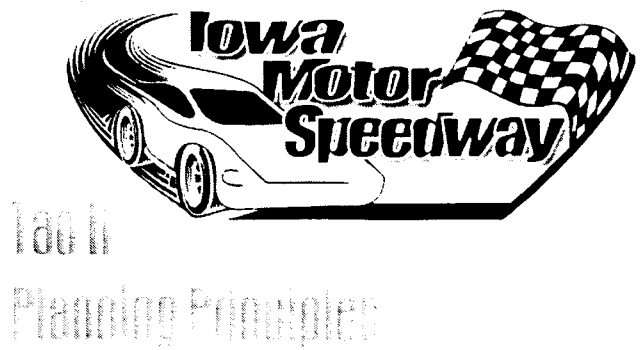


The activities under the program must demonstrate how planning principals were considered in order to be eligible for assistance. No minimum score is required on this rating factor to be eligible for funding.



Planning in Jasper County and the City of Newton has long recognized the importance of balanced development. Each type of land use, from residential to industrial, from agricultural to commercial, is necessary for a fully functioning community. However, unplanned development can lead to incompatible land uses bring located near each other and to inefficient use of infrastructure. Jasper County and the City of Newton have taken steps to ensure that all types of land use have the opportunity to grow in a compatible fashion.

The Iowa Motor Speedway is best viewed on a regional scale. In determining where a large facility such as this belongs, there are several factors to consider. It needs to be located:

- Along a major highway corridor for access and visibility.
- Near a large population base.
- In an area that minimizes disruption to the environment.
- In an area that will not destroy the existing fabric of the community.

Locating the Iowa Motor Speedway at the proposed location in Jasper County meets these criteria.

The Newton Comprehensive Plan summarizes the importance of planning, showing how the City strives to respect all types of land use while still providing for economic growth.

- *Without planning and development controls in an open land market, it is very probable that land use conflicts would develop with "incompatible" land uses located adjacent to each other. Increased concern over social, economic and environmental problems have broadened the planning movement. As a result, land use planning has*

evolved to a more positive and flexible approach of attempting to create the best possible environment for people to live, work and play.

The Iowa Motor Speedway fits well with the overall planning scheme for the Central Jasper County area. Local uses are centered along Highway 6, while regional uses are located near the Interstate, out of the central city and away from yet in close proximity to the heart of the local community.

When a large project is proposed, it is evaluated using the same planning principles that apply to any other development. In the case of the proposed Iowa Motor Speedway, it satisfies the following major planning principles:

- Development should follow a Comprehensive Plan
- Existing infrastructure and facilities should be utilized
- Access and visibility for regional facilities should be promoted
- The natural environment should guide facility design
- Incompatible uses should be separated

These principles have long been established as major tenets of urban and regional planning. They have been used to ensure that the Iowa Motor Speedway proposal is sound from a land use planning standpoint. These principles and how they relate to the speedway project will be examined in greater detail in response to the specific questions below.

1. Compliance with local comprehensive plans, zoning and land use.

Both Jasper County and the City of Newton adopted updated Comprehensive Land Use Plans in 1997, with ten-year time frames for both documents. Therefore, the Plans are still current and they can be utilized to evaluate planned developments. The County and City have also adopted Zoning Ordinances, which have periodically been updated. The proposed Iowa Motor Speedway is consistent with these plans and ordinances.

While an individual recreational development at the scale of the proposed speedway was not anticipated, the long-range Comprehensive Plans of both Newton and Jasper County do direct large, land-intensive uses toward Industrial areas located near the Interstate Highway interchanges. Thus, the City of Newton has zoned the land within its City limits around Interchange 168 and the Newton Airport as Industrial, consistent with the City's comprehensive plan. Likewise, the County has zoned the land on which the speedway is proposed as Industrial. Again, this is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan adopted for the area.

The speedway use is appropriately located in an Industrial zone, but its impacts will be strongly felt in nearby commercial zones. The primary goal of the Commercial section of the Newton Comprehensive Plan is, *"To provide an economic climate for the city that will encourage the improvement of existing businesses, and the establishment of new businesses that will be of benefit to the community."* This project, with its anticipated spin-off development and its boosting of existing businesses, is entirely consistent with the City's major commercial goal.

Another one of the major goals of both the City of Newton and Jasper County has been to promote recreational opportunities. The Newton Comprehensive Plan has a goal *"to provide for all citizens a variety of enjoyable leisure opportunities"*. The Plan recommends that the City *"continue to provide a balance in recreational facilities to serve the varied interests of the population"*. Similarly, the Jasper County Comprehensive Plan has a goal to *"increase recreational activities to attract tourists"*. Both the City and County had adopted these goals long before the Iowa Motor Speedway project was proposed.

The Newton Comprehensive Plan also calls for the area around the City's eastern Interstate 80 interchange to be oriented toward regional and travel related activities. Specifically, the Plan calls for the City to encourage large-scale development at Interchange 168 and along the Beltline Road corridor heading north toward 1st Avenue East (Highway 6). The Comprehensive Plan states:

It may be prudent for the city to gain control of the east interchange through annexation and encourage appropriate development in that area. This development could be in the form of a similar motel/gas station complex or a warehousing/

distributing type of activity which would benefit from the location next to Interstate 80. New future commercial development is planned and anticipated to occur along the Beltline from 1st Ave. East to interchange 168 where the Beltline intersects with I-80. The City should take great care in planning for and approving developments in this corridor.

In summary, though the Iowa Motor Speedway project was not specifically anticipated when the documents were adopted, it is clear that the proposal is consistent with both the Jasper County and City of Newton Comprehensive Plans. The Plans encourage new tourist-oriented recreational facilities and state that a large-scale, regional facility like the speedway is best located near an Interstate 80 interchange where access is good, there is land available, and there is great potential to spur additional development.

2. A description of the efficient and effective use of land resources and existing infrastructure or capacity to avoid costly duplication of services and costly use of land.

The Iowa Motor Speedway site is a prime example of re-development of an abandoned facility (the County Care Facility). It also utilizes an existing road network and Interstate interchanges. Services are either already in place or can be provided by extending existing networks. By not having to create either entirely new infrastructure and a service-providing entity, duplication of facilities and services is avoided.

3. A description showing provisions for a variety of transportation choices, including pedestrian traffic.

Motor Vehicles

Since this facility celebrates the automobile, and especially considering the wide geographic origin of the patrons and fans, the primary and preferred mode of transportation to the site will be by private cars, trucks, and RVs. The tourism agencies will also organize and promote group motor coach tours to the facility. Upgrades are proposed to the existing road network to accommodate the large

5. A description of the conservation of open space and farmland and preservation of critical environmental areas.

The facility is proposed on former but now vacant County Care Facility structures and land. By re-using existing structures and land that has already been developed, it lessens the impact on rural open space. This facility is of such a scale that it does not fit within the established built environment of Newton, so it is best suited to be in a less developed fringe area. Planning requires making choices and balancing competing or conflicting interests. In primarily rural Iowa, it is a reality that almost all vacant land is suitable and used for farming even when it is of marginal agricultural value. This project avoids the critical environmental areas as identified by site visits, soil surveys, and flood plain maps, but does utilize some farmland for development. However, after it is built, the project will retain compatibility with the rural character and environment by maintaining hundreds of acres of open space, grassed parking areas and landscaping.

6. A description of the promotion of the safety, livability, and revitalization of existing urban and rural communities.

The Iowa Motor Speedway provides a new choice in entertainment which will enhance the quality of life of not only local residents, but of people on a state-wide and region-wide basis. By locating the facility away from the heart of Newton and major populated areas Jasper County, noise and traffic from the speedway will have minimal impact on the safety and enjoyment of the community residents. The speedway is projected to create a tremendous economic impact which will enhance the economic future of Jasper County, Iowa and the regional area.

7. A description of the transportation choices to be available to the project.

This was covered in Item Number Three.