

---

## **Introduction - Smiths Grove Focal Point Plan**

The 1990 Comprehensive Plan of Warren County, as amended, provides for the development of Rural Village Focal Point Plans in developed areas of Warren County. Rural Village Focal Point Plans are cited in the Comprehensive Plan as unique opportunities for preservation of historic and architectural buildings and places, as well as, plans designed to enhance the Rural Village individuality and livability. The community of Smiths Grove was identified in the 1990 Comprehensive Plan of Warren County as a Rural Village.

Smiths Grove is located in south-central Kentucky, ten miles northeast of Bowling Green, at the intersection of Kentucky Highway 101 and U.S. Interstate 65 (see exhibit 1). Smiths Grove (pop.784) is a fifth class city and it is the second largest municipality in Warren County (see exhibit 2). The community of Smiths Grove was incorporated on March 21, 1871.

### **Focal Point Definition and Boundary**

The 1990 Comprehensive Plan for Warren County, as amended, identifies this Focal Point as Smiths Grove Focal Point Number 116B. Its development status is considered stable due to little pressure for redevelopment within, and property values which are stable. The Focal Point is referred to as a Rural Village/Traditional Residential Focal Point characterized by mostly single family low density residential development, but with a small commercial center.

During this planning process, the Smiths Grove Focal Point Planning Committee conducted a detailed analysis to define the actual boundaries of the Focal Point. The Committee looked at all individual parcels inside the city limits and several parcels adjacent to the city for their similarities and inherent qualities in relationship to the overall Focal Point Goals. The Smiths Grove Focal Point Planning Committee adopted a Smiths Grove Focal Point boundary that will encompass all of the incorporated area within the City of Smiths Grove (see exhibit 3). As any new area is annexed into the City, the boundary of the Focal Point will adjust to include the addition.

### **Historical Setting**

#### **Early Settlement in Smiths Grove**

In 1779, Kentucky was still a county of Virginia. The frontier settler, after clearing a patch of land, building a house, and plowing a field for crops, was granted the right to purchase that land at a minimum price and without competition from speculators. These "preemptive" laws were passed by Virginia and several other states. In 1779 when Virginia opened its western lands for sale, preemption was granted to settlers with the exception of Indian lands, and land reserved for Virginian soldiers of the Revolutionary War. The preemption laws applied to the area of present day Kentucky that is north of the Green River, and north of an imaginary line extending from the headwaters of the Green River to the southeast and toward the Cumberland Gap. The region south of the Green River and that imaginary line was reserved for soldiers.

---

The Commissioner of War, and later the Governor's Office, authorized the Register of the Land Office to issue the official military land warrant. The veteran then needed to locate a plot and have it surveyed before he could obtain a title to it. Typically the veteran preceded the surveyor, chose a place, blazed the trees around it to stake his claim, and entered a description of his claim in the land office. A surveyor's report in 1788 cited that only 1/3 of an estimated six million available acres was arable, and a large portion was "extensive open barrens...without timber, covered with a coarse sedge grass and a great portion of the woodland mountainous, poor and stony."

When Kentucky became a state in 1792, legislators called for the cessation of the allocation of any additional land grants in Kentucky while they continued to honor those already issued. Many veterans sold their grants to speculators. Tax records show that 85 percent of the families living along the Green River Basin in 1795 were not official land-holders. During the 1795 session, the General Assembly granted the settlers along the south side of the Green River the preemption that the north side had enjoyed. An act was passed allowing settlers to buy 200 acres of land upon which they had been living for thirty cents an acre.

Warren County was created in 1796 from part of Logan County and named for General Joseph Warren, one of the first to give his life in the war of Independence and who fell at the battle of Bunker Hill. Warren County contains about 545 square miles. In the early history of Warren County the hundred square miles northeast of Bowling Green and south of the Green River was known simply as,

"Smiths Grove Country." It contained the towns and villages of Smiths Grove, Oakland, Hays, Three Forks, Kepler, and Sunny Side.

### **Smiths Grove 1842-1942**

On the north boundary of the Smiths Grove Country and south of the Green River basin are the Green River Knobs. The Chamelian and Chalybeate Springs, famous health resorts for over one-hundred years, are located in the knobs approximately eight miles north of Smiths Grove. The town of Smiths Grove was named for a grove of trees west of town at the base of a small knob by an original landowner. The old Nashville to Louisville Pike, built in 1842, passed by Smiths Grove's northern boundary. The Smiths Grove post office was established in January, 1844 on Smoky Row at what now is the intersection of Hurt Road and Highway 68/80. Dr. Nathan Perry Allen, a dentist, who was born in 1830, wrote that he moved as a boy to Smiths Grove country with his parents, brothers and sisters and a few slaves. He speaks of going to Poplar Level Academy which was established in 1848 by Professors Huff and Beck in an old residence which stood where the Hays Cemetery is located. The land for the L and N Railroad was surveyed in 1851 and the railroad was completed in 1859. After the railroad depots were established, the post office moved to Main Street across from City Hall and later to its present location in Smiths Grove. The first store was established around 1859 in Smiths Grove. Mr. Urias Rasdall bought the store in 1866 and in 1872 it became U. Rasdall and Sons. The Kentucky History by Perrin and Battle credits Urias Rasdall with "laying out the town of Smiths Grove". Soon after the community's growth surged and the town of Smiths Grove was incorporated on March 21,

---

1871. The Smiths Grove College was established in 1875 by W. W. Beck and was built where the present North Warren Elementary School is located. In May 1880, the Deposit Bank of Smiths Grove commenced business and the Farmers Bank of Smiths Grove opened its doors in 1889. In 1901, the Smiths Grove College was sold to the Methodists and was renamed the Smiths Grove Training School for Vanderbilt University. The L and N depot at Smiths Grove was opened in 1903, and served the community for over 50 years. In 1913 the community had three schools: Warren Baptist Academy (the renamed Vanderbilt Training School), the Smiths Grove Institute (located on the Smiths Grove Oakland Road), and the Old Public School (which later became the Smiths Grove High School). The community's business directory in 1915 consisted of an undertaker, two barbers, a jeweler, three general merchants, one restaurant, two banks, a blacksmith, a hardware store, a grocery and furniture store, a hotel, a tinner, a hospital, and a local newspaper called the Smith's Grove Greyhound. Smiths Grove High School in 1941 was consolidated again with Oakland High School and renamed North Warren High School.

### **Smiths Grove 1943-2000**

The building that is now the Smiths Grove City Hall was erected in 1946. City Hall contained the City Jail, the Court Room, and the town's fire truck and offices of town officials: Mayor, Clerk, Town Marshall, and the Police Judge. The Hays Cemetery, deeded to the City in 1947, remains one of the oldest in the county and contains several significant historic monuments. The population of

Smiths Grove in 1950 was 683 persons. In the early 1960's the town's train depot was torn down and the community's economic boom slowed dramatically. The new Warren East High School was opened in 1969, and the former North Warren High became the North Warren Elementary School.

Smiths Grove's southern boundary became the site of a full interchange of Interstate 65. Finished in the fall of 1977, after the completion of the Smiths Grove to Oakland section of Interstate 65, the community saw modest interstate related growth. The 1980 census reported that the community had grown to a record high, 767 persons. By contrast, the 1990 census reported that the population had declined to 703 persons. This decline in growth was in direct contrast to the +8.2% growth rate of Warren County as a whole. 1992 saw the re-birth of a new economic base in the community, the Smiths Grove antique district and antique association. This new found tourist attraction draws several thousand visitors to Smiths Grove and North Warren County for a unique day of shopping and discovery. Recent additions of fast food establishments, other automotive services for interstate travelers, and the large amount of tourist traffic has once again made this small town a potential major commercial growth area in the county.

## **Physical Resources**

### **Subsurface Hydrology**

Scattered widely over the Earth is a rather peculiar landscape known as "karst." Karst landscapes are often pocked and pitted lands of sinkholes, limestone towers, steep sided hills, underground drainage, and caves. Most karst is formed on carbonate rocks such as

limestones or dolomites. Limestone karst is the most extensively developed, has the broadest regional extent, and has the most elaborate and highly integrated underground drainage and cavern systems. Warren County is underlain by mostly rocks of carbonate nature and resides in a karst area. The most characteristic feature of karst terrain is the concentration of water flow in underground solution conduits. This means there are two or more parts of the aquifer with very different recharge times. Because much of the input to the karst aquifer is through sinkholes and sinking streams, and because of the open character of the aquifer and lack of thick soil covers, karst systems are susceptible to pollution. Sources of pollutants include industrial and hydrocarbon wastes; sinking polluted surface streams, sinkhole dumps, agriculturally derived nitrates; herbicide and pesticide residues; highway spills; and leaking sewer pipelines, and storage tanks.

\*Subsurface Hydrology section taken from Crawford, Nicholas, *"Karst Landscape Analysis"*, Warren County Comprehensive Plan, 1989.

**Temperature/Precipitation**

The Kentucky Climate Center located at Western Kentucky University reports the 30-Year annual average high temperature for Warren County is 67.5 degrees Fahrenheit, and the annual average low temperature is 46.0 degrees Fahrenheit. This calculates to an annual average mean temperature of 56.8 degrees Fahrenheit. The average amount of precipitation received annually in Warren County is 50.93 inches. The month of March received the greatest amount with 5.10 inches, with December having the second highest amount at 5.03 inches. October is the driest

month of the year, receiving only 3.02 inches of precipitation. (See Exhibit 4)

**EXHIBIT 4  
Average Temperature and Precipitation,  
Warren County**

Month	Low	High	Mean	Rain (Inches)
Jan.	23.6	42.1	32.9	3.82
Feb.	27.1	47.1	37.2	4.13
March	36.6	58.2	47.4	5.10
April	45.4	68.6	57.0	4.32
May	54.3	77.3	65.8	4.94
June	62.8	85.5	74.2	4.17
July	67.1	88.7	77.9	4.74
Aug.	65.3	87.2	76.3	3.51
Sept.	58.4	81.0	69.7	3.72
Oct.	45.4	70.2	57.8	3.02
Nov.	37.3	57.6	47.5	4.43
Dec.	28.4	47.0	37.8	5.03
<b>Annual Average</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>67.5</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>50.93</b>

\*Warren County 30 Year Averages (1961-1990)  
KY Climate Center, Western Kentucky University

**Soils**

The soil that prevails in the Smiths Grove area is the PeB (Pembroke silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes), making up about 70 percent of the soils. This soil is deep, well-drained, and gently sloping. It is situated on broad limestone uplands. Typically, the surface layer is dark brown silt loam about 9 inches thick, while the subsoil is reddish brown and

---

red silty clay loam, reaching to a depth of 75 inches. This soil is high in natural fertility and is moderate in organic matter content. The soil is suited to most urban uses. In addition to the PeB soil, other soils found within the Smiths Grove Focal Point Area include, the PeC (Pembroke silt loam, 6-12 percent slopes), PeA (Pembroke silt loam, 0-2 percent slopes) and BaC (Baxter cherty silt loam, 6-12 percent slopes). They are all found on broad limestone uplands. The same descriptions for PeB soils follow for these soils as well. The PeC soil makes up about 10 percent of soils in the area and it is found in the mid-eastern section of Smiths Grove. PeA soil makes up about 5 percent of the soils, and it is found in the eastern portion of Smiths Grove, while BaC soil makes up about 5% of the soils, and is found in the southern portion of Smiths Grove (see exhibit 5).

### **Land Use Analysis**

Population growth and the economic structure of Smiths Grove, analyzed in later sections, are two factors which characterize a developing area. A third important factor is the past and present physical form. Physical form is best expressed by the way in which land is being used and the resulting patterns that develop. While existing patterns of development need not dictate the future use of land, they will exert a strong influence on the way land is used and, in turn, the manner in which future land uses affect the local economy. To understand the land use pattern of Smiths Grove, the land must be analyzed for use by location, quantity, and quality. Such an analysis provides an insight into functional and spatial relationships between various City activities. The information for this element was acquired from field surveys, a review of property valuation records, 1990

Census data, and high altitude aerial photography.

### **Land Use Survey**

To determine the nature of the existing land use, a review of property valuation records and a survey by automobile was performed. The review of property valuation records was conducted during the fall of 2000. Mr. Bill Carter, Property Valuation Administrator, graciously made the records available. Using these records and current highway and road maps, land uses were located and recorded. From this data, digital copies of the land use maps for the City of Smiths Grove were generated. These maps were then reviewed for accuracy by various public officials and citizens. Field surveys were conducted in areas identified by those individuals. The Smiths Grove General Land Use Map was compiled in GIS format in December 2000 (see exhibit 6).

### **Land Use Classification**

Land use analysis provides information on the spatial organization and integration which develops between planning area activities. This analysis may then be used to make assumptions about future land use development and the control of this development. For that purpose Smiths Grove's land uses have been classified according to the following system:

**Residential:** Any area used for a permanent home is classified in this category. This includes single family permanent homes in Smiths Grove, plus residential areas devoted to multiple family use.

**Commercial:** This land use category includes all the major retail/wholesale and

---

private for profit service institutions located in the City.

**Industrial:** Production industry and industrial plants which manufacture finished and semi-finished products are included in this category; also included are dedicated industry specific warehousing.

**Public/Government:** This class includes such facilities which primarily serve the administrative, social, recreational, educational, and health needs of the general public. The most common land uses in this category are government offices, schools, churches, cemeteries, and post offices. In



*Smiths Grove City Hall*

addition, the category includes right-of-way for transportation (roads, streets, and railroads) and transmission lines (power and gas).

**Open Space/Agriculture:** This designation includes all agricultural land in the City. Woodland, floodways, and wetlands are part of this category.

### **Land Use Densities**

Land use densities that can be derived through mathematical manipulation are important projection tools in determining future land use needs in the City. Exhibit 6 provides land use category data and comparisons for Smiths Grove. In the summer of 2000, Smiths Grove had 186.16 acres of residential land use. This is 44.31% of the total area of the City.

Commercial land use activities were located



*Section of Residential District*

on 29.57 acres or 7.37% of the total city area. Industrial areas occupy 18.31 acres and public/government facilities cover another 42.63 acres. Vacant/open space/agriculture land use is a significant feature within the City of Smiths Grove. This category occupies 143.49 acres or 34.15% of the total area in the City. This would suggest that there is ample room for expansion to meet future land use needs of Smiths Grove. The rugged character of the terrain, however, precludes development on some of the vacant land.

### **Smiths Grove Zoning Districts**

The relationship between land use map and zoning map is two-fold. The current land use map reflects the general current activity on a particular parcel but the Zoning Classification outlines the type of uses permitted, as well as,

other lot characteristics and dimensions allowed. Usually these activities and uses are consistent, but several parcels within the City of Smiths Grove have underlying zoning different than the type of activity presented on the existing land use map. The Zoning Map also further defines the particular land uses into smaller more detailed zoning classifications that are also not reflected in the General Land Use Map (see exhibit 7).

## **Population and Economic Characteristics**

### **Population Data**

The 2000 U.S. Census Resident Population data was released in late March, 2001. The City of Smiths Grove is reported to have 784 persons residing within the corporate limits. This is a 11.5% increase from the 1990 figure of 703 persons. The 2000 Census reports the racial composition of Smiths Grove was 84.8% percent white, 12.1% percent Black or African American, 1.9% Hispanic or Latino (of any race), and 1.1% two or more races.

There were 319 housing units reported in 1990 within the jurisdiction of Smiths Grove (2000 census data were not available for this report). The 1990 median household income for Smiths Grove was \$20,893, lower than the Warren County income level of \$24,175. The 1990 census reports that 64.6 percent of the residents of Smiths Grove derived their income from employer-based wages or salaries, 7.7 percent derived their income from farm self-employment and 12.4 percent of the working population are self-employed in non-farm employment. Some 42.7 percent of the residents receive some income from social

security, which is higher than Warren County's figure of 25.2 percent. The 1990 population receiving retirement income of Smiths Grove was 18.2 percent, which was also higher than Warren County's 13.4 percent. In 1990, there were 14.6 percent persons below the poverty level.

The Kentucky State Data Center (KSDC) also compiled Household Projections for Warren County up to the year 2020. The estimated persons per household is predicted to decline for the county (see exhibit 8). This follows a national trend of downsizing of families as well as indicating the aging of the Smiths Grove population.

### **Exhibit 8 HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS Warren County 1997-2020**

<u>Year</u>	-	<u>Persons</u>
1997	-	2.41
1998	-	2.40
1999	-	2.38
2000	-	2.36
2005	-	2.33
2010	-	2.29
2015	-	2.26
2020	-	2.22

### **Economic Characteristics**

The City of Smiths Grove currently has approximately 50 licensed businesses within the corporate limits. The community is well known for its antiques and speciality shops, but the City of Smiths Grove has a significant

---

amount of Office and Professional and Industrial type businesses. According to records provided by the Smiths Grove City Finance Department, the number and types of business licenses are:

- C Office and Professional/Service-10,
- C Commercial/Retail-9,
- C Restaurant/Food Service-4,
- C Overnight Accommodation/  
Daycare-3,
- C Automotive Service-5,
- C Antique/Specialty-10,
- C Industrial/Light-8, and
- C Industrial/Heavy-1.

The City of Smiths Grove's economic base is very balanced by business category and diverse as indicated different types of retail and service businesses located in the city.

### **Community Facilities**

The community facilities of an area are those services and resources designed to sustain the citizens' quality of life. In addition, many families and businesses look to the availability of these facilities as an important factor in deciding where to locate. Community facilities are essential to the life of a community. This analysis of community facilities will include: water, sewer, transportation, electricity, natural gas, phone, cable, solid waste disposal, police and fire protective services, recreation facilities, health care services, education and other community facilities.

#### **Water**

The Warren County Water District provides water for the City of Smiths Grove and rural

Warren County. Bowling Green Municipal Utilities (BGMU) supplies the treated water from the Barren River to Warren County Water District. The system has a maximum capacity of 22.5 million gallons daily (MGD). Plans are currently underway to expand the capacity to an estimated 30 MGD. The Warren County Water District uses this water to supply 18,500 total customers, 1,245 of which are commercial/industrial.

Total average daily consumption for Warren County is 5.3 MGD. The peak consumption rate is 8.9 MGD which occurs in August. The lowest consumption rate is 4.9 MGD which occurs in April. The Warren County Water District has a storage capacity of 9.2 million gallons. The system contains 905 miles of water distribution lines under 70 to 150 pounds per square inch (psi) of water pressure.

The City of Smiths Grove is part of the Warren County Water District system (see exhibit 9). There are 339 residential and 69 commercial consumers in Smiths Grove for a total of 408. Total average daily consumption for Smiths Grove is 95,000 gallons per day. Peak consumption amounts to 130,000 gallons which occurs in August. The lowest consumption rate is 67,000 gallons which occurs in April. Smiths Grove has a storage capacity of 100,000 gallons.

#### **Wastewater Treatment**

Warren County Water District provides sewage treatment to the City of Smiths Grove (see exhibit 10). The system serves a total of 1,472 customers in Warren County; 1,187 residential, 285 industrial/commercial. The current capacity of the treatment plant is 10.5

---

million gallons per day. It treats an average of 8 million gallons per day. The system has approximately 47 miles of sewer lines and 16 pumping stations. The City of Smiths Grove has adopted an ordinance requiring all developments to connect to public sanitary sewers. The sewage system should be extended as needed to areas of potential annexation, as well as areas of residential growth close to the city limits of Smiths Grove.

### **Transportation**

Smiths Grove is bordered to the south by Interstate 65 and is served by a full-interchange for this north-south interstate. Major construction plans are underway to widen I-65 from the existing four-lane to a six-lane interstate highway. A major arterial, U.S. 68-KY 80 also traverses the southern edge of the Smiths Grove Focal Point. KY 101 intersects U.S. 68-KY 80 and runs north and south through the center of Smiths Grove. The Kentucky Cabinet for Transportation is in the planning stages of a re-alignment and/or by-pass project of Highway 101 from the I-65 interchange, north to US 31-W. Average Daily Traffic Counts supplied by the Kentucky Cabinet for Transportation indicate that 3,050 vehicles travel KY 101 in Smiths Grove, 3,180 vehicles travel U.S. 68-Ky 80 at the intersection of KY 101 and the volume of traffic on Interstate 65 near the Smiths Grove interchange is approximately 41,700 vehicles per day (see exhibit 11).

Several local county-maintained roads access Smiths Grove such as Smiths Grove-Oakland Road, Rocky Hill Road, Little Knob Road and Stanley Rice Road. The City of Smiths Grove has 7.08 miles of city-maintained streets

within its incorporated boundaries (see exhibit 12). The CSX Railroad runs through the Focal Point but does not currently make any stops in the City of Smiths Grove. Air and bus transportation services are available in Bowling Green as well as in Nashville and Louisville.

### **Electricity/Natural Gas**

Warren Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation serves Smiths Grove and Warren County, which includes residential, commercial and industrial customers. There is underground natural gas currently located in Smiths Grove. However, this section of Warren County receives natural gas piped from the Western Kentucky Gas Company in Bowling Green.

### **Telephone/Cable**

Telephone service is provided to the community of Smiths Grove by Verizon Communications (GTE and Bell-Atlantic). Currently there are fifteen-hundred (1500) customers in the "563" exchange (NE Warren County), which includes the City of Smiths Grove. Cable television services are provided by In-Sight Communications, Inc. There are approximately 250 current cable subscribers within the city limits of Smiths Grove.

### **Solid Waste Management**

The Fiscal Court is responsible for the Warren County Solid Waste Management Area. Waste collection in Warren County consists of ten residential and five commercial, private franchised collection systems. Monarch Environmental, Inc. provides an exclusive franchise collection service within the city limits of Smiths Grove and the Little Knob

---

Road area to approximately 272 residential and 28 commercial customers within the city limits of Smiths Grove.

### **Police Protection**

Smiths Grove Police Department consists of two (2) officers and two (2) patrol vehicles. Officers must undergo 400 basic hours (10 weeks) of initial training at Eastern Kentucky University and forty hours of annual refresher courses. The National Municipal Police Administration cites 2 officers per 1,000 people as the standard for sufficient protection. The Smiths Grove Police Department's protection ratio is 2 officers per 700 citizens. Warren County Sheriff Department consists of sixty-one (61) full-time and part-time sworn officers and sixteen (16) non-sworn office personnel. The department operates 30 cruisers. The department handles dispatched 911 and other calls for this area of Warren County. Kentucky State Police Post #3 is located in Bowling Green. This post serves several south-central Kentucky cities and counties, including Warren County, and Smiths Grove. Post #3 employs 43 sworn officers and 1 arson investigator. Post #3 has eight (8) troopers assigned to Warren County.

### **Fire Protection**

Warren County maintains nine (9) volunteer fire departments which are distributed throughout the county. The Smiths Grove Fire Department #1 is located in a County owned building on Main Street in Smiths Grove, Smiths Grove Fire Department #2 is located on Gott-Hydro Road (see exhibit 13). These two stations serve the City of Smiths Grove and the adjacent rural area of Warren County. The combined departments enlists

the assistance of 28 volunteer firefighters, four (4) of which are 1<sup>st</sup> responder, four (4) certified paramedics and four (4) are listed as



*Volunteer Fire Station*

EMT's. The Smiths Grove Fire Department operates two (2) 1,000 gallon pumpers, a 3,000 gallon pumper and a brush/ squad truck with a 250 gallon pumper. The Smiths Grove volunteer fire department has a ISO fire classification rating of seven (7).

### **Recreational Facilities**

The National Recreation and Park Association has set standards to ensure the minimal space, areas, and facilities are provided. Kentucky, in its 1995 Assessment and Policy Plan for Outdoor Recreation, identifies by Area Development District, the degree to which facilities or activities are needed. Ed Spear Park is located within the community of Smiths Grove. The Warren County Parks Department maintains the 9.77 acre facility (see exhibit 14). The Ed Spear facility inventory includes: 2 picnic shelters, a lighted basketball court, 2 lighted tennis courts, 2 lighted baseball/ softball fields, a volleyball court, 2 playgrounds, a concession/ restroom facility, a maintenance building and parking for 250 vehicles.

---

## Health Care

Not having a local major medical facility, Smiths Grove must rely on facilities in the surrounding communities. Smiths Grove is adequately served in the medical field by the Warren County District Health Department as well as the two other regional medical facilities, located ten miles south in Bowling Green. Greenview Regional Hospital and the Medical Center at Bowling Green. These two high-tech medical facilities offer major services that include complete cardiac care, respiratory care, same day surgery, plastic and cosmetic surgery, addiction recovery centers, laboratory/pathology departments, pharmacy department, radiology department, rehabilitation, and social services. Emergency calls and ambulance service are accessed through the community enhanced 911 service. The Warren County Health Department also provides necessary health care for Warren County. This includes medical and other social services to the county. The Community of Smiths Grove currently has two dentists and a drug store serving the citizens of the city.

## Education

Warren County School District, in 1999-00,



*North Warren Elementary School*

had a beginning total school system enrollment of more than 10,800 students attending the district's 17 schools. The operating budget of the Warren County School District is nearly \$64 million a year. The Warren County School System employs approximately 1,700 persons. The North Warren Elementary School is located at 420 College Street, in Smiths Grove. In 1999-'00, the school's enrollment was 446 students.

## Other Community Facilities

Other Community Facilities are places and programs which help and provide quality of life for the people of the community. These are programs such as: Social Services Bureau, Social Insurance Bureau, Barren River Aging Services, and the Community Action Agency. Another type of special program or place that fits into this category is a church. A church is defined as a nonprofit organization that provides care and refuge to



*Smiths Grove United Methodist Church*

the people of that particular community. There are six (6) churches in Smiths Grove. They range in size, number, and religious beliefs and include: Mount Pleasantville Baptist Church, Smiths Grove United Methodist Church, Smiths Grove Presbyterian Church, Smiths Grove Church of Christ, Smiths Grove Baptist Church, and the Smiths

Grove Christian Church.

The Community is also adequately served by a local Post Office and the Smiths Grove



*Smiths Grove Public Library  
(building on right)*

Branch of the Bowling Green-Warren County Library.

### Visual Survey

The majority of visitors to the City of Smiths Grove usually are traveling along U.S. Interstate 65 and decide to exit at mile-marker 28 for gas, food, or some type of auto service. At first glance the area looks like many interchanges in the Commonwealth, and for that matter, the rest of the country. Many of



*Smiths Grove Truckstop*

the services that you would see in Ohio, Georgia, or Indiana are present: a McDonald's restaurant, a large BP station/truck stop, Shell

and Exxon convenience markets, auto and truck repair businesses, a small motel, and a diner. But if the traveler is so inclined to drive north on KY Highway 101 (Main Street), the small town beauty of Smiths Grove starts to unfold. Gone are all the



*Section of Antique District*

highway type and strip commercial services. The streets are lined with modest homes and small scattered antique and neighborhood-type businesses. Tree-lined sidewalks, the presence of on-street parking and pedestrian traffic remind the traveler that this area is more than just an interchange town.

Upon exploring the town further, the quiet, but very well maintained Ed Spear City/County Park sits in southwest section of the City. The homes in this part of town and the homes north of the railroad are on very



*Tree-lined sidewalks*

---

small lots. The homes sit close to the street and are complemented with an abundance of trees and sidewalks. As you drive (or walk) back to Main Street and move north towards the CSX Railroad, the heart of Smiths Grove's historic 130 year downtown completely overshadows the initial image at the I-65 interchange: the town library, a volunteer fire station, the small City Hall (no larger than most residential subdivision garages), and the reminiscent historic buildings of a railroad town from a different day. Large older structures (most over 100 years old) house the very popular antique district, some small



*Smiths Grove Baptist Church*

businesses, a drug store, and a bed and breakfast. Several historic churches and large homes sit along Main Street as you move north past the downtown. Moving east, the North Warren Elementary School, formerly the Smiths Grove High School and Smiths Grove College established in 1875, sits as an anchor in the neighborhood. The homes are much larger than in the northwest section of town, but are closely spaced and share the same tree-lined/sidewalk elements of the rest of the community. The City's tight-knit atmosphere becomes very obvious. The City does have some newer residential developments to the north and east of town.

The Jackson Manor Subdivision sits north of Sixth Street. Twenty-one (21) lots are laid out with modern homes, mostly built of brick, with a minimum 20,000 square foot lot requirement. To the east and somewhat southern section of town are several new homes constructed in the last 10 to 20 years. Some are brick, but most are large, vinyl-sided/mixed homes. If the traveler is so inclined to leave the City to the north on KY highway 101, one of the City's most beautiful and historic sites still remains to be explored.



*The Hays Cemetery*

The Hays Cemetery is full of many reminders of the area's historic past. Several markers date back to the 1800's, and many of the town's forefathers are buried there. The cemetery sits at the most northern edge of the City and several hundred acres of farmland and the Green River Knobs can still be seen just as the first settlers did over 200 years ago.

### **Vision Statement**

*The **Smiths Grove Focal Point** offers an opportunity for this Rural Village to preserve its rich heritage, individualism, and small town identity, while enhancing the community's overall value and appearance through well planned developments.*

---

*Traditional neighborhood development, mixed with compatible neighborhood scale commercial is encouraged. All residential density should reflect the surrounding land use. Commercial developments will be encouraged to complement the existing services being provided in this rural village. All new land uses and developments in the Smiths Grove Focal Point should encourage pedestrian mobility through the use of sidewalks, green ways and bike ways.*

## **Policy Plan**

### **Rural Village General Description**

The Comprehensive Plan for Warren County characterizes Smiths Grove as a “Rural Village” focal point. Rural Villages are developed areas of Warren County that “represent unique opportunities for preservation of historic and architectural buildings and places. These villages are primarily historical agricultural service centers that may or may not have remaining commercial districts.” The text further states that Rural Village policies should be “designed to enhance their individuality and livability, while providing for local situations”.

### **Future Land Use Needs**

Based on discussions with community leaders, and on the analysis and recommendation of the Kentucky State Transportation Cabinet, that KY State Highway 101 be re-constructed to accommodate 102" truck traffic from Interstate 65 to U.S. 31-W, it will be necessary to draft a proposed Highway 101 Corridor/By-Pass route on the Smiths Grove Future Land Use Map until the final route is determined. The future land use plan is

suitable both for limited residential and commercial development. Future land use needs for the City of Smiths Grove are found on Exhibit 15.

In particular, the Smiths Grove Focal Point Committee recommend the development of tourist oriented activity along this proposed improved Highway 101 corridor. The proposed highway improvement along KY 101 should significantly increase traffic volume and accessibility. The suggested area of improvement adjacent to KY 101 should experience commercial development and residential growth in the coming years.

Policies in this Focal Point Plan are numbered using first a reference to a Comprehensive Plan policy (e.g. LU for land use policies), followed by “SG” for Smiths Grove, and then by a consecutive numbering system. The following policies are hereby established and do not require amendment of the Comprehensive Plan’s goals and objectives:

### **General Policy Statement**

**LU-1-SG-1 To ensure orderly development of vacant tracts and in-fill sites within the City of Smiths Grove, the Future Land Use Map should guide all zoning and development decisions.** The City of Smiths Grove currently has limited acreage available for new development. Plans must be carefully considered to ensure the best use is made of the land while benefitting the overall welfare of the City. A Future Land Use Map analysis has been prepared which identifies areas of the City that are suitable for particular types of development (see exhibit 15). Any development not in conformance with the

---

Map must fully demonstrate the need for such development and how it will benefit the City of Smiths Grove and its residents.

### **Residential Policy Statements**

**LU-5G-SG-1 Infill residential development should reflect the character of the neighborhood with regard to size, scale, setbacks, and architecture.** On sites that are currently vacant or that may be redeveloped, it is important that the development occur in a way that the neighborhood attributes be maintained or enhanced. In redevelopment, the footprint of the previous residence should be followed as closely as possible to ensure that new residences are well situated among existing residences. In areas where a specific architectural period is predominant, care should be given in designing new structures to not detract from the existing character.

**LU-5G-SG-2 New single family residential development of greater than 10 units should be limited in density to no more than 4 units per acre.** Single family residential development over the past two to three decades has typically been on larger tracts than the intensely development central core of Smiths Grove. These areas, generally along the outer edges of Smiths Grove, have developed slowly and in a general pattern of modern half-acre lot subdivisions. Single family residences continue to increase in size and limiting the allowable density will ensure that adequate space is available to handle parking, drainage, and open space needs in new development. Where a proposed development can adequately address these

needs, this density may be increased to 6 units per acre.

**LU-5G-SG-3 All new residential development must have sidewalks, curb, and gutter.** The City of Smiths Grove has funded several sidewalk construction projects over the past decade in an effort to provide pedestrian access throughout the City. To further this goal, all new residential development, both single and multi-family, must be developed with sidewalks installed during subdivision construction. Adding curb and gutter will facilitate the drainage system for each development as well as contribute to the maintenance of any new streets.

**LU-5G-SG-4 New multi-family residential development shall be limited to two-family and townhouses only.** The predominant residential type in Smiths Grove is the single family residence. However, the need for more housing options has been recognized and two-family structures, such as duplexes, twinhomes, and townhomes can help meet that need. Limiting multi-family residential development to these structures will ensure that the neighborhood character is maintained, while providing some transition options from the single family neighborhoods to the commercial districts and higher traffic corridors, including the railroad.

### **Commercial Policy Statements**

**LU-6F-SG-1 Highway commercial development should be limited to the area designated on the Smiths Grove Future Land Use Map (exhibit 15).** This area

---

focuses on the Interstate 65 Interchange. The Smiths Grove Zoning Ordinance states that

purpose of the Highway Commercial (C-2) district is “for commercial uses which require a high volume of passing vehicular traffic to provide the support necessary for successful operations”. The Zoning Ordinance further states that the expansion of the Highway Commercial district should only occur when the need for such use is clearly demonstrated. Highway Commercial businesses are designed to attract travelers to their offered services and most must have a minimum traffic volume to operate. These businesses are most appropriate near the high volume of Interstate 65 and restricting the uses to that area will ensure the maintenance of the small town atmosphere, including lower traffic volumes, within downtown Smiths Grove.

**LU-6F-SG-2 Smiths Grove has a unique tourist market in its antique district and this niche should be encouraged to continue by allowing the mixed use of residential and antique businesses.** Allowing an antique shop to be located in a personal residence would offer an incentive of lower overhead and expenses for potential small business owners. However, in allowing for a mixed use, the residential character of the structure must be maintained. In the current Zoning Ordinance for Smiths Grove, the residential districts do not allow for retail businesses in a residence, nor do commercial districts have residential use as a permitted, conditional, or accessory use. To allow for mixed use of properties in Smiths Grove, the Zoning Ordinance would require amendment.

**LU-6F-SG-3 Commercial development in**

the

**areas outside of the Highway Commercial district should be limited to a neighborhood size, scale, and type.** Smiths Grove is recognized as a community service center for its residents, nearby Oakland, and the surrounding agricultural areas. Commercial development should be designed to serve the needs of the local population. Neighborhood scale commercial services can generally be limited to 2,500 square feet, but in no case should a commercial use command more than 6,000 square feet.

### **Industrial Policy Statements**

**LU-7G-SG-1 Only Light Industrial development and uses should be allowed and should be limited to the area designated on the Smiths Grove Future Land Use Map (exhibit 15).**

The predominant industrial use type in Smiths Grove is Light Industrial. The land use analysis determined that the City has several parcels adjacent to existing industrial lots that could be re-developed. The Warren County Comprehensive Plan has designated that in rural villages, new industrial uses should be located in the traditional industrial district or in newly developed industrial parks within the rural village. The future land use map (exhibit 15) has designated areas where Light Industrial uses may be located.

### **Recommendations for Action**

The final step in the Focal Point planning process is outlining recommendations for public action to implement the Focal Point

---

Plan. To complete the objectives set forth by this planning document, public action would be required for several items. The City-County Planning Commission of Warren County should adopt and incorporate this planning document into the Warren County Comprehensive Plan. The City of Smiths Grove and Warren county governments should be consulted in the implementation of the Focal Point Plan to ensure support of both entities.

The revised countywide Zoning Ordinance should be adopted by the City Commission of Smiths Grove. The revised Zoning Ordinance includes a Rural Village Overlay District which would complement the Rural Village Focal Point Policies presented in this document. This would ensure compatibility of any new development or redevelopment in this Rural Village Focal Point.

An expanded review of the alternatives for the reconstruction of Kentucky Highway 101 by the Kentucky Department of Highways should be conducted to study the economic impacts of creating a bypass around the City of Smiths Grove. The impact analysis should also review the effect of a new highway/bypass with full urban services and the possibility of urban sprawl on the Rural Village of Smiths Grove.

Policies should be developed and adopted by the City Commission of Smiths Grove involving the use of annexation. The City should state its intentions regarding annexation of contiguous parcels outside the City of Smiths Grove. A detailed cost-benefit analysis for each potential annexation project and the services it would need to provide must be conducted for any newly annexed parcels.

The policies contained in this document should also be considered in the review of each annexation request. Focal Point 116-B would be amended to include all annexed areas brought into the City.

---

## SELECTED REFERENCES

- C Allen, Dr. Nathan Perry, *“Early History of Smiths Grove- taken from the Autobiography of Dr. Nathan Perry Allen, p.22-23”*. Reproduced from the Glasgow Times, 1899.
- C Baird, Nancy and Crowe-Carraco, Carol, *“History of Bowling Green and Warren County”*, Technical Report- Warren County Comprehensive Plan, WKU Center for Local Government, 1989.
- C Barren River Area Development Council, *“BRADD Data Book”*, Bowling Green, Kentucky 1994.
- C Crawford, Nicholas, *“Karst Landscape Analysis”*, Warren County Comprehensive Plan, 1989.
- C Hatcher, Mary and Pelly, Mary F, *“The History of Smiths Grove”*, 1964.
- C Kentucky Climate Center, *Warren County 30 Year Averages (1961-1990)*, Western Kentucky University, 2000.
- C Kentucky State Data Center, Urban Studies Institute, *“How Many Kentuckians”*, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky, 1999.
- C McGrain, Preston, and James C. Currens, *“Topography of Kentucky,”* Kentucky Geological Survey, University of Kentucky, Special Publication 25, Series X, 1978.
- C Napier, Marion T, *“History of North Warren School”*, 1994.
- C Perrin, W H and Battle, J H, *“Kentucky- A History of the State”*, Louisville, F A Battery, 1886.
- C Rennick, Robert M, *“Kentucky Place Names”*, the University of Kentucky Press, 1984.
- C Snow, Richard and Snow, Mary, *“History of Edmonson County”*, WKU Center for Local Government, 1997.
- C United States Census Bureau, *2000 Redistricting Data (public law 94-171), Summary File, PLI-4*, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 2001
- C United States Census Bureau, *2000 Redistricting Data (public law 94-171), Summary File- Kentucky*, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 2001
- C United States Census Bureau, *1990 Census of the Population*, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.
- C United States Soil Conservation Service, *“Soil Survey of Warren County, Kentucky”*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

---

## Acknowledgments

Preparation of this document was made possible through the extensive participation of the following members of the Smiths Grove Focal Point Planning Committee, and the City-County Planning Commission Staff:

Gerald Brown, *Planning Commission, Smiths Grove Representative*

Shirley Martin, *Smiths Grove City Commission*

Jessie Varner, *Smiths Grove City Commission*

Bill Hardy, Jr., *Citizen member*

Tommy Hunt, *Warren County 4<sup>th</sup> District Magistrate*

John Wayne Smith, *Smiths Grove Vision Committee Chairman*

Roger Thomas, *District 21 (Warren Co.), House of Representatives*

Andy Gillies, *Executive Director, City-County Planning Commission*

Alice Burks, *Assistant Director*

Stephen Hunter, *Planner*

Victoria Alapo, *Planner*

Tonya Colley, *GIS Intern*

---

## **Appendices**

### *PVA Parcel Data*