



RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP

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MEMORANDUM

TO: **AMYE KING, AICP**

FROM: **JULIE SALVO, AICP**

COMPANY: **LAKE COUNTY**

COMPANY: **RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP**

RE: **GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

DATE: **OCTOBER 28, 2005**

URGENT FOR REVIEW PLEASE COMMENT PLEASE REPLY PLEASE RECYCLE

INTRODUCTION

The following information is intended to help Lake County establish a vision for future land use and framework for development throughout the County. The vision should address “how do we want to grow?” and the framework should address “where do we want to grow?” There are several strategies that may be included in the future land use element that can provide the County with a clear cut strategy on protecting open space, controlling sprawl, and encouraging quality new development and redevelopment. These strategies will be described, as follows:

How do we want to grow?

1. Greenprinting - addresses overall conservation strategies
2. Clustering/Conservation Subdivision Design - addresses residential and conservation
3. Activity Centers - addresses commercial and/or mixed-use

Where do we want to grow?

4. Transect-based planning - potential countywide strategy to identify which locations are suitable for development

HOW DO WE WANT TO GROW?

1. GREENPRINTING

GreenPrinting, as defined by the Trust for Public Land, is a smart growth strategy that emphasizes land conservation to ensure quality of life, clean air and water, recreation, and economic health. GreenPrinting is a comprehensive, proactive open space protection strategy that is begun by defining a vision for conservation in the county and implements that vision through matching opportunities with **funding and acquisition**. A key component of this strategy is the continual management of the lands once they are acquired.

The greenprinting approach to land conservation is to steer growth toward existing infrastructure and away from a community’s most sensitive land and water resources. Open space and development rights are acquired from willing sellers, and conservation becomes a powerful and cost-effective tool for managing growth—an equal partner with zoning and regulation.

The traditional approach to land conservation has been reactive and piecemeal: individual pieces of property are protected in order to prevent development, often without consideration for a larger conservation and growth vision. Greenprinting puts planning front and center in the land conservation process; a community



plans for open space in the same way it plans for other aspects of its infrastructure—transportation and communication networks, schools, hospitals, utilities, and so on. And a community integrates conservation with other development and land use plans. **The result is an interconnected network of parks, open space, greenways, and natural lands that allows for growth where growth makes sense.**

2. CLUSTERING/CSD

The term “Conservation Subdivision Design” (CSD), as coined by Randall Arendt, describes a concept of cluster-type development that enables land to be developed while simultaneously preserving community character, reducing environmental impacts, protecting the rights of property owners, and enabling a developer to benefit from a high-quality project. Wetlands, floodplains and steep slopes, in addition to a large portion of the flat, dry, and otherwise buildable land, are set aside within those conservation areas from clearing, grading, and construction. Instead, lot sizes are reduced and the allowed development is arranged to “fit” onto the unconstrained land. This concept was described in detail in a memo from Renaissance Planning Group to Lake County, dated September 12, 2005.

In summary, CSD takes traditional “clustering” one step further by connecting it with flexible design approaches that allow a community to create an interconnected network of open space, linking resource areas in adjoining subdivisions and/ or providing buffers between new development and pre-existing parklands or forest. For example, if a “traditional” residential zoning ordinance requires a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet, a 50-acre parcel could yield roughly 200 houses. In contrast, a CSD-friendly zoning ordinance might allow a developer to build the same 200 houses on 5,000 square foot lots if the other half of the land is left undeveloped.

To encourage the use of CSD, the County will need to include objectives in the comprehensive plan and land development regulations (pending completion of the Comprehensive Plan) to allow conservation subdivisions and to incorporate the flexibility design standards - such as lot sizes, building setbacks, and road frontages and standards - needed to implement CSD. Additional regulatory changes are also needed:

- The County may provide incentives such as density bonuses to developers that incorporate CSD into their projects.
- The County or individual developers need to develop a toolkit supporting CSD. This toolkit, at a minimum, should include a stormwater management plan, parks and greenway acquisition plan, a riparian buffer plan, etc. Also, land use plans must identify priority areas for development, as well as areas appropriate for higher density development.
- Design guidelines or site design standards that govern elements such as street width, parking, use of sidewalks and protection of trees and open spaces will promote better environmental protection and encourage pedestrian travel.

3. ACTIVITY CENTERS

Activity centers can be a useful tool in managing growth, if designed properly. Activity centers can be defined as places that are physically and aesthetically unified, concentrated mixed-use areas containing commercial, office, institutional, and high- and medium-density residential uses, arranged in a walkable, compact, pedestrian- and transit-friendly manner. All elements and land uses are designed to function as an integrated whole (rather than as a series of unconnected, unrelated developments). They are focal points for the surrounding neighborhood and community, and should have a strong sense of identity.



Activity Center - Types

There are typically three types of activity centers: **neighborhood**, **community**, and **regional**. The types are described in further detail below.

Neighborhood Activity Center: A neighborhood activity center (NAC) should provide the commercial and institutional uses necessary to support the common day-to-day demands of the surrounding neighborhood for goods, services, and facilities. The NAC should also supply limited local office space demanded by neighborhood businesses, and provide high-density housing for the neighborhood (and possibly medium-density housing as well), conveniently located near the center's shopping and employment. A grocery store, drug store or "corner store" will normally be the principal establishment. The actual uses and amount of space in a center will likely vary according to different circumstances such as physical constraints and the free market.

Community Activity Center: A community activity center (CAC) includes the typical mix of commercial, office, and institutional uses and facilities offered by a neighborhood activity center. Additionally it includes commercial and institutional uses that provide goods, services, and facilities which are demanded less frequently than on a daily basis by the surrounding community (i.e., a collection of three to five neighborhoods). The activity center also supplies moderate amounts of office space demanded by community businesses. High-density residential uses should also be present in the center area, typically in amounts (and possibly densities) greater than found in NACs. The principal commercial establishments will likely be a very large supermarket together with at least one other large community-sized retailer, such as a large discount store or movie theater. A grocery store is an essential feature of the center.

Regional Activity Center: A regional activity center (RAC) provides the nonresidential elements intended to provide goods, services, and facilities which are demanded less frequently than on a daily basis by the surrounding region (i.e., a collection of communities, having a total population around 80,000-150,000), or which are possible only with the critical mass of population provided by an entire region. The center supplies large amounts of regional office space, plus ample high-density (and possibly medium-density) residential uses typically in amounts greater than found in CACs. As with the CAC, the RAC encourages mixed-use development that integrates higher-density residential uses with nonresidential uses, such as developments that place dwellings over shops, is encouraged. A regional center may also include uses typical of both neighborhood and community centers, since it may also serve these functions for the surrounding neighborhood or community. The principal commercial establishment will likely be a large regional shopping mall or traditional commercial district or downtown. A regional center has the potential for a more diverse and intense mixing of land uses than either a community or neighborhood activity center. The actual amounts of uses in a center will likely vary according to different circumstances such as physical constraints and the free market.

Old Centers vs. New Centers - Guidelines for Infill and Redevelopment

Another element of establishing activity centers is the identification and strengthening of existing centers. It is often a wise strategy to focus on what is already in place, and retrofit existing places into activity centers. The main objectives in this endeavor are to improve the overall functionality of the center, to improve the mix of uses, and to help encourage the development of those uses and elements.

The following guidelines are intended to encourage a greater variety of uses, services and facilities to serve citizens and create a balanced community. They are not intended to encourage redevelopment of existing land and uses where they make a valuable contribution to a center's function. Also, they are not a mandate to turn existing residential, office and institutional property or parks into commercial uses.



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Land Use

- Infill development should compliment existing uses, and provide missing elements that make a particular area a “center.” For example, in a center, that contains commercial uses, the preference would likely be to develop vacant parcels for office and institutional or medium and high-density residential uses. In other words, land uses should be complementary, but compatible.
- Buildings and sites that contain both a horizontal and vertical mix of uses are desirable. That is development may consist of single uses placed side by side or different uses on different floors of the same structure.
- Appropriate reuse, redevelopment or refurbishment is encouraged for parts of existing centers where activity and attractiveness have declined, e.g., when an anchor grocery vacates a center.
- Centers should include high or high and medium density residential uses.
- Formal outdoor space for public use, such as a formal park, village green, or plaza, should be provided as focal points for public interaction. Larger activity centers should include more such space than smaller centers, and may break them up into two or more outdoor spaces. Public space must be well related to the center and create a focal point, and not just be space left over after buildings have been sited.

Infrastructure/Connectivity

- Often, the presence of a transit stop will dictate the need and desirability for an activity center. Therefore, the center’s layout should include provisions for a future transit stop. The center should also be designed to promote safe and efficient internal circulation for all modes, both internal and external to the center.
- To the extent practical, development should help provide missing design elements and facilities such as internal sidewalks, plazas and focal points, pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjoining neighborhoods.
- It is appropriate to provide for shared parking and shared stormwater for uses in centers. Shared parking should be sited and designed to minimize parking provision.

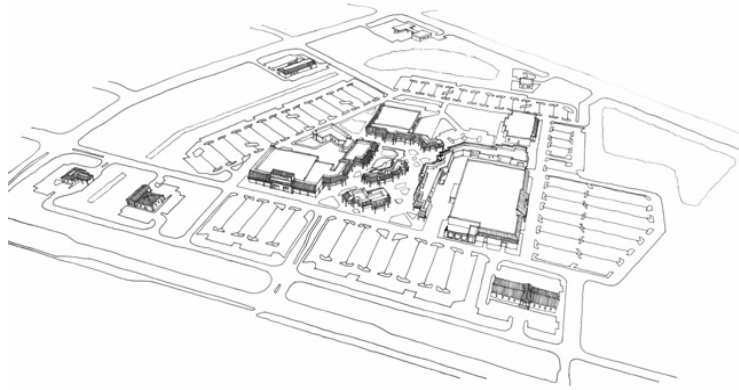
Recommended Center Spacing for Greenfield Activity Centers:

In order to concentrate developments in one, convenient location and to avoid strip commercial development along roadways, new activity centers (greenfield), should be located and arranged according to the following table:

	NAC	CAC	RAC
Population Served	+/- 5,000	+/- 20,000	80,000-200,000
Service Radius	0.25 - 1 mile	1-10 miles	>10 miles
Minimum separation from NAC	0.25 - 1 mile	0.25- 1.5 mile	0.25 - 1.5 mile
Minimum separation from CAC	0.25 - 1.5 mile	2-6 miles	2-6 miles
Minimum separation from RAC	0.25 - 1.5 mile	2-6 miles	6-10 miles

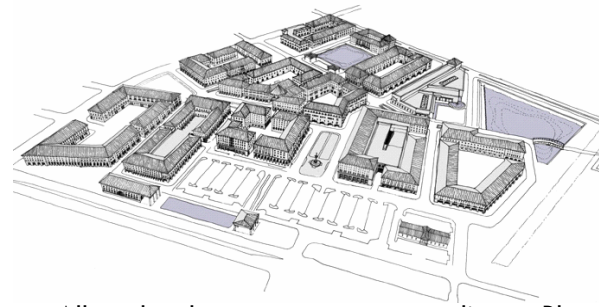
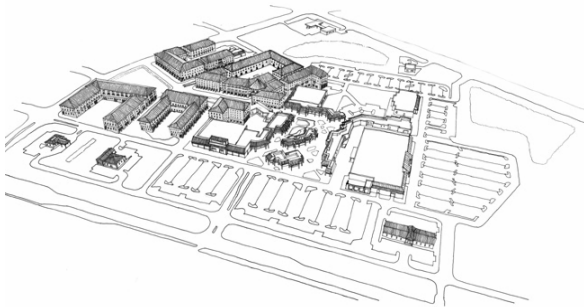


SAMPLE PHASING STRATEGY FOR INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT AT ACTIVITY CENTERS

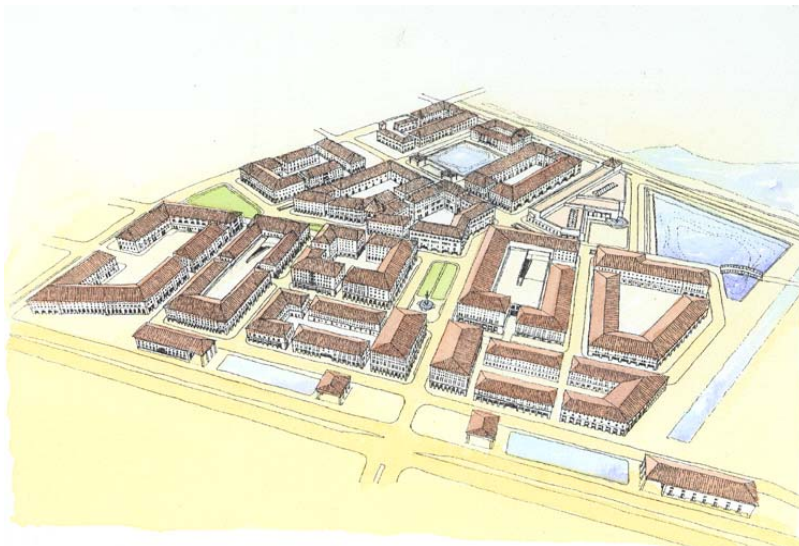


Existing Conditions,
Shopping center along
major highway

First step is to prepare a
master development plan.



Phase in new development in surface parking areas. Allow development to occur according to Plan.



Ultimate build-out.

Strategy includes:

- Shared parking, stormwater and open space
- Internal roadway network
- Mixed uses
- Transit stop



WHERE DO WE WANT TO GROW?

4. Transect-Based Planning

The Transect is a model for planning and coding that is based on a categorization system that organizes all elements of the urban environment on a scale of six zones ranging from rural to urban. It begins with two that are entirely rural in character: Rural preserve (protected areas in perpetuity); and Rural reserve (areas of high environmental or scenic quality that are not currently preserved, but perhaps should be).

The transition zone between countryside and town is called the Edge, which encompasses the most rural part of the neighborhood, and the countryside just beyond. The Edge is primarily single family homes. Although Edge is the most purely residential zone, it can have some mixed-use, such as civic buildings (schools are particularly appropriate for the Edge). Next is General, the largest zone in most neighborhoods. General is primarily residential, but more urban in character (somewhat higher density with a mix of housing types and a slightly greater mix of uses allowed).

At the urban end of the spectrum are two zones which are primarily mixed use: Center (this can be a small neighborhood center or a larger town center, the latter serving more than one neighborhood); and Core (serving the region — typically a central business district). Core is the most urban zone.

Each of the Transect zoning categories — Rural, Edge, General, Center, Core — may contained provisions for density, thoroughfare dimensions and design, block dimensions, the design of parks, appropriate building frontages, the mix of uses, building design, parking, and other aspects of the human environment. These categories can go on to serve as the basis for zoning.

Regional Sectors	Transect Zones	Community Types
S1 Preserved Open Space	T1 Natural	N/a
S2 Reserved Open Space	T2 Rural	N/a
S3 Restricted Growth	T2 Rural	New Cluster Developments/ Hamlets
	T3 Sub-Urban	
	T4 General Urban	
S4 Controlled Growth	T3 Sub-Urban	New Traditional Neighborhood Developments
	T4 General Urban	
	T5 Urban Center	
S5 Intended Growth	T4 General Urban	New Regional Centers/ Transit-Oriented Developments
	T5 Urban Center	
	T6 Urban Core	
S6 Infill and Redevelopment	T3 Sub-Urban	Existing Neighborhoods/ Urban Villages/ Town Centers/ Downtowns
	T4 General Urban	
	T5 Urban Center	
	T6 Urban Core	