

Interstate 70/Route 160 Area Future Land Use Plan

City of Highland, Illinois Comprehensive Plan Update June 29th, 2009



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APPENDIX 2. I-70 / Route 160 Future Land Use Plan

SECTION 1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the I-70/Route 160 planning process and this plan was twofold;

1. Build consensus regarding the future growth and preservation of the city's northern limits and area east of Silver Lake; and
2. Better position the city to obtain funding for the design and construction of an interchange at I-70/160 and the associated public improvements and future land uses.

The I-70/Route 160 Plan helps prepare the City of Highland for the future by developing a long-range land use plan to help guide the future growth and development in the northernmost planning area of the City and east of Silver Lake. The Plan is an official update to the City's Comprehensive Plan and supplements all maps, sections and recommendations regarding the planning area as defined in the following section.

SECTION 2 PROJECT AREA

The project area contains approximately 5,000 acres and is centered around the proposed I-70 / Route 160 interchange. The limits of the project area includes; Silver Lake to the west, Highway 40/143 to the east, Silver Lake Road to the north and Troxler Avenue to the south.

SECTION 3 PLANNING PROCESS

A key component of the planning process was public engagement. The public engagement program consisted of three (3) public meetings with the joint Planning and Zoning Committee, several interviews with key stakeholders and a visioning focus session which included a visual preference survey. The following critical issues analysis provides a summary of the public engagement process findings.

SECTION 4 CRITICAL ISSUES REPORT

The following Critical Issues Report provides a summation of the issues raised during the I-70/160 Focus Session and meetings with decision makers. The intent of the public participation process was to define how residents want Highland to develop within the northern growth opportunity areas over the next 10-15 years. The responses gathered during the public engagement process help identify Highland's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as they relate to the future growth and development of the city's north growth and opportunity areas.

The following findings were recorded during the February 10th Focus Session, the joint P&Z Meeting held on November 11, 2008 and meetings with the City's decision makers. The citizen comments and recommendations are instrumental in identifying the future vision, needs and desires of Highland. This information will help establish a direction for the future as it relates to the growth and development of the area north of the City's present limits and east of Silver Lake. The goals, objectives and future land use recommendations for the Specific Area Plan will be based on the following citizen defined strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Section 4.1 Strengths

- Recreation center & campus
- Schools: recent improvements
- Downtown: fountain / square improvements / wheelchair accessible-sidewalks
- Roundabouts & road improvements
- Hospital / Emergency services
- Variety of places to worship
- Numerous community organizations & festivals
- Generating our own power and water
- Close to St. Louis

Section 4.2 Weaknesses

- Poor street planning and traffic flow; building streets without curbs and sidewalks & subdivisions with poor traffic circulation.
- Incomplete peripheral route
- Lack of bike/pedestrian trails. Northtown development has taken place without much thought to pedestrian traffic crossing the tracks.
- Lack of control of 160
- Too much development- overbuilt. There are too many housing developments. Condition of residential areas in entry and main areas of community lack pride.
- Too many apartments
- Vacant buildings
- Limited activities at the lake
- Railroad divides the city
- Economy and its impact on industry.
- High taxes with continued increases without benefits.
- Park and recreation maintenance- especially at City Lake Park.
- Street & sewer maintenance
- Redundant driveway/parking access– Especially at Sixth Street at Highland Supply.
- Putting the needs of business owners and corporations before the citizens.
- Street flooding- broken water mains

Section 4.3 Opportunities

- The development of a full-service interchange at 160 & I-70 is our biggest opportunity. It should include the following elements:
 1. Include the development of gateway features.
 2. Provide direct access to the Square and Downtown and open the city's retail and commercial districts to a much larger regional consumer-base due to the ease of access and convenience.
 3. Relieve traffic by providing an alternative, full service interstate access point to the city and decrease traffic congestion.
 4. Decrease emergency vehicle response times.
 5. Promote retail, industrial and residential growth- throughout the city.
 6. Provides a viable location for the hospital. The hospital would draw medical office, neighborhood commercial and residential uses and provide salaried jobs.
 7. Development of a visitor's center.
 8. Provides the opportunity for more growth.
- Develop true walkability in the area via the installation of a lake trail and comprehensive walking network.

- Plan and implement a perimeter route to relieve traffic on 160.
- Railroad
- Widen 160 to include more lanes, medians, multi-purpose path, street trees, boulevard lighting and landscaping.
- Dot the area with ball diamonds, open play fields, picnic/outdoor meeting areas and public art.
- The new interchange provides an opportunity to bring fiber optics to town.
- Develop a water walk, sculpture, arts/art related store and pedestrian and bike trails- all connected to visitor center.
- More development of Silver Lake. The City should acquire more property for park development along the lake. This area should be primarily residential with amenities to residential living.
- Add at least two north/south roads, east and west of 160.
- Criss-cross the area with sidewalks, trails and bike paths.
- Develop with the same order and consistency that the original town was developed, with updates that are in time with what people want.

Section 4.4 Threats

- Too commercialized. The area should not be too commercialized.
- Unwanted businesses; No truck stops
- Hospital relocating outside the city limits.
- Property taxes
- Loss of industry
- Retail competition. Additional retail at the interchange could kill downtown.
- Loss of jobs/economy
- Infrastructure
- Regionalized healthcare
- Traffic congestion
- Limitations on how/where to expand. Highland is land-locked.
- Out of control taxes.
- Growing too fast. People want to keep Highland small and isolated.
- Creating easier access from the interstate might invite trouble/crime. The City is already attracting transients.
- Dwindling job market and industrial tax base.

SECTION 5 FUTURE LAND USE MAP

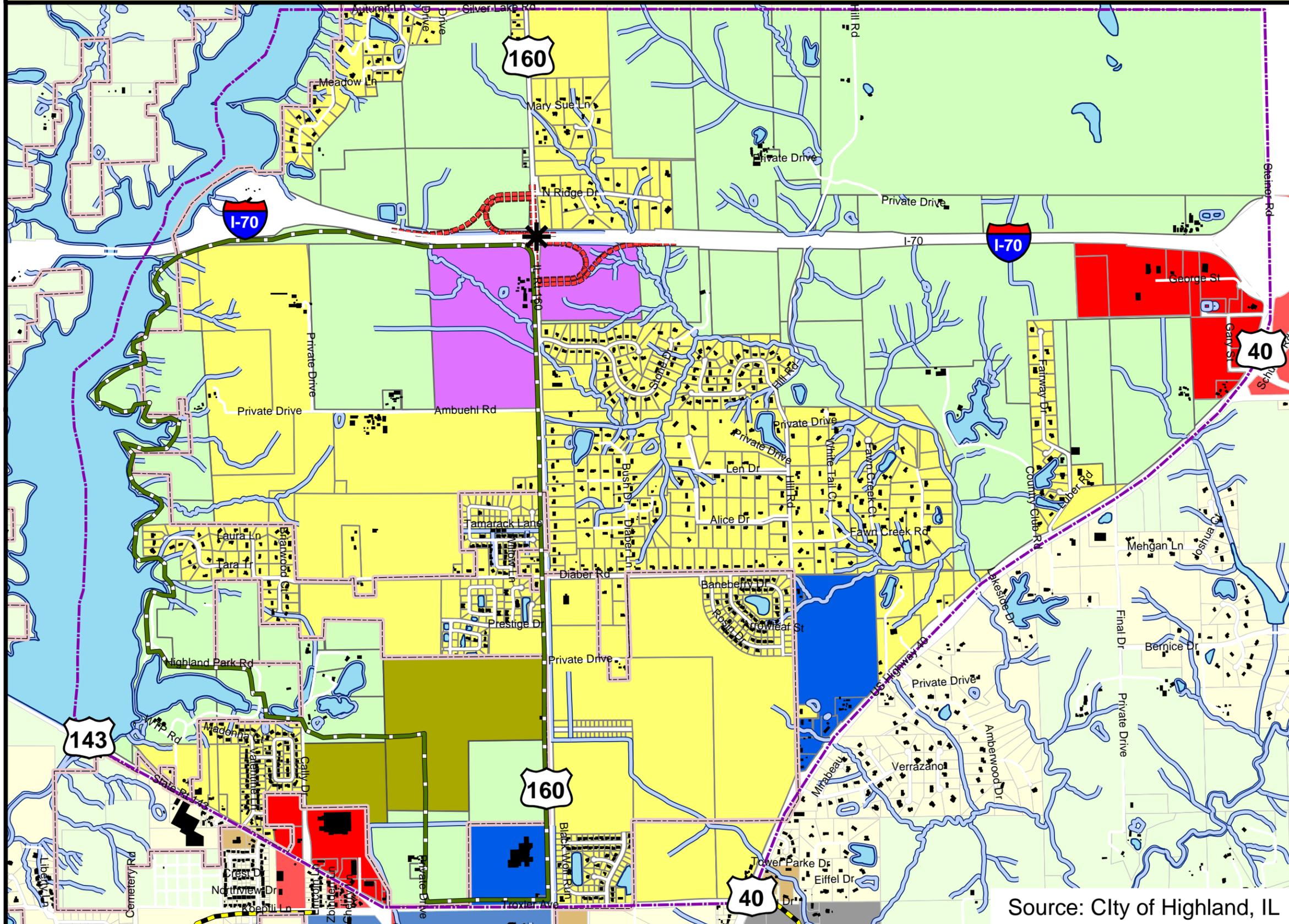
The Future Land Use Map includes the designated growth and opportunity areas located north of the city's present limits and east of Silver Lake. All areas are colored or shaded to represent a specific future land use category that corresponds with the description contained in the future land use category matrix on page 8. The I-70/160 Future Land Use Plan provides a long range plan for the future growth of the City at the proposed interchange location. There may be slight modifications to the precise boundaries of each future land use category when a lot-by-lot analysis is conducted during plan implementation. The intent of the I-70/160 Land Use Plan is to serve as a "road map" for promoting planned, orderly development in the City's northern growth and opportunity areas.

The I-70/160 Specific Area Plan will not become reality unless the daily decisions and implementation activities in Highland are consistent with the Plan. The decision to locate new uses and activities in this area should be based upon factors such as impact on existing development, capacity of adjacent streets and compatibility between the built and natural environment. The recommendations of this plan should be used with a sense of flexibility. Development proposals that do not exactly match the I-70/160 Area Plan or future land use goals, objectives and recommendations, but reflect marketplace demands, should be given reasonable consideration. However, all future development should strive to achieve an acceptable level of consistency with the goals and objectives of this plan and should not present public service burdens or compromise the health, safety or welfare of the community.

City of Highland, IL Comprehensive Plan Update

I-70 / Ill Route 160 Future Land Use Plan

Future Land Use & Gateway Plan



Legend

- Study Area
- Corporate Boundary
- Lakes
- Streams
- Proposed Interchange
- Gateway Trail
- Peripheral Route
- Primary Gateway

Future Land Use

- Commercial
- Institutional
- Planned Mixed Use
- Non-Urban
- Single Family
- Multi-Family



June 29, 2009

STREILER PLANNING

Source: City of Highland, IL

SECTION 6 FUTURE LAND USE MATRIX

The shaded areas shown on the *I-70/160 Area Plan* include the designated growth areas north of the City’s present limits and east of Silver Lake. The future land use categories include:

- Residential
- Multiple Family
- Non-Urban/Agriculture
- Public Use
- Commercial
- Mixed Use

Table 1: Future Land Use Categories & Descriptions		
Description (Estimated Acres)	Density	Proposed Uses
Residential (1,946)	Average minimum lot size: No less than 5,000 SF per single family dwelling and 2500 SF for single family attached dwellings.	-Single Family Detached -Single Family Attached -Public/Institutional/Gov’t -Trails & Greenways -Parks
<p>The “Residential” land use category is intended for single-family homes and attached single family dwellings arranged in subdivisions with similarly sized lots and reflecting densities consistent with the City’s single family and two-family residential zoning densities. New homes should have a door and at least one window facing the street. Front porches and other architectural entrance features are encouraged. Garages should be located in the rear or set back behind the primary plane of the façade. Single-family attached dwellings (villas) are recommended on a case by case basis as a planned use.</p>		
Multiple Family (171)	Average minimum lot size: Single family: 5,000 SF. Two-family: 2,500 SF/per du Multi-family: 1,800 SF/per du. Maximum: 24 units per acre.	- Duplex, triplex & townhomes - Apartments - Public/Institutional/Gov’t - Trails & Greenways - Parks
<p>The “Multiple Family” land use category is intended for a mix of residential housing types and densities. Any new use or major redevelopment of an area designated Multiple Family should provide buffers and screening between uses and additional improvements necessary to bring streets and other infrastructure into compliance with the City’s standards. Unified ownership and perpetual control and maintenance of any multi-family structure and common use areas are recommended. The recommended maximum density is 24 units per acre, or as approved by the Combined Planning & Zoning Board. Parking areas and garages should be located in the rear, shielded from the street. Doors and windows should be oriented towards the street. Structures should not be more than 3-stories unless as approved by the Combined Planning & Zoning Board.</p>		
Non-Urban / Agriculture (2,356)	Average minimum lot size: 3 acres or as determined by the Combined Planning & Zoning Board based on the level of compatibility with surrounding zones and uses	-Public and Private Parks -Trails & Greenways -Schools, Churches, Libraries -Government Facilities -Planned residential-cluster sub. -Gateway features along I-70
<p>The “Non-Urban” land use category is intended for agricultural uses, low density residential, active and passive public parks, open space, recreational uses and other uses where public utilities are not immediately necessary. Areas designated as “Non-Urban/Agriculture” generally have limited access to infrastructure, such as paved roads and connections to municipal utilities. New single-family homes should be located on lots greater than 3 acres. Compact, cluster subdivisions, schools and other institutional uses are recommended as planned uses in areas that are served by city utilities and improved roads. Lots shall be served by utility and sewer connections. The cost to extend or improve utilities and roads should be shared by the developer and installed prior to occupancy of any new homes or buildings. Cluster developments and other planned residential subdivision designs are recommended as approved by the Combined Planning & Zoning Board on a case by case basis. Silver Lake and its associated watershed areas are recommended as the location of a future greenbelt that includes trails, preserved natural areas and other passive recreation uses.</p>		

Table: 1 Future Land Use Categories & Descriptions		
Description (Estimated Acres)	Density	Proposed Uses
Public Use (117)	As determined on a case-by-case basis and depending on the level of compatibility with surrounding zones and uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Public and Private Parks -Trails & Greenways -Schools, Churches, Libraries -Government Facilities
<p>Public uses are allowed in all of the designated future land use categories subject to City approval. Each public use should comply, to the extent possible, with the applicable zoning and design criteria. All public and quasi-public uses and facilities should provide access to public roadways, public transportation and major utility trunk lines. Recommended uses include government, institutional, active and passive public parks, open space and public recreational uses.</p>		
Commercial (145)	Densities should be equivalent to the city's commercial zoning districts or as approved by the Combined Planning & Zoning Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial Service & Retail - Office, Medical - Public/Institutional/Gov't - Trails & Greenways - Parks
<p>Areas designated as "Commercial" have already been developed with a mix of commercial, industrial and other uses. Any new use or change in use in the Commercial areas should follow planned development techniques that help integrate the new or changed use(s) with the existing uses and transportation system. All uses that generate high volumes of traffic or require more than 25 parking stalls should have direct access to an arterial road, unless waived by the Combined Planning & Zoning Board. The intent of the Commercial land use category is to encourage reinvestment in the City's existing developed areas, while increasing the level of compatibility with adjacent land uses. Access control, landscaping, buffering, and monument signage (in lieu of pole signage) is recommended.</p>		
Mixed Use (138)	As determined on a case-by-case basis. Single tenant, big box uses are discouraged. Planned, mixed-use developments with outdoor gathering areas are recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Commercial -Medical -Governmental/Public -Residential -Gateway design features -Trails & Greenways -Parks & Public Plazas
<p>The "Mixed Use" future land use category is created herein to facilitate the creation of a regional mixed use destination center, medical facility and major gateway into Highland. A full-service interchange and gateway design features are recommended at the intersection of I-70 and Rte 160. The area designated "Mixed Use" is intended to accommodate a wide range of market-driven land uses and development types. Recommended uses, by category, include: Commercial uses; such as retail, commercial services, office, financial services (excluding payday loan/title loan uses), dry cleaning, food or drug sales, postal/mailing service, art galleries and automobile oriented uses (excluding truck stops & motels); Medical Uses; including medical services & treatment facilities (i.e. hospitals) and medical office buildings; Governmental/Public Uses; including parks, trails, visitors centers, libraries, etc. Residential Uses and any mix of the above uses are envisioned. Gateway design features are recommended at the intersection location to improve the visibility, aesthetics and to promote Highland's heritage and downtown business district. Future development should provide a wide range of local and regional services, indoor and outdoor public gathering areas and contribute to the design, installation or maintenance of the gateway feature.</p>		

SECTION 7 FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The I-70/ Route 160 Future Land Use Plan serves as a guide for the planned and orderly growth within the city's most anticipated growth areas. The plan focuses on the northernmost planning limits of the City, east of Silver Lake. The intention of the plan is to consolidate future development along existing arterial roadways (Route 160) and to create a planned mixed use destination served by a full service interchange and highlighted by a regional gateway at I-70 and Route 160. The future land use plan was developed to provide a tool to preserve the area's signature natural areas and implement the community's desire for "place making" where uses are integrated into a memorable village setting that is pedestrian oriented and where people can live, work, shop and gather. In the words of one Focus Session Participant, the area should be "Developed with the same order and consistency that the original town of Highland was developed, with uses and amenities that are in time with what people want."

The Plan anticipates modest, well planned growth provided the long-range goal and objectives of the Plan are implemented incrementally. The Plan includes the Future Land Use Map, Future Land Use Matrix and Implementation Table, all of which must be considered when making decisions regarding a new use or change in use. Zoning changes, subdivisions and new development or redevelopment should be reviewed for consistency with the future land use plan during the planning & zoning process. The Plan is a fluid document that should be periodically reviewed and updated to accommodate the latest trends in development and lifestyle changes. The following sections provide an overview of the major issues and summary of the findings that help support the vision, goals and objectives for the plan.

Section 7.1 Proposed I-70 Interchange

To effectively provide access to and from the City's businesses, the Downtown Square, local neighborhoods, parks, roads and schools, the City must plan for the funding, design and installation of an additional point of access to Interstate 70, preferably at Route 160. Better accessibility to Interstate 70 will ultimately reduce costs and delay in the movement of people, goods and emergency vehicles. The recommended interchange provides consumers increased accessibility to existing businesses, employment centers and other destination centers within the city.

The proposed interchange is a major public sector investment; therefore it was necessary to carefully assess the trade-off between location and design during the planning process. The following assessments and considerations were made with regard to the location and installation of the interchange:

- a) The location of the Route I-70/160 Interchange, in relation to existing and future land use development, provides substantial growth opportunity within close proximity to the City's jurisdictional and service locations.
- b) A future interchange at I-70 and Route 160 opens up vast areas of currently unused or underutilized property for the purposes of efficiently supporting commercial, industrial and residential growth.
- c) The amount of open land at this location, its close proximity to existing City services, and seamless Interstate access will provide the most desirable location in the region for high quality, high revenue generating enterprises.
- d) Due to the potential for a number of developments to co-exist and the large scale of businesses this location can support, there is a great opportunity to amortize the capital

improvement costs for supplying utilities, roads and services among several potential property owners incrementally as the area becomes developed.

- e) The City had a commitment from IDOT for purposes of constructing a new interchange at this location and has already made IDOT and the appropriate state and local officials aware of the City's interest in having an interchange at this location.
- f) An interchange at this location relieves, rather than intensifies, traffic congestion currently experienced within the City's transportation system. This is critical for the movement of everyday vehicles, especially emergency vehicles who need direct and uninterrupted access to and from the interstate.
- g) Future land use planning in this area will help preserve significant natural and agricultural areas.

The installation of a full service interchange and access to I-70 at Route 160 is recommended for the following factors:

- a) The City is willing to provide police, fire, and maintain the areas that fall within the City's jurisdiction.
- b) The interchange and associated improvements follows the principals of "System Planning" by serving the greater need of the region and improving upon the overall local transportation network.
- c) There is considerable community support for the proposed interchange and a general consensus that it would improve the health, safety and wellness of the community. The city should adopt a resolution regarding the proposed interchange location and findings of fact to be available to IDOT and any other funding entity.
- d) The future interchange is in keeping with the City's current and future land use patterns.
- e) Highland has a stable population base that is growing. Furthermore, the proposed interchange provides access to a much larger regional market. Population in the year 2000 was 8,438 and the population in 2005 was 9,433. This most recent population estimate represents a growth rate of over 12.5%.
- f) The study area has strong incomes and a relatively low cost of living. The median family income for the City of Highland in 2007 was \$49,682.00, up from \$39,524 in 2000. In 2008, the cost of living index in Highland was 79.2; the U.S. average is 100.
- g) Daytime Population grows by 33.5% or 2,829. Additionally, there is a high percentage of residents who work in Highland; (47.3%, 1,954). While the robust daytime population provides a strong local market for retailers, it also reinforces the need for good local traffic circulation and access to regional markets/interstate traffic.

In summary, the recommended interchange provides much needed relief from the current traffic loads and improved traffic circulation for the City's entire transportation system. Furthermore, the future development and sustainability of the planning area relies heavily on the installation of a full service interchange at I-70 at 160. The recommended I-70/Route 160 interchange is also intended to serve as a prominent gateway into the City and is intended to support a broad spectrum of planned development scenarios and market driven land uses, as demonstrated in the following sections.

Section 7.2 Mixed-Use

Planned within the central portion of the 5,000 acre study area, at the proposed interchange location, is a 140 acre planned mixed use area with almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of interstate frontage. This area is intended to create new employment opportunities and provide a strong economic base for the City of Highland. The mixed use development area should also serve as a neighborhood gathering place and retail hub for the local and regional market that compliments rather than competes with the downtown businesses and other established commercial districts. A range of residential housing types such as lofts, apartments and townhomes are also recommended to help support commercial uses at this location.

The latest trend in the retail market is a new form of a "mixed-use mall" that builds upon the strength and diversity of a downtown or historic Main Street. These main-street malls are sometimes referred to as "town centers" for this reason. Town centers typically include residential dwellings, which bring "life" to the center and fashion-oriented boutique stores which give the center "style". Therefore, town centers are also referred to as "lifestyle centers". These two terms are used interchangeably in the Plan.

Lifestyle Centers are not just retail destinations. They provide a festival marketplace that includes entertainment, alfresco dining, unique shopping experiences, creative window displays as well as casual public settings that encourage civic-oriented activities such as meeting, mingling, strolling, exercising and people watching. Town Center designers have learned that the shops alone do not bring back repeat visitors. A successful town center needs quality public spaces that relate to an identifiable architectural theme and interactive storefronts that reinforce the human scale; these are the elements that are recommended to help attract repeat consumers/visitors.

Through good design and thoughtful tenant selection, mixed use developments can successfully integrate a wide range of land uses. The objective is to allow visitors to become citizens again and not feel like consumers, which in turn increases the length of visits to the site and the number of visits. Non-retail activities bring life to shopping districts around the clock and increases public accessibility, creating a spontaneous marketplace. This results in a development wherein the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The synergies created between complimentary tenants, well-planned site amenities and pedestrian activity can create a sense of place that visitors want to experience again and again. As a result, mixed use developments have become very successful and are gaining considerable popularity.

A lifestyle center or similar mixed-use center with a medical facility or hospital is recommended for Highland. A lifestyle center would provide the retail and entertainment choices and opportunities desired by the community, while the hospital would provide the necessary health care needs. The mixed-use development should also provide a centralized meeting place that encourages both chance encounters among residents as well as planned social engagements of all types and a variety of sizes. Lifestyle centers provide a diversity of shops and activities that compliment, rather than compete with, downtown businesses and big box retailers. A successful lifestyle center will increase the city's share of the regional retail spending attracting consumers from a larger geographic region and limiting the need for local residents to travel outside the city for retail goods and services. The proposed interchange location is the most suitable location for a future mixed-use center. This area is also recommended for a hospital or regional medical facility, which is recommended to co-exist with the mixed-use center. A hospital or similar use would support the mixed-use center businesses and contribute to the overall vitality of the area. The key to successful mixed land use planning is connectivity,

compatible design and synergistic land uses located in a compact, integrated setting, these elements and the following design guidelines are recommended for any development proposed in the City future mixed use areas.

1. Design to the human scale and maintaining a traditional town center atmosphere throughout.
2. Balance the needs of tenants/consumers and civic facilities/citizens in an integrated, campus-like setting.
3. Buildings on the edge must provide a smooth transition with the surrounding uses.
4. Architectural design must maintain a high level of visual interest.
5. Buildings should be pulled close to internal drive lanes to accommodate pedestrians by providing easy access, window displays and shelter. Incorporate architecture and building technology that allows the outdoor areas of the town center to adapt to the local climate and seasonal changes.
6. Awnings, stoops, balconies and porches should be used to establish a connection between indoor and outdoor space.
7. Provide outdoor amenities such as public art, benches, fountains, pedestrian lighting, landscaping, banners and other ornamentation tied together in a unifying, thematic fashion.
8. Include a combination of sit-down restaurants and other outdoor vendors and activities. Restaurants create excellent land use synergies with retail and medical uses as they comfort various uses, provide spontaneous meeting places and prolong stays.

The intent of the mixed-use future land use category is to provide a suitable location for an expanded or relocated hospital (the nearest full-service hospital is over 15 miles away) and to expand the future land use possibilities and development configurations permitted within the City, thereby allowing the market to dictate the highest and best use of these properties. Uses envisioned in the mixed-use future land use category include, retail, commercial services, office, financial services (excluding payday loan/title loan uses), medical services, dry cleaning, food or drug sales, automobile oriented uses, postal/mailing services, governmental uses, residential uses and any mix of the above uses. However, as identified in the previous section, the strength of this location relies on the installation of the aforementioned interchange.

Section 7.3 Non-Urban Land Use & Preservation Techniques

The largest single future land use category is “Non-Urban”, with encompasses over 2,350 acres. The non-urban land use classification is intended to manage growth and preserve the natural resources in the planning area, which includes vast areas of prime agricultural land, significant wooded areas, natural corridors, Silver Lake and several tributaries, channels and riparian areas. Uses recommended in the “Non-Urban” areas should be limited to existing agriculture uses or agriculturally related uses, single-family detached residential dwellings, parks and institutions. Multiple-family development should not be located in areas designated “Non-Urban”. Conservation/cluster subdivisions are recommended where utilities area provided and substantial portions of the site are conserved and maintained to preserve the areas small-town/agrarian character. The following section explains what a conservation subdivision is and provides recommended conservation design guidelines.

Section 7.4 Future Residential Growth

The “traditional household” has changed dramatically over the last 20 years. Today only 25% of homebuyers are the traditional two parent/two child household. This change in household demographics requires a diverse mix of housing types, sizes and prices ranges. For example, twenty (20) years ago golf courses, subdivision pools, large lots and other materialistic amenities “sold” homes. Today’s homebuyer wants more intrinsic elements; such as neighborhoods that possess a sense of place, connectivity, safety, convenience and diversity. Today home purchases are driven by local or regional access to good jobs, education, medical, recreation and a full range of cultural, arts, hospitality, entertainment and shopping opportunities where one can feel a part of the community.

The future residential growth area is approximately 1,946 acres and distributed throughout the planning area. The recommended residential dwelling types are limited to single-family and planned attached single-family dwellings with recommended densities ranging from 8 to 17 dwelling units per acre. There is only one area for future multifamily growth. The area is approximately 171 acres and is concentrated in the southernmost portion of the study area, just north of the Highway 40 commercial district and the high school. Densities between 8–24 units per acre are recommended in the area designated for multi-family. The location recommended for multifamily provides good access to arterial roads and minimal exposure to existing single family homes or areas zoned single family.

The small town character and family values found in many of the local neighborhoods are defining characteristics of Highland, and highly valued by the community. This plan recommends the continued development of quality neighborhoods that reinforce these characteristics. New housing development is also recommended to offer housing choices, provide residents with a sense of identity and connection to their community and follow the development policies, goals & objectives contained in Chapter 4 of the City’s Comprehensive Plan and the site development and design guidelines contained in Chapter 6.

When asked which type of subdivision was most preferred in the City’s residential growth areas, the focus session participants recommended cluster/conservation subdivisions over conventional large lot subdivisions and traditional design/new urbanism subdivisions for the project area. The preferences were broken down as follows:

1. Cluster/Conservation Subdivisions: 57%
2. Traditional Neighborhood Design Subdivisions: 36%
3. Conventional Large Lot Subdivisions: 7%

This plan recommends conservation subdivision design as a tool to help preserve natural areas, environmental corridors and prime agricultural areas while allowing residential development that is well planned, managed and sustainable. The following conservation subdivision design recommendations are intended to supplement the guidelines provided in Chapters 4 and 6 of the Comprehensive Plan.

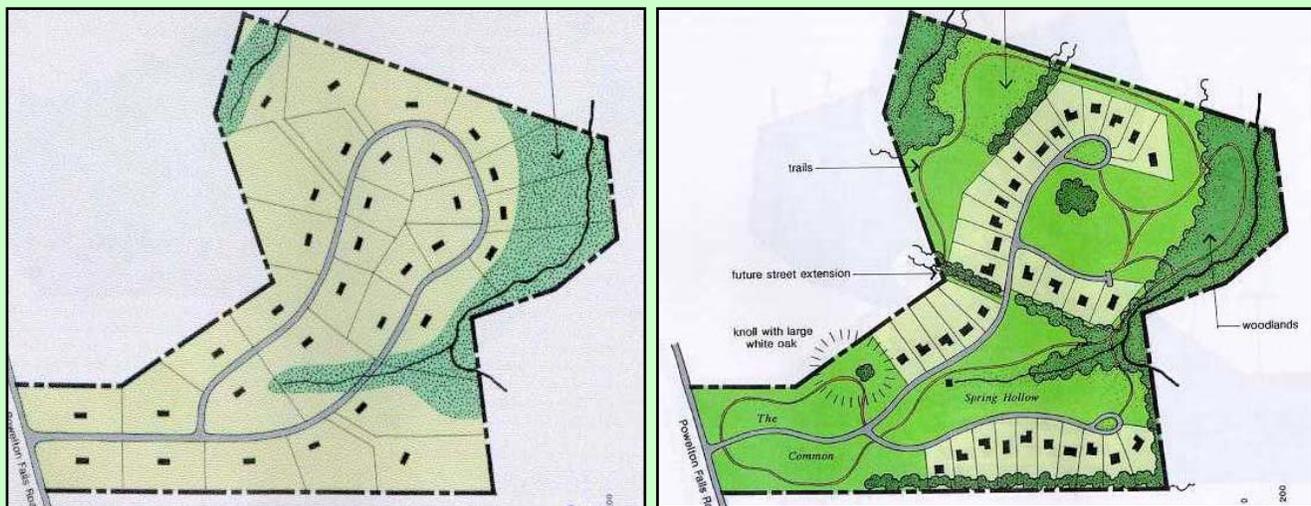
Conservation Residential Subdivision Design

Conservation residential subdivision design is recommended as a development option. While the city’s future residential growth areas are largely undeveloped, they contain precious agricultural land and sensitive natural areas that should be preserved. The intent of

conservation subdivision design recommendations is to preserve natural areas while permitting residential densities that are consistent with the City's underlying residential zoning districts.

Generally, conservation subdivision design maintains the same density as a conventional subdivision and allows the same uses as permitted in the underlying zoning district. This is a concept known as "density neutral". The biggest difference is that a conservation subdivision preserves 50% or more of the development site. This is accomplished by minimizing the development footprint by building compact subdivisions with smaller lots, leaving vast areas undisturbed. Lake and golf course developments follow the same subdivision design concepts as conservation subdivisions. Conservation subdivisions would require relief from the City's minimum lot sizes and setbacks. Developing environmentally sensitive lands in this manner provides for a more sustainable use of land and resources. The land conserved as a result of cluster or conservation subdivision design should be dedicated in perpetuity as undeveloped common ground or open space. Figure 1.0 illustrates the difference between conventional and cluster subdivision design.

Figure 1.0 Conventional Subdivision Design VS. Cluster Subdivision Design



Source: Randall Arendt- "Conservation Subdivisions"

Section 7.5 Gateways

Primary points of entrance, major intersections and key points of interest are often a visitor's first and most lasting impression of a city. These areas function as "gateways" and should be aesthetically improved to positively influence visitors' perceptions of a place. The planning and design considerations given to gateways should be based upon a hierarchy of importance, based upon purpose, location, traffic volumes, street function and visibility. As such, gateways should be identified as primary, secondary and transition gateways.

The city presently does not have any primary entrance features. Therefore, special attention and planning consideration is recommended to help create a primary gateway feature at the

proposed interchange location at I-70 and 160. The gateway should be designed to reflect the heritage and/or the social or physical characteristics of Highland and to make a lasting impression. Features used for primary gateways may include:

1. A prominent feature such as large-scale public art, statuary, fountains, gardens or park-like settings;
2. A building or structure of special architectural significance. The Gateway Arch is the most famous local example of a regional gateway feature of architectural significance. Local landmarks, welcoming centers, museums and other prominent civic buildings or significant architectural features may constitute a primary gateway. If a building or structure is proposed, special consideration should be given to the building orientation, design and material selection.
3. Signage to clearly identify entrance into Highland. Brick, stone or other high-quality materials and the city crest/logo should be incorporated into the signage to further establish the gateway; and
4. Landscaping to accent the proposed gateway features. A combination of street trees, ornamental trees, shrubbery, ground covers and ornamental plantings should be used to accent and coordinate the design.

The primary gateway recommended at I-70 and 160 should include a combination of the above elements and should be designed along a common theme. In addition to the I-70/Route 160 primary gateway feature, this plan recommends continuing the gateway design theme along Route 160, leading all the way to the square. The recommended improvements include:

1. installing a landscaped median along various section of 160 to Troxler Avenue,
2. creating a linear park and multi-purpose trail meandering along Route 160,
3. providing street trees along both sides of 160 and within the recommended median,
4. providing pedestrian lighting along both side of 160 and along the recommended multi-purpose trail.

The desired end result would be an artistic or memorable primary gateway feature at the interchange that would be “tied” to the Square via a liner park-like boulevard (Route 160) that supports a variety of travel modes and activities.

The city should work closely with local developers to ensure that adequate aesthetic considerations are given in the development of the recommended primary gateway and associated streetscape improvements. The City should develop incentives that encourage the private sector to fund the acquisition, installation and ongoing maintenance of the gateway and streetscape features. For example, in exchange for the design, installation and maintenance of a gateway feature, the City might allow a private citizen, group or business to be publicly recognized within the design of the gateway in a manner similar to the adopt a highway

program. The City may also want to launch a design competition to solicit ideas for the best or most appropriate primary gateway feature.

Section 7.6 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Alternative transportation modes are necessary to accommodate the diverse needs of the population. To ensure everyone has access to the City's transportation system, public transit, sidewalks and bike paths should be provided in addition to providing adequate roads and roadway maintenance. The following is a brief summary of some of the recommended alternative transportation modes.

Pedestrian paths and trails provide alternative means for people accessing activity centers and neighborhoods without relying on vehicular transportation. Focus session participants strongly recommend the implementation of a citywide system of sidewalks. The sidewalks on the Square have been replaced; however, the sidewalks along the perimeter of the Square and along most residential roads need repair or replacement. More importantly, sidewalks and/or bike paths need to be installed throughout the City to link neighborhoods, schools, parks, churches, businesses and employment centers.

This Plan recommends the installation of sidewalks along all roadways and the creation of a community-wide greenway. The greenway is intended to increase pedestrian travel, encourage active lifestyles and expand year-round park and recreation options for all ages. The implementation of a linear park system is an effective way to create a "preservation corridor" that provides multi-generational recreational opportunities. Equally important is the preservation of the city's precious signature natural areas that fall within the recommended greenway and that provide key wildlife corridors. Trail locations and sidewalk improvements should link to the City's roads, historic downtown, schools, churches, businesses, recreational facilities and neighborhoods. The general location of the recommended trails and greenways are shown on the Future Land Use Map. Trailheads, picnic areas, restroom facilities and parking areas should be provided at the major points of access to primary trail/pathway segments. Additionally, educational kiosks should be located at trailhead locations and along trail routes. Trailheads, kiosks and trail way improvements must be designed and located in areas that attract a wide range of users.

Section 7.7 Growth Management

Growth management can be described as a conscious public decision to restrain, accommodate or encourage development. Management techniques can be applied to any type of growth, but of particular concern to the City of Highland is the current and future supply of quality commercial and residential development opportunities. The growth of the land uses mentioned above are managed in part by proposing areas of commercial, residential and mixed-use growth on the Future Land Use Map and developing strategies for each land use. In addition to proposing land uses, the city can manage growth by extending the city boundary and concentrating municipal services within the planning area. This strategy will minimize sprawl and the inefficient use of the land, resources and municipal services.

The purpose for managing growth in the City of Highland is multi-fold, they include:

1. The protection of the city's water source (Silver Lake) and its tributaries;
2. the preservation of farmland & the income generating potential of the natural land;

3. the prevention of overextending municipal services and infrastructure;
4. the prevention of vacancies and thus economic decline within existing city neighborhoods and commercial areas; and
5. the control of the types and quality of development at the city periphery.

The challenge faced by the City of Highland is finding the balance between investing in new developments within the project area or reinvesting in the city's existing built areas. To remain competitive with other cities in the region, the City of Highland must allow and encourage commercial development by providing adequate commercial property with good access to the City's transportation system and utility services. Potential for commercial development exists in several areas as indicated on the Future Land Use Map. Future commercial development in these areas can be used to generate city tax revenue, expand employment opportunities, and increase shopping and entertainment alternatives for area residents as well as tourists and travelers. However, this growth must not occur in a manner that will contribute to the further deterioration of downtown. Businesses that could feasibly operate in a downtown building should be given incentives to do so.

Section 7.8 Annexation

Annexation into the growth areas identified on the Future Land Use Plan is recommended to gain more control of the area to preserve the natural character of the planning area and to provide for future growth. In response to the community's support, and due to the City's ability to provide centralized services to adjacent unincorporated areas, the city should prepare an organized annexation plan that identifies and prioritizes the annexation of specific parcels within the City's growth areas. The annexation plan should include thorough inspections of all public infrastructure within the proposed annexation area and a thorough service provision evaluation. Once the plan is completed, the City should immediately begin acquiring pre-annexation agreements with adjoining land owners, specifically at the proposed interchange location and other key opportunity areas. Partnerships between the City, property owners and developers should be established early in the process to help avoid unanticipated repercussions during or after the annexation process. To the fullest extent possible, future development and land uses within the annexation area should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and comply with the City's Zoning Code.

Annexation of any land into the City should be considered carefully. While each situation is different, the end result should provide specific benefits to the city as well as the annexing area. The areas of land shaded on the Future Land Use Map that fall outside the City's limits are the areas the City should consider for future annexation. Before any annexation decisions are made, the following general questions should be considered.

1. Will the annexation lessen demand to develop in-fill property or redevelop existing sites and buildings within the current city boundary?
2. Will the annexation place any unacceptable political, financial, physical or operational demands or expectations upon the city for the provision of services or infrastructure?
3. Will the annexation allow for more appropriate guidance of future development within the annexation area?

4. Will the annexation bring existing land uses into the city that are desirable and have some benefit to the city in terms of revenue or the sense of community?
5. Is the annexation in the best interest of the city as a whole?
6. Does the annexation make economic sense from both long and short range perspectives?

SECTION 8 FUTURE LAND USE VISION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The I-70/Route 160 Specific Plan is intended to accommodate a broad spectrum of planned development scenarios. The vision, goals and implementation strategies provided herein were co-authored by the community and/or respond to the citizen-defined critical issues indentified during the planning process. Therefore, the Plan represents the needs, desires and wishes of the community.

Section 8.1 Vision

The Vision for the I-70 / Route 160 Future Land Use Plan is:

“To promote the City’s small-town character, quality work force, active lifestyles and natural amenities while providing a well-planned community through managed growth and improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation.”

Section 8.2 Goals

The goal of the Future Land Use Plan is to procure support and funding for the installation of a full-service interchange and primary gateway into Highland at the intersection of I-70 & Route 160 supported by a mixed-use destination center, well connected residential growth areas and low impact “non-urban” areas that help preserve the agricultural character and significant natural resources of the area.

The intent is to create a destination center and gateway into the city and better connect the City’s downtown to both regional and local markets via a linear park-like boulevard (Route 160) that is highlighted by thematic landscaping, banners, lighting, pedestrian & bicycle trails, pathways and other amenities.

Section 8.3 Objectives, Recommendations & Implementation Strategies

The following objectives, recommendations and implementation strategies were developed with consideration given to the comments recorded during the public engagement sessions, public hearings and collaboration with City staff and the elected and appointed officials. The future land use recommendations consider the compatibility of various land use categories and indicate how land may be best utilized or redeveloped in a manner that helps achieve the community’s vision. The Future Land Use Plan depicts a number of traditional land use categories and provides a range of land use, growth and revitalization strategies. These strategies seek to create opportunities for a wide range of uses while ensuring compatibility between existing and proposed development as well as the preservation of natural and agricultural areas. The I-70/ Route 160 Area Plan updates and supplements the Highland Comprehensive Plan and includes the following objectives and implementation strategies:

Table 2 Implementation Action Plan	
Objective 1: Install a full-service interchange at Route 160 and I-70 that provides improved traffic circulation, balanced growth opportunities and supports the preservation of natural resources in the city's northern region and east of Silver Lake.	
Implementation Strategies and Recommendations:	
1.	The immediate installation of a full service interchange at I-70 and 160 is needed to relieve congestion throughout the city's transportation system during peak traffic intervals and to mitigate the traffic generated from approved and anticipated development in the area.
2.	Proper spacing between grade separated interchanges on high-speed roads is recommended to preserve seamless traffic flow and to allow for safe and efficient weaving of traffic that is entering or exiting. AASHTO's recommended distance between interchanges on interstate roadways within urban areas is 10,560 feet (2 miles). This separation ensures adequate area is provided for traffic to make the transition from a road with a very high level of access control (I-70) to a highway with at-grade access points (160).
3.	In order to provide a safe distance for turning movement to occur along Highway 160 at the proposed interchange, a spacing of approximately 1320' is recommended from one end of the off ramp to the first private driveway on the left-hand side, median opening, or intersection with Route 160. When only right turns into or out of driveways or public roads are involved along 160, a shorter clearance area of 750 feet is recommended. This distance must be longer where excessive travel speeds are permitted. Presently there are no roads or driveways along 160 within the distances specified. However, it is recommended that future drives are separated according to the above distances.
Objective 2: Preserve the Agricultural and Natural Resources in the Area.	
Implementation Strategies and Recommendations:	
1.	Areas designated as Non-Urban on the Future Land Use Map should be limited to existing agriculture uses or agriculturally related uses, single-family detached residential dwellings, parks and institutions. Multiple-family development is not recommended.
2.	Generally, the areas recommended for future non-urban development are adjacent to Silver Lake, at the fringe of the City's present limits or areas already developed.
3.	Conservation subdivisions are recommended as a tool to help preserve sensitive natural areas and protect the area's agricultural lands on a case by case basis. Only areas served by publicly provided sewer and water are recommended for conservation subdivisions.
4.	The City should annex any areas that might be developed in the near future to ensure greater control of the timing, density and type of development. All proposed residential development that is not served by city sewer or water should provide at least three (3) acres per house lot.
Objective 3: Provide future residential growth areas.	
Implementation Strategies and Recommendations	
1.	Consolidate future single family residential development in the areas designated "Single Family" on the Future Land Use Map.
2.	All new residential subdivisions should be required to install sidewalks.
3.	All future high-density residential (multiple family) development shall have direct access to a major road and follow the residential design guidelines contained herein.

Table 2 Implementation Action Plan (continued)
<p>4. Develop a conservation residential overlay zoning district as part of the City’s Zoning Code. The overlay is recommended as a development option in the areas designated “Residential” and “Non-Urban” on the Future Land Use Map. The intent of the conservation overlay is to preserve the natural environment and provide significant areas for public use. Conservation subdivisions should maintain the same density as conventional subdivisions. The conservation overlay should allow greater flexibility in the site design by reducing the minimum and maximum standards for setbacks, lot widths and lot area. While large portions of the site will be undeveloped or preserved, developers should still be able to achieve the same density because the lots can be smaller, and clustered closely together leaving much more area for open space.</p>
<p>5. The City’s zoning code should be updated to help regulate the quantity, configuration and quality of open space to be established in future residential development and as a part of the recommended conservation overlay district requirements. The adoption of quantitative performance standards for open space is recommended to help achieve a sustainable balance between public and private spaces in residential developments.</p>
<p>6. New development should provide parks or payment in-lieu of parks to ensure a balanced supply of parks and recreation activities for all.</p>
<p>7. New development should be consistent with the development policies, goals & objectives contained in Chapter 4 of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.</p>
<p>8. Future multi-family development should be consistent with the design and development guidelines contained in Chapter 6 of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.</p>
<p>Objective 4: Create a Mixed-Use Destination Center.</p>
<p>Implementation Strategies and Recommendations</p>
<p>1. Encourage the future development of a mixed use center south of I-70 at Highway 160, as shown on the Future Land Use Map.</p>
<p>2. Recommended uses include, retail, commercial services, office, financial services (excluding payday loan/title loan uses), medical services, dry cleaning, food or drug sales, automobile oriented uses, postal/mailing services, governmental uses, residential uses and any mix of the above uses. A range of residential housing types such as lofts, apartments and single family homes are also recommended to help support commercial uses at this location.</p>
<p>3. The use of planned development procedures and regulations addressing signage, parking, landscaping and the preservation of existing structures are recommended to help mitigate negative land use externalities and ensure that the development is sensitive to the adjacent residential or other less intense uses.</p>
<p>4. The areas designated as “mixed-use” provides a viable location for a hospital and mixed use center. This plan recommends locating a hospital or similar medical use at the I-70/160 intersection to draw medical office users, neighborhood commercial businesses, residents and to provide salaried jobs. The following uses are also recommended and desired by the community in the area designated “mixed-use”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Visitors center b. Winery with views of the lake and outdoor dining. c. Restaurant with alfresco dining, such as rooftop dining, and views of the lake. d. Art gallery, theatre and outdoor cultural/arts facility. e. Retail
<p>5. The City’s zoning code should be reviewed and updated to include a mixed-use zoning district that encourages compact, mixed-use development. Density bonuses and waivers from the City’s conventional zoning regulations are recommended on a case by case basis to encourage well planned, mixed use development.</p>

Table 2 Implementation Action Plan (continued)	
6.	Parking should be designed to not overpower the character of the development nor appear as a dominant feature of the site. Parking should be located to the rear and interior side of the building. Shared parking is encouraged.
7.	Low impact development (LID) techniques are recommended. These include the use of multi-story buildings (to make the development more compact/pedestrian friendly), clustering and screening parking areas (to reduce the development footprint) and the use of natural drainage and retention systems (to reduce stormwater runoff).
8.	LID techniques, the creation of useful outdoor gathering areas and public plazas and architecturally interesting designs are encouraged and should be incentivized through density bonuses and other means as approved by the Combined Planning & Zoning Board.
9.	All development should require quality public spaces that relate to an identifiable architectural theme and interactive storefronts that reinforce the human scale.
9.	New development should be consistent with the development policies, goals & objectives contained in Chapter 4 of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
10.	Future multi-family development should be consistent with the design and development guidelines contained in Chapter 6 of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
Objective 5: Create an interstate gateway that benefits Highland as a whole.	
Implementation Strategies and Recommendations:	
1.	Create an identifiable gateway at the proposed I-70/Rt 160 interchange and continue with streetscape enhancements along Route 160 to help connect the Downtown business district to I-70 and the greater regional marketplace
2.	Public art, distinctive building designs, unique landscaping and/or lighting schemes should be encouraged along I-70 and Route 160.
3.	Develop a gateway theme that builds upon the city's Swiss heritage and well-known fountain on the Square.
4.	Sponsor a design contest to come up with the most suitable primary gateway design.
5.	As part of the site plan review process the city should consider the visual impacts of development at the "gateway" locations. Building, design, orientation and parking should also be carefully planned to minimize any negative physical or visual impacts.
Objective 6: Plan and maintain a safe, efficient road system that provides effective circulation and economic development potential while maintaining the integrity, security, and privacy of the community.	
Implementation Strategies and Recommendations:	
1.	The presence of too many driveways along an arterial roadway causes safety problems and congestion. Therefore the following access management techniques are recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reduce the frequency and number of driveways and intersections by eliminating unnecessary or redundant curb cuts, consolidating curb cuts by requiring shared entrances and relocating access points to adjoining streets, when possible. b) Restrict turning movements at intersections or driveways to help reduce potential traffic conflicts and congestion. c) Driveways on opposite sides of an arterial roadway should be lined up across from each other. The maximum offset for such driveways should be no more than 6 feet. When driveways cannot be aligned, the minimum offset spacing should be 125 feet. However, the presence of a raised median, as recommended along 160, eliminates the need for such requirement.

Table 2 Implementation Action Plan (continued)	
2.	Improve Route 160 to a four lane, median divided boulevard that is lined with trees, street lamps and other streetscape amenities that create a unified theme. Roadways containing a raised median can handle more traffic volumes and allow a higher concentration of right-in and right-out driveway access points than it can accommodate when left-turns into and out of driveways are permitted.
3.	Install a multipurpose trail along Route 160 to ensure safe and convenient pedestrian use thereby decreasing the vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
4.	Install a roundabout approximately at the midpoint along 160 within the study area (i.e. around Ambuehi or other major cross street in the general vicinity) to create better east/west traffic circulation.
5.	Plan and implement a perimeter route, as shown on the Future Land Use Map, to relieve traffic on 160 and to create a complete and integrated transportation system that provides seamless connections to the City's schools, businesses, employment centers, parks, neighborhoods and Interstate 70. The City should consider improving existing roads that lie within the desired loop system. The objective of the loop road is to connect the northern portion of the City with the southern portion and the eastern portions with the western areas. The City should continue implementing the perimeter road in phases and acquiring the necessary right-of-way and easements as applicable to the community's needs and financial capacities.
Objective 7: Develop a city-wide trail system and greenway that provides alternative access to the city's key activity centers, increases the utilization of Silver Lake and creates a more active, healthier community.	
Implementation Strategies and Recommendations:	
1.	Upgrade existing sidewalks in disrepair.
2.	Require sidewalks in all new residential development.
3.	All commercial development should provide sidewalks that provide a safe and direct pedestrian accessibility to the main entrance from the parking areas or street.
4.	Install a Lakefront Trail that provides connections to the city's schools, neighborhoods and other activity centers to expand accessibility options to the City's activity centers and reduce the demand for vehicular travel. Include trailheads, bathrooms, parking and other amenities at key trail junctures.
5.	It is recommended that the location and design of greenways and sidewalk improvements utilize existing built and natural topography whenever possible to minimize erosion, preserve existing vegetation and mitigate any negative impacts on surrounding land uses.
6.	Ball diamonds, open play fields, picnic/outdoor meeting areas and public art are recommended throughout the planning area, where access to neighborhoods and roadways are provided.
7.	At least one water-themed trailhead is recommended in the study area with a spray-play park/fountains or features similar to the fountain on the Square. Information kiosks, parking areas and park amenities, such as age-appropriate play equipment, fitness trails and landscaping are recommended to increase the utilization and enhance the overall park/trail experience.

Table 2 Implementation Action Plan (continued)	
8.	Purchase property surrounding Silver Lake to protect the City's water supply and provide right-of-way for the installation of a greenbelt/trail system. Recommended methods of obtaining land and/or right-of-way for an integrated trail system includes the creation of community land trusts, conservation easements, preservation corridors and the use of land dedications. The City should consider immediate acquisition of property and right-of-way within the general vicinity of the recommended greenway locations.
9.	The City should create a Highland Events Committee to create and implement ongoing special activities and community events that bring people together, increase the utilization & maintenance of the city trails/parks/public spaces and promote active lifestyles.
Objective 8: Develop an annexation plan addressing the development of the recommended interchange and mixed use development center at I-70 and 160 and the provision of future residential growth areas and infrastructure.	
Implementation Strategies and Recommendations:	
1.	Strategically annex growth areas to ensure full control of the type, quality, and nature of future land use.
2.	Formulate an annexation policy based upon future growth patterns, ability to provide public facilities and services, and suitability of land for development.
3.	Encourage development in areas where municipal services can most easily be extended. New development should not be permitted until such time municipal services are available.
4.	Conduct thorough inspections of all public infrastructure within the proposed annexation area and complete a thorough service provision evaluation- prior to annexation.
5.	Develop partnerships with property owners and developers early in the annexation process to help avoid unanticipated repercussions during or after the annexation process.
6.	All future development should be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan the City's Zoning Code.
7.	Promote the preservation, maintenance and renovation of the city's existing buildings and established districts. Direct business development towards the Square and established business districts where infrastructure is already provided to avoid the establishment of dispersed, fragmented commercial or residential districts.