

Kannapolis growth area cut out of county land plan

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CONCORD - After concerns about a future growth area being limited by a major county land-use plan, the Kannapolis portion of the plan has been altered from the last version to be presented to the public.

The changes focus mostly on the area at the interchange of Interstate 85 and Lane Street at Exit 63. In the previous land plan, the area was mostly zoned for open space and agricultural uses, allowing developers to build only one house for every two or three acres.

But Kannapolis officials believe the area will be an important, growing corridor for the city as the North Carolina Research Campus and a planned medical center are built.

"It's the very same plan, but amended in the area around Land Street," said Susie Morris, the county's planning director.

The area around Lane Street, Morris said, has been altered to allow for mixed-use development. The area below Lane Street to Kannapolis' utilities boundary with Concord will have a rural, residential designation.

On August 18, the Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing of the plan, which consists of about 39,200 acres of low density, rural and semi-rural residential and agricultural communities.

In July, Kannapolis City Council discussed their displeasure with the land-use plan, expressing a few concerns.

Kannapolis City Manager Mike Legg said in July that the city's concerns dealt with the proposed density and the 20-year life span of the land-use plan.

"We think that interchange will be dramatically different over the next several years," said Legg last month. "And I think the residential densities should be comparable to the interchange."

County Manager John Day has said the changes to the Kannapolis growth area would not greatly change the plan in that there are no utility extensions in the area in question.

Generalized boundaries for the "central area" include Rowan County to the north; Irish Potato Road and Cold Springs Road to the east; portions of Rocky River Road to the south and southwest; and the cities of Harrisburg, Concord and Kannapolis to the west.

Concord City Council is expected to consider the land-use plan following commissioners' decision on Aug. 18.

A similar agreement with Harrisburg is expected to follow.

"We haven't contracted anything (with Harrisburg) at this point," Morris said. "Once everything is settled with this...we will be looking to start that."

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