

Rural Living

A Guide to Building Your Home in Miami County

Sometimes, you just need more space.

Each year, Miami County welcomes new residents looking for their own slice of rural living. Whether you are looking for just a few acres or a larger tract of ground, living in the country can be a lifestyle change.

This guide offers information and suggested considerations to help make those decisions. It does not replace official direction provided directly from the sources listed, and information should always be verified before an investment is made. The information is focused on persons looking at new home sites outside of the jurisdiction of our cities – Fontana, Louisburg, Osawatomie, Paola and Spring Hill.

This summary does not provide guidance regarding nonresidential uses. If you are looking for a location for both your business and your home, please contact the Miami County Planning and Zoning Department for specific input tailored to your needs.

Miami County, Kansas

201 S. Pearl Paola, KS 66071 (913) 294-9500

www.MiamiCountyKS.org

Miami County is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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How Do I Start?

The process of buying property or selecting a new home can be daunting. Generally speaking, there are four main issues you will want to consider early on during your research.

Do I need a real estate agent?

If you have never purchased property before and are unfamiliar with the process, you will likely want to consult an agent. An agent can assist you with research on properties and guide you through the overall buying process.

If you have purchased property before and are knowledgeable about things like deeds, covenants and home inspections, you may want to consider handling the process on your own.

By handling an array of services, real estate agents earn a commission on the sales and purchases they facilitate.

How much can I afford?

You will likely want to talk with your local bank or another financial institution to determine your budget. Your income, family expenses and other assets will traditionally play a factor. Don't overlook related costs such as permits, inspections, renovations, property taxes, insurance and utility connections.



How much ground do I need?

The answer to this question depends upon your own expectations. If you are looking for just a home site, a few acres may be all you need. If you are interested in farming or want more solitude from neighbors, a larger tract is probably better suited for your needs. For many, it comes down to how they intend to use and maintain the land.

Pristine, weed-free green lawns covering acres of ground will mean a significant investment in time and money.

You will want to consult the county's regulations if you intend to break a larger tract into smaller ones. Miami County has adopted Zoning and Subdivision Regulations which can impact the process for dividing a property. The regulations set standards for requirements such as road access, property size and setbacks. A section later in this guide includes suggestions to consider when evaluating potential home sites.

Should I hire a general contractor or do it myself?

Much like the real estate decision, this question relies heavily on your own skill set. General contractors can serve as a central resource for construction projects that involve multiple trade professions. They generally assist with helping a project stay within an established budget and timeline.

If you are knowledgeable about the best way to implement building codes, you may want to serve as your own general contractor. This will require your availability to be on-site during weekdays to supervise subcontractors and for required inspections.

If your weekday availability is limited, you will likely want to hire a general contractor for any large-scale construction project. Efforts to save money by serving as your own general contractor may end up causing scheduling difficulties, creating construction delays and added costs. If your weekday availability is limited and your technical knowledge of building codes is not extensive, hiring a general contractor may be your best option.

Do I need a licensed contractor?

A property owner who personally occupies a property may perform any construction trade work without having a license. However, Miami County requires that many of the contractors or individuals that perform construction work on a home or building to be licensed.

Licensing is required to ensure that the contractors working in Miami County have the minimum experience and qualifications to comply with the applicable codes and regulations and to ensure that they possess a minimum level of liability and workmen's compensation insurance. A list of licensed contractors can be found at www.miamicountyks.org/DocumentCenter/View/3052.

Evaluating a Site

The natural rural setting and lack of streetlights has its own attraction. But, sometimes it is easy to overlook that open landscape may also mean limited access to many amenities readily available within a city. Before selecting a location, here are some thoughts for you to consider.

- What uses are permitted on the site being considered?
- What uses are permitted on the surrounding properties?
- Is the site within a floodplain?
- What permits will I need?
- What are the required building setbacks?
- What options do I have for wastewater treatment?
- Was the property legally created and does it qualify for the issuance of permits?
These questions can be answered by the county's Planning and Zoning, and Code Services offices. They are located in the same suite of offices within the county administration building.

- What district am I in? (Fire, school, commission, etc)
Through the county website you can access a website called Beacon that provides information such as zoning, EMS districts, tax unit, water districts and more. To access Beacon visit www.miamicountyks.org/183/Building-Sites and click on the Beacon GIS system link. Once the Beacon webpage has loaded, click on View Map. A map of the county will now be displayed. On the left-hand side of the screen is a list of categories, simply click on the one you wish to view, and an overlay will be created that will allow you to locate which zone or district you are in.

- Who owns the road?
- Does the property have any covenants or restrictions?
- Are there any easements or leases on the property?
- Will mineral rights stay with the property or are they owned by someone else?
While your real estate agent can answer these questions initially, you will want to verify the information provided with the county's Register of Deeds office.

- What is the county's policy for road maintenance and improvements in my area?
For public roads, the Miami County Road and Bridge Department is your best source of information. They can provide you information on topics such as driveway entrances and dust control options.

- How close are utility connections for water, electric, internet, telephone and natural gas?
- Who provides trash service?
- What school district serves the location?
Your real estate agent can answer these questions initially, but you may want to verify that information with each of the service providers.

Utilities can create unwanted surprises. Just because a location is within a utility provider's territory, that doesn't mean that a service line has already been extended to the site or that the existing line has additional capacity for new connections.

Water and Electric: It can be very expensive to extend these services. The length of extension needed, type of service requested, and amount of rock encountered will all impact the price. In some instances, it may be necessary to cross property owned by others to extend electrical service to your property in the most cost-efficient manner.

Both services typically have a fee for connecting to the system and a monthly charge based on usage.

Internet and Telephone: Most telephone lines in the county are capable of supporting basic telephone services. In some areas, cellular reception may be limited. DSL internet service is available in a large portion of the county with more options becoming available for high-speed fiber connections. Point-to-point wireless service is expanding in the rural areas providing a viable option for high-speed internet.

Natural Gas: Most rural areas do not have access to natural gas. Be prepared to consider alternative fuels such as propane, electricity, wood pellets, wood or heat pumps.

Wastewater: If your site has an existing system, you will likely want to have it inspected as part of the purchase process. If a new home is planned, a soil profile will need to be conducted to evaluate your site's soil properties. The results from the soils testing will provide you the best insight on the most viable types of wastewater systems that can be installed at the location. Having a profile performed as part of a property purchase is sometimes beneficial. Factors in the design of an on-site wastewater system include the site's soil type, number of bedrooms of the home planned and slope of the land. Because this decision is so site specific, it is important to talk with your contractor and the county early in the process to make sure you budget appropriately. The newer technology offered by advanced treatment alternative systems such as mound or sand filtration systems may be an option.

Trash: Waste pickup is provided on a contracted basis through private haulers. Miami County has a transfer station where bulk items can be taken. A household hazardous waste facility operates at the same location. Information regarding those services is available through Miami County Road and Bridge.

Other site features are more natural, but also create considerations.

Landscaping: Existing wooded areas and prairie grasses are beautiful features. You may want to evaluate the site for balance to make sure those features do not also create fire hazards or maintenance burdens. The K-State Research and Extension Marais des Cygnes District office has access to resources to assist.

Terrain: Slopes, drainage ways and soil types can all impact construction options – and your budget. You will want to discuss those factors with your contractor.

Wildlife: Most wildlife is a positive addition to the environment. However, even "harmless" animals, like deer, can cross the road unexpectedly and cause traffic accidents, or eat your garden in one night. Rural development encroaches on the traditional habitat of turkeys, coyotes, deer, snakes and other wild animals that can be dangerous. In general, it is best to enjoy wildlife from a distance and know that if you do not handle your pets and trash properly, it could cause problems for you and the wildlife. The Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, and the K-State Research and Extension Marais des Cygnes District office are good resources.



County Land Use Regulations

Zoning: The first thing you need to know is that the entire unincorporated area of Miami County is zoned. The unincorporated area is anything not annexed into the cities of Fontana, Louisburg, Osawatomie, Paola or Spring Hill.

Zoning classifies the use of property into different categories. Most of the county is zoned to allow agricultural and single-family residential uses. As you scout out your home site, you will want to remember that agricultural uses are exempt from nuisance and zoning regulations in the State of Kansas.

Zoning Classifications:

- Planned Development District (PD)
- Rural Residential District (R-1)
- Countryside District (CS)
- Agricultural District (AG)
- Low Intensity Commercial District (C-1)
- Commercial District (C-2)
- Business Park District (BP)
- Light Industrial District (I-1)
- Heavy Industrial District (I-2)

Lot Size: Most of the county is zoned either Countryside (CS) or Agriculture (AG). Several options are available to divide land in each district with varying minimum lot sizes. Please contact the Planning and Zoning Department to discuss your options.

Permitted Uses: Each zone has different permitted uses. You must check with the Planning and Zoning Department to determine if your property is zoned for the desired uses and for the type of structure you wish to build.



Property Lines: Unless property has been surveyed and pins set by a licensed surveyor, the location of property lines can only be assumed. Fences and hedgerows do not always represent the correct location of property lines. To ensure you know the actual property line locations, it is always best to have a licensed land surveyor locate and mark property boundary lines.

Surrounding Properties: The surrounding properties will probably not remain in their present land use indefinitely. You can check with the Planning and Zoning Department to find out how these properties are zoned and to see what future developments may be in the planning stages.

Floodplain: Miami County is a member of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and requires permits for any development in the floodplain. Development is any man-made change to real estate, including but limited to construction, buildings or other structures, culverts, grading, damming, dredging, excavating, filling, storage of equipment, etc. Flood insurance should always be considered whether the property is located in the floodplain or not. It may be required if you obtain a federally backed real estate loan.

Floodplain areas can be beautiful when dry, but hazardous when inundated. Always check for the presence and location of a floodplain and determine which roads provide access to the property during high water. You will want to consider that flood areas may exceed what is mapped.

Setbacks: Each zoning district has its accompanying building setback requirements. For front, rear and side yard setbacks, check with the Planning and Zoning Department. Make sure you have enough space to accommodate building setbacks, possible separation distances and the topography. If your property is on a major or minor road/highway, your setback requirement will increase.

Easements: Existing easements may require you to allow construction of roads and utilities across your land or may place restrictions on how the land can be used. These easements are a matter of record in the Register of Deeds Office.

There can also be problems with the legal aspects of access, especially if you gain access across property belonging to others. Even if you have a verbal agreement with adjacent landowners, it is better to obtain legal advice and have a signed easement recorded in the Register of Deeds Office.

Mineral Rights: Many property owners do not own the mineral rights under their property. Owners of mineral rights can change the surface characteristics in order to extract their minerals. It is important to know what minerals may be located under the land and who owns the rights to them. Much of the rural land in Miami County can be used for mineral extraction, such as oil.

Covenants: Many subdivisions have covenants that limit the use of the site. Before purchasing a property, it is important to obtain a copy of the covenants, or confirm that none exist, and make sure that you can live with those rules. Recorded covenants are filed in the Register of Deeds Office. Miami County does not enforce covenants. Find out if there is an active homeowners' association to enforce the covenants.

A homeowners' association may take care of common areas and open spaces. A dysfunctional homeowners' association or poor covenants can cause problems for you and even involve you in expensive litigation.

Dues are almost always a requirement for those areas with a homeowners' association. The organization's bylaws outline how the group operates and how dues are set.

What Permits Could I Need?

Water Permits: Miami County requires a water well permit. All water wells must be registered with Code Services as to well type, location and installed by a KDHE licensed Water Well Contractor. Any questions about water wells or testing of water from wells should be directed to Kansas Department of Health and Environment. If you discover an abandoned water well on your property, state statutes require that the well is properly plugged and logged with the KDHE and Miami County. Check with Building Code Services for permit applications and additional information.

Wastewater Permits: An on-site wastewater permit must be obtained from Code Services for all new construction and remodeling projects before a building permit can be issued for the property. A permit is required from the Code Services Department for most repairs, alterations or new connections to an existing on-site wastewater system.

Building Permits: Before beginning construction, a permit is required for all new structures regardless of the property's zoning. Permits are also required for many repairs or alterations to the structure or electrical, plumbing, HVAC or on-site wastewater systems. Check with Building Code Services for permit applications and additional information. Guidelines that describe the plans and documents needed to apply for a permit can be found at www.miamicountyks.org/153/Application-Guidelines.

Burn Permits: The burning of any material is not allowed without a burn permit. Permits are free and can be obtained online at <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/8330555955454d0cab2a29090c94d344>.

Entryways and Culverts: New entrances and culverts must meet county guidelines. You will also want to verify if the property has any platted restrictions. When considering where to locate entrances and driveways on your property, consider accessibility during wet or icy weather conditions. Road construction across or through ravines, watercourses or waterways must be carefully planned. If the proposed entrance or culvert is in a floodplain, a floodplain development permit is required prior to its installation. Entrances and other work in the road right-of-way may not be constructed without approval of plans and obtaining a permit from the Miami County Road and Bridge Department. Permit applications can be submitted either directly to the Road and Bridge Department or to the Code Services Department with the other applications and documents needed for construction permits.

Installation and Maintenance of Entrances on County Right-of-Way: Entrances may be installed in county right-of-way for private individuals, businesses, and other agencies upon approval by the county. The county must review proposed installations for appropriate approach sight distances, to calculate drainage area to determine culvert size and design, and to approve types of materials used to construct the entrance. The standard minimum width for entrances installed in the county right-of-way is 20 feet of driving surface with 3 to 1 end slopes. A minimum culvert of 18" shall be installed with a 12" minimum cover, including surfacing.

Existing Culverts: The county will maintain and/or replace entrances once an entrance has been installed in county right-of-way.

Your Rural Neighbors

Even in the most rural parts of Miami County, you will likely have neighboring property owners who impact your views of the sunsets and sunrises. An agricultural use, whether it is a row crop, livestock or a hayfield, will likely be one of those neighbors.

It is important to note that those agricultural uses may rotate, and change based on planting seasons and local production cycles.

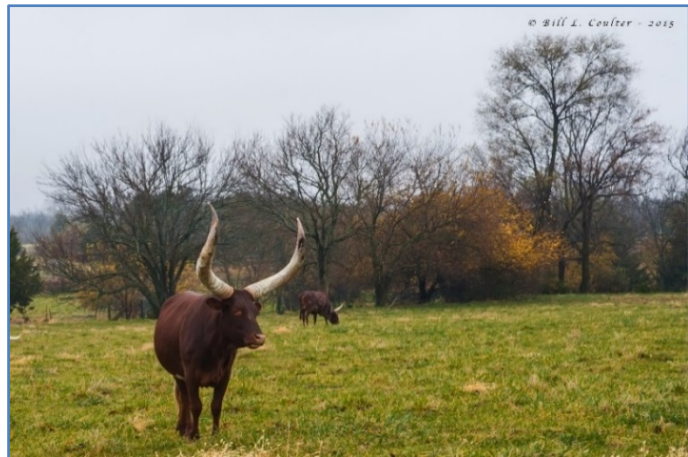
Hours: Farmers often work around the clock, especially during planting and harvest time. Hay is often swathed or baled at night. These processes will likely involve noise, dust and lighted equipment.

Dust: Land preparation and other agricultural operations can cause dust. The amount of dust involved will increase during windy and dry weather.

Burning: Pastures, ditches and grasslands may be burned off during the spring generating significant smoke. Burn permits are required for this activity.

Chemicals: Chemicals, mainly fertilizers and herbicides, are used in growing crops. While farmers obviously try to limit "drift," there may be occasions when the wind conditions cause the applications to spread further than intended. The wind blows both ways, so there are times chemicals you would like to apply to a yard or garden could have a negative impact on your neighbors.

Livestock and Pets: Livestock and pets do not always mix. Landowners should remember that their pets could cause great harm to livestock. There are laws that allow for the destruction of dogs that chase or worry livestock, although the problem is usually resolved before drastic measures are necessary. Miami County provides animal control for animals outside the corporate limits of any city. Please remember that you could be considered financially responsible for harm done to livestock by your pets.



Livestock and Horses: Miami County does not regulate the number of horses and livestock you are allowed to have on a property. To protect the wastewater system, animals should not be pastured over a septic field. Adequate land area is important to ensure proper feeding and health of the animal. One horse may need approximately 5 acres to graze for one year, and it may be necessary to alternate pastures for proper care of the pasture. It may also be necessary to supplement hay and feed for proper care of the animal. Contact the local K-State Extension Office for advice regarding the land area needed to properly care for livestock and horses.

Noxious Weeds: Before buying land, you should know if it has any noxious weeds. Kansas law requires landowners to treat noxious weeds on their own land. The Miami County Noxious Weed Department can provide you with a site inspection. They operate via the Miami County Road and Bridge Department.

Odors: Animals and their manure may cause objectionable odors. You can normally expect the odors to be stronger for a couple of weeks in both the spring and fall.

Other Miami County Government Services

Addressing: Street addresses are assigned by the county when you obtain a residential building permit. Residents are required to clearly display their street address at the roadway.

Driver's Licenses and Car Tags: Once you move, you will want to update your driver's license and car tags. This can be done at the Miami County Treasurer's office.

Emergency Services: Response times to rural areas can be impacted by travel times, visibility of address signs, weather and road conditions.

911: Call 911 anytime you need a response from the Fire Department or Emergency Medical Service. Also call 911 to report any crime in progress or any activity where a law enforcement response is immediately needed. A highly trained dispatcher will answer your 911 call. Provide your location, problem along with your name and phone number. While the 911 call taker is obtaining information their partners are sending help to your location. Remain calm and answer all questions to the best of your ability. When calling from a cell phone your location will plot on a map. You will still need to advise the location in case the "cell plot" is not accurate. It is always possible your 911 cell phone call will go to an out-of-county agency. When this occurs, your call will be transferred to the Miami County 911 center. Text to 911 is also available case you cannot talk or cannot make voice contact.

Fire: The fire departments in Miami County are staffed by highly trained volunteers. Equipment and vehicles are purchased and maintained by either the city department or the appropriate fire district. Contact the appropriate fire station for information on fire code, community fire training, upcoming classes, ISO rating and volunteer applications. The ISO rating is used by many insurance carriers to determine how much you will pay in premiums. ISO ratings in unincorporated Miami County range from a Class 2 to a Class 10. Generally, any structure more than 5 road miles from a fire station is a Class 10.

Emergency Medical: Miami County Emergency Medical Services operate from stations based in Hillsdale, Louisburg and one located between Paola and Osawatomie. The agency provides Advanced Life Support units. Law enforcement staff are generally dispatched on EMS to provide immediate care and assist EMS crews. Fire Departments also respond on injury accidents, life threatening calls and when ambulance response times are extended.

Law Enforcement: The Miami County Sheriff's Office is the primary law enforcement provider for unincorporated Miami County. Kansas Highway Patrol, Kansas Game Wardens, Kansas Parks and Wildlife Officers also provide law enforcement services within Miami County.

Personal Property: Ownership and location of personal property such as boats, jet skis, trailers, all-terrain vehicles, airplanes and similar equipment need to be reported for registration and assessment purposes. This process can be completed at the Miami County Appraiser's Office.

Road Maintenance: Some private drives and roads exist within the county. Those are not maintained by county crews. There are also roads that have been designated and signed by the county as "minimum maintenance." These are typically gated by the neighboring landowners. A majority of the county's roads are gravel. Programs are in place for property owners willing to underwrite the cost of dust control in front of their own property. Otherwise, roads are paved based on traffic counts and similar factors. For information about the roads near your site, contact Miami County Road and Bridge.

As a gravel road is used, its original shape changes. The crown will become flattened and chuck holes will develop. Surface materials are eventually blown, plowed or washed away. The road surface and shoulders must be smoothed and reshaped with a motor grader as often as necessary for the amount and kind of use the road receives.

Dust: Traffic traveling on gravel roads creates dust especially during windy and dry weather. The amount of dust created will depend on the volume of traffic, the speed of the traffic, the moisture in the road surface and the hardness of the rock. Dust can result in reduced visibility and other inconveniences at your residence. After a rain, dust will turn into mud. The storm's runoff may create potholes and other challenges. The gravel roads will likely impact your vehicle maintenance.

In Miami County, road dust tends to be more of a problem on the north and east sides of a gravel road. The Road and Bridge Department recommends that all houses be built at least 300 feet from a gravel road to reduce some of the associated problems.

Miami County does provide a list of approved vendors to apply a chemical sealant which acts as a dust suppressant. This is not a program the county participates in other than supplying the approved vendor list. Approved vendors will then inform the road and bridge department of residents who have elected to have dust abatement chemicals applied to a section of the road.

Weather: County roads may become impassable during extreme weather events. The classification of a particular road will determine the level of service the road will receive during these events. Travel may be difficult during these times so appropriate precautions should be exercised.

Voter Registration and Voting: Once you move, you will want to update your voter registration. This can be done at the Miami County Clerk's office.

Resources for Assistance

County Departments

www.MiamiCountyKS.org

Miami County Appraiser's Office
201 S Pearl St., Suite 100, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-9311
Appraisals (Real Estate and Personal Property)

Miami County Clerk's Office
Miami County Administration Building
201 S Pearl St., Suite 102, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-3976
Voting Registration and Hunting Licenses

Miami County Code Services
Miami County Administration Building
201 S Pearl St., Suite 201, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-4145
*Building Permits, Environmental Health
and Soil Testing*

Miami County Economic Development
Miami County Administration Building
201 S Pearl St., Suite 202, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-4045
*General Community Information and
Business Development*

Miami County Emergency Medical Services
32765 Clover Drive, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-5010
Emergency Services

Miami County Planning and Zoning
Miami County Administration Building
201 S Pearl St., Suite 201, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-9553
*Allowed Land Uses, Land Division, and
Floodplain Information*

Miami County Register of Deeds
Miami County Administration Building
201 S Pearl St., Suite 101, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-3716
Deeds, Easements and Covenants



Miami County Road and Bridge
201 S Pearl St., Suite 203, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-4377
*Entrances, Driveways, Roads, Bridges and
Noxious Weeds*

Miami County Sheriff's Office
Miami County Office of Emergency Management
209 S. Pearl St., Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-3232
Emergency Services

Miami County Treasurer's Office
Miami County Administration Building
201 S Pearl St., Suite 103, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-2353
*Driver's License and ID Card Renewals,
Tax Payments, and Motor Vehicle Registration
and Titles*

Fire Protection:

Miami County Fire District #1

Miami County Fire District #1 serves the majority of unincorporated Miami County. The department contracts with the City of Linn Valley, City of Louisburg, City of Osawatomie and the Wellsville Fire District. A station in Fontana is operated by the fire district. Vehicles and funding for operations are provided by the district via a property tax mill levy and other funding sources. Volunteers receive a small stipend for incident responses and training.

Miami County Fire District #2

Miami County Fire District #2 contracts with Johnson County Fire District #2 for service in a 75 square mile area of north central Miami County. Johnson County Fire District #2 contacts Johnson County Fire District #1 and the City of Overland Park Fire department for coverage. Both departments staff their stations 24/7 and respond on all fire and EMS incidents in the Miami County Fire District #2 response area.



Other Resources:

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
26001 W 255th St, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 783-4507
Wildlife

Kansas Forest Service
913 N Pearl St, Suite 1, Paola, KS 66071
(785) 477-6412
Woodland Management, Planting and Conservation

K-State Research and Extension, Marais des Cygnes District
913 N Pearl, Suite 1, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-4306
www.maraisdescygn.es.ksu.edu
Community Education

Miami County Conservation District
100 Angela St., Ste 3, Paola, KS 66071
(913) 294-3751 Ext 3
Soil and Water Conservation, and Education

Frequently Asked Questions ...

Who are my service providers?

Your real estate agent can assist you with many of these questions. Territories are also depicted on this online map, www.miamicountyks.org/968/Map-of-Services. Just remember, a site may be within a company's service territory and still not have a service line or available capacity. That information can only be verified by the individual service provider.

Do I have access to high-speed internet?

The rural areas of the county are generally served by point-to-point wireless internet providers, cellular connections, satellite providers or via telephone lines. These services are rapidly evolving in the county. You will want to check with your real estate agent and neighbors for input. The Miami County Economic Development Department will also have limited information regarding your options. If you are building your home, you may want to work with your designer to include networking cable throughout the home.

What does "zoning" mean?

Zoning is the process used by county governments to control land uses. The most basic zoning is agriculture. The tiered process then allows additional rights for more intense uses. To change zoning, a landowner must go through a formal, public hearing process. Neighbors are notified of the proposed change and given an opportunity to comment on the proposed request. This process is handled by the Miami County Planning and Zoning Department.

Who is the final authority on land use decisions?

This is a great question. And like many others, the answer is: it depends. County staff is responsible for implementing and enforcing the county's land use regulations. If a change in use is being requested, typically the planning commission would make a recommendation to the county commissioners. The commissioners then serve as the final authority. Appeals of the county staff decision can be made to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Appeals of the County Commission can be made to District Court.

It is always wise to fully document your requests with the county or other agencies. Even if you make your request during a phone call, a follow-up email to staff summarizing the conversation and verifying your take-away direction is always a good idea. If you have questions about the decision-making or appeals process, make sure it is outlined for you.

What are my neighbors allowed to do on their property?

In most instances, your neighbors are allowed the same uses you are on your property. There are some instances where a conditional use, for things like a small business, has been allowed within the county. There are also some neighborhoods where light commercial uses are allowed. The Miami County Planning and Zoning Department's staff can clarify this question by reviewing your zoning district and the allowed uses. They can also walk you through the process you or your neighbor would need to complete if a change in land use is planned.

How much land do I really have to buy?

For newly created lots within the county, the minimum lot size depends upon the zoning district and the land division option chosen. The two predominant zoning districts in the county are Agricultural, with a 20-acre minimum lot size, and Countryside, with a 15-acre minimum lot size for newly created lots. Other options are available for smaller lot sizes by utilizing conservation design and agricultural preservation techniques. There are smaller vacant lots that currently exist in the county. To verify that the site you are considering meets the county's requirements, contact the Miami County Planning and Zoning Department.

Can I build a shed or a barn?

The Miami County Planning and Zoning and Building Code Services departments can help you with this question. They can help you identify pertinent building codes, size limitations and other factors.

Can I have more than one dwelling on a property?

Miami County Zoning Regulations only allow for one single-family dwelling per property. However, the Miami County Zoning Regulations do allow for an Accessory Dwelling Unit as an accessory structure to an existing single-family dwelling. Accessory Dwelling units must comply with a number of standards, so please contact the Planning and Zoning Department to discuss any questions you may have.

Will my road ever be paved?

Traffic volumes and road conditions are primary factors in this decision. The staff at Miami County Road and Bridge can more definitively answer this question for you. They can also provide information on dust control alternatives offered to landowners willing to underwrite the cost of application adjacent to their property.

What will my property taxes cost?

Taxes are based on a property's use and multiple uses may occur on a single property. For example, a farm field is taxed at a lower rate than a house. Meanwhile a barn is considered a commercial use. Tax usage classifications are separate from land use zoning classifications, and that is an item that oftentimes causes confusion.

Information regarding a site's current appraised value is available from the Miami

County Appraiser's Office. A single tax bill is issued by the County Treasurer. The total funds collected are shared with the school district, fire district and similar taxing authorities. You will want to consult with the Miami County Appraiser's Office to better understand your potential tax bill.

Are there any programs to help me pay for things I want to do on my farm?

While dollars are increasingly becoming limited, the Miami County Conservation District, K-State Research and Extension Marais des Cygnes District and Miami County's Economic Development Department can offer insight into potential grant funds.

Who can help me identify the trees on my property?

The Kansas Forest Service operates an office in Paola. They can provide assistance with tree identification and care.

Is it really that difficult to raise some animals and plant a garden?

That probably depends on your definition of difficult! It does require planning, time and patience. The K-State Research and Extension Marais des Cygnes District office and Miami County Conservation District offer resources to help you get started.

As a general rule of thumb, if you are wanting to grow a vegetable garden large enough to avoid any grocery shopping, you should estimate roughly 200 square feet of garden space per person. Obviously, if you are just wanting to grow a few specialty items, your garden can be much smaller in size and scope.

If you are looking to sell your products, you will want to be sure to understand the potential food processing regulations. It is suggested you contact Miami County Planning and Zoning Department regarding their regulations. Miami County's Economic Development Department can assist you with your business plan, marketing and identifying helpful resources.

Can I operate a business from my home?

Some home occupations are allowed in the unincorporated areas of the county. Home occupation standards are in Article 20 of the Miami County Zoning Regulations: <https://www.codepublishing.com/KS/MiamiCounty/#!/MiamiCountyZR/MiamiCountyZR20.html#20>

Other business uses will likely require special zoning entitlement. Please contact the Planning/Zoning Office to verify whether the use is an allowed home occupation, will require a conditional use permit, or need to be in a different zoning district.

To suggest revisions to this document, please contact:

Miami County, Kansas

Economic Development

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