



**1. What is the biggest challenge and opportunity facing your district and/or Woodford County?**

Economic Development to recruit new jobs. Extensive water & sewer line improvements are critical and will require careful study and implementation where over \$20M will be invested in the next few years.

**2. Do you support the study of a merger of the county government with one or more of the city governments?**

Yes, to form a commission, (appointed by County and City leaders per capita by statute), to study the merits of merged governments. If we cannot save money and improve services then the commission, will not move forward. But if there is merit then the public would get to vote for or against.

**3. Do you support the NGL pipeline project?**

No.

**4. Would you support the implementation of design guidelines in the commercial zones throughout the county?**

In general yes. While I see the merits of design guidelines we need to be careful about putting up too many hurdles to potential new businesses with overly stringent demands. Having said that other communities near by have.

**5. Would you support Local Investment for Transformation (LIFT), a 1% local sales tax increase for a specific project? Please explain what project(s) that such a tax would support?**

Yes.

**6. Do you support the construction of the Northwest Connector around Versailles?**

Yes. IF it is one lane with no commercial development. My core reasons are to get large trucks out of downtown and to provide safe access to our planned new high school while eliminating the Kentucky Ave., MLK mess we currently have.

**7. Would you support an expansion of the existing Urban Services Boundary in Versailles and/or Midway during the next Comprehensive Plan update process? If so, where and how would you change the boundary?**

Only where it makes sense. Our EDA needs inventory to help grow our industrial tax base.

**8. Would you support the funding of the purchase of development rights by the Woodford County Rural Land Management Board?**

Yes, but without public money.

**9. Would you support an "Empty Box" ordinance that would require an owner/developer to remove an empty building when the primary tenant vacates it, after an appropriate period of time for lease/resale?**

Yes for an 'Empty Box' ordinance. Requiring a bond to allow local government to 're-purpose' OR tear down. This has been done in other similar communities. We do not want another Versailles Center which sat empty for years.

**10. What initiatives will you support to make economic development land "shovel ready" for recruiting new companies and jobs to Woodford County?**

Both City Council and Fiscal Court need to continue, (and increase where possible), the funding to our local EDA to continue an aggressive Business Retention Program with EDA reaching out to current employers to ensure they stay here and to discuss incentives to have them grow and expand. I also believe a full time EDA (with correct incentives in his/her contract), Director would wake up every day looking for ways to increase local jobs.

**11. How should Woodford County sustainably leverage its brand to promote economic development?**

Technology today allows many to do their jobs remotely. The small town values and quality of life we enjoy here WITH our geographic access (I64/I75, 2 international airports within an hour, broadband access to over 90% of the county, UPS hub nearby, etc. should be used to attract new businesses. Our new logo and promotional video, which showcases our quality of life, should be distributed more widely through the State of Ky EDA and to site selection groups world wide.

**12. What role should regionalism play in our growth strategies moving forward?**

Any meaningful growth will not happen on our own. How can Versailles/Woodford County, (on it's own and currently w/o a full time economic development director), position itself and have the value it needs to go to market in the new economy? Regional collaboration is one way to help smaller cities combine collective advantages, particularly in attracting international attention. Getting local leadership to fully understand and embrace this is a real challenge.

**13. How would you help Versailles and Midway become certified Trail Towns?**

I am already serving on a committee exploring this possibility.

Following is the official Agenda for the Regional Trails Meeting on the 16th of October:

**Blue Grass Bike Hike Horseback Trails Alliance Regional Trails Meeting**  
Thursday, October 16, 2014 • 1:30 p.m.  
Woodford County Chamber Office, 141 N. Main St., Versailles, Ky 40383

AGENDA

- \* Introductions
- \* Brief History and Description of Project - Rob Rumpke
- \* NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program - Russ Clark
- \* Continuation of Trails Plan into Woodford and Franklin Counties - All
- \* Recap on Woodford County Trails - Pattie Wilson
- \* Franklin County Trails and Trail Town Certification - Ed Council & Joy Jeffries
- \* BG Tomorrow Event on October 30th - Rob Rumpke.

**14. How do you see Woodford County fitting into the Bluegrass Bike Hike Horseback Alliance?**

All part of the above effort.

**15. What kinds of businesses do you think Woodford County should try to attract? What are the wage structures for those businesses?**

Retaining and growing our current industry should be priority #1. After that the growth industries of Agriculture, Business & Industry, Education, Hospitality, Arts, Tourism and Healthcare would be the next 'new industry' targets. Finally, a small/medium sized corporate headquarters and additional professional/service firms like Photizo Group (Midway). They are a premier research and consulting firm in the imaging industry that provides high-income opportunities and little if any environmental impact.

**16. What do you perceive as Woodford County's strengths?**

Our 'Uniquely Woodford' tagline is: "Small town feel you want, Urban access you need".

As a long term member of 'Woodford Tomorrow' and contributor to the document: "A Community Vision and How to Achieve It, Executive Summary", I will quote directly from it below:

"Created in 1788, Woodford County was the last of nine counties organized by Virginia before Kentucky's separation. Today, Woodford County sits in the heart of Kentucky's Bluegrass Region and is home to almost 25,000 residents and consists of 191 square miles of land.

It is the Karst geology of Woodford County with the rich levels of phosphorus and limestone deposits that creates the fertile, unique soil that sets the county apart from their neighbors. In fact, over 90% of Woodford County is comprised of soils that are prime for agriculture production according to the Versailles, Midway, and Woodford County 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Agriculture has defined Woodford County since the first settlers came to the area in the late 1700's. The fertile farmland with its phosphorus rich limestone soils has been the foundation on which the cities in the county have developed, first Versailles in 1792 and later Midway in 1846.

It is this unique territory that has also created a rich tradition of breeding, raising, and selling horses - Thoroughbred, Saddlebred, and other breeds in Woodford County. Today, there are over 300 horse farms in the county that bring tourists in from around the world.

While agriculture has been the foundation on which Woodford County was developed, it has been the strong entrepreneurial spirit of the community that has allowed it to grow beyond its agrarian roots.

Woodford County's location in the golden triangle makes it strategically placed to access major transportation routes, including two major interstates (I-64 and I-75), a state parkway (Bluegrass), and the Bluegrass Airport in Fayette County. The solid business infrastructure, quality health care, strong entrepreneurial spirit, and quality education system in Woodford County also provide a foundation for the growth of business in the community.

The Woodford County region presents significant educational opportunities for both business and employee development and for quality of life. Woodford is home to Midway College and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, plus it is located within a day's drive of 28 colleges and universities in Kentucky and within a two-hour drive of two major community and technical colleges. The county school district is compact and effective and performs over state averages in most significant measures.

Woodford County's appeal to potential businesses and residents is strengthened by the health care resources within the community and in the surrounding region. The county is home to a wide array of health specialists, a community hospital, and care for seniors.

The Hospitality industry has grown in importance through the years as the interest in Kentucky's equine industry, bourbon, and agritourism industries have grown. The bed and breakfast lodging includes unique and charming overnight options for those visiting the community. The tourism and hospitality sector of the economy will represent a significant and growing component of the local economy and entrepreneurs new business opportunities to enhance the visitor experience.

#### **Woodford Tomorrow—A Community Vision and How to Achieve It**

The arts community in Woodford County also provides a strong appeal to potential residents and visitors. Over 300 writers, artists, and musicians call Woodford County their home. Woodford County is home to seven art and artisan galleries and the Annual Arts Walk, Art in the Park fair every May for Woodford County artists, and the Francisco Farm Arts Fair.

Even with the strengths of the community, the county faces challenges as it moves forward with community and economic development. In the past, Woodford County has struggled to create alternative economic development strategies because of the differences in opinions for land use policies. Other challenges for the county include business retention, business expansion, and regional branding.

While urban expansion in counties surrounding Woodford has pushed agriculture to the margins, in Woodford County there is significant support to see agricultural production remain a strong and viable economic contributor to the county.

The opportunities to grow the agriculture industry vary from the development of value-added opportunities for farmers (direct marketing and agritourism) to the development of the agribusiness sector (equipment dealers and agriculture credit services) in the community.

It is important for community planners to recognize the potential of Woodford County's agriculture industry, and the important economic value of the farms and the fertile soils to future generations.

The agriculture industry in Woodford County has the opportunity to capitalize on the uniqueness of the natural resources by developing a "Uniquely Woodford" brand for agricultural products, from beef to berries. The Uniquely Woodford brand can go beyond traditional agriculture to be the brand for all of Woodford County capturing bourbon, agritourism, recreation, tourism, the arts and other specialty products and experiences."

#### **17. Do you have any specific strategies in mind for how to build upon those strengths?**

We have hired the Ky League of Cities to help us develop a Strategic Plan for the future of the city Versailles to define our top priorities.

#### **18. What are your ideas for promoting tourism in Woodford County, breaking it apart from economic development?**

As co-chair of the Woodford Tourism Commission we are working on updating our website to separate Tourism from Chamber/EDA details. We are also revising our advertising spend to be much more 'on-line' vs. print.

I met with the State Tourism cabinet recently and they are editing our 8 min promotional video to separate Tourism from Economic Development to have two separate videos of shorter length for a more targeted approach.