

## **EXHIBIT “B” – Study Approach**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and other changes defined in the scope for this new Request for Proposals, we have taken this opportunity to reassess and envision our project approach. Our goal remains providing LFUCG with a practical system to assess, evaluate, and implement land use decisions related to the administration and possible expansion of the Urban Service Boundary (USB). It is also important to develop this system in a collaborative manner that will allow LFUCG to take advantage of its own internal resources, both now and in the future. We also recognize the realities of social distancing and the need to create safe engagement strategies with each other, stakeholders and decision-makers, and the public.

Decisions regarding land use, and Lexington’s USB specifically, are naturally contentious. The dynamics of power and equity are real and the issues to be considered complex. Further, the need to make these decisions will continue to arise as our community and economy grows. For that reason, we see the opportunity to create a defined and recognized system for making these decisions to be the most critical aspect of this project. Having an agreed upon framework in place that identifies essential data resources and defines the criteria and evaluation metrics, LFUCG can make these contentious decisions more openly, deliberately, and confidently.

Therefore, while we assess and analyze the existing conditions of Lexington’s land use and USB as it stands today, we will approach our work as the prototype for future evaluations. We will draw on the experience of the same team of experts we assembled in our previous proposal, including our experience developing and managing the LFUCG Wastewater Capacity Assurance Program, which developed a consensus-based approach for managing contentious decisions similar to the ones we are considering here.

The system we propose will be built on a foundation of organized and accessible data and will identify well defined criteria that reflect both the consensus values of our many communities and the relationship between local and regional land use, our economic potential, and our municipal budgets. Finally, our chosen criteria will be activated within a framework that functions as both a pathway to implementation and as a user’s guide for maintaining it for future use. Each of the following tasks will be discussed in respect to delivering this new system and demonstrate how it will work for LFUCG and our community as we consider and re-consider the USB, its expansion, and everything within it.

### **TASK 1 – EXISTING CONDITIONS AND GROWTH TRENDS EVALUATION**

This task represents the foundation upon which our evaluation system will be based. We must establish not only a baseline of land use and market conditions as they currently exist, but also catalogue and organize the metrics and data sources we use so that the baseline can be easily refined and re-assessed for future USB evaluations. This task will be performed throughout the first half of the study and concurrently with Tasks 2, 3, and 4, as existing conditions and growth trends must be directly related to the criteria for considering growth or USB expansion. As we proceed through this work, we will develop the framework guidance for collecting data and updating the existing conditions analysis for future evaluations.

#### **Task 1.1 – Assessment of Existing Conditions**

We will begin by taking inventory of current planning and development realities. This includes gathering the essential data and information from previous and ongoing studies of the Lexington-Fayette County efforts, as well as preparing an updated community demographic and economic profile. The team will synthesize all data to highlight the key challenges and

opportunities. During this task, the team will:

- Review existing background documents, such as:
  - Imagine Lexington Comprehensive Plan (2018)
  - Development/Growth Scenarios Explored by the Division of Planning (2017)
  - Lexington Area MPO 2045 (2019)
  - Expansion Area Master Plan (1996)
  - 2017 Rural Land Management Plan
  - 2017 Fayette County Housing Demand Study
- Document and synthesize relevant land use policies and plans
- Review existing land use patterns both inside and outside the USB
- Update and analyze the vacant land inventory and where possible, enhance it to highlight under-utilized land
- Review current demographics within the USB and surrounding counties to identify market absorption patterns.
- Review population and employment forecasts and growth projections for the USB and surrounding counties over the next 20-years using data supplied by LFUCG staff.
- Investigate and discuss how this future growth may impact land use and development within the USB
- Review current transportation and utility infrastructure coverage and capacity, as well as expansion potential and cost of expansion into the rural service area
- Identify environmentally sensitive and hazard prone areas that deserve special consideration based upon reliable public information sources or information provided from the County

## **Task 1.2 – Economic Market Assessment**

Led by MXD Development Strategists, our team will conduct an overview market assessment of the Lexington region that will describe local employment conditions, identify growing economic sectors, and consider how economic trends are and will impact development pressure in Fayette County. Our team's assessment will:

- Assess and quantify the various economic sectors and their respective development typologies (light industrial, logistics, office, flex office etc.)
- Identify major employment nodes and their potential for growth
- Identify the economic sectors that represent the best opportunities for growth in the study area over the next several decades
- Summarize larger historic economic trends and current conditions and their relationship with local economic growth, and assess the potential impact they will have on land development into the future.

## **TASK 1 DELIVERABLES**

1. Existing Conditions and Growth Trends Report
2. Updated vacant and under-utilized land inventory
3. Framework for updating data and re-creating existing conditions and growth trend report and land inventory for future USB evaluations
4. Outline of data sources and format for input into future evaluations

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

- LFUCG staff will provide updated GIS data for vacant and under-utilized land inventory including current and known future use, zoning, and tax assessment data.

- LFUCG staff will obtain growth projections/studies from surrounding counties if not publicly available.

## **TASK 2 – PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

We recognize the critical importance of directly engaging with local officials, residents, and stakeholders to develop the metrics, criteria, and framework for developing this new evaluation framework. Even with the social distancing required due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our goal is to make sure the public has many opportunities through a variety of engagement tools and venues to express their views and aspirations for their community, while building consensus and support for this work. That is one reason why work on this task will be continuous throughout the study.

EHI Consultants will lead this task and direct our advisory and support service to LFUCG staff. Ed Holmes, the President of EHI, is an established and recognized presence in the Lexington planning community who has served on both the Planning Commission and the Sustainable Growth Task Force, as well as led a broad spectrum of planning projects and community engagement as a private consultant.

### **Task 2.1 Identify Stakeholders and Communities**

Identifying relevant stakeholder groups and communities is essential to establishing and implementing an effective engagement strategy. We must include a diverse collection of formal and informal groups and individuals from across the geographic and economic spectrum while maintaining meaningful coordination between all participants.

We will begin with the Sustainable Growth Task Force, which will serve as the advisory committee for the overall project. The engagement of the task force is critical, as their historical knowledge of the USB and this project, as well as ongoing or planned projects or activities that could impact or be impacted by this project will be our starting and recurring reference point as we move forward. The task force will also provide advice and independent feedback to help build consensus throughout the process.

Existing municipal and stakeholder groups currently involved in the urban growth boundary discussion represent additional critical stakeholders. We will work with the LFUCG to identify these key stakeholders along with other business, environmental, and residential community groups that represent the diverse constituencies affected by the land use choices our framework is intended to guide. These groups include:

- Fayette Alliance
- Commerce Lexington
- Building Industry Association of Central Kentucky
- LFUCG County Council & Planning Commission
- Infill and Redevelopment Steering Committee
- Neighborhood & community leaders
- Commercial, residential, and industrial developers

### **Task 2.2 Public Engagement Support**

While we recognize the difficulties of implementing an effective community engagement strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic, we also realize that solely engaging the public online potentially creates a digital divide for a large number of people who do not have access to the necessary technology or adequate internet access. Our team's ability to implement flexible

strategies during this pandemic will present some digital obstacles but also opportunities will grow out of being able to reach a broader more diverse group of people.

The sheer size, scope, and significance of this project along with the restrictions of meetings impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic requires an array of creative outreach methods that will effectively include online and other non-traditional outreach strategies and community engagement techniques that evolve as we identify and target busy, hard-to-reach, and marginalized populations through a variety of traditional and non-traditional engagement methods. Our suggested strategies include the following:

- Virtual meeting platforms including GoToMeeting, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. We are currently utilizing these platforms in various configurations, which allow us to include multiple presenters, share screens, conduct live polls, participant chat, and record audio and video of meetings. Recording and archiving these meeting online is critical to providing equitable access to those who cannot access these platforms live.
- Social Media including Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor offer other opportunities to promote project events and milestones and direct the public to the web site.
- Traditional outreach methods, revised to reflect social distancing best practices, including community organization and neighborhood association grassroots partnering, small scale roundtable discussions, and text messaging platforms such as Textizen.

We also recommend using the planning principles of the Placebuilder and Public Engagement Toolkit (PET), developed by the LFUCG Division of Planning. These concepts help frame and inform stakeholders about the comprehensive planning process, to help them understand the relationship between the Urban Growth Boundary and the Comprehensive Plan.

For all engagement efforts, we must adopt the spirit of “checking in,” which means compiling and organizing the feedback we receive in a format that can be shared back with stakeholders. In other words: “Here’s what we heard. What do you think? Is there anything we’ve missed?” Ultimately the information collected from the community must be synthesized and filed in a detailed public engagement and outreach report that is easily accessible and recognized by the community as the fruit of their efforts and an essential element within the development of the entire evaluation system.

#### Recommended Public Engagement Events

1. Kick-off Meeting  
We will lead a public kick-off event with the Sustainable Growth Task Force, either live (if possible) or in an online townhall style, to introduce the project and gather early preferences for criteria and prioritization.
2. Key Stakeholder Interviews & Focus Groups:  
We will work with LFUCG staff to set up live or online interactive work sessions. These informal meetings are critical to developing an understanding of various perspectives on the USB’s history, as well as Lexington’s opportunities and challenges.
3. Scenario & Criteria Workshop  
We will hold a live or online townhall style meeting with polling to allow participants to offer input on criteria for evaluating potential USB expansions and feedback on the first two scenarios described in Task 3.
4. Final Presentation  
Once the final system of criteria and implementation framework have been determined,

refined, and approved by the LFUCG Sustainable Growth Task Force, we will hold an online townhall style meeting presenting our current land use and growth assessment, and the evaluation system itself.

### **Task 2.3 Online Web Support**

The Stantec team will provide materials and activities for online engagement via a project website designed to allow stakeholders and the public to help identify and prioritize the criteria for evaluating potential USB expansion. Online engagement activities will also be important in making the process for evaluating potential USB expansions as transparent as possible, giving the public a window into the data and criteria used in decision making. The online engagement activities developed during this project to develop our evaluation system can serve as a model to be used in future USB evaluations.

We recommend using Social Pinpoint as the basis of our online engagement platform. With Social Pinpoint we can quickly develop a web site with engagement tools including surveys, idea walls, forums, and mapping. Further, as we are currently using a Social Pinpoint service subscription for the Red River Gorge Destination Resort Masterplan project, we can add this project to that subscription at a very low cost. The Social Pinpoint site for the Red River Gorge project is <https://rrgresort.mysocialpinpoint.com/engage>

### **Task 2.4 Government Coordination**

While LFUCG staff will lead this task, we will partner with them to keep the members of the Sustainable Growth Task Force, the LFUCG Planning Commission, and the LFUCG Urban County Council updated and engaged in our work. We will prepare materials and participate in presentations to these groups as appropriate, as determined by LFUCG staff. All materials and meeting notes from these meetings will be posted on the project website. Most importantly, we will dedicate a significant portion of our time with LFUCG staff to listening and collaborating on the creation of an evaluation system that they are both familiar with and comfortable using and maintaining.

## **TASK 2 DELIVERABLES**

1. Materials preparation and participation for up to three community meetings\*
2. Materials preparation and participation for up to 10 stakeholder interviews/focus groups\*
3. Public survey and online engagement activities to support completion of other project tasks
4. Engagement plan outline and activities for use in future USB evaluations

\*All interactive meetings are assumed to be virtual or online unless in person meetings are expressly approved according to all applicable COVID-19 guidelines governing such meetings.

### **Other recommended online activities**

1. Two surveys designed to collect opinions and information useful in developing and prioritizing criteria
2. Online forum for open dialogue about USB expansion

## **Assumptions**

1. LFUCG staff will operate and maintain the project website once established by the Stantec team.
2. LFUCG staff will lead all live or online community meetings and stakeholder interviews/focus groups with materials preparation and participation by the Stantec team.

## **TASK 3 – REDEVELOPMENT & LAND USE SCENARIOS**

With economic analysts Urban3, our team brings a unique approach to analyzing the lasting fiscal repercussions of the land use choices that communities make every day, using a transparent and data driven approach. Urban3's approach uses economic modeling principles that capture the true municipal value of development and present it in a compelling visual format that makes it easy to convey the benefits and costs associated with any strategy or scenario for future growth and development in our community.

At the heart of this approach is establishing the per acre metric as a unit of productivity, identifying performance of a specific parcel or land use type's tax value relative to its land area. This metric directly compares overall revenues with tax values, flipping the traditional approach of looking at total taxable value on its head. This approach recognizes that cities and counties are finite areas of land, and how that land is used has a direct effect on municipal budgets. Efficient tax production impacts the availability of funds to repair roads, provide equitable access to public amenities, and maintain adequate public services. Therefore, identifying which development is financially efficient, and which development is not, is critical to cultivating community wealth.

Using GIS and other the land and property data resources we develop with LFUCG staff as part of Task 1, we will incorporate these principles as we create up to three scenarios to demonstrate the effects and impacts of different land uses and densities on vacant and under-utilized land within the Urban Service Area. The process of developing and discussing these scenarios will inform the selection and prioritization of the evaluation criteria we develop in Task 4. Our suggestions for scenarios to test are:

1. A future buildout scenario incorporating the primary infill goals from the Imagine Lexington Comprehensive Plan to maximize vacant and underutilized land.
2. A future buildout scenario reflecting the growth trends and market assessment developed in Task 1, presuming a more conventionally unconstrained land development pattern.
3. A buildout scenario reflecting the ideas and public/stakeholder feedback received from the first two scenarios exercises. This scenario will be run following the proposed criteria workshop described in Task 2.

## **TASK 3 DELIVERABLES**

1. Scenario reports with 2D and 3D graphics visualizing results of scenarios.
2. ArcGIS map package and user guide instructions for LFUCG to perform similar scenarios for future USB evaluations.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

1. LFUCG staff will provide all parcel, property value, and tax assessment data necessary

- to build the models.
2. LFUCG will host criteria workshop and document feedback on scenarios one and two, to inform scenario three.
  3. From Task 1 - LFUCG staff will provide updated GIS data for vacant and under-utilized land inventory including current and known future use, zoning, and tax assessment data.

#### **TASK 4 - IDENTIFICATION OF EVALUATION CRITERIA**

In coordination with the Sustainable Growth Task Force and our stakeholder and public engagement, we will begin identifying, cataloguing, and developing a comprehensive list of criteria for growth or expansion of the USB based on the results and outcomes of our work in the first three tasks. These criteria are intended to comprehensively address the diversity of interrelated subject areas intrinsic to land use and community planning and economic development, as well as the economic, real estate market, and fiscal assessments gathered and developed as part of our work. The criteria will be accompanied by benchmarks and thresholds that serve as clear indicators for current and future decision makers.

The Imagine Lexington Comprehensive Plan and the 2017 Rural Land Use Management Plan, and other relevant planning documents will directly inform our deliberations. The criteria will be robust enough to be adaptable at all levels of planning, from individual parcels and developments to large and complex master plans. Finally, the criteria will also be assessed in relation to how they can be measured and managed with the data expected to be available to LFUCG staff going forward for future evaluations.

We will participate in a work session with the Sustainable Growth Task Force to discuss the results of the scenarios and feedback from public and stakeholder engagement and to identify and prioritize the criteria to be formally adopted for use in the evaluation system we are developing. The criteria will be weighted based on a prioritization exercise completed by the Sustainable Growth Task Force.

#### **TASK 4 DELIVERABLES**

1. Sustainable Growth Task Force work session.
2. Criteria for Growth of Expansion with summary report documenting process, decision-making, and weighting system.

#### **TASK 5 – EVALUATION FRAMEWORK**

Our work in data analysis, engagement, and criteria development will culminate in a comprehensive implementation framework to be used whenever considerations related to the administration or expansion of the USB occur. From that perspective, the development of the implementation framework will be a top consideration during the work in each of the other tasks, and the framework itself will be built and refined incrementally as we perform this work.

The framework will inherently reflect the evaluation criteria identified and prioritized in Task 4. For each criterion, the framework will define data requirements and sources, evaluation methods, metrics, benchmarks, and thresholds. The framework will also outline and direct the steps of the evaluation process and define the weights associated with all criteria. It will provide opportunities to acknowledge new or specific considerations as well as establish the practical timelines for maintaining databases and performing routine evaluations of the USB and potential expansion. As such, the framework will serve both as a rulebook and a user's guide.

Once the evaluation process has developed specific recommendations for immediate consideration, we can draw on the experience of our larger project teams and national best practices to identify the mechanisms, policies and tools currently in place here or elsewhere to implement the particular policies or plans identified. We will assemble and coordinate these implementation tools with the goals they are intended to support as part of the user's guide. As this initial effort will likely identify some candidate policy recommendations for implementation, we will have the opportunity to field test and refine the process of identifying and establishing instructions for specific implementation strategies, as we explicitly address the recommendations developed from this initial use of the evaluation framework.

## **TASK 5 DELIVERABLES**

1. Comprehensive Evaluation Framework, including defined criteria with data sources and thresholds, and user's guide for conducting future USB evaluations and maintaining the framework.
2. Recommendations for near-term regulatory changes and projects to facilitate expansion of the USB or desired development within the USB.

## **Study Schedule**

We propose a nine-month schedule with most of the data gathering and analysis occurring in the late summer and fall. The collaborative development of the criteria and framework would occur in the winter and early spring. The project will culminate with the roll-out of the policy and implementation framework in the form of a report and users' guide, as well as a final presentation.

We have developed our schedule recognizing the interrelatedness of each of the tasks. In Task 1, we will gather data for our assessments and analyses from many sources, including the advice and feedback we receive from our public and stakeholder engagement activities (Task 2), which will happen throughout the study. The data analysis and assessments (Task 1) will inform the scenario development and analysis (Task 3), which will feed back to engagement activities and help identify and refine evaluation criteria (Task 4). Engagement (Task 2) will also support Task 4 and the development of an implementation framework (Task 5). Framework construction will begin as soon as we identify the foundational data (Task 1), the best methods for engagement and evaluation (Tasks 2 and 3), and the criteria for effective evaluation assembled in Task 4.



	MONTH								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
TASK 1 - Existing Conditions and Growth Trends Evaluation & Report	1		4						
TASK 2 - Public & Stakeholder Engagement	2	3	.....			6			10
TASK 3 - Redevelopment & Land Use Scenarios					5	.....	7		
TASK 4 - Identification of Criteria for Growth or Expansion						6		8	
TASK 5 - Regulatory & Practical Framework for Plan Implementation									9
TASK 6 - Data Clearinghouse*									11

\*Optional Add-on Task

### PROJECT MILESTONES

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 Project Kick-off with Sustainable Growth Task Force | 4 Existing Conditions and Growth Trends Reports | 8 Expansion Criteria Report and User Guide |
| 2 Project Web Site Launch                             | 5 Scenario Reports                              | 9 Implementation Framework Report          |
| 3 Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups             | 6 Scenario & Criteria Workshop                  | 10 Final Presentation                      |
|   | 7 GIS Data and User Guide                       | 11 Data Clearinghouse                      |