AGRICULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY IN RILEY COUNTY

2008 Dialog on Sustainability
July 17, 2008
1949 Riley County Planning Board created a county-wide Master Plan adopted by BOCC.

1951 Zoning regulations adopted for areas surrounding the City of Manhattan.

1974 • Updated Land Use and General Development Plan; • Updated Subdivision & Zoning Regulations adopted (county-wide).

1980 Minimum lot size for a residence in the Ag district changed from 1 acre to 20 acres.

1987 Riley County Comprehensive Plan adopted.

2003 • Manhattan Urban Area Plan adopted jointly by City of Manhattan and Riley County. • Zoning regulations adopted for areas surrounding the City of Manhattan.


2006 (Sep) First meeting of Vision 2025 Committee.
Survey Results Report

February 2006
PLANNING GOALS RESPONSES

- Ensure adequate water, sewer & roads for new developments: 73%
- Direct urban density development to the cities: 66%
- Require development to “Pay its own way”: 87%
- Provide for a sufficient supply of affordable housing: 66%
- Preserve regional rural character: 80%
- Preserve our natural environment: 87%
- Minimize urban-rural conflicts: 80%
- Promote environmentally safe development: 90%
- Promote orderly and efficient development: 87%
- Preserve agricultural lands: 86%
Land Use Conflict: When City and Country Clash

A Project of the National Public Policy Education Committee in Cooperation with the Farm Foundation

“Visualize a strip of land a half-mile wide stretching from New York to California,” reads a study done for the Council on Environmental Quality and USDA. “That is one million acres — the amount of farmland converted to other uses from agriculture every year in the United States.”

Fastest-Growing U.S. Counties
Percent change 1990-98

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Douglas County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forsyth County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elbert County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Custer County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paulding County</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Archuleta County</td>
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<td>Washington County</td>
<td>30.1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


“America is losing 1.2 million acres of farmland annually, much of it the best and most productive farmland near where most Americans live.”

Source: American Farmland Trust (2006)
http://www.farmland.org/programs/default.asp
See also: www.farmland.org/resources/fic/default.asp

Why Preserve Ag Land?

- Nonrenewable resource
- Primary and secondary economic impact
- Cultural heritage
- Local food
- Future alternative uses
- Wildlife habitat and related economic activity
- Quality of life
- Lower public costs
- Fragmentation diminishes sustainability
Obstacles to Preservation

- Population demands
- Cheap fuel
- Age of landowners
- “Island” view of property rights
Actions

- **Support local agriculture**
  - Farmer’s markets, cooperatives, pick-your-own.
  - Community gardens, urban agriculture.

- **Dialog and education on property rights and the community good.**