

# **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

Several environmental quality issues were raised in the Community Assessment: 1) inadequate sewage disposal, 2) solid waste disposal (including problems of litter and illegal dumping), 4) nuisances, 5) protection of green space and open areas, and 5) watershed management (to include problems of flooding and soil erosion).

## **SEWAGE DISPOSAL:**

The Soil Survey points out that a large percentage of land in the county has severe restrictions for septic tanks and absorption fields. In other words, the vast majority of soils are not really suitable for sewage disposal by septic tanks.

As feasible, city sewer services should be extended to targeted development areas, and to those areas where present septic tank systems are not working well. In addition, other sewage disposal options should be examined for their potential use in the county.

## **SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL:**

Public agencies should continue to hold community awareness programs on the need for keeping the county free of litter and illegal dumping; hold annual cleanup programs; and take the necessary steps to implement a mandatory county-wide solid waste collection program.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION:**

Protecting the environment and minimizing negative impact is one of the goals of local governments. The natural environment is the base upon which human activity takes place. It is desirable to use our natural resources wisely and efficiently. It is also in the best interest of the community that a portion of the natural landscape be retained as greenspace, protected from undesirable development. There are a number of tools or techniques that can be used to conserve and protect the natural resource base:

- i. Establishment of Conservation Easements. This is a legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified conservation organization that provides long-term legal protection for the natural or historic features of a property. Six Agricultural Districts are located throughout the unincorporated limits of Mason County.
- ii. Creation of a Land Trust. A land trust is a private, non-profit organization that protects natural and cultural resources through land acquisition, conservation easements, and education.
- iii. Donations. This involves a transfer of land to a conservation organization in the form of a charitable gift from the property owner.
- iv. Outright Purchase. This method is referred to as fee-simple acquisition and simply involves the government or a non-profit organization buying the land to protect it from future development.
- v. Land Banking. In this approach, the local government acquires, holds, and subsequently releases land for controlled development or for conservation purposes. In this way open space is protected by acquiring and temporarily holding land, placing permanent conservation restrictions on it, and reselling it, sometimes at a profit.
- vi. Purchase of Development Rights. This method allows for government to acquire the development rights to farmland in order to keep it in agricultural use.
- vii. Transfer of Development Rights. This is a technique for guiding development away from sensitive areas and toward areas that can better handle it through the transfer of development rights from one area to another.
- viii. Agricultural/Large Lot Zoning. This is a method for protecting agricultural land by stipulating minimum lot sizes or limitations on non-farm uses. It might require that each new house be constructed on a minimum number of acres, generally at least five or more.
- ix. Right to Farm Law. This legislation (KR413.072) protects a farmer from nuisance lawsuits and from local ordinances that might hinder normal farming practices.

- x. Agricultural Districts. This approach allows a farmer or farmers to voluntarily create an agricultural district of at least 250 contiguous acres of land in agricultural use which protects the area from annexation, and requires state agencies to mitigate the impacts of state projects in that area.

In addition, greenspace or sensitive environmental/cultural sites can be protected through the use of required land landscape buffers. Landscape provisions can be added to the zoning ordinance or subdivision regulations to require the retention or addition of plants in conjunction with development proposals.

**WATERSHED MANAGEMENT:**

The Maysville/Mason County Zoning Ordinance provides for a Flood Prone Overlay District which is designed to protect certain areas that have been designated as subject to periodic flooding. One of the major problems related to local flooding is the cumulative effect of developed areas coming in upstream without proper considerations being given to the impact downstream. Subdivision plans and development plans should require the submission of calculations on the amount of water entering the site prior to construction, plans for retention on-site, and calculations of expected runoff from the site after structures are in place, with the goal of holding post-construction runoff to pre-construction levels.

**SOIL EROSION**

The Soil Survey points out that the major management problem for soils in Mason County is erosion. This problem applies to 134,296 acres of land (87.1%). Structural development to those areas where the slope does not exceed 20%. About 1/3 of the soils (by acreage) have slopes that are too steep for most structural development.

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<u>Slope Category</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent</u>
12 to 20%	16,220	10.3
20 to 40%	30,200	19.2
30 to 60%	<u>6,510</u>	<u>4.1</u>
	52,930	33.6

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TABLE 15. PERCENT OF SOILS BY SLOPE CATEGORIES

The Zoning Ordinance includes provisions for a Conservation Overlay District designed to protect environmentally sensitive areas, especially those identified to be steeply sloped. Existing requirements for managing soil erosion in the subdivision regulations appear to be adequate. More strict enforcement of these guidelines should help to reduce the extent of the problem.

The provisions for reviewing environmental issues in the Zoning Regulations should be extended to the unincorporated areas of the county.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### **HISTORIC OVERVIEW:**

In the community assessment, the richness of historic resources in Maysville and Mason County was listed as one of the major community assets. The historic record goes back to the late 1700s when the town of Washington (then in Bourbon County) was created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1786. The following year, the port of Limestone and the town of Charleston were established. Shortly thereafter, the residents petitioned for a division of Bourbon County, and Mason County was created.

Native Americans had long occupied the area and with the arrival of new settlers there were occasional skirmishes. Despite these conflicts, the small settlement of Limestone quickly became a busy port on the Ohio

River. In 1789 thirty flatboats per day were arriving at Limestone. By 1793 the original inhabitants had withdrawn from the area and a stream of settlers began to pour into the area. A post road was constructed in 1794 which connected Limestone with the Bluegrass area and with Pittsburgh. With this improvement regular mail service became available.

Early settlers included Scots-Irish, Germans, and English people who came down the Ohio River from source areas largely in Virginia. Most were intent on earning their living by raising crops and livestock. Limestone was a major disembarkment point for settlers moving south into the Bluegrass. In 1790 Washington already had a population of 460, second only to Lexington in size among Kentucky's settlements. By 1810 Washington had grown to 815, while Maysville's population reached 335. In that same year there were seven communities located in Mason County with a combined population of 1,388, including Washington, Maysville, Mayslick, Charleston Bottoms, Germantown, Lewisburg, and Williamsburg (now Orangeburg).

(Note: Most of this information is taken from Mason County, Kentucky: Historic Sites Survey Summary Report, by Gibson Worsham, 1990).

Slavery was a fixture in Mason County from the earliest settlements. There were 229 slaves in 1791. By the 1860s Mason County was 12<sup>th</sup> among Kentucky's counties in total slave population. People in the county were divided over the slavery issue and fought on both sides during the Civil War. In the post war years freed blacks settled in several of the county's towns where their descendants are still found today.

Roads were improved, rail connections were completed and Mason County continued to grow and prosper. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the strong agricultural base, with tobacco as the dominant crop, was giving way to a more diversified economy with Maysville becoming the focal point of manufacturing, trade, and services. Today the city and county function as the growth center for a seven county trade area.

The Statement of Goals and Objectives dealing with historic preservation stress six primary themes:

1. Comprehensive coverage of historic sites and structures  
(Largely completed, with some work continuing).
2. Support of the Preservation Programs in Maysville and Old Washington.

3. Protection of historic areas.
4. Adequate review of historic values in all development proposals.
5. Better use, promotion/marketing of historic resources.
6. Encouragement of maintenance/preservation by property owners.

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES:**

Today, Maysville and Mason County still have many visible reminders of this long and interesting history. Since the 1970s, hundreds of historic sites have been researched. In the most recent study by Gibson Worsham, approximately 500 rural sites were surveyed providing detailed information on structures to include construction, material, number of stories, floor plan, functions, architectural/decorative styles, quality, and age.

The 1990 study listed some 50 additional sites to be added to the existing National Register properties in the county. The study also included six proposed or expanded districts being added to the inventory of historic resources (excluding archaeological and Maysville sites).

## **RENAISSANCE PROGRAMS:**

The Renaissance Program in Maysville was established in 1998. The city entered the program as a Silver community and was elevated to Gold status in 2001. The City's program focuses on restoration and revitalization within the historic core downtown business district. The City received \$1.1 million to make improvements to the streetscape in Downtown Maysville, including underground utilities, removal of overhead wiring, sidewalks and street lighting.

Old Washington entered the Renaissance Program in 2000 at the Silver level, making Maysville the only community in Kentucky with two Renaissance Programs. Washington received \$450,000 for their streetscape improvements. Since the Renaissance Program began, there have been two gubernatorial changes. The current administration has downsized the program, which is now referred to as Renaissance on Main. The Kentucky Heritage Council has taken the lead on community program certifications, while the Department for Local Government administers all available finances. Due to the current economic situation within the state, funding has been at a minimum. With administration changes and downsizing of the program, Maysville was only permitted to have one program Maysville Renaissance, which is a Certified Community. Even though there is minimal financing from the state, the City of Maysville has

proceeded to administer programs using local funds. In June 2010, the City of Maysville retired a very successful locally funded facade program. Twenty-three facades were completed within the renaissance district within a four year period using local funding (50/50 match program). Currently, the local renaissance board is focusing on economic restructure of the district and are discussing and investigating options to spur occupancy in empty buildings through recruitment incentives.

## **PROTECTING/PRESERVING HISTORIC/CULTURAL RESOURCES:**

Maysville s historic preservation program was initiated in 1990 with the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, creation of the Maysville Board of Architectural Review (now the Maysville/Washington Board of Architectural Review, and the establishment of the Maysville Historic District and Old Washington Historic District). The guidelines for Historic Preservation are included in the Maysville Zoning Regulations and give the Architectural Board broad powers in dealing with these issues. Historic Overlay Districts have been designated for part of Maysville s Downtown area and Old Washington. The Zoning

Ordinance also provides a special zone for Oldtown Residential uses and a Historic Overlay District. Mason County needs to establish a similar ordinance in conjunction with the development of its land use regulations.

One of the problems of historic preservation review is the tendency to treat these concerns lightly and to allow changes to take place before the appropriate agency has an opportunity to have a meaningful input into the process. In early 2006, the Architectural Review Board met to make changes to the historic district ordinance. Eventually, the City approved changes which included splitting the ordinance: one for Downtown Maysville and one for Old Washington. More regulations were put into place in order to better preserve Old Washington, yet still allowing for economic development to take place in Downtown Maysville.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND HERITAGE TOURISM:**

Heritage tourism is defined as travel that is motivated by interest in the historical aspects of a given place. It is part of the larger cultural tourism picture. The rise of heritage tourism as a major component of travel/tourism development is related to more travelers being better

educated, more affluent, staying closer to home, and desiring a higher quality experience.

History is one of the most valuable resources that Maysville and Mason County have to offer to its residents and to visitors from an extensive market area. Some of the most important historic attractions in the community include the following:

1. Old Washington
2. Kentucky Gateway Museum Center
3. National Underground Railroad Museum
4. Limestone Landing- Floodwall Murals
5. Downtown Maysville Historic District
6. Mayslick
7. Bank of Maysville
8. Olde Mechanics Row
9. Washington Opera House
10. Phillips Folly
11. Pioneer Graveyard
12. Rosemary Clooney s Childhood Home
13. Russell Theatre
14. Simon Kenton Bridge
15. Dover Covered Bridge
16. Valley Pike Covered Bridge
17. Harriet Beecher Stowe Slavery to Freedom Museum

18. Mefford Station
19. Minerva Baptist Church
20. Germantown
21. Pogue House Micro-Distillery

In addition to these sites, several historic events are reenacted as part of the larger festivals, and special events (discussed earlier). These events draw thousands of people into the county each year. There needs to be an adequate mechanism in place to better measure the magnitude of tourism impact on the local economy and other community systems.

## **OLD WASHINGTON:**

Old Washington is part of the larger Washington community which merged with the City of Maysville in 1991. As mentioned previously, the original settlement of Washington was established in 1785. The community today is much like it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The uniqueness of Old Washington is not found only in its architecture, but in the overall character of the community. It is one of the only places in the country where 18<sup>th</sup> century Frontier period cabins survive next door to gracious early 19<sup>th</sup> century Federal townhouses. It

is also the site of important historic events and was linked to a number of dignitaries in its early development. An illustration of the main features of Old Washington is presented in Figure 15.

Information in this portion of the Comprehensive Plan draws largely from three reports:

In 1975 a major study of Washington was completed by John Walden, and Vogt, Sage & Pflum Consultants. The study includes an historic area analysis, design analysis, land use analysis, land use plan, and economic development strategy. In addition, it contains a survey of the historic buildings and an extensive appendix of other related historic documentation.

More recently, a Market Study of Old Washington was completed by RM Associates, Inc. in conjunction with an application for designation as a Silver Level Community. The study includes an analysis of the market served by Old Washington as well as recommendations for changes to the community in keeping with the results of visitor surveys and on-site observations by the consultant. Most recently, in 2007 the volunteer community preservation group, Old Washington Inc., in cooperation with the Mason County

Fiscal Court and the Maysville Tourism Office, created the *Old Washington Community Plan* (Miller 2007). The Old Washington Community plan defined resources, current conditions, and short-and long-term threats to the community, reviewed the tools available for preservation, advanced proposal for enhancing residential and visitor amenities, and articulated an action plan. The Plan in its final form was the result of a series of public meetings and over two years of volunteer expertise. (The plan is on file at the Maysville Municipal Building for review and research).

### **RENAISSANCE /MARKET STUDY:**

In 2007, a comprehensive plan was developed by Old Washington, Inc. with assistance from Dr. Orloff Miller. A similar document to this plan, it solely focuses on Old Washington. A copy of the document is located at the Maysville Municipal Building.

### **ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT:**

There should be one group overseeing the promotion and development of historic Old Washington. In the past there have been several organizations formed to guide the future of the community,

sometimes with significantly  
different views on what future policies and programs  
should be carried out.

The newly formed Renaissance Board would appear  
to be the most likely  
group to be given this task.

In addition, there is a need for the shopkeepers to  
work together in terms  
of days and hours of operation (as is feasible).

Tourists who visit the site  
during normal working hours expect all shops to be  
open.

While volunteers have done an excellent job in  
taking care of the many needs of visitors, there needs  
to be someone in charge of daily operations (a  
salaried employee) who would be available on site at  
least on a part-time basis to deal with problems that  
arise and to manage the overall affairs of the district.

The City needs to consider providing additional  
financial support to Old

Washington in light of its historic significance and its  
contribution to the  
economy of the community. It is a unique historic  
place that is not duplicated

anywhere else. With total visitations estimated to be in the range of 15,000 to 20,000 per year, and approximately 98% of these people coming from outside the county, the county receives a net influx of \$300,000 to \$500,000 yearly. This is basic income that has a multiplier effect, circulating within the community and supporting a number of non-basic employees.

### **THE MIX OF GOODS AND SERVICES:**

The present mix of goods and services, being offered, consists largely of the following items being offered in Old Washington; 1) antiques and collectibles, 2) prints, frames, books, 3) jewelry, 4) lamps/lampshades, 5) furniture, 6) brass items, 7) toys, dolls, 8) crafts, 9) silk items, 10) herbal gifts, 11) candles, 12) tinware, 13) cards/stationery, and 14) food.

Food establishments and antiques/collectibles attract the most visitors. Most visitors were satisfied with the present mix of goods and services. Some 15% of the visitors expressed an interest in a greater variety of shops, with specific mention of additional restaurants and antique shops. Since most of the visitors surveyed are repeat

visitors, the addition of new attractions is an important consideration.

An overwhelming majority of visitors said they would not want to see new businesses that would take away from the quality of the site and its values. Several comments pointed out the need to keep out fast-food places, flea markets, and similar ubiquitous activities that attract a different clientele. There was also a concern over adding too many new businesses (over-commercializing).

The interest in history and its values as represented in the old buildings, the architecture, genealogy, costumed tour guides, special historic events, and related activities was by far the single most important purpose for people coming to Old Washington. A significant number of visitors wanted to see more historic re-enactments (living history), more historic memorabilia, and more shopkeepers/volunteers in costumes.

A number of visitors were disappointed with the limited amount of time that some of the shops were open, and the late

starting time for some of the special events.

## **SITE ENHANCEMENT:**

In 2008, the Architectural Review Board tried to expand the boundary of the historic district to further protect the core of Old Washington. This attempt was unsuccessful as numerous residents in the area opposed the expansion. None-the-less, the Board was successful in implementing new protection measures to the zoning ordinance. The following measures were adopted:

- " Update of the design review guidelines
- " Limitations on the subdivision of existing parcels in the district
- " Divided the district into in-lots and out-lots
- " Distinguished construction standards for in-lots and out-lots
- " Rezoning requests will be reviewed jointly by the planning commission and architectural board, and MUST be accompanied by a development plan
- " New construction on a previously built-upon lot must be the same or similar to the demolished or destroyed structure
- " Require the Board's Administrative Official to survey all properties in the district once a year, and

prepare a report on those properties being neglected

The Board, along with existing preservation groups, should continue to make strides in enhancing the overall aesthetics of Old Washington.

### **PROMOTION/MARKETING:**

Old Washington is the single most important travel/tourist attraction in Mason County. The number of visitors to the site each year is not known, but estimates range from 15,000 to 25,000. The majority of these people come from Mason and surrounding counties, and the nearby metropolitan areas of Lexington and Cincinnati. Almost every state in the United States is represented, along with several foreign countries. Of those visitors surveyed, almost all were favorably impressed by their experience, and were repeat visitors.

Some visitor suggestions made were; include more information on special events, keep regular visitors posted as to scheduled events, do more advertising in newspapers, magazines, etc.

Additional marketing and promotional activities should be targeted to those areas that are the source areas for the majority of visitors (The Target Markets of Mason and its surrounding counties, Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky, Lexington, Dayton, Louisville, and Ashland), as well as to the interests expressed (history, antiques/crafts, genealogy, slavery, architecture), and tour groups (riverboats, school groups, senior citizen groups, etc.)

Four of the Target Market newspapers are included in the top 100 newspapers in the U.S. in total circulation:

The Louisville Courier Journal,	45 <sup>th</sup>
Cincinnati Enquirer	57 <sup>th</sup>
Dayton Daily News	73 <sup>rd</sup>
Lexington Herald-Leader	93 <sup>rd</sup>

These four newspapers cover almost all of the Primary Market Area. With a population in excess 4.1 million, these newspapers reach over 2.3 million readers on a daily basis. The focus on advertising should be directed toward these metropolitan areas, especially in regards to

special events.

The single-most important special interest group to be targeted is that of

Historic Interests. These groups could be reached through promotional materials mailed to historic organizations in Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and other states with high visitation rates. Historic groups can also be reached through leading historic magazines such as American Heritage (circulation 300,000), American History (120,000), America's Civil War (125,000), and Preservation Magazine (250,000).

## **TRACKING VISITORS:**

In order to better meet the needs of visitors in terms of marketing, promotional information, etc., and to more effectively measure the success of Old Washington, the Visitor's Register needs to be modified to provide for more information in a format that will be easier to use in future studies (see the Appendix).

## **DOWNTOWN MAYSVILLE:**

Downtown Maysville is an historic district situated along the banks of the Ohio River. Downtown is a relatively small and compact area of land, situated largely between the river on the north, the south side of Third Street on the south, Wall Street on the West, and Limestone Street on the east. The Renaissance Kentucky Community boundary includes this area as well as additional property to the east. The downtown area consists of a mixture of commercial, residential, and public/semi-public land uses. It is not only an attractive business center, but also is a focal point of much of Maysville's early history.

In 1999, a Downtown Market Study was conducted for the City of Maysville by McGlothlin Marketing to serve as a basis for future economic development in the downtown area. Many of the suggestions have been implemented, and the City should continue to pursue the following ideas:

- " Form a business development team with the goal of adapting industrial recruiting materials and methods to the businesses. Expertise is required in four areas; industrial development, local business development, marketing, and internet/web development.

" Promote available space. An inventory of all vacant space should be maintained and information made available to realtors, developers, builders, and the general public.

" Target entrepreneurs outside the community. Promote downtown as a business site via a dedicated web site and public relations materials to magazines such as INC, and Fast Company.

Stress Maysville's high quality of life, high speed data capability, and available space.

" Improve downtown aesthetics. Use existing laws and regulations to enforce owner upkeep of buildings and property. Aggressively apply safety, health, and public nuisance laws to improve downtown appearance and cleanliness.

Within the city of Maysville, the area presently occupied by a number of large tobacco warehouses is also in need of revitalization. Some of these buildings stand idle, while others are presently underutilized. In light of the decline in tobacco farming, it is likely that further deterioration will take

place in this area. The city needs to develop a plan that would examine some options for redevelopment of this area. Some of these structures are sound and suitable for renovation into useable commercial or industrial facilities. The city is presently using one of these structures as a location for an economic incubator.

This concept could be expanded to include an entrepreneurship training center. There is adequate public infrastructure in place to support new residential, commercial, or industrial development, thereby reducing the demand for development of raw land and new public infrastructure out on the fringes.

## **RURAL/AGRICULTURAL AREAS**

Mason County agriculture has long been dependent upon tobacco for most of its revenues. With recent declines in tobacco production and purchasing, the county is forced to look to other sources for income.

In keeping with the requirements of the legislation, a County Agricultural Development Council, consisting of eight members has been formed to

accomplish the following tasks; 1) evaluate the needs of the local agricultural economy, 2) complete a Comprehensive Farm Plan that will identify those programs that are best suited to support the county s agriculture, and 3) assist local applicants in preparing proposals to spend county funds to be submitted to the State Board.

Tobacco farmers will be given priority in this program, with small farmers having equal access to funding as do the large farmers. Counties can use these funds for the following uses (not limited to these items only):

- Low (or no) interest venture capital loans
- Grants for local agricultural economic development projects
- Grants for water line extensions
- Transition assistance to another farm enterprise or off-farm employment
- Environmental clean-up of failed farm operations

Counties may use these funds in multi-county/regional projects or to match state or federal programs. Individuals, groups,

educational institutions, governmental entities, cooperatives, and other agriculturally related entities are eligible for funds.

In addition to the funds that are set aside for Mason County, the State

Agricultural Development Board has a pool of \$91 million to be used for statewide projects. There are two programs that have been created for funding and implementation by the state board.

" A Farm Market Development & Infrastructure Program, designed to develop regional farm markets and regional or community projects  
An Agricultural Entrepreneurship Program, designed to support small farm agricultural diversification.

Based on input from farmers at meetings of the Agricultural Task Force appointed by the Judge Executive, and input from other agencies (the Agricultural Extension Office, Conservation and Natural Resources, etc.)

the following strategies were proposed:

1. Retain the Agricultural Task Force as a group to oversee the implementation of strategies spelled out in this plan. Perhaps this group could work together with the more recently appointed Agricultural Development Council.
2. Develop an on-going Rural Entrepreneurship Program
3. Develop policies and programs to protect/retain valuable farmland and greenspace. Selected options include; Purchase of Development Rights, Creation of Agricultural Districts, and establishment of Conservation Easements,
4. Upgrade and expand the activities of the local farmer s market.
5. Encourage the revitalization of rural communities as part of the economic development and land use management strategies included in the plan.

The Agricultural Development Council after a series of meetings and review of surveys and other input from farmers and interested citizens, developed a Comprehensive Farm Plan which include the following Mission Statement and recommendations for improving agriculture in Mason County.

### **AGRICULTURAL MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Mason County Agricultural Development Council wants farming to remain a vital part of the rural economy. We are proud farmers who wish to make a stand together to live in a community where agriculture is a valued part of community life. We want everyone to have the opportunity to farm profitably while using environmentally sound farming practices. We want our government to be responsive to the needs of the Mason County farming community. As a council, we have been given a once in a lifetime opportunity to invest in the future of agriculture in Mason County. It is our goal to

promote agriculture for current farmers and future generations.

The following primary themes are derived from the Mission Statement above:

- Retention of farmland as an economic factor
- Value of the farming lifestyle (quality of life)
- Opportunity to make a profit
- Environmental responsibility
- Local governmental support
- Opportunity to invest in agriculture
- Agricultural promotion
- Farming as a sustainable activity

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

The Mason County Agricultural Extension Office mailed out a survey to 468 farmers asking for their input as to how the Phase I funds should be spent in Mason County. Some 68 (14.5%) of the farmers responded to the survey. In

addition, the Agricultural Development Council met several times to discuss

the options to be considered for funding. Proposed actions for meeting future

farm needs in Mason County (prioritized on the basis

of survey responses) are described below. These categories parallel those that are proposed by the state for funding both at the county and state levels.

**Retention and enhancement of those elements of the farm economy that are viable (development of established agricultural sectors):**

Continue to support tobacco farming while exploring ways to improve upon production and new markets for tobacco products.

Add value to livestock production through more efficient management.

Increase forage production through better control of noxious weeds and expansion of pasture land.

Develop a program for land use management and retention of valuable farmland.

Improve upon the removal and disposal of dead animals.

**Diversification/Expansion of the Farm Economy (new and emerging agriculture):**

Investigate the potential for new farming opportunities to include new crops, livestock, horticulture, aquaculture, etc. Expand agricultural production into areas presently being underutilized.

**Rural/Agricultural Capacity Building (value-added/entrepreneurship):**

Provide educational assistance to rural young people to help better prepare for future farming options, or to change to other careers.

Assist farmers in their efforts to start new rural/agricultural businesses.

**Attraction of New Businesses and Industries (value-added processing):**

Seek to attract new businesses and manufacturers to the county that have a connection to the farm economy.

**Networking/Leveraging:**

Work with surrounding counties in establishing regional programs, facilities and markets, and seek to leverage local funds with state and federal funds.

Work with other surrounding counties to develop regional options that will benefit the agricultural economy.

### **Developing Market Infrastructure:**

Establish a Multi-Purpose Farm Marketing Center.

Improve the local Farmer s Market.

Improve upon marketing skills of local farmers, and seek additional on-site marketing expertise from the state.

The individual plans and projects submitted by farmers and groups serve as the strategies for implementing the goals and objectives of the farm plan.