2035 Comprehensive Plan*. Sumner County Government plays a critical role in the unincorporated county of implementing strategies and ensuring that policies, plans, and programs address the vision and goals and enhance assets.



Figure 3-3: A rural viewshed in Sumner County



Figure 3-4: The widening of Highway 109 has been identified for future improvements for some time in Sumner County.

3.3 Vision & Goals for 2035

Based upon input received from local residents and decision makers, the following vision and goals are established for Sumner County for 2035. The goals are closely tied to the Nashville Area MPO's Tri-County Transportation & Land Use Study and are prioritized according to decision maker feedback and through group consensus. In all public input opportunities, the protection of natural resources was heavily emphasized and is reflect with a high priority among the list of goals. Objectives with supporting strategies in achieving the goals and vision for Sumner County are outlined in the Implementation Element (7.0).

Sumner County's Vision

Sumner County will maintain the high quality of life of those that live, work, and play in unincorporated Sumner County.

Goal 1 – Protection of Natural Resources

To identify and protect the most critical resources existing in Sumner County.

Goal 2 – Efficient Transportation System

To provide for the efficient movement of people, goods, and services while providing a range of transportation choices within Sumner County and the Middle Tennessee region.

Goal 3 – Maintain Sense of Community and Sense of Place

To allow new types of development while recognizing the importance of retaining the established character and existing development types unique to Sumner County and the Middle Tennessee region.

Goal 4 – Rural Preservation

To preserve areas in Sumner County intended to retain a rural character or way of life and reinforce preservation through plans, programs, and policies.

Goal 5 – Economic Enrichment while Safeguarding Existing Public & Private Development

To enhance economic growth and opportunities in Sumner County and the Middle Tennessee region to ensure that a high quality of life remains for residents.

Goal 6 – Historic Conservation & Enhancement

To promote the conservation of historic and cultural resources and support these efforts in Sumner County through plans, programs, and policies.

Goal 7 – Ensure Availability of Services

To ensure that future growth in Sumner County occurs in a coordinated manner with community infrastructure and services needed to adequately support growth and development.

Goal 8 – Viable Agriculture

To recognize and support the important role of agriculture in Sumner County’s existing and future economy.

Goal 9 – Preserve Urban Centers

To strengthen and enhance existing community nodes in Sumner County through plans, programs, and policies.

Goal 10 – Provide Housing Options

To provide a wide range of housing types and communities in Sumner County for a variety of household sizes and income ranges.