



Madison County Government Planning and Development Department

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I-55 Development Code Questions & Answers (Q&A)

Question: What are the next steps, and when can we expect the next meeting?

Answer: Staff is currently revisiting several key components of the plan, including demographics and projections, development trends, and housing market demand. We endeavor to address, and hopefully satisfy, each comment received at the hearings. We're also meeting with the Home Builders Association (HBA) and are working to ensure their input is included.

As new information is compiled, it will be posted to the Madison County website, which is <http://www.co.madison.il.us/>. Go to the "County News" section on the main page and click on the link for "I-55 Corridor Plan Updates."

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-July. We'll post an exact meeting date on the I-55 webpage on the Madison County website once it is identified. We will also issue a press release and send letters as we have for previous meetings.

Question: What specific changes are you considering?

Answer: While any proposed changes need to be accepted by the Plan Commission and/or Zoning Board, staff will propose the following changes:

- Increase the minimum lot size to 7,500 square feet, which is Edwardsville's current minimum, and the maximum to ½ acre (21,780 square feet).
- Remove the "Urban Residential" and "General Neighborhood" districts and create a single "General Residential" district.
- Disallow multi-family in the "General Residential" district. Multi-family would only be permitted in the "Town Center" district or as part of a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Multi-family includes apartments, condos, and townhouses. Only single family detached and attached villas will be permitted by-right in the "General Residential" district.
- Include more flexible language for frontage and architectural requirements.
- Provide better direction in the street standards for cul-de-sacs and alleys.
- Include more flexible language in the Planned Unit Development overlay.

Question: I own a home in the I-55 planning area. How will I be affected if the code is adopted?

Answer: You can continue to use the property as you do today. The code is only triggered when new land development is proposed. Refer to Article 1 – General Provisions for a list of uses that are exempt.

Question: What if I sell the property?

Answer: The same exemptions apply to the new owner. Anyone can buy or sell property within the planning area and continue to use the property as it was previously used. The code is only triggered when new land development is proposed.

Question: I farm ground or lease ground for farming in the planning area. Can I continue to farm the ground?

Answer: Yes. The same exemptions apply to agricultural uses and you may continue to use the property as you do today. You can also sell or pass down your property, and it can still be used for agricultural purposes.

Question: Can I make repairs or improvements to my property?

Answer: Yes. Additions, renovations, and new accessory buildings are permitted. Refer to Article 1 – General Provisions for a description of permitted repairs and improvements.

Question: My property is currently zoned “A” Agricultural in unincorporated Madison County. Will my zoning designation change if the code is adopted?

Answer: No. The zoning will remain “A.” The Madison County Zoning Ordinance will continue to apply to your property. If any new land development is proposed, the new code will be triggered and the property will need to be rezoned to the I-55 district map.

Question: I own a vacant parcel in the planning area. Can I build a new house on the property?

Answer: Yes. Existing “lots of record” can be built in accordance with the Madison County Zoning Ordinance requirements as well as City of Edwardsville requirements.

Question: Are 3,000 square foot single-family detached residential lots allowed in the planning area?

Answer: As stated in a previous question, we are proposing to increase the minimum to 7,500 square feet.

Question: Won’t denser development create cheap, low quality development?

Answer: No. The architectural and design requirements in the draft code require higher quality development. While we’re going to make some changes to the draft requirements, we want to ensure only high quality development is built in the planning area.

Question: Are larger lot subdivisions prohibited?

Answer: No. The developer will still have the choice of platting larger lots. The previous maximum lot size was ¼ acre (10,890 square feet). Staff is currently proposing to increase the maximum to ½ acre (21,780).

Question: Are ranch homes allowed in single-family detached areas?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Are cul-de-sacs prohibited?

Answer: No. While the city and village wish to limit cul-de-sacs, they are NOT prohibited. Cul-de-sacs are discouraged because they limit vehicular and pedestrian movement and overload existing collector streets. Staff is working to clarify this item.

Question: Are alleys required?

Answer: No. While alleys are an alternative available to the developer, they are NOT required. Alleys don't belong in every development, but they can be useful in certain situations. If several homes are built along a collector road, for example, it is more efficient to locate access in the rear of the property rather than requiring cars to pull-in and back-out onto a traffic-filled road. Staff will clarify this item.

Question: Why is the code being considered?

Answer: The form-based code is the next step in implementing the I-55 Growth and Transportation Management Plan which was adopted in 2006 by the partner communities – Madison County, Edwardsville, and Glen Carbon. The code will equip Edwardsville and Glen Carbon with the tools necessary to govern new land development and effectively implement the plan over the next 20 to 40 years.

Question: What is a form-based code and why is it necessary? Why not allow what is currently permitted in the Edwardsville and Glen Carbon zoning codes?

Answer: Under existing codes, the city and village don't have any oversight over the "look" or quality of development proposals. A form-based code focuses on architectural and design aspects of land development which traditional zoning codes don't specifically govern. By covering these aspects, Edwardsville and Glen Carbon can ensure a higher quality of development.

Question: What steps have been taken and what is involved in the current process?

Answer: Please find a detailed timeline of events on the I-55 Corridor Plan webpage on the Madison County website – www.co.madison.il.us.

Question: How was the public notified of the planning process?

Answer: Through each step of the planning process, staff has cast a wide net to get more people involved. Letters and post cards have been sent to property owners on several occasions. Staff has also posted signs along roadways and published ads in the Intelligencer. Lastly, the Madison County website has been used as a portal for information. The map and regulations have been available for review on the website for the last two years.

Question: What's the estimated impact to the Edwardsville and Triad school districts?

Answer: Both Edwardsville and Triad school districts have been aware of the overall process, and they were involved through the initial planning stages for the I-55 Corridor Plan. In regard to impact, there is no reason to expect that the I-55 Corridor will develop at a more accelerated pace than the area has grown in the past 20 years. And, as in the past, the school districts will incrementally grow as the area grows. More than anything, the I-55 Corridor Plan provides a good idea of where growth is targeted and will provide insight into future needs. In that sense, the plan puts the school districts in the position to ascertain opportunities and constraints ahead of time as opposed to trying to identify future needs without any guidance on future growth.

Another aspect is the demographic trends, which have shown us that much of the growth will come from retirees and empty-nesters. If this proves out, growth pressures on the school districts may actually be reduced as a result of the plan.

Question: Is there a roadway plan for the I-55 Corridor? Why isn't that being done first?

Answer: Planners examined basic roadways scenarios and layouts as part of the overall I-55 Corridor Plan process in order to understand limitations of access and circulation within the area. Many aspects of traffic planning have had to remain general until after land use and density questions are answered. Traffic needs are directly tied to land use, and when it comes to "green field" growth areas, land use often dictates traffic needs. So, it's been very important that the land use and density questions have been further along before more specific work on infrastructure needs have occurred. Nevertheless, as the land use and density picture have become clearer, staff has begun working with a consultant to uncover more information about future roadways and the cost of infrastructure.

Question: What about other municipal services, including Fire and Police protection, water, sewer, and trash?

Answer: Similar to the school districts, all other city services will incrementally expand as the area grows. In 20 or 30 years, the city or village may need to have a conversation similar to Edwardsville's current consideration of new Fire and Police facilities. This is all part of municipal operations and is a regular exercise undertaken by city leaders. The same conversation will occur as a result of future growth. As with the school districts, with a growth plan in place, many of the questions have been answered, and it gives the city the chance to understand opportunities and constraints ahead of time. If no plan existed and there was no guidance to growth, this opportunity wouldn't exist.

Question: Is the Town Center really economically sustainable? What's the real draw to these areas and don't they compete with areas such as Downtown Edwardsville?

Answer: Both Glen Carbon's and Edwardsville's Town Center areas will need to work hard at offering something different than locations such as Downtown Edwardsville and Glen Carbon. Edwardsville's downtown for example is the government center for Madison County, characterized by office buildings, historic structures and many great restaurants and shopping destinations. While those living within $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ miles provide a basic level of economic support, Downtown Edwardsville is heavily reliant on those from well beyond "walking distance" to sustain it economically. The Town Center areas will similarly depend on those living within it and those within walking and bike distance to remain viable. This is another reason the plan emphasizes a more dense level housing in the surrounding Urban Residential district. The two Town Centers will also need to draw a different employment base than Downtown

Edwardsville. Anderson Hospital, for example, is already setting the tone of Town Center by committing to anchoring it with a future medical services center. A potential new park less than a half mile away is also sure to draw visitors. Finally, the proximity of I-55 has great potential of enticing travelers off the highway to eat and shop in the Town Center's future restaurants.

Question: What is the anticipated mix of single family to multi-family housing in this area?

Answer: This question is based in part on what the local housing market will sustain. However, the Edwardsville 2010 Comprehensive Plan provides some guidance in that it anticipated 65% of the new dwelling units built city-wide would be detached single family units, 20% would be attached units, and 15% would be "multi-family" units of 3 units or more. A similar ratio would be reasonable in the I-55 Corridor area, with the overwhelming majority of the multifamily units being located within the Town Center area.

Question: This plan seems like a moving target and it seems different than the one I saw some time ago. Why the constant changes?

Answer: The planning staff from each of the participating communities view the I-55 Corridor Area Plan as truly a collaborative effort. Every time a public meeting or hearing has been held, the planner's top priorities have been to 1) Explain the Plan and the logic for why it is presented as clearly and openly as possible; and 2) Listen carefully to all public comments and work to incorporate those comments into the plan as best as possible.

Prior to the March public hearings, these steps were taken at the July 2014 public forum and the September 2013 open house, which were held at Liberty Middle School. In each instance, planners have gathered comments and then made changes accordingly, and this level of participation will continue at future public meetings. There remains a lot of work to do, and more changes will be take place as this process unfolds.