

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



UPDATE MAY 2025



BASTROP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
UPDATE (2016 - 2036)



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Bastrop Comprehensive Plan Update 2025 was developed by the City of Bastrop with the technical assistance of Halff Associates. Planning for the future is a complex and thoughtful process, one that requires balancing diverse needs, anticipating change and making the best decision possible with the information at hand. We are deeply grateful to the many residents, business owners, community leaders and others who shared their insights, experiences and hopes for Bastrop. Their involvement played a vital role in shaping this plan and guiding the city toward a successful and inclusive future. The following individuals are especially recognized for their significant contributions to the preparation of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan Update 2025.

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INTRODUCTION UPDATE CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

This report serves as an update to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, focusing on two key chapters: **Growth and Infrastructure** and **Land Use and Character**. These chapters play a critical role in shaping the future of the City of Bastrop, as they address how the area will develop and how it will manage the essential services and infrastructure needed to support this growth. The Update reflects changes in demographic trends, regulatory changes, and community vision, ensuring that the Plan aligns with both current conditions and future community aspirations.

BACKGROUND

The City of Bastrop adopted its current Comprehensive Plan in 2016. Since then, the City has experienced various and significant changes, both in terms of regulatory frameworks and physical development, prompting the need to update to the Community Growth and Land Use components of the 2016 Plan.

At the time of adoption, Bastrop used a traditional Euclidean-style zoning code. In 2019, Bastrop replaced this zoning with the Bastrop Building Block (B3 Code), a fully form-based code built around a gridded street system.

While the B3 Code aligns with some of the principles outlined in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the broadness of the B3 Code has made it too vague with overly generalized land use outcomes. This disconnect has created discrepancies between the land use outcomes and the vision of maintaining the city's unique and historic charm.

These issues highlight the need to revisit the 2016 goals and land use guidance of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and consider a shift toward a more hybrid approach - one that combines the flexibility of form-based codes with the clarity and specificity of traditional zoning. Such an approach would better support development that is aligned with Bastrop's identity and vision.

This update seeks to establish a clearer framework for the City's growth, aligning both the goals from the Growth and Infrastructure and the Land Use and Character chapters under a more balanced model. It will integrate traditional and form-based planning, community needs, and future development goals.

While comprehensive plans are intended as long-term guidance documents, they are also living documents, evolving to address new challenges and opportunities as they arise, ensuring Bastrop's growth is sustainable and true to its identity for future generations.

ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

The following outreach tools were used to disseminate information regarding the planning process and engagement opportunities to the general public.

OUTREACH TOOLS

- *Web Page:* The City maintained a web page with draft documents, maps, schedules, meeting details, contact information, and ways to stay involved.
- *Social Media:* Updates on open houses, public hearings, and key messages were shared on the City's social media accounts.

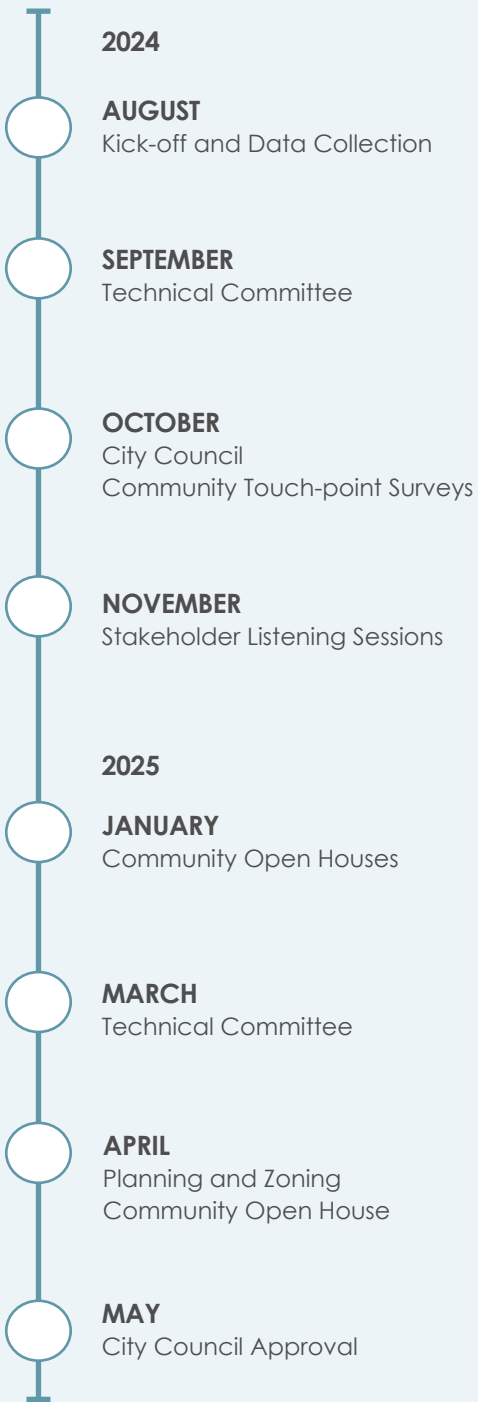
- *Print/Electronic Notifications:* Stakeholders and interested parties received meeting updates and project information via email and mailers.
- *Informational Displays:* Public notices, surveys, and meeting details were posted to direct people to the project web page.

ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

The following engagement tools were used to gather input throughout the planning process. Since many of these activities occurred multiple times and overlapped, they are not listed in chronological order.

- *Technical Committee (TC):* City staff and departmental heads provided guidance, feedback, and assisted with outreach to community groups. Members had specialized knowledge of key topics.
- *Community Survey:* A community-wide online survey was conducted to gather public input on various aspects of the Plan update.
- *Open House (3):* Public meetings were held to share information and collect feedback from community members.
- *Stakeholder Listening Sessions (3):* Three in-person stakeholder sessions were conducted with targeted discussions on a variety of topics.
- *Planning and Zoning Meetings (2):* The Commission provided input through workshops, focusing on land use, issue identification, public input review, and a final draft plan presentation.
- *City Council Meetings (3):* A workshop and joint session with the Planning and Zoning Commission helped define the City Council's goals and priorities for the plan update.

TIMELINE



COMMUNITY TOUCH-POINT SURVEYS

As part of the City of Bastrop's Comprehensive Plan Update, a series of four short surveys were conducted over a two-month period to gather community input. These surveys focused on key topics within **Chapter 2: Growth & Infrastructure** and **Chapter 5: Land Use and Urban Design** of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. A total of 311 responses were received, providing valuable insights to inform the comprehensive plan update. The full survey results can be found in the Appendix.

WEEK ONE: COMMUNITY GOALS & PRIORITIES

The first survey asked residents to review and provide feedback on the goals outlined in the 2016 plan. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each goal to assess their continued relevance. The survey results reaffirm the importance of the goals established in Bastrop's 2016 Comprehensive Plan, particularly the community's strong emphasis on water and wastewater infrastructure. Ensuring long-term water system capacity and quality, along with wastewater

ter system improvements, continues to be a top priority, reflecting the city's commitment to maintaining essential services as growth occurs. Likewise, the focus on flood mitigation and water conservation remains critical, reinforcing the need for sustainable resource management and resilience planning.

While measured growth, land use planning, and community character remain important considerations, the data underscores that residents continue to prioritize foundational infrastructure improvements, ensuring that Bastrop's development is supported by a reliable and sustainable framework.



WEEK TWO: FUTURE LAND USE & CHARACTER AREAS

The second survey focused on growth and development patterns, asking participants to review the City's Future Land Use Map (FLUM) (page 5-6) and determine whether the designated Character Areas align with current needs or should be adjusted.

Survey responses highlight a strong desire for additional Parks and Open Spaces, with 69% of participants emphasizing their importance.

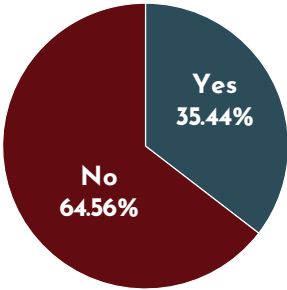
Rural Residential areas received broad approval, with 66% agreeing on their current locations. Neighborhood Residential areas also saw moderate support, but some respondents stressed the need for better services rather than new subdivisions. Opinions on Transitional Residential were split with some favoring more diverse housing, others concerned about density.

Neighborhood Commercial development was seen as concentrated along Highway 71, prompting suggestions for better distribution. General Commercial areas were also cited as contributing to traffic congestion, with calls for dispersal. Professional Services and Downtown Bastrop received strong support, though some advocated for Downtown expansion and increased protections. Public and Institutional uses were largely deemed appropriate, while Industrial areas drew mixed responses, with concerns about proximity to residential zones and natural features. Overall, the feedback underscores a community preference for balanced growth, infrastructure investment, and careful land-use planning to enhance quality of life.

WEEK THREE: GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

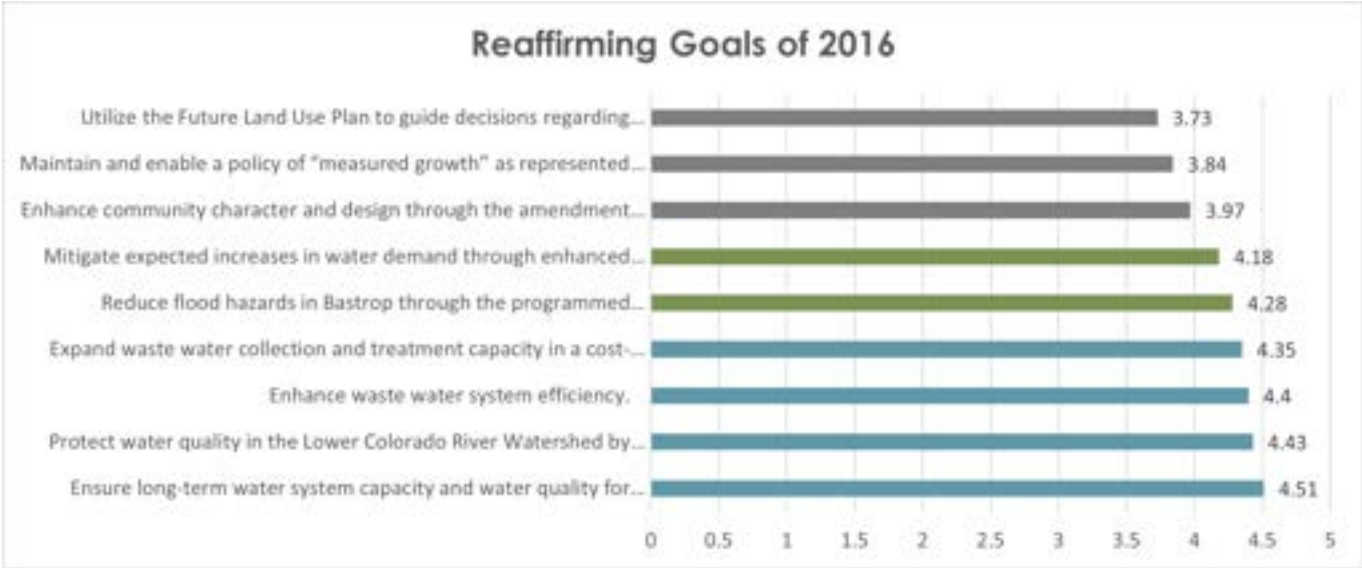
Building on prior input, the third survey explored where development is occurring and how well it aligns with Bastrop's Growth Concept Map from the 2016 plan. Residents provided feedback on geographic patterns of development and potential areas for improvement.

DO YOU FEEL THE CITY DOES AN ADEQUATE JOB AT BALANCING ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS WHEN DEVELOPING CITY PROJECTS?



Respondents expressed concerns about congestion and felt growth should be planned along highways other than Highway 71. There was also a belief that commercial development is more appropriate along Highway 71 rather than residential. Many suggested the need to spread people out more and noted that the west side of town, away from the Lost Pines area on the east side, is more desirable for growth

The theme of inadequate city services and infrastructure is consistently highlighted throughout the responses. Many respondents expressed concerns that services such as roads, utilities, schools, and other amenities have not kept up with the city's rapid growth. The city is lacking sufficient essential services and facilities to support its expanding population, with key areas such as transportation infrastructure (roads), grocery stores, hospitals, schools, and parks identified as needing attention.



WEEK FOUR: NATURAL HAZARDS & CITY PREPAREDNESS

The fourth survey provided valuable insights into the natural hazards that pose the greatest risks to Bastrop and how the city can better prepare for and mitigate these challenges. Respondents ranked wildfires as the greatest concern, followed by drought, flooding, severe storms, and winter storms. Wildfires received the highest weighted score of 4.34. Past severe weather events, including flooding, power losses, and damage from drought or windstorms, highlight the immediate impacts felt by the community. To reduce the effects of extreme heat, residents overwhelmingly supported creating more green spaces (75.56%) and planting more shade trees (73.33%). Many also called for enhanced communication during severe weather events, with suggestions for better outreach to those not using platforms like Facebook. Furthermore, survey respondents also highlighted environmental considerations, such as maintaining existing trees, protecting water sources, and reducing pollution, as key areas for future planning.

STAKEHOLDER LISTENING SESSIONS

On Thursday, November 21, 2024, a series of stakeholder listening sessions were held at Bastrop City Hall. Four sessions focused on Arts and Heritage, Natural Resources and the Environment, Land Development, and Youth Leaders and Engagement. A complete summary of the listening sessions is in the Appendix.

ARTS AND HERITAGE

Many residents are drawn to Bastrop for its rich history, architecture, and community heritage. They support integrating historic and artistic elements into new developments and educating newcomers about these cultural assets. Participants also emphasized the need to preserve a more inclusive heritage, including Hispanic and African American histories, and to document the experiences of the aging population. Participants expressed interest in developing an amphitheater or stage at Fisherman’s Park, trail connections to downtown and other cultural sites, and the incorporation of storytelling and native landscaping throughout new development to maintain Bastrop’s identity.

Serenbe is a sustainable, mixed-use community located in Fulton County, Georgia, about 30 miles southwest of Atlanta. It is known for its commitment to environmental stewardship, walkability, and a strong sense of community.



Aerial of Serenbe. Source: serenbe.com

NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Participants emphasized the need for stronger environmental policies in Bastrop to balance development with conservation. Key themes included preserving and enhancing access to natural resources like the Colorado River and Bastrop State Park, encouraging developers to integrate more natural spaces, and addressing environmental challenges such as habitat loss, dark skies, and flooding due to impervious cover. Stakeholders supported strengthening the tree or landscape ordinance, incentivizing the preservation of vegetated areas, and enforcing policies such as a dark skies ordinance and low-impact development standards.

LAND DEVELOPMENT

This group highlighted the importance of aligning the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and Comprehensive Plan with other plans, such as the Thoroughfare Plan, to guide Bastrop’s growth effectively. Participants emphasized the need for regular plan updates and raised concerns about environmental impacts, particularly pollution (i.e., stormwater runoff, erosion, etc.) and flooding along the Colorado River. There was interest in revisiting development restrictions in the

Houston Toad Habitat area to balance growth. Stakeholders had mixed feedback on the B3 Code. Transportation challenges, particularly congestion along Highway 71, led to discussions about the need for connector roads and a potential loop road to enhance mobility as Bastrop expands.

YOUTH LEADERS

Stakeholders emphasized the need for Bastrop to evolve into a “complete community” where residents can access essential amenities, such as medical services, entertainment, and grocery stores, without traveling to larger cities. Connectivity was a major concern, with participants expressing frustration over time spent driving across town and advocating for more pedestrian-friendly pathways. Sustainable development was another key theme, with a focus on community-scale water conservation, preserving wildlife corridors, and integrating green spaces into neighborhoods. Stakeholders highlighted existing local communities, such as Riverside Grove and Hunters Crossing, as positive examples and pointed to the Serenbe neighborhood in Georgia as a model for diverse housing and open space integration.



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES

Three (3) public open houses were held during the comprehensive planning update for the community to discuss the vision for future growth and development in Bastrop. The first two meetings were held as part of the plan update and the final was held to communicate the revision to the Future Land Use Map and goals for **Chapter 2: Growth & Infrastructure** and **Chapter 5: Land Use and Urban Design**.

Public open houses were held according to the following schedule:

- **January 23, 2025.** Plan update overview and identification of key issues of interest or concern.
- **January 29, 2025.** Plan update overview and identification of key issues of interest or concern.
- **April 24, 2025.** Presentation of Bastrop Comprehensive Plan Update recommendations.

KEY THEMES FROM THE OPEN HOUSES

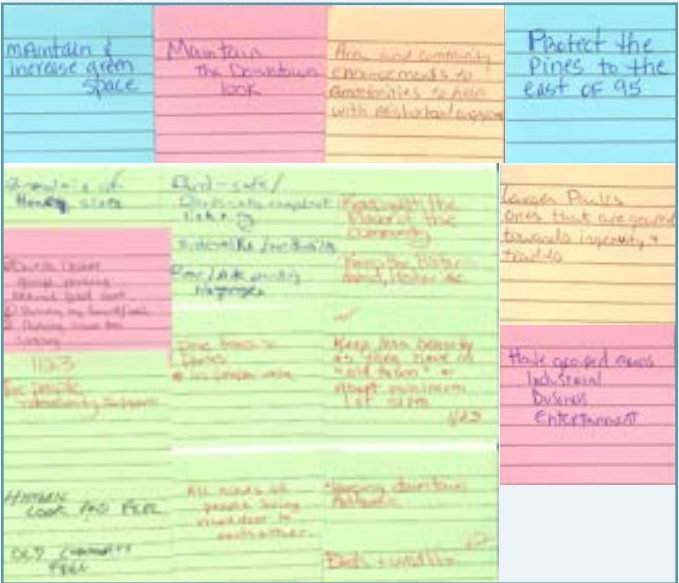
Preservation of Natural and Historic Character. Residents emphasized the importance of preserving trees, shade, and native landscaping to maintain the natural environment. There was also a strong desire to protect the city's historic character, with a focus on using high-quality building materials and implementing development guidelines, such as overlay districts, to preserve the look and feel of Bastrop.

Development and Growth. The community expressed support for low-density development in Old Town, advocating for zoning measures to maintain single-family areas and control building scale. There was also a desire for infill development with a preference for development along Main and Pecan Streets and careful consideration for areas south of Blakey Lane and Highway 71.

Walkability and Public Spaces. Improving walkability, bike lanes, and traffic calming measures were key priorities. Residents also called for the expansion of public spaces and recreational facilities, with a particular focus on making these amenities more accessible to all community members.

Water Conservation. Water conservation was a significant concern, with strong support for rainwater capture and incentives for sustainable landscaping. Flood mitigation strategies, such as better stormwater management and proactive flood prevention, were highlighted, along with the need to protect water quality in the Lower Colorado River Watershed.

Natural Hazards and Community Resilience. The community expressed concerns about natural hazards, particularly heat and flooding. There was a call for more green space, public shade, and rainwater capture systems to help mitigate these issues, ensuring the city remains resilient in the face of environmental challenges.



Ideas and concerns shared by participants at open house meeting.



Natural Hazards Station discussion at the open house meeting.



Mapping activity at the open house meeting.

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CHAPTER 2. COMMUNITY GROWTH UPDATE



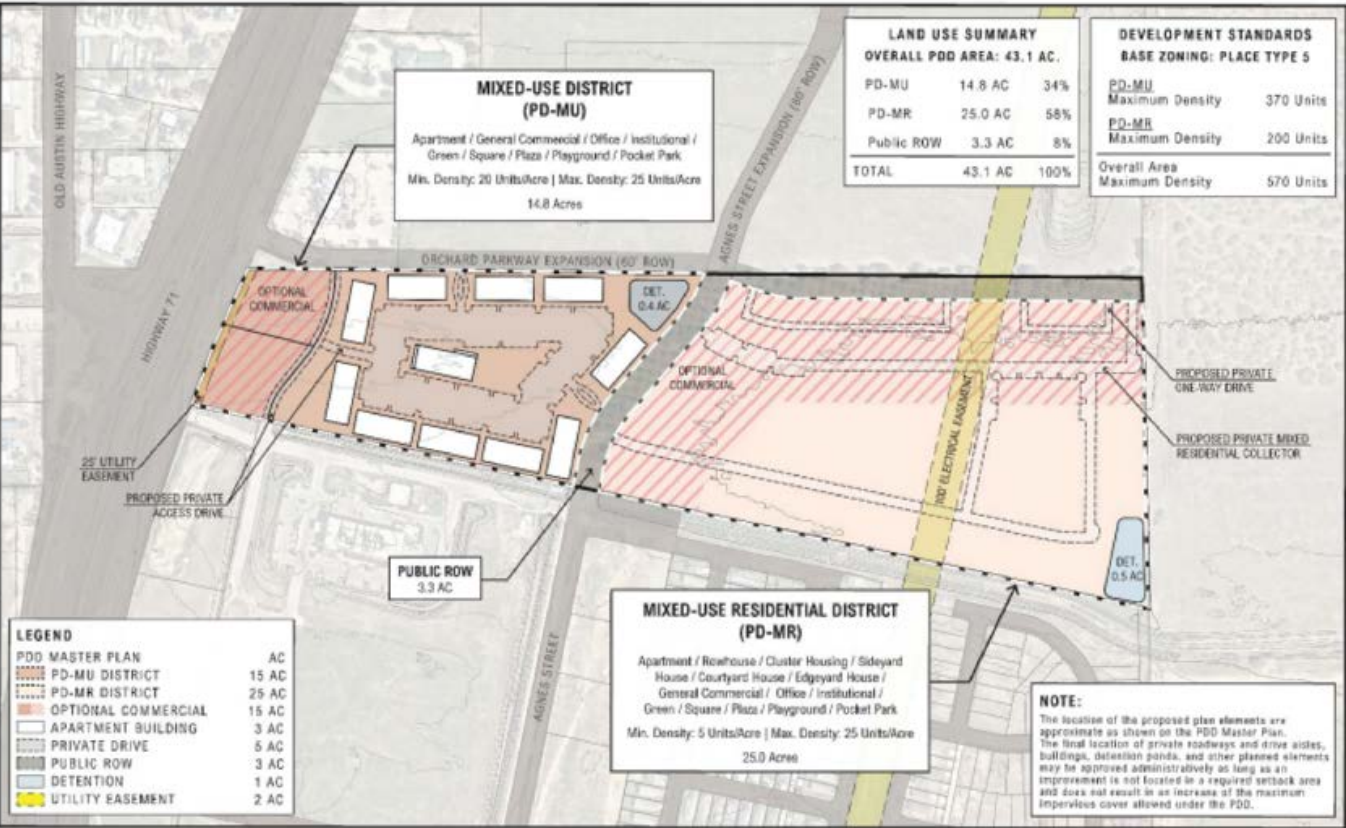
CHAPTER TWO COMMUNITY GROWTH

Bastrop continues to experience dynamic growth influenced by its proximity to Austin, relative affordability, proximity to the Colorado River, and small-town charm. These forces have accelerated housing and economic development since 2016 and reinforced the need to update growth goals and strategies.

The update of **Chapter 2: Community Growth** highlights how Bastrop has evolved since 2016 and presents a more targeted and sustainable approach to managing future development.

It includes revised population and housing projections, evaluates current growth trends, and identifies opportunities to refine the City's development code. The chapter also reflects input from public engagement, City staff, and local leaders to ensure the goals align with today's priorities and emerging needs.

A summary list of all Community Growth goals and objectives can be found at the end of this chapter (page 2-19).



A recently approved Planned District Development, Nixon PDD, which includes commercial and residential mixed-used opportunities.

HISTORICAL AND CURRENT GROWTH PATTERNS

HISTORICAL POPULATION TRENDS

Population growth in Bastrop and Bastrop County has been inconsistent over the last century. **Figure 2.1** shows that the City experienced a 60.7 percent population increase between 1940 and 1950 through the establishment of Camp Swift. The closure of the camp however, combined with the closure of area coal mines and reductions in lumbering operations caused Bastrop's population to decrease by 5.5 percent in the decade to follow. Bastrop has experienced sustained growth since 1990 as development along the Highway 71 corridor to Austin began to increase. All signs indicate that this growth trend will continue into the next decade.

FIGURE 2.1. HISTORIC POPULATION¹

YEAR	CITY OF BASTROP	BASTROP COUNTY	AUSTIN-ROUND ROCK MSA	TEXAS
1940	1,976	21,610	-	6,414,824
1950	3,176	19,622	-	7,711,194
1960	3,001	16,925	-	9,579,677
1970	3,172	17,297	398,938	11,196,730
1980	3,789	24,726	585,051	14,229,191
1990	4,044	38,263	846,227	16,986,510
2000	6,308	57,725	1,249,763	20,851,820
2010	7,218	74,171	1,716,289	25,145,561
2020	9,688	97,216	2,283,371	29,145,505

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey & Texas A&M Real Estate Center

GROWTH PATTERNS

Bastrop, once a quiet and small city within the five county Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), has continued to become "closer" to Austin, as the Austin housing market and the establishment of the Highway 71 toll road have continued to push development to the east.

Economic trends in Austin have contributed to this push east, including the arrival of the Tesla Giga Texas manufacturing plant, located in southeast Austin near the intersection of Toll Road 130 and Highway 71, approximately 24 miles from the heart of Bastrop. Between 2010 and 2020, Bastrop experienced a nearly 37 percent increase in total housing units and a greater than 110 percent increase in median housing value since 2016 when the current Comprehensive Plan was adopted.

Population growth and housing development is expected in the nearest residential center for several major technology and manufacturing

companies, including Starlink, The Boring Company, and X (formerly known as Twitter). These sites will be located just northwest of the Bastrop ETJ along Farm-to-Market Road (FM) 1209.

Bastrop's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) refers to the area outside the city's limits but still under the city's legal authority. As such, it serves as a key tool for managing growth. It allows the city to extend some municipal powers beyond its boundaries to help with planning, land use, and infrastructure.

"A BALANCE OF HOUSING FOR A VARIETY OF FAMILIES, SINGLES AND MORE SENIOR HOUSING."

Community Touch Point Survey Week 2
Respondents [City Residents]

POPULATION GROWTH & FORECASTING

POPULATION GROWTH OVERVIEW

For this update, nine different population models were used to estimate Bastrop's growth over the next 20 years. These models used a variety of data, some of which were also used in the 2016 Plan. However, differences in the data can be observed due to the use of new or updated information. Notably, the 2016 Plan's population projection was based on a 2011 study; no similar study has been conducted recently. In lieu of this, the Plan Update incorporates the most recent projections available, including those from the 2022 Water Master Plan and 2020 Water Conservation Plan.

Between 2016 and 2024, Bastrop's population grew by 70.2 percent, reaching 14,799 — an average annual growth rate of 6.88 percent.

While public data (such as Census data and state water plans) is less frequently updated, private data sources used by the City's economic development teams suggest more rapid growth. This Plan prioritizes public data for consistency but acknowledges the value of private estimates where available.

Figure 2.3 illustrates population growth projections ranging from 137% to 208% by 2040, based on a 2010 baseline population of 7,218.

Figure 2.4, Bastrop Population Growth Projection, (page 2-4) illustrates the final population growth projection upon which subsequent City growth

and development assumptions are based. During the 20-year horizon of this Plan, Bastrop's population is expected to grow from 8,694 to 19,199 persons.

Additional data inputs which may enhance the accuracy of long-term population projections include:

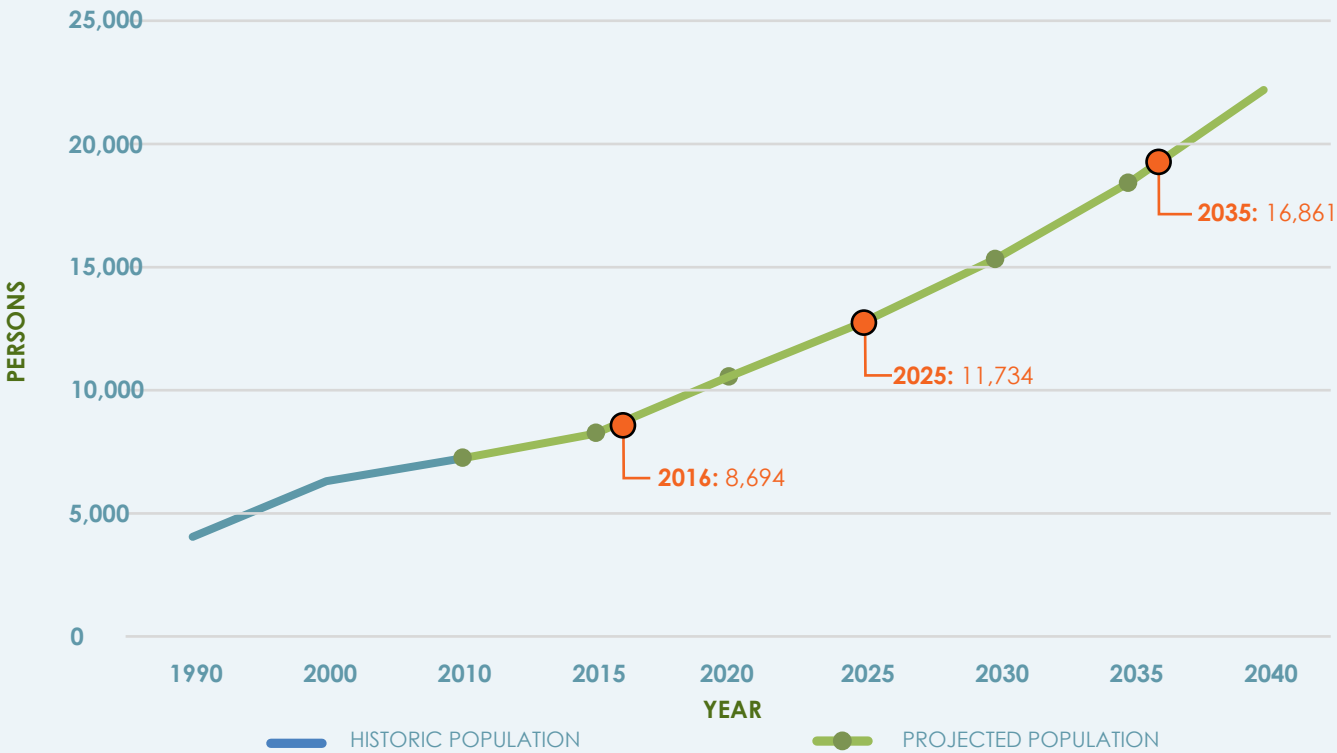
- Annexation Policy
- Residential Building Permits
- Preliminary and Final Subdivision Plats
- School Enrollments
- Sewer System Expansion
- Zoning of Vacant Land
- Municipal Utility Districts

FIGURE 2.3. BASTROP POPULATION GROWTH MODELS

YEAR	HISTORIC POPULATION	0.5 COUNTY STEP DOWN	1.0 COUNTY STEP DOWN	TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD	LINEAR REGRESSION	EXPONENTIAL GROWTH	SCHOOL DISTRICT INDICATOR	WATER MASTER PLAN	WATER CONSERVATION PLAN
1970	3,172								
1980	3,789								
1990	4,044								
2000	6,308								
2010	7,218	7,218	7,218	7,218	7,218	7,218	7,218	7,218	7,218
2015		7,669	7,669	8,938	7,669	7,669	7,669	7,669	7,669
2020		9,688	9,688	11,069	9,668	9,668	9,668	9,810	9,653
2025		9,772	10,281	12,889	10,853	11,224	11,834	11,734	11,373
2030		10,156	11,246	15,008	12,158	13,003	14,457	14,964	13,093
2035		10,536	12,287	17,381	12,976	15,065	17,660	16,861	14,813
2040		10,906	13,405	20,129	13,848	17,453	21,572	19,611	16,533
2045		11,243	14,589	23,342	14,815	20,220	26,352	23,132	18,253

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Texas Water Development Board, Bastrop Independent School District, & City of Bastrop

FIGURE 2.4. BASTROP POPULATION GROWTH PROJECTION



Source: City of Bastrop Water Demand Projections (2014)

ANNEXATION & GROWTH MANAGEMENT

WHAT IS ANNEXATION?

Annexation is the process by which a city extends its municipal services, regulations, and taxing authority to new areas. It helps manage growth without burdening existing neighborhoods. The benefits to annexation include:

- Providing municipal services, such as utilities and police protection, to developed and developing areas.
- Exercising regulatory authority necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- Ensuring fair tax and maintenance contributions for facilities and utilities.
- Regulating land subdivision and development within the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

The ETJ is a contiguous one-mile area extending beyond the city limits. This one-mile area is the City's statutory ETJ which is based on the city's population. Bastrop, however, is unique in that it also holds limited jurisdiction over a voluntary ETJ, a non-contiguous area where residents agreed to be annexed into the city's ETJ jurisdiction.

Bastrop, like other cities of similar size, exercises limited jurisdiction in its ETJ (both statutory and voluntary), but recent legislative changes have reduced annexation powers across Texas.

Senate Bill 2038 (effective Sept. 1, 2023) allows property in a city's ETJ to be released if more than 50% of voters and the majority landowners sign a petition. Released areas are no longer subject to municipal regulations, which could lead to unregulated development and future challenges for cities seeking to manage growth and provide services. This limits Bastrop's ability to rely on annexation as a primary growth strategy. As a result, this Plan assumes future growth will occur largely within the city's boundaries.

Figure 2.2 outlines the differences between statutory and voluntary ETJ boundaries. The Texas Legislature has placed tighter restrictions on annexation, further limiting its use as a growth strategy. During the planning process, there was low community interest in pursuing annexation, so the Update assumes that most future growth will happen within the City's current boundaries.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

As cities expand, effectively managing this growth is essential to desirable development and efficient use of resources. Several strategies can guide this process, including delineating service areas and growth areas, and employing innovative tools such as development agreements to align the objectives of both the city and developers.

A key distinction in growth management is between service areas and growth areas. Service areas refer to the regions where existing infrastructure and public services are readily available, while growth areas represent locations designated for future expansion and development. Properly defining and managing these areas helps prevent overextension of resources and ensures that new developments are well-served by necessary utilities and infrastructure.

Cities in Texas manage growth through tools like service and growth area designations, development agreements, and financing districts such as MUDs (Municipal Utility Districts), PIDs (Public Improvement Districts), and TIRZs (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones).

These help fund infrastructure and guide development. Impact fees ensure new growth contributes to utilities and services, while Chapter 380 agreements offer incentives for projects aligned with community goals. In Bastrop, the existing B3 Code does not always enable the variety of housing and development types the community desires. By using these tools, the City can experiment with alternatives and pilot new approaches that support its long-term vision.

By combining these growth management strategies, cities like Bastrop can respond to population growth in a way that is both strategic and sustainable.

FIGURE 2.2. STATUTORY VS. VOLUNTARY ETJ

	STATUTORY ETJ	VOLUNTARY ETJ
Application	Automatically applied based on the city's population.	Initiated by property owners who request inclusion.
Purpose	To regulate land use, subdivision, and infrastructure in areas outside city limits.	To extend city regulation and services to adjacent areas.
Coverage	Land within a specified distance from city limits (e.g., 5 miles for cities with populations between 5,000-100,000).	Land that property owners voluntarily agree to include in the city's jurisdiction.
Regulatory	Provides the city with authority over zoning, land use, and subdivisions outside city limits.	Extends the city's regulatory powers to areas that are not automatically included in the statutory ETJ.
Benefits	Typically includes some oversight on development and infrastructure but no direct services.	Allows property owners to receive city services and infrastructure planning.
Planning Objective	To manage growth and ensure that developments are compatible with the city's long-term growth and needs.	To ensure better coordination of development and services in areas that might eventually be annexed.

“WE NEED TO BE MORE THOUGHTFUL IN OUR GROWTH PLAN AND ITS EFFECTS WITH REGARDS TO TRAFFIC PATTERNS AND PUBLIC SERVICES THAT WILL BE REQUIRED. WE DEFINITELY NEED A LARGER HOSPITAL THAT PROVIDES MORE DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES AND BEDS FOR ADMITTED PATIENTS TO AVOID HAVING TO BE TRANSPORTED TO AUSTIN.”

Community Touch Point Survey Week 2
Respondents [City Residents]
(Comments have been lightly edited for grammar and clarity.)

GROWTH SCENARIOS

The growth in Bastrop presents both a tremendous opportunity and a significant challenge. The city must ensure that its mobility network and municipal services can support future development. This Update builds on the foundational ideas established in 2016, re-evaluating how the city has evolved since then, identifying areas with growth potential, and outlining strategies to manage that growth effectively. The purpose of this Update is to reaffirm the city's goals, assess progress made, and align future efforts with community feedback.

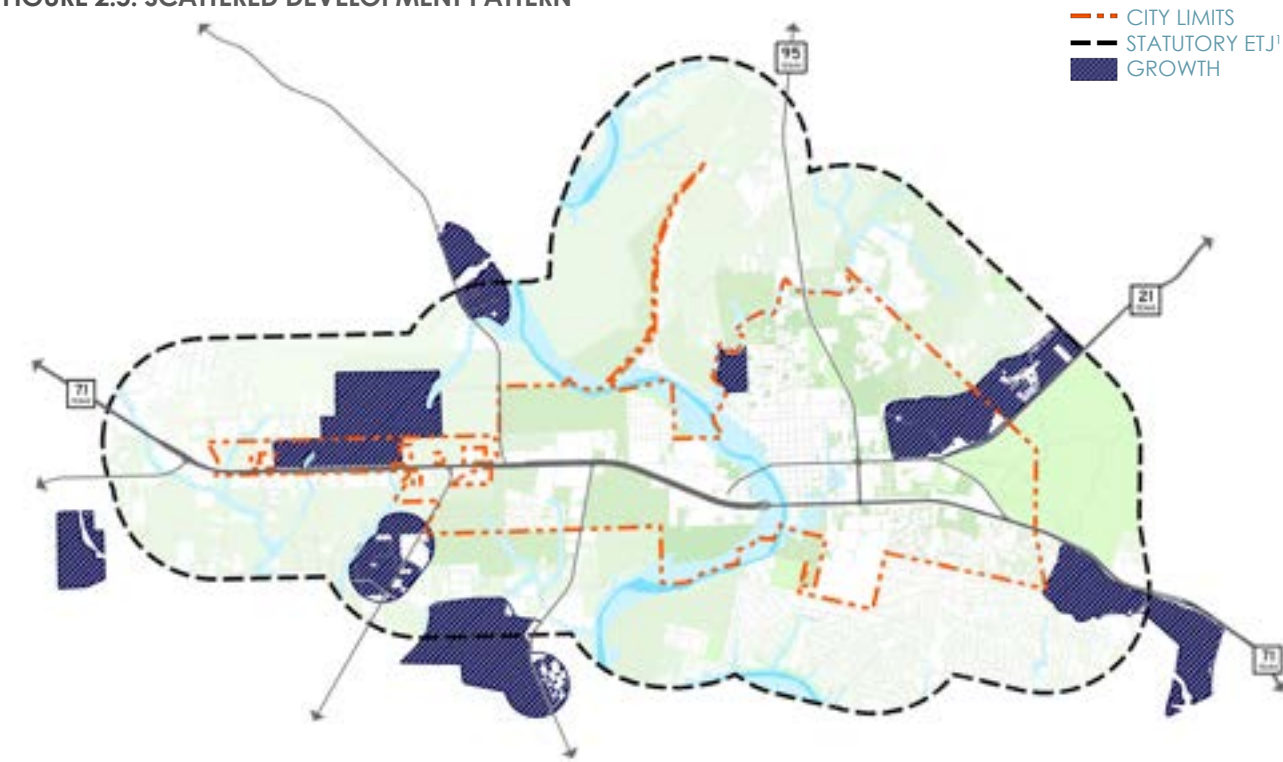
DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Several conditions and factors will influence how and where physical growth and development occurs within Bastrop, and surrounding areas. Over time, obvious

patterns of development emerge, along transportation corridors, at crossroads, adjacent to water bodies, etc. Sometimes growth is logical and contiguous, following an already established development pattern. Other times, growth is haphazard and scattered, the result of economic influences, like the availability of inexpensive land, or access to a utility trunk line.

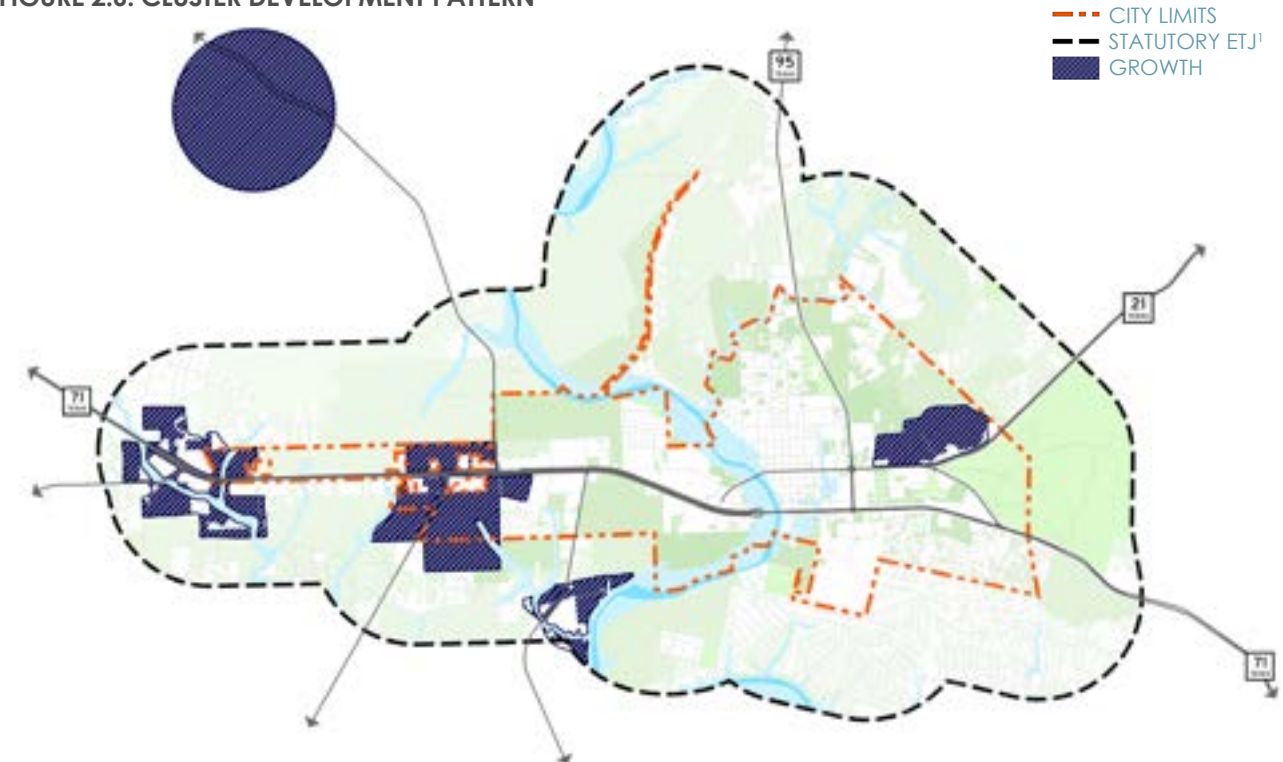
Five scenarios were presented in the 2016 plan presented on pages 2-7 through 2-9 which illustrate patterns of growth that can occur in Bastrop. The city and the community reviewed these to see to which degree any one of these hypothetical growth patterns has or is occurring as a result of private market forces, as well as public policies, investments, and regulation.

FIGURE 2.5. SCATTERED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN



Development is not constrained by land use or development regulations. "Leapfrog" development occurs over empty land to build in remote locations – often through privately financed infrastructure.

FIGURE 2.6. CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT PATTERN



Nodal development at strategic locations, where on-site construction occurs in concentrated areas. Compact on-site building and site design preserves natural features; but, development nodes may still be occur in a scattered manner.

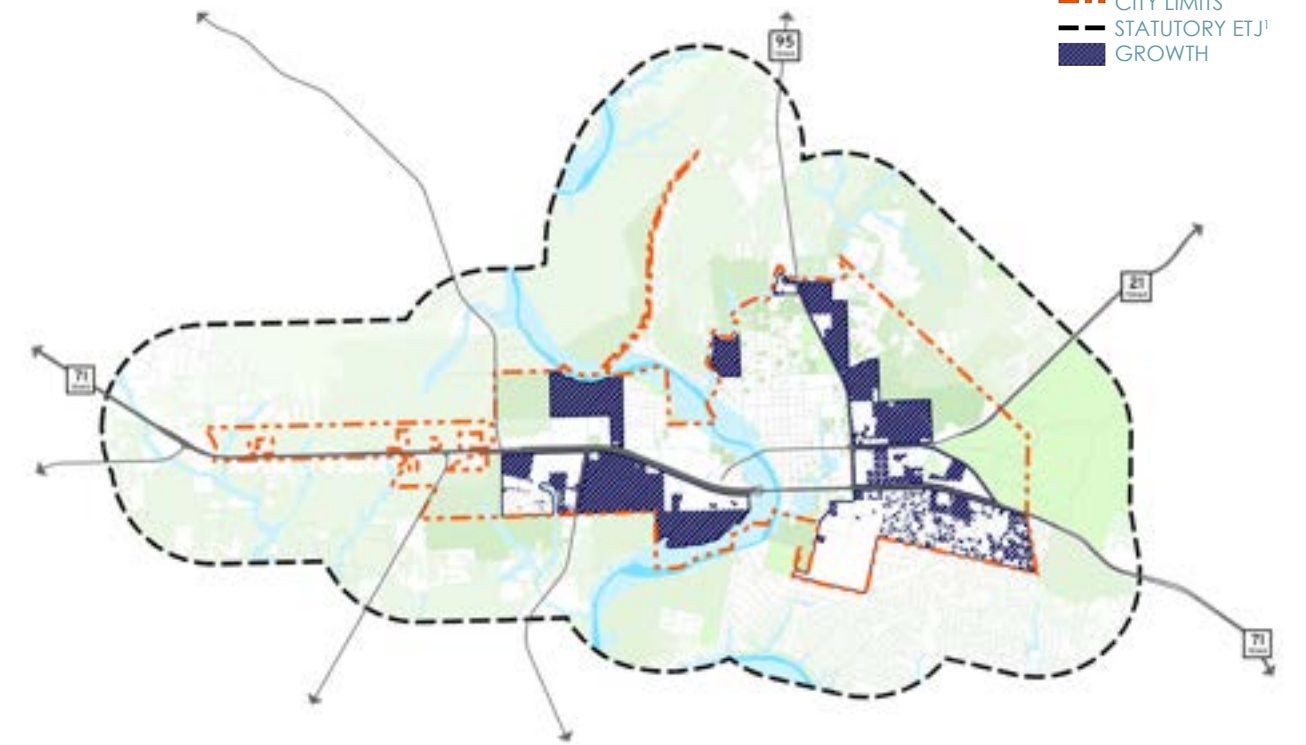
FIGURE 2.7. CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT PATTERN



Development occurs along major transportation corridors in a linear manner. Access to transportation and utility infrastructure saves development costs; but, development quality and intensity can overburden thoroughfares.

¹LIMITS OF STATUTORY ETJ LOCATED 1 MILE FROM CITY LIMITS

FIGURE 2.8. CONTIGUOUS DEVELOPMENT PATTERN



Growth occurs in very close proximity to existing development. When carefully planned, can reduce the footprint of development, while strategically increasing development intensity.

FIGURE 2.9. INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT PATTERN



Development within existing districts and neighborhoods in close proximity to existing utilities and public services. Promotes a compact community form and utility network, and may promote neighborhood conservation and blight removal.

¹ LIMITS OF STATUTORY ETJ LOCATED 1 MILE FROM CITY LIMITS

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS DESCRIPTIONS

Scattered Development happens on land that is not constrained by land use or development regulations. Development in this manner typically takes place on vacant land, but it may lack access to essential utility infrastructure and public services.

Cluster Development refers to the concentration of construction at strategic locations, where buildings are grouped together, although these areas may still be spread out. This type of development focuses on compact on-site building and design to preserve the natural features of the land.

Corridor Development takes place along major transportation corridors in a linear fashion. The proximity to transportation

and utility infrastructure can reduce development costs, but the intensity and quality of the development can potentially strain the thoroughfares.

Contiguous Development occurs near existing developments. This type of development can reduce the overall development footprint while increasing the intensity of the development, making it more efficient in utilizing available space.

Infill and Redevelopment involves construction within existing districts and neighborhoods. This approach takes advantage of existing utility infrastructure and public services, promoting a compact community form and reducing the need for expansion.

Of the five scenarios presented, this Update supports policies aligned with the Corridor and Cluster strategy but with an emphasis on development toward the west. Bastrop's growth policies are detailed on page 2-19.

Understanding how growth may occur is only one part of the planning process. It is equally

important to consider the natural hazards that could impact these areas. The following section explores risks such as flooding, wildfires, and other hazards to support safer and more informed development decisions.

"...WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE OF THE OPEN AREAS DEVELOPED LIKE AT THE NW CORNER OF 969/71."

"I BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NOT ENOUGH GREEN SPACES AND WITHOUT THEM BASTROP WILL LOSE A LOT OF ITS CHARM."

Community Touchpoint Survey - Week 2 Respondents
[City Residents]

HAZARD ANALYSIS

FLOOD PRONE AREAS

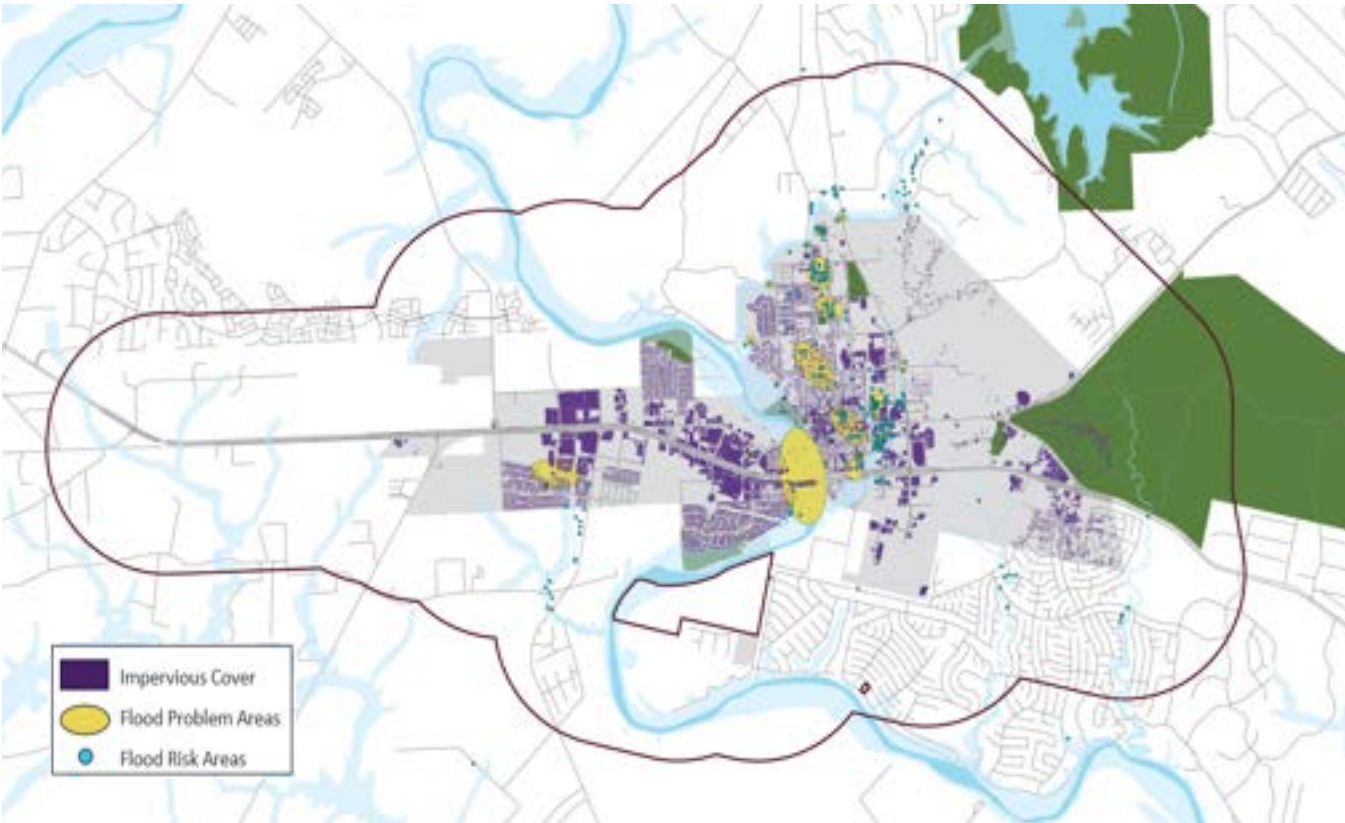
Being prominently located along the Colorado River, the City of Bastrop’s connection to water is a key component to the City’s character and history. The water bodies that flow in and around the City can be sources of recreation and economic drivers but also pose a threat to the community through flooding. Compounded with historic drainage infrastructure and increasing impervious coverage, this creates localized and widespread flooding hotspots throughout the City.

Figure 2.10 shows the flooding hotspots identified throughout the community using current and future flood modeling projections created for the Texas Water Development Board’s Region 10 - Lower Colorado-Lavaca

Regional Flood Plan, which includes Bastrop County. The areas shown in yellow depict the areas of flooding hotspots. The large area in central Bastrop shows the compounding flooding in the floodplain of the Colorado River and the historic downtown of Bastrop. Additional flooding hotspots are identified throughout the city where there are areas of large impervious cover and inadequate drainage capacity.

As Bastrop continues to grow, understanding this flood risk is critical to acknowledge current risk and mitigate future increases from risk from both increased storm severity and severe weather and increased development and impervious cover. Both factors can increase the overall flood risk to infrastructure and the citizens of Bastrop.

FIGURE 2.10. FLOOD PRONE AREAS MAP



WILDFIRE RISK

The wildfire threat in a given area is determined as the likelihood of a wildfire occurring or burning into an area. The threat is determined by combining a number of landscape characteristics including surface and canopy vegetation as fuel, resultant fire behavior, historical fire occurrence, historical weather observations, and terrain conditions.

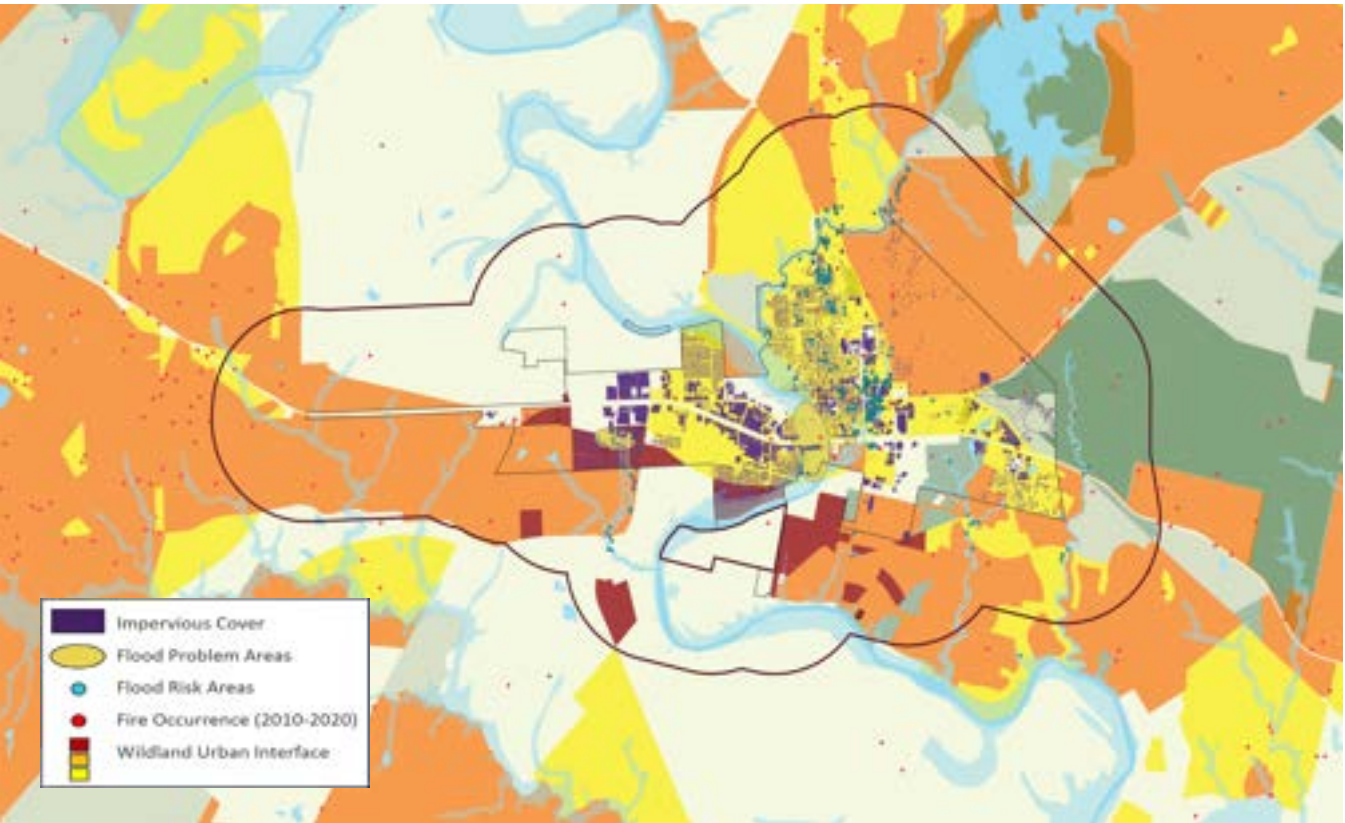
Among fire disasters in the U.S. in recent years, fires in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas have caused the most devastation. The WUI is the zone where human development meets undeveloped wild land or vegetative fuels and these fires can result in substantial property damage and loss of life. This area is at risk of wildfires due to the proximity of structures to natural landscapes, which

complicates wildfire management and response.

Understanding the WUI is important for communities to develop strategies to reduce wildfire risks and improve safety. **Figure 2.11** below shows the WUI data for the City of Bastrop and surrounding area. The areas in red pose the highest risk to wildfire impact on the WUI scale due to the level of undeveloped vegetation in proximity to infrastructure and urbanized areas.

Effectively managing vegetation fuel loads (anything that can burn in a wildfire and can include grasses, shrubs, trees, and dead leaves), and reducing loads when and where appropriate, helps to reduce the risk of fires and maintain functioning ecosystems.

FIGURE 2.11. WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE (WUI) MAP



BASTROP GROWTH POTENTIAL MAP

BASTROP GROWTH POTENTIAL

Reviewing the impact of hazards such as flooding and wildfire can have on a community are key to planning for future growth and development in Bastrop. The planned and projected growth bring both opportunities and constraints that need careful consideration.

OPPORTUNITIES

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Improving roads vulnerable to soil expansion and extreme weather provides the City with an opportunity to create a more resilient transportation network.

ENHANCED DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Upgrading drainage and culverts can prevent roadway erosion and maintain essential access routes for emergency services, ensuring the City is better prepared for adverse weather conditions.

WATER STORAGE AND FIRE SUPPRESSION

Investing in water storage and fire suppression infrastructure can help mitigate wildfire risks and ensure community safety.

REGULATORY UPDATES

Adopting and updating floodplain ordinances and enforcing fire codes can reduce risk and promote sustainable growth.

CONSTRAINTS

GEOGRAPHIC LIMITATIONS

The City's proximity to natural water bodies and flood-prone areas increases infrastructure and development risks. Future growth that increases impervious surface coverage will continue to increase risk in flood-prone areas.

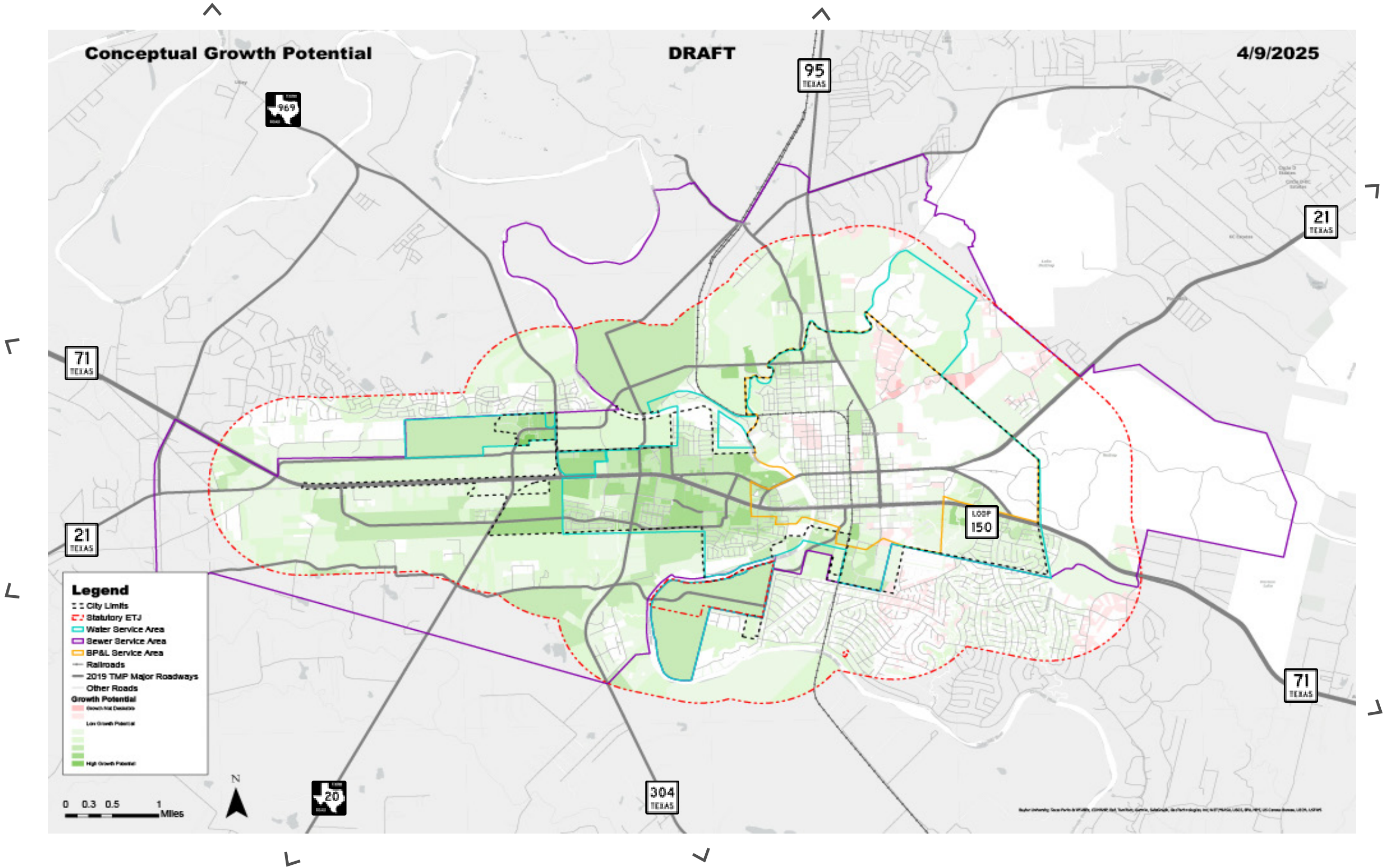
RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Ensuring adequate water resources for both residential needs and fire suppression may strain the City's budget and planning efforts. Prolonged drought coupled with growth and development puts a strain on the already limited resources for water supply and creates a greater need to improve existing systems and develop alternative water supply techniques.

COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

Raising awareness and educating the community about the risks from hazards is essential but can be hindered by varying levels of public engagement and participation, especially in a growing community with many new residents who may not be as familiar with local environmental risks and emergency response procedures.

Balancing these opportunities and constraints is crucial for the City to achieve sustainable growth and development. By addressing these factors with innovative solutions and proactive planning, the City can enhance its resilience against natural hazards and ensure a thriving future for all its residents.



MAP INSIGHTS



LOW GROWTH POTENTIAL AREAS (RED/
PINK AREAS):

Environmental Constraints. Located on the outskirts of Bastrop, these areas face environmental constraints such as floodplains, protected parks, and Houston Toad habitats

Fire and Flood Risk. High fire or flood risk areas further limit the viability of growth in these regions, especially for residential or commercial projects.

Downtown Bastrop. Downtown Bastrop is considered low-growth due to its already built-out status, which leaves limited opportunities for expansion. This area is more suited for slow and thoughtful infill development or preservation of its historical character.

“I ALSO BELIEVE GROWTH SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED TO THE EAST DUE TO STATE PARKS AND HOUSTON TOAD.”

Community Touch Points Survey - Week 3
Respondents [City Residents]



HIGH GROWTH POTENTIAL AREAS (GREENER
AREAS):

Proximity to Infrastructure. These areas are near major roadways and utility corridors, with easy access to water, wastewater, and electric services, particularly in the central-west and south-central portions of Bastrop. They are well-suited for new development due to the existing infrastructure in place.

Land Availability. These areas often overlap with vacant or agricultural parcels, suggesting that there is readily available land for future development. This makes them ideal candidates for residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments.

Strategic Location. Being located within the city's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) and Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) areas, these areas are eligible for municipal services, making them easier to annex or manage in the future.

Growth Corridor Identification. Areas near TX-71 and SH-95, which are major transportation routes, should be prioritized for higher-density residential and commercial developments, as these corridors are key to accommodating future growth and regional connectivity.

GROWTH STRATEGY INSIGHTS

Infill Vs. Sprawl. Strategically focusing growth within high-potential areas supports more cost-effective infrastructure and service provision over time. While Bastrop's overall land area is moderate, prioritizing infill and development on vacant parcels, particularly within well-served, low-risk zones, offers a smarter alternative to extending development into environmentally constrained areas in the east and southeast. This approach reduces future hazard exposure, infrastructure costs, and environmental impacts while reinforcing a more resilient growth pattern.

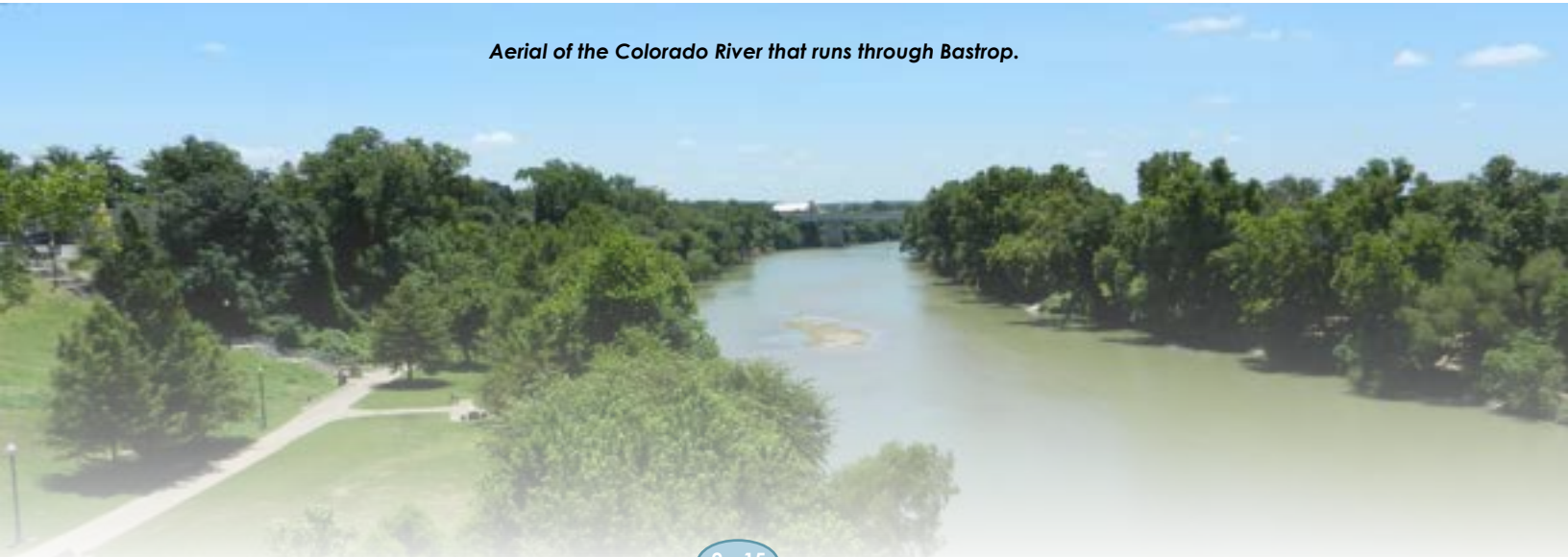
Infrastructure Investment Priorities. To support efficient growth, the City should prioritize infrastructure investments in high-growth potential areas that are already served or easily serviceable by existing networks. Concentrating development in these areas reduces the long-term cost of extending infrastructure to geographically distant or environmentally constrained zones. However, targeted investments may still be needed in constrained areas for resilience, hazard mitigation, or to address equity concerns. The City should also consider formalizing cost-sharing partnerships or agreements with the development community such as impact fees or infrastructure participation agreements with developers to provide that new growth contributes fairly to infrastructure expansion and maintenance.

Future Land Use Map Guidance. The Growth Potential Map provides important context for shaping the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). It helps identify areas where future development may be more suitable, such as regions with existing infrastructure and lower environmental risk, and where development should be limited due to hazards or lack of services. This guidance

informs decisions about where to encourage higher-density residential, mixed-use, or commercial development, and where to reserve land for parks, open space, or conservation. Combined with community input, infrastructure planning, and policy priorities, the map supports a future land use vision that is both resilient and responsive to Bastrop's growth.

Tailored Development Strategies. The development patterns and conditions highlighted in the analysis map indicate the need for targeted planning tools to guide growth in high-opportunity areas. Tools such as Public Improvement Districts (PIDs), Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs), and development agreements can help finance infrastructure and support the transition of land from agricultural to urban or suburban uses. Where current zoning does not align with desired housing or commercial development, rezonings or special overlays may be needed in coordination with these tools. Deploying such strategies in a coordinated manner (with attention to infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints, and community goals) can ensure responsible, efficient, and well-supported growth.

Connectivity and Accessibility Considerations. Identifying growth corridors near major transportation routes provides an important foundation for promoting well-connected and accessible development. However, true connectivity requires more than proximity to highways; it depends on thoughtful street network design, safe pedestrian and bicycle access, and the potential for future transit service. By integrating land use planning with multi-modal transportation strategies, Bastrop can provide that new residential and commercial developments are not only well-located, but also accessible, safe, and convenient for all users.



Aerial of the Colorado River that runs through Bastrop.

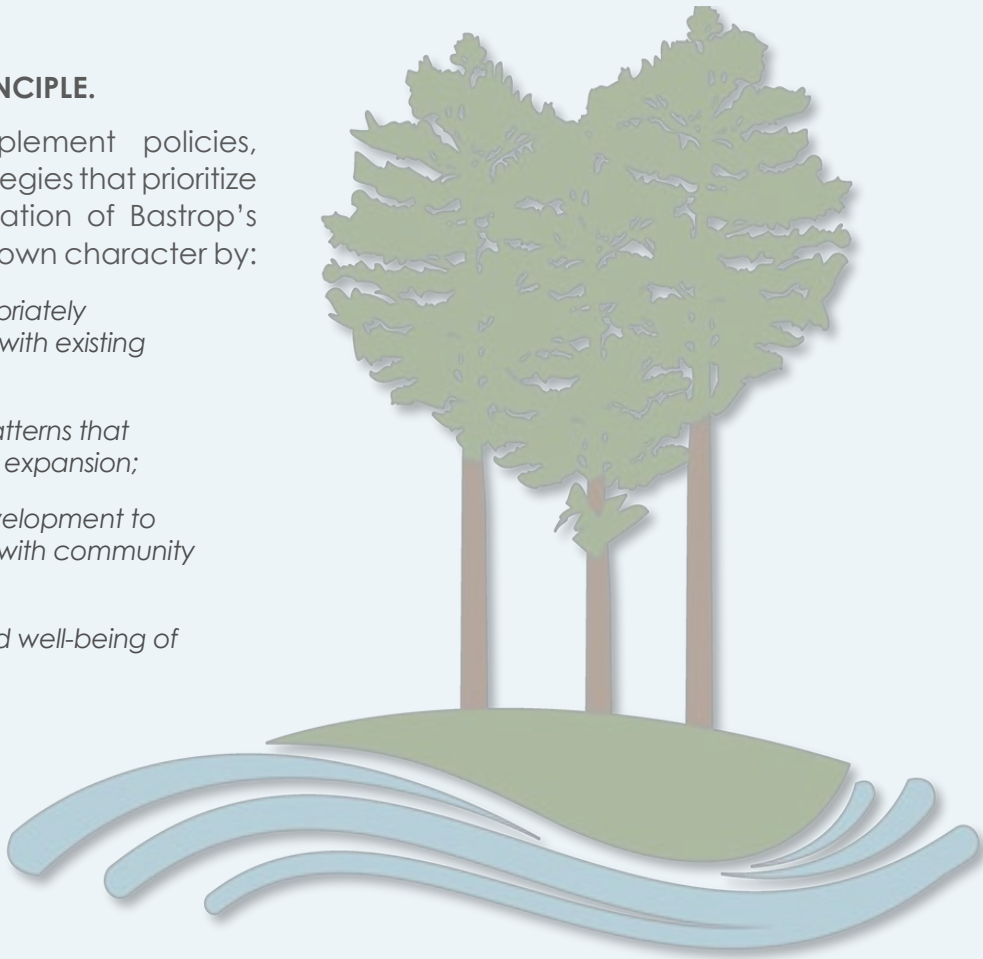
BASTROP GROWTH VISION AND FRAMEWORK

The insights gathered regarding infrastructure, development tools, and connectivity provide a clear foundation for how Bastrop can effectively manage growth in the coming years. As we look ahead, it's important to shift from addressing immediate development needs to shaping a cohesive, long-term vision that aligns with the city's values and goals. The following planning framework will guide us in turning this vision into reality—ensuring that Bastrop's growth is not only manageable but also aligned with its aspirations for a vibrant, sustainable, and well-connected community.

BASTROP GUIDING GROWTH PRINCIPLE.

The City of Bastrop will implement policies, programs, investments, and strategies that prioritize fiscal responsibility and preservation of Bastrop's natural environment and small-town character by:

- Encouraging low-impact, appropriately scaled development that aligns with existing infrastructure;
- Promoting contiguous growth patterns that minimize infrastructure impact or expansion;
- Managing targeted corridor development to balance economic opportunity with community character; and
- Protecting the health, safety, and well-being of the community.



To achieve this vision, the City of Bastrop will implement a set of focused policies, programs, and strategies. These policies are designed to ensure that development occurs in a fiscally responsible and environmentally conscious manner, while preserving the small-town character that defines Bastrop. The policies listed on the following page will guide Bastrop's growth, ensuring that it aligns with the community's values and long-term goals.

BASTROP GROWTH POLICIES

GROWTH, LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

- Encourage Gradient Land Use Strategies: Utilize landscape buffer zones or leverage park land dedication to create transitions between different land uses, reducing conflict and enhancing compatibility while preserving rural edges and protect Bastrop's small-town character.
- Maintain Lower Density in Established Neighborhoods: Preserve the character of historically single-family areas by maintaining lower-density development patterns that reflect Bastrop's small-town identity.
- Encourage Cluster Development for Housing Diversity and Businesses: Encourage clustered development in identified areas with adequate utilities to provide a mix of housing types and support commercial growth while preserving open space and natural features.
- Promote Responsible Growth Through Strategic Development Tools: Encourage development that aligns with Bastrop's character and existing infrastructure capacity by leveraging neighborhood conservation districts, planned development districts, zoning overlays, economic development tools, and performance-based strategies. Utilize voluntary guidelines, incentive-based approaches, and strategic partnerships to promote private investment while minimizing public costs.
- Encourage Voluntary Land Conservation to Preserve Rural Edges: Support voluntary conservation agreements and similar tools to protect rural edges, maintain open space, and establish appropriate buffers between land uses while respecting property rights.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION & COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Preserve Natural Features: Identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, riparian corridors, and native Piney Woods ecosystems.
- Encourage Agricultural Preservation: Promote land use practices that retain agricultural operations and rural landscapes on the City's fringe.

- Incorporate Context-Sensitive Design: Require new development to reflect Bastrop's historic character, scale, and design aesthetic through voluntary design guidelines and incentives that support the city's unique identity.
- Adopt Conservation Subdivision Standards: Encourage subdivisions that preserve natural features, minimize impervious cover, and reduce infrastructure demands.

INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

- Utility Capacity-Based Development: Encourage development that aligns with the available capacity of Bastrop's existing utility infrastructure to reduce costly upgrades.
- Prioritize Infrastructure Maintenance: Emphasize maintaining existing infrastructure for reliability and resiliency.
- Limit Utility Extensions: Establish clear criteria for when and how infrastructure extensions are allowed, ensuring they align with fiscally sustainable growth patterns.

TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

- Alleviate Traffic Congestion Through Strategic Improvements: Focus transportation investments on improving traffic flow along key corridors and ensuring safe, efficient access to local destinations. Emphasize solutions that manage growth-related congestion while minimizing impacts on Bastrop's character and existing neighborhoods.
- Focus on Multimodal Corridors: Prioritize transportation investments in targeted growth areas to enhance walkability, reduce traffic congestion, and align with targeted growth patterns.
- Maintain Vibrant Street Designs in Established Neighborhoods: Preserve the character of Bastrop's established neighborhoods by investing in streetscape improvements identified in master plans or other city plans designated for reinvestment. Prioritize sidewalks that enhance connectivity and contribute to the overall walkability.

GROWTH GOALS

FIGURE 2.7. COMMUNITY GROWTH, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 2.1: ENSURE RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE LONG-TERM WATER SYSTEM CAPACITY AND QUALITY FOR EXISTING CUSTOMERS, WHILE SUPPORTING INCREMENTAL GROWTH IN APPROPRIATE AREAS WITHOUT ALTERING HISTORICAL LAND USES
Objective 2.1: Coordinate water system planning with land use decisions to ensure new growth is supported by adequate infrastructure while preserving the integrity of historically developed areas.
Strategy 2.1.1: Establish zoning overlays or conservation districts in historically developed areas that limit up-zoning or densification unless infrastructure upgrades are completed first.
Strategy 2.1.2: Implement a concurrency policy requiring water infrastructure adequacy reviews before approving infill development or rezoning that could increase density.
Strategy 2.1.3: Prioritize growth in areas with available water capacity by aligning the Future Land Use Map and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to encourage development where infrastructure is available.
Strategy 2.1.4: Limit extensions of new water service lines in areas identified for preservation of rural or historical land use patterns.
GOAL 2.2: PROMOTE WATER CONSERVATION THROUGH ENHANCED PRACTICES, EFFICIENT LANDSCAPING, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS
Objective 2.2: Reduce per capita water demand and preserve hydrologic function through conservation education, landscape standards, and integrated stormwater management.
Strategy 2.2.1: Mitigate expected increases in water demand through enhanced conservation practices and community education.
Strategy 2.2.2: Adopt landscape design standards that require native, drought-tolerant plants and prohibit turf grass in non-functional or ornamental areas (e.g., medians).
Strategy 2.2.3: Promote sustainable growth through integrated stormwater management practices that protect the city's hydrology and infrastructure.
GOAL 2.3: EXPAND WASTEWATER CAPACITY AND IMPROVE SYSTEM EFFICIENCY THROUGH COST-EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACHES
Objective 2.3: Ensure wastewater system reliability and readiness to support future growth through targeted investments, modernization, and climate resilience.
Strategy 2.3.1: Prioritize wastewater infrastructure investments in areas identified for growth in the Future Land Use Map.
Strategy 2.3.2: Modernize aging wastewater infrastructure to reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I), minimize treatment loads, and improve system reliability during extreme weather events.
GOAL 2.4: IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT TO REDUCE FLOOD HAZARDS, PROTECT NATURAL SYSTEMS AND MAINTAIN QUALITY THROUGH INTEGRATED LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS
Objective 2.4: Enhance flood resilience and water quality through strategic stormwater system improvements and environmentally responsible development practices.
Strategy 2.4.1: Reduce flood hazards in Bastrop through programmed improvement of the city stormwater system.
Strategy 2.4.2: Protect Lower Colorado River water quality by managing stormwater runoff through best management practices (BMPs) like low-impact development.
Strategy 2.4.3: Mitigate stormwater discharges associated with new development to protect water quality in the Lower Colorado River Watershed.

GOAL 2.5: SUPPORT COMMUNITY RESILIENCY WITH PLANS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS, INCLUDING FLOODING AND WILDFIRES, THROUGH PROACTIVE POLICIES AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
Objective 2.5: Enhance Bastrop's resilience to environmental hazards by integrating green infrastructure, preserving natural systems, and leveraging open space as protective and recreational assets.
Strategy 2.5.1: Incentivize the use of green infrastructure, like bioswales, green alleys, and rain gardens in new subdivisions and commercial sites.
Strategy 2.5.2: Implement a tree preservation and native landscaping ordinance to maintain Bastrop's natural character and reduce climate impacts.
Strategy 2.5.3: Use parks, rivers/creeks, and open space as dual-purpose amenities that provide both recreational value and environmental resilience (e.g., floodplains as greenways).
GOAL 2.6: GUIDE GROWTH THAT PRESERVES BASTROP'S EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND SMALL-TOWN CHARM WITH CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT
Objective 2.6: Manage development in a way that maintains Bastrop's character by limiting incompatible growth and promoting gradual, thoughtful expansion that enhances rather than disrupts the community fabric.
Strategy 2.6.1: Limit high-density development in historically low-density areas unless infrastructure and hazard mitigation standards are met and reflect the scale, character, and architectural style.
Strategy 2.6.2: Use the Future Land Use Map to direct growth to areas that minimize disruptions to the character of established neighborhoods while accommodating gradual, low-impact development in underutilized or non-sensitive areas.
Strategy 2.6.3: Develop and implement guidelines that preserve tree canopy, open spaces and local landmarks as a part of development projects to maintain the visual and environmental quality of Bastrop's small-town atmosphere.
Strategy 2.6.4: Encourage new developments to integrate parks and green spaces that reflect Bastrop's unique character, ensuring that future growth enhances the city's cultural and natural identity while meeting the recreational needs of residents.
Strategy 2.6.5: Promote a balanced approach to development that prioritizes maintaining the city's historic charm and small-town feel, while addressing park and open space gaps in growing neighborhoods.
GOAL 2.7: GUIDE COMMUNITY GROWTH TO MAINTAIN SAFE, EFFICIENT VEHICLE ACCESS TO ENHANCE NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY AND SUPPORT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION.
Objective 2.7: Promote transportation options that maintain vehicular access while prioritizing safe pedestrian and cyclist connectivity to support active, sustainable transportation in Bastrop.
Strategy 2.7.1: Expand Bastrop's sidewalk and trail networks alongside growth areas to provide residents with safe non-vehicular options for short trips, recreation, and community connectivity without reducing vehicle access.
Strategy 2.7.2: Support more flexible, market-responsive development patterns in newer growth areas.
Strategy 2.7.3: Preserve the street grid in Bastrop's Historic core to maintain character and walkability.
Strategy 2.7.4: Promote close-to-home park access by recommending that parks be located within a ¼ mile or a 10-minute walk of residential areas, including new developments.

POLICY CONTEXT AND IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY



OVERVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS

A literature review and gap analysis identified opportunities for updating the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. These were reviewed in chronological order from oldest to newest.

BASTROP MASTER DRAINAGE PLAN (2024)

The Bastrop Master Drainage Plan outlines design criteria for stormwater-related infrastructure including roads, inlets, drainage pipes, and the incorporation of Low Impact Development (LID) practices. This plan can be used by engineers and developers to understand how new development impacts existing site hydrology and take necessary steps to prevent adverse effects on downstream neighborhoods. Flooding is the largest risk to infrastructure and the community in Bastrop, especially as growth continues and more land is urbanized with impervious surface cover. The plan's modeling of current and future flood conditions and the identified projects and design work completed in this plan can be considered in the future land use planning of the comprehensive plan. The master drainage plan emphasizes the importance of using LID and natural stormwater management approaches to replicate pre-development hydrology and regulate post-construction stormwater discharge to downstream water bodies.

In Bastrop, drainage design aims to meet several key goals, including stream bank protection, conveyance, and flood mitigation. It is also the intent of the City of Bastrop that the requirements outlined herein regulate post-construction stormwater discharges to downstream receiving waterbodies. With significant population growth and new development anticipated over the next 20 years, these criteria are crucial in managing the impacts on the city's hydrology and infrastructure.

RECOMMENDED B3 CODE UPDATES:

- *Incorporate the Bastrop Master Drainage Plan's criteria into new development regulations to ensure future projects align with the city's flood mitigation and stormwater management goals.*
- *Strengthen requirements for Low Impact Development (LID) practices in new developments to minimize impervious surfaces and enhance natural stormwater management.*
- *Encourage the use of green infrastructure such as bioswales, permeable pavements, and rain gardens to replicate pre-development hydrology and reduce runoff.*

CITY OF BASTROP PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN UPDATE (2023)

The 2015 Bastrop Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update analyzed projected growth and population trends to guide park planning, budgeting, and access improvements. The plan highlighted the importance of ensuring park and open space access for both residents and visitors. The plan identified several spatial gaps in park access, specifically in the southern, western, northern, and southeastern areas of the city. These regions currently lack parks or recreational services within a ¼ mile radius, with further details available in Chapter 6 under the Standards Assessment section. Additionally, the community engagement survey, with 632 out of 814 respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing, revealed a strong consensus that the city needs more parkland and greenspaces. This feedback, alongside input from city officials and staff, underscored the need for a new community recreation center in Bastrop.

RECOMMENDED B3 CODE UPDATES:

Encourage Park Dedications in Zoning

Require or incentivize developers to dedicate land or fees-in-lieu for parks in new residential or mixed-use projects:

- *Eight (8) Pocket Parks to serve middle and higher density areas (P3);*
- *Three (3) Neighborhood Parks to meet local recreation needs (P1, P2); and*
- *Four (4) Community Parks to support larger gatherings and events (P1, P2).*

Create a park and green space development checklist for new developments to ensure all parks meet the city's recreational and aesthetic standards.

BASTROP'S BUILDING BLOCK (2019)

To evaluate how Bastrop's Building Block (B3) Code aligns with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map (FLUM), we assessed the goals, policies, and vision outlined in these documents against the framework of the B3 Code. This analysis identifies areas of alignment, where the B3 Code supports the city's vision, as well as areas for improvement, where the code could better reflect community preferences through more traditional land uses and zoning strategies. While the B3 Code supports elements of the Comprehensive Plan, such as prioritizing walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and maintaining a sense of place, it also reveals areas for improvement. Specifically, incorporating more traditional land uses and zoning strategies could better reflect community preferences and provide a more balanced approach to future development. Below is a detailed breakdown of these alignments and gaps.

The alignment of the B3 Code with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, specifically in the areas of Community Growth (Chapter 2) and Land Use and Community Image (Chapter 5), reveals several key areas of strength and potential gaps that warrant updates to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.



COMPATIBILITY WITH ESTABLISHED LAND USES:

The B3 Code currently allows flexibility for mixed-use development, but this approach is conflicting with areas historically zoned for single-use, such as residential neighborhoods and commercial districts. This flexibility is already leading to unintended development outcomes that disrupt neighborhood character and clash with community expectations. To address this, the city could implement more detailed zoning requirements or establish specific land use classifications, through overlay districts, to guide multi-family or mixed-use projects into areas that can support them without disturbing existing neighborhood dynamics.

RECOMMENDED B3 CODE UPDATES:

- Create new overlay districts for mixed-use and neighborhood-scale multi-family developments in areas that can accommodate them without disrupting residential or commercial areas.
- Update land use classifications to clearly define where mixed-use is appropriate, ensuring that flexibility in zoning doesn't compromise neighborhood integrity.
- Implement transitional zoning standards for properties near single-family zones to ensure gradual, compatible development.



PRESERVING SMALL-TOWN CHARM:

As new developments emerge under the B3 Code's form-based framework, some low-density neighborhoods are experiencing urban-style features that conflict with Bastrop's small-town character. The current flexibility in zoning is already introducing higher-density projects in areas that have historically favored single-use patterns, causing concern among

residents. Introducing overlay districts, design criteria, or edge zones can help maintain neighborhood character while supporting controlled growth.

RECOMMENDED B3 CODE UPDATES:

- Introduce design standards and guidelines that limit urban-style features in neighborhoods with established low-density character.
- Establish edge zones to transition between medium-density and low-density areas to preserve the small-town feel while accommodating growth.
- Create new overlay districts in areas where preservation of small-town charm is critical.



PROTECTING HISTORIC ASSETS:

The B3 Code incorporates Transect Zones to regulate development intensity and promote compatibility with historic areas. However, current development patterns reveal that the code's flexibility is enabling projects that could disrupt Bastrop's historic fabric. Without additional preservation-focused design guidelines or review processes, there is a risk of losing the city's historic charm. Implementing more rigorous design standards or expanding preservation districts could ensure that new projects complement the city's historic assets.

RECOMMENDED B3 CODE UPDATES:

- Expand the preservation districts to include areas at risk of losing their historic character due to development pressures.
- Implement stronger design guidelines and review processes for development near historic assets, ensuring compatibility with the city's heritage.
- Introduce regulations to prevent high-intensity development in areas with significant historic value, requiring special review or permitting.



EFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE & CONNECTIVITY:

The B3 Code's form-based approach emphasizes connectivity and multi-modal transportation, but gaps are emerging in infrastructure standards. The city is already encountering challenges with unclear right-of-way standards, insufficient parking regulations, and inconsistent street functionality requirements. The lack of Euclidean-style zoning standards is causing difficulties in managing traffic flow and pedestrian safety in developing areas. To resolve these issues, the city should:

- Establish clear zoning standards for street infrastructure, including defined right-of-way widths and multi-modal access provisions.
- Develop comprehensive guidelines for parking and traffic flow.
- Align street functionality standards with the Comprehensive Plan's infrastructure goals.

RECOMMENDED B3 CODE UPDATES:

- Establish clear street infrastructure standards, including defined right-of-way widths and pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access provisions.
- Set parking requirements that balance the needs of various types of development while supporting walkability and reducing congestion.
- Align street functionality standards with the Comprehensive Plan's vision for pedestrian-friendly and multi-modal streetscapes, ensuring better traffic flow and safety.



ALIGNMENT WITH THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP (FLUM)

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS: Current developments show discrepancies between the B3 Code's mixed-use allowances and FLUM's single-use designations, leading to confusion and mixed outcomes. Adjusting the B3 Code's transect zones to align more closely with FLUM categories could address this misalignment.

GROWTH AREAS: The B3 Code's emphasis on compact, walkable neighborhoods is conflicting with FLUM's goals for low-density, rural preservation areas. This divergence is already apparent in areas where open space and rural character are being impacted by higher-density projects.

Incorporating provisions for rural preservation zones and gradual density transitions can help reconcile these differences.

RECOMMENDED B3 CODE UPDATES:

- Align the B3 Code's transect zones with the FLUM's land use designations to avoid discrepancies and confusion about permitted developments.
- Integrate specific provisions into the B3 Code for rural preservation zones, limiting higher-density development in these areas and ensuring smooth transitions from urban to rural areas.
- Encourage gradual transitions in density to preserve Bastrop's rural and open spaces while supporting appropriate growth.

FIGURE 2.8 PLAN REVIEW & GAP ANALYSIS SUMMARY

EXISTING PLAN	GAPS/ISSUES	PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS	PROPOSED B3 UPDATES
Bastrop Master Drainage Plan (2024)	Stormwater management and flooding concerns need to be integrated into development regulations to prevent adverse effects on hydrology.	Promote sustainable growth through integrated stormwater management that protects Bastrop's hydrology and infrastructure.	Incorporate Bastrop Master Drainage Plan criteria into development regulations.
	Existing drainage regulations need to encourage Low Impact Development (LID) and natural stormwater management approaches.	Support flood mitigation through LID practices and green infrastructure.	Strengthen LID practices and encourage green infrastructure like bioswales, permeable pavements, and rain gardens.
City of Bastrop Parks and Open Space Master Plan Update (2023)	Significant gaps in park access in southern, western, northern, and southeastern areas. Community feedback highlights a need for more parks and recreation spaces.	Encourage growth that preserves small-town character while expanding park access.	Require park dedications in zoning, create a park and green space development checklist, and encourage developers to dedicate parks or fees in lieu for parks in new developments.
	Need for more accessible parks within a ¼ mile or a 10-minute walk from residential areas.	Promote close-to-home park access for all residents.	Implement zoning ordinances requiring parks within walking distance of residential areas and include parks in master planning of new residential and mixed-use developments.
City of Bastrop HMAP Update (2022)	Current floodplain management provisions are insufficient. Wildfire risks not fully addressed in the code.	Strengthen community resilience to environmental hazards like flooding and wildfires through proactive planning.	Update floodplain management regulations, include wildfire risk mitigation in zoning and building codes, and introduce fire-resistant building materials and defensible space in high-risk zones.
Water Master Plan (2022)	Existing water system is outdated and cannot support anticipated population growth.	Ensure Bastrop's water system is resilient, efficient, and adaptable to accommodate future growth and sustainability.	Require downstream assessments, reinforce or stabilize downstream conditions, and control post-development discharges to meet stormwater standards.
Bastrop's Building Block (2019)	Existing zoning flexibility is causing unintended consequences in mixed-use areas. Lack of protections for historic assets. Infrastructure and connectivity gaps emerging in new developments.	Promote balanced, context-sensitive development that respects neighborhood character and preserves Bastrop's historic charm.	Introduce overlay districts, edge zones, and stronger design guidelines for mixed-use and multi-family development. Expand historic preservation districts, and implement stronger design standards near historic assets.
	Need to balance higher-density development with small-town atmosphere preservation.	Protect low-density neighborhoods while accommodating growth in a way that maintains small-town feel.	Establish design standards for low-density neighborhoods and create edge zones to preserve small-town character.
	Infrastructure and connectivity standards unclear, leading to issues with traffic flow and pedestrian safety.	Ensure infrastructure supports growth, emphasizing multi-modal connectivity and pedestrian-friendly streets.	Establish clear infrastructure standards, including right-of-way widths, parking requirements, and multi-modal access provisions. Align street functionality standards with the Comprehensive Plan's vision for pedestrian-friendly streetscapes.



RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the last decade, Bastrop has made significant strides in local investments and policy advancements to support sustainable growth, infrastructure resilience, and economic development. Since 2016, the city has expanded and modernized its water and wastewater systems, enhanced development regulations, and implemented policies that balance growth with community needs.

WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Bastrop has made significant progress in enhancing its infrastructure to support a growing population and expanding development. In the water system, the city's Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) is scheduled for updates in FY2025 to address future needs. As of November 2024, Bastrop serves 4,579 water customers, a substantial increase from 3,078 in 2015, including 762 commercial and 3,817 residential connections. The average daily water consumption in FY2024 was 1.81 million gallons per day (MGD).

To ensure a reliable water supply, Bastrop is transitioning from its seven existing city wells, which will be decommissioned in FY2025, to four new Simsboro wells. Each well is permitted to produce 1,500 gallons per minute (gpm), providing a combined capacity of 8.64 MGD. This transition to higher-capacity wells not only ensures an ample water supply to meet current and future demand but also supports the City's growth objectives by enabling higher-density residential, commercial, and industrial development, as well as the expansion of urban areas.

The shift from the current wells to the Simsboro Wells necessitates careful planning for well site

locations. These new sites must balance proximity to service areas with the need to minimize potential conflicts with surrounding land uses, ensuring efficient and sustainable land use allocation. Additionally, the city maintains eight water storage facilities with a total capacity of 3.317 million gallons, including notable facilities such as the Loop 150 Standpipe (1.0 million gallons) and the Willow GST-1 and GST-2 (each 0.5 million gallons). This increased storage capacity enhances the resilience of Bastrop's water infrastructure, making it better equipped to support areas with higher water demand, such as mixed-use or industrial districts, and improving disaster preparedness.

In the wastewater system, Bastrop will update its CCN in FY2025 to address growing demand. As of November 2024, the City serves 4,076 wastewater customers, comprising 496 commercial and 3,580 residential connections. The City's wastewater collection network includes 64.9 miles of gravity sewer lines, 15.81 miles of force mains, and 20 lift stations. Proactive measures such as routine smoke testing and camera inspections have been implemented to identify and mitigate inflow and infiltration (I&I). Although new construction occasionally results in temporary I&I increases, these efforts have substantially improved system performance, helping to accommodate Bastrop's expanding

population and planned residential and commercial areas.

Bastrop's wastewater treatment infrastructure includes three plants. Plants 1 and 2, located east of the Colorado River, have a combined permitted capacity of 1.4 MGD and currently treat 800,000 gallons per day. Plant 3, located west of the Colorado River, became operational on May 7, 2024, with a permitted capacity of 2.0 MGD and currently treats 500,000 gallons per day. Together, these facilities processed 443.6 million gallons of wastewater in 2024, marking a significant increase from the 306.4 million gallons processed in 2015. This expanded capacity not only meets current demand but also positions the city to support future development, aligning with anticipated growth areas identified in the future land use plan, such as residential subdivisions, commercial corridors, and industrial parks.

As the city continues to expand its wastewater infrastructure, it will require rights-of-way and easements for the extension of gravity sewer lines, force mains, and lift stations. This expansion affects land use in areas where infrastructure

is upgraded or newly installed, reinforcing the importance of aligning system design with future growth patterns. By integrating these improvements with land use planning, Bastrop ensures the wastewater system is well-positioned to support the city's evolving needs and promote sustainable urban development.

BASTROP BUILDING BLOCK CODE (B3 CODE)

The form-based code was approved in 2019, it has received several updates since 2023. These changes to Bastrop's B3 Code reflect a shift toward greater flexibility, simplified requirements, and alignment with practical development needs. Here's a summary of key themes and potential impacts:

The following is a list of the ordinances and code adjustments:

ENHANCED DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

- Added traffic impact fees for new development.
- Added requirements for wireless transmission where none previously existed.

STREAMLINED PROCESSES AND ADMINISTRATIVE CLARIFICATIONS

- Clarifies that when planning and zoning unanimously recommends denial of a zoning concept scheme, a three-fourths majority vote will be required for canceled to approve for council to approve the zoning.
- Removes the requirement for an affirmative vote of five members of planning and zoning to pass recommendations to council. Added qualification requirements for at least three planning and zoning members shall have a demonstrated interest competence and knowledge in a related field.
- Added the process for planned development districts back into the code.
- Added the requirement of GIS and CAD files for four lots or more when platting.

INCREASED FLEXIBILITY FOR DEVELOPERS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

- Fence requirements removed the requirement of a permit for fences under 7 feet remove specification that the front facade must have 50% transparency.
- Glazing requirements removed the 70% requirement for clear glazing on commercial buildings and remove the requirement for all openings including galleries arcades and windows to be square or vertical.
- Non-conforming uses and structures section of the code added the intent to preserve Bastrop's authenticity and prevent creating undue hardships for property owners.
- Provisions for administrative relief for non-conforming uses and structures was added to allow properties to be modified if their proposed changes are generally consistent with the surrounding properties within a 500-foot radius.
- Platting lots of records now clarifies the criteria for what qualifies as an infrastructure upgrade, specifically requesting a metered connection does not constitute infrastructure grade or extension.

BALANCED GROWTH MANAGEMENT

- Lot size minimum requirements when OSSF is needed lowered from 1.0 acre to 0.5 acre to mimic TCEQ standards.
- Removed the requirement of a public hearing at City Council for historic landmark designations.
- Removed alleys as preferred means of access and clarified the intent of the purpose of alleys.
- Added a parking requirement of one parking space per bedroom, a parking size of 10 feet by 20 feet without obstructing the sidewalks, allowed parking in the first layer, and allowed shared parking where it does not cause undue hardship all within the B3 code.
- Allowed parking in the first layer within the B3 technical manual.
- Removed the exception of parking not allowed within the first layer.



Completed in Spring 2024, Bastrop Wastewater Treatment Plant No. 3, which is located in the City's ETJ. The plant processes up to 2.0 million gallons of wastewater per day with an expansion possibility for up to 8.0 million gallons per day. Construction began in Spring 2021, and the facility is designed to support wastewater treatment needs from the nearby SpaceX facility.



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CHAPTER FIVE LAND USE & COMMUNITY IMAGE

The City of Bastrop is experiencing new growth, and with it, the community's vision for how and where it wants to grow has evolved since 2016. Today, residents express a strong desire to be a thriving community, one that offers a high quality of life, access to community resources, and opportunities for families to settle and succeed. As development continues, land use and community image are critical tools to ensure growth is well-managed and enhances Bastrop's appeal.

This Update reflects that evolving vision in two important ways. First, it revisits the City's future land use categories to better align with current priorities, which includes supporting affordability, quality of life, and the preservation of Bastrop's small-town charm. Second, it introduces updated community goals that respond directly to today's needs and aspirations. These revised goals serve as a compass for decision-making and are woven throughout the recommendations and land use strategies.

Chapter 5 builds on the **Chapter 2, Growth and Infrastructure** update. It presents a future development framework that outlines preferred land use patterns and redefines categories to better reflect current trends and community priorities. The framework seeks to balance new development with the preservation of Bastrop's "certificate of authenticity", or its identity as a historic small river town, deeply rooted in green spaces, local arts, and generational connection. These elements are not just cultural touchstones; they are central to Bastrop's sense of place and must be actively safeguarded as the city grows.

At the heart of this Update is the revised Future

Land Use Plan, which translates community aspirations into a clear strategy for how, when, and where growth should occur. By identifying key land use categories and their appropriate locations, the plan helps ensure Bastrop remains attractive and livable for future generations, particularly families seeking affordability and a strong, authentic sense of place. With this guidance, City leaders are better equipped to support growth while preserving what makes Bastrop unmistakably Bastrop.

A summary list of all corresponding Land Use and Community Image goals and objectives can be found at the end of the chapter update (page 5-34).

TODAY'S DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use composition within the City of Bastrop's municipal limits, and its one-mile ETJ area, is presented in **Figure 5.1, Bastrop Existing Land Use Composition**, and illustrated on **Map 5-A, Bastrop Existing Land Use** (page 5-4). The existing land use classifications are coded in accordance with state tax code data obtained from the Bastrop County Appraisal District. The land use data itself was cross-referenced with property improvement values, and reviewed with aerial photography, and discussions with City staff to differentiate between active and discontinued land uses.

Bastrop continues to function as a "bedroom community" with strong ties to the greater Austin metropolitan area. Since 2016, these development patterns have remained consistent. The influence of high-tech

FIGURE 5.1. BASTROP EXISTING LAND USE COMPOSITION (2024)

Land use	City limits (acres)	Percent of city total	ETJ (acres)	Percent of ETJ total	Combined (acres)	Percent of combined total
Single Family Residential	1,432.65	25.2%	3,806.23	25.3%	5,238.87	25.2%
Two Family Residential	25.96	0.5%	35.24	0.2%	61.20	0.3%
Multiple Family Residential	74.66	1.3%	23.11	0.2%	97.77	0.5%
Manufactured Homes	59.16	1.0%	749.64	5.0%	808.81	3.9%
Retail/Office/Commercial	565.39	9.9%	402.39	2.7%	967.78	4.7%
Industrial	70.98	1.2%	14.55	0.1%	85.53	0.4%
Semi-Public	111.32	2.0%	185.98	1.2%	297.30	1.4%
Public	329.89	5.8%	108.40	0.7%	438.28	2.1%
Parks & Open Space	448.56	7.9%	1,116.41	7.4%	1,564.98	7.5%
Agriculture & Rural Development	638.33	11.2%	5,284.45	35.1%	5,922.78	28.5%
Vacant	1,933.27	34.0%	3,332.51	22.1%	5,265.78	25.4%
TOTAL	5,690.16	100.0%	15,058.92	100.0%	20,749.08	100.0%

Note: Data derived from Bastrop County Appraisal District records. Modifications by Halff Associates, Inc. via aerial imagery and staff interviews.

development, particularly driven by initiatives like Starlink and SpaceX's expanding presence in the region is becoming increasingly evident further reinforcing Bastrop's role in the regional growth landscape.

Figure 5.2, Bastrop Land Use, 2016 to 2024, suggests that over the last eight years the City's land use composition has changed especially in terms of urban growth and land use shifts.

Bastrop has experienced a notable shift from its rural roots toward a more suburban and urban character. There has been strong growth in housing, especially in single-family and manufactured homes, suggesting a focus on suburban development or

population growth. Single family jumped from 17.9% to 25.2%.

The most striking change is the sharp decline in agricultural and rural development land, which dropped from 29.1% in 2016 to just 11.2% in 2024. This loss corresponds with increases in residential and commercial uses, reflecting the city's transformation as part of the greater Austin region's expansion.

At the same time, the amount of vacant land within the city limits rose from 28.6% to 34.0%, suggesting that while development pressure is high, large portions of land are either recently annexed, under preparation for future

FIGURE 5.2. BASTROP LAND USE, 2016 TO 2024

Land Use	Percent in City Limits (2016)	Percent in City Limits (2024)
Single Family Residential	17.9%	25.2%
Two Family Residential	0.2%	0.5%
Multiple Family Residential	0.9%	1.3%
Manufactured Homes	0.6%	1.0%
Retail/Office/Commercial	7.2%	9.9%
Industrial	1.0%	1.2%
Semi-Public	1.2%	2.0%
Public	6.0%	5.8%
Parks & Open Space	7.3%	7.9%
Agriculture & Rural Development	29.1%	11.2%
Vacant	28.6%	34.0%
TOTAL	100%	100%
TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%

development, or awaiting market-driven demand and infrastructure improvements. Together, these changes illustrate a community in transition and preparing for its next phase.

There also remains sufficient vacant land within Bastrop to accommodate substantial non-residential development activity for the foreseeable future. **Figure 5.3, Development Capacity, Non-residential Property**, indicates that of the roughly 3,400 acres of vacant land within the Bastrop municipal limits, approximately 1,400 acres are zoned for office, general retail, commercial, and industrial uses. Illustrated on **Map 5-B, Bastrop Existing Zoning**.

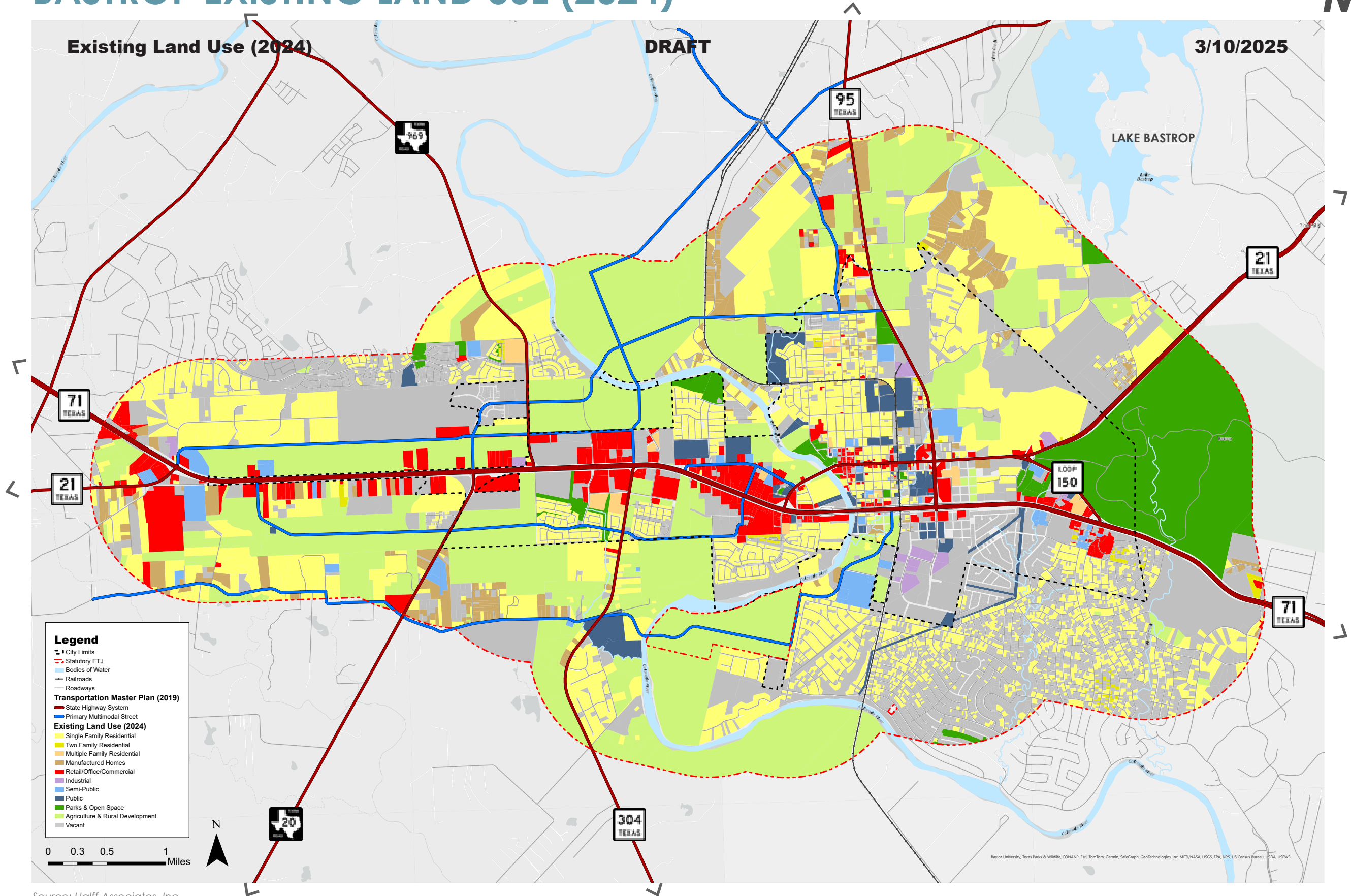
The city is sitting on the capacity to change quickly and dramatically. New businesses, offices, services, and public facilities can come online rapidly. The shape, character, and feel of the city can shift fast if growth is not well-managed. Without direction, development could become scattered, inconsistent, or misaligned with community values.

FIGURE 5.3. DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY, NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

Zoning districts allowing non-residential uses ¹		Vacant/undeveloped acres zoned	Available vacant/undeveloped land (acres) ²	Maximum lot coverage (percent) ³	Potential building area (acres) ³
P1	Nature			N/A	
P2	Rural	2231.381	1583.948	40	633.6
P4	Mix	91.176	86.837	70	60.8
P5	Core	488.961	430.634	80	344.5
CS	Civic Space/Civic Building	16.456	13.847	n/A	13.8
EC	Employment Center	337.21	274.481	80	219.6
PDD	Planned Development Districts	232.14959	168.069	N/A	168.07
TOTAL		3,397.32	2557.8	N/A	1440.37

Notes: ¹Excludes form-based districts. ²Excludes land that is located within the 100 year floodplain. ³For principal and accessory buildings only, per City Code. Excludes parking, detention, landscaping, etc. ⁴No maximum building coverage identified.

BASTROP EXISTING LAND USE (2024)

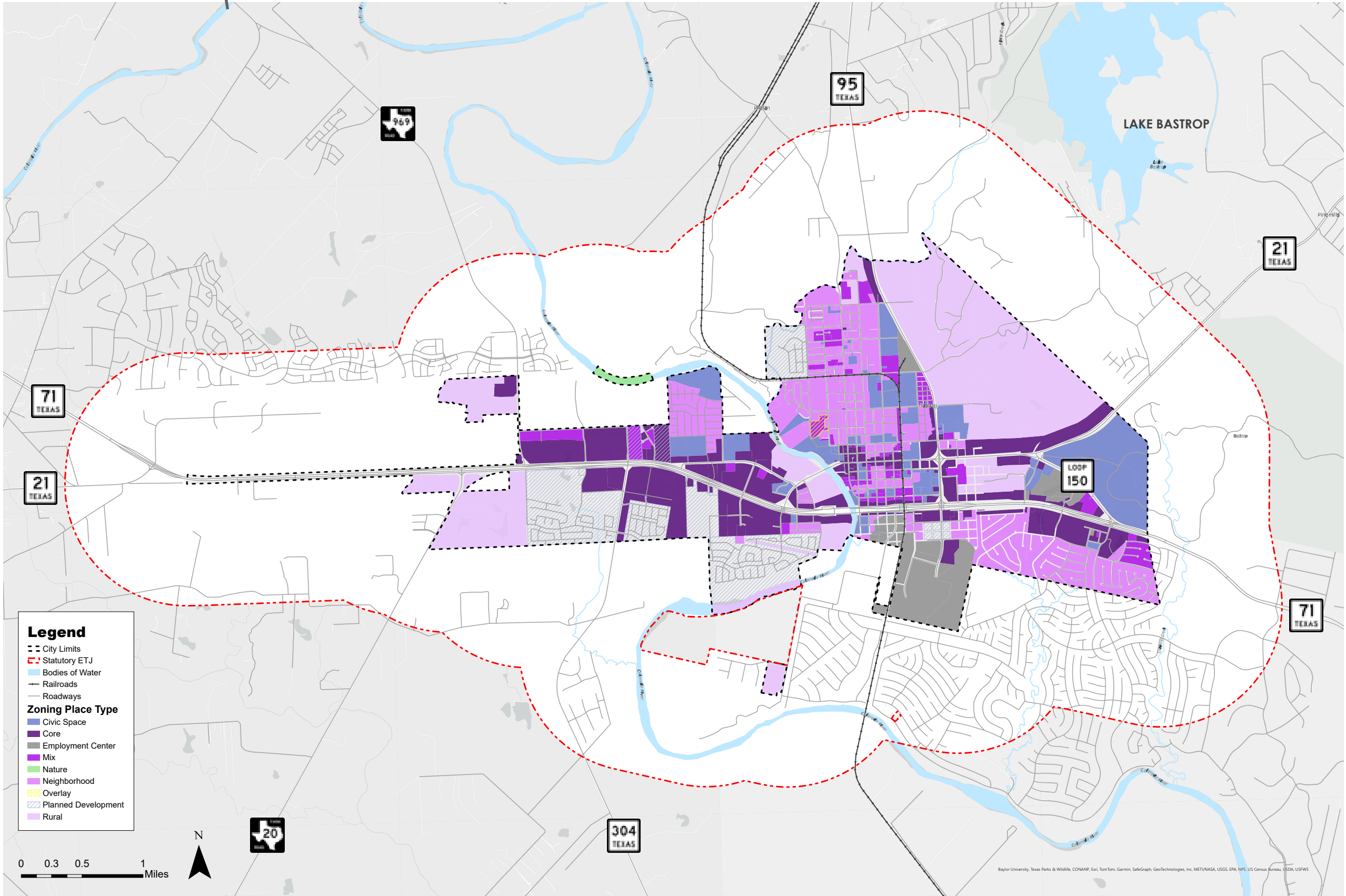


Source: Halff Associates, Inc.

MAP 5-A:

BASTROP EXISTING ZONING (2025)

MAP 5-B:



Source: Halff Associates, Inc.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN UPDATE

One of the main drivers of Bastrop's community character is the physical development that occurs over the next 10-20 years. The future growth and development framework should, therefore, reflect the community's values as to how, when, and where this growth should occur. The revised development framework is the most important component of this plan update.

This revised framework builds on the expressed desires of the public summarized earlier in the document and the revised Growth Potential Map to create a land use framework that considers current conditions and future needs.

WHY THE FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES AND MAP MATTERS

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and categories are not just administrative tools. It is the city's playbook for shaping its identity during change.

Here's how they guide deliberate growth.

DIRECTING GROWTH TO THE RIGHT PLACES

The FLUM shows where different types of development should occur, whether it's offices, mixed-use, rural preservation, or community space. It helps concentrate activity in areas like the Core (P5), where higher lot coverage and infrastructure are ready for development. It also preserves more sensitive or slower-growth areas like Rural (P2) by limiting the intensity of use.

ALIGNING GROWTH WITH COMMUNITY VISION

Land use categories define what kind of growth is appropriate. Not just commercially, but socially and culturally. For example, emphasizing green space, small-town character, and generational values in land use categories can protect what locals call Bastrop's "certificate of authenticity."

BALANCING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LIVABILITY

The EC (Employment Center) zone is vital for job growth, but the FLUM ensures it doesn't encroach on residential or historic areas. Mixed-use areas (P4 and P5) offer flexibility and walkability. A key for a livable, vibrant community.

MAKING INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS COUNT

When development is concentrated and guided, the City can invest in roads, water, and sewer more efficiently. This supports long-term sustainability and avoids scattered or leapfrog development patterns. The review of natural hazards in this analysis helps identify the potential impacts to infrastructure based on current land use and supports the future land use decision making.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP APPLICABILITY

The Future Land Use Map incorporates all land within the municipal limits, and land that is currently within the City's statutory (one-mile) ETJ.

In the 2016 Future Land Use Plan and Map, different geographic areas of the City were classified as Character Areas based on their recommended future development patterns. However, since the B3 Code includes specific Character Districts, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Character Areas have been renamed as land use categories to eliminate confusion.

The updated land use categories provide clearer guidance for evaluating development proposals. Their descriptions and representative imagery help inform decisions regarding land use compatibility, character, and appropriateness.

The goal is to ensure that new development aligns with existing and surrounding uses while maintaining a cohesive built environment in terms of design, site layout, and scale. The Land Use Category includes the descriptions identified in **Figure 5.4, Future Land Use Categories**.

BASTROP LAND USE CATEGORIES: GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS

The Future Land Use Map (**Map 5-C**) illustrates nine land use categories within which certain types of building and site development should be promoted, and/or natural features retained or preserved. Bastrop's Land Use Categories are described below and on the facing page.

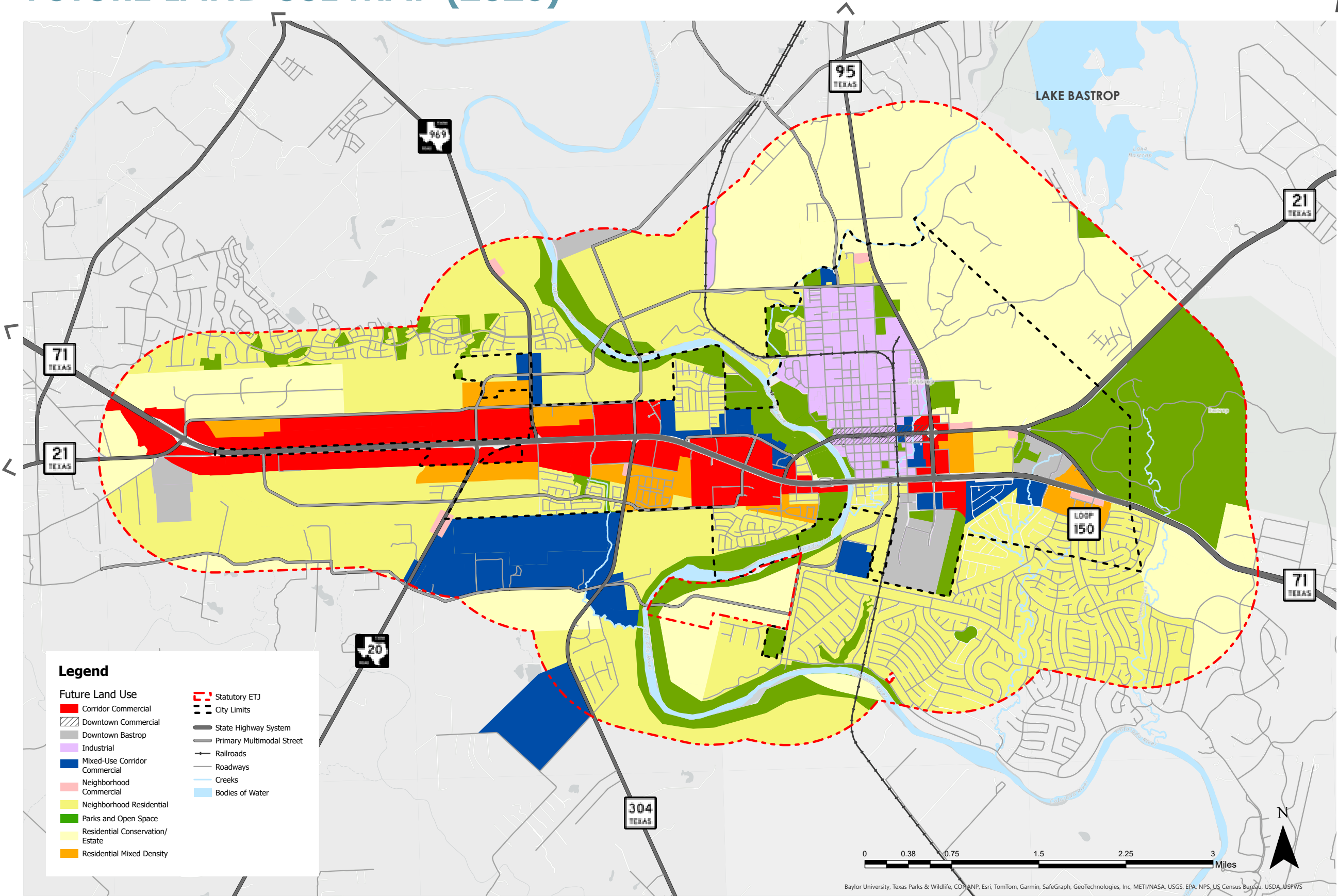
FIGURE 5.4. FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

NEW LAND USE CATEGORIES	DESCRIPTION	NOTABLE CHANGES
Park and Open Space	Covers parks, greenways, conservation areas, and recreational lands.	No changes.
Residential Conservation/ Estate	Protects low-density, large-lot residential areas, often with environmental or rural character considerations.	Stronger focus on conservation while still allowing large-lot residential development. <i>Previously Rural Residential.</i>
Neighborhood Residential	Traditional single-family and low-density housing areas, ensuring neighborhood stability.	Traditional single-family and low-density housing areas, ensuring neighborhood stability. <i>Previously Neighborhood Residential.</i>
Residential Mixed Density	Allows a blend of housing types (single-family, townhouses, small multifamily), promoting diverse living options.	Adds the missing middle options for diverse housing choices. <i>Previously Transitional Residential.</i>
Neighborhood Commercial	Small-scale, pedestrian-friendly retail and services integrated within or adjacent to residential areas.	Emphasis on walkability, local-serving retail, and small-scale office uses. <i>Previously General Commercial.</i>
Mixed-Use Corridor Commercial	A pedestrian-friendly mid-scale commercial designation that supports retail, office, service, and public/institutional uses with optional residential above.	Incorporates professional services, supports live work options to support employment centers. <i>Previously General Commercial and Public and Institutional.</i>
Corridor Commercial	Auto-oriented retail, larger-scale commercial, and mixed-use developments along major roadways.	Targeted approach along main highway corridors. <i>Previously General Commercial.</i>
Downtown Bastrop	A special district for historic downtown, mixed-use development, and walkable, pedestrian-friendly commercial and residential uses.	Area is specific to Old Town and Downtown. The hatched area shows the historic area.
Industrial	Areas focused on job-generating uses such as business parks, office campuses, and industrial facilities.	Areas focused on job-generating uses such as manufacturing, production, warehousing, distribution, food processing, high-tech industries and related activities. <i>Previously Industry.</i>

Source: Halff Associates, Inc.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP (2025)

MAP 5-C:



FUTURE LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS

The Future Land Use Map is a key tool for guiding community growth. It visually represents preferred development patterns within the city limits and ETJ, helping to plan for growth and infrastructure. The updates were carefully designed to balance the community's vision, market realities, existing conditions, and public services.

Because the zoning code is form-based, this framework emphasizes building design, site characteristics, and land use while considering the context of growth areas. The plan update reflects the community's desire for traditional residential development, more commercial and retail development to support growth, walkability where appropriate, tourism opportunities along the river, preservation Old Town and Downtown, and more opportunities in the Arts and Cultural District.

USAGE AND INTERPRETATION

The Land Use Map shows general areas rather than specific properties. The colors on the map represent the community's vision for a balanced mix of land uses, but they are not exact boundaries. While the land use areas often follow property lines or streets, actual decisions consider factors like site details, compatibility, and timing. Since the designations are not tied to specific parcels, it's important to look at the area's existing conditions. If a major road or natural feature divides a land use area, it may be helpful to analyze the land based on these divisions. Staff and decision-makers should review development proposals to ensure they align with the plan. Proposed zoning should be evaluated based on the intent of the land use categories described in the following pages.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY TARGETS

Most land use categories encourage a mix of uses to create balance and synergy. Each category has target densities and suggested residential-commercial percentages, but these are guidelines, not strict rules. These targets help assess zoning proposals and the overall mix of uses across larger areas rather than individual parcels.

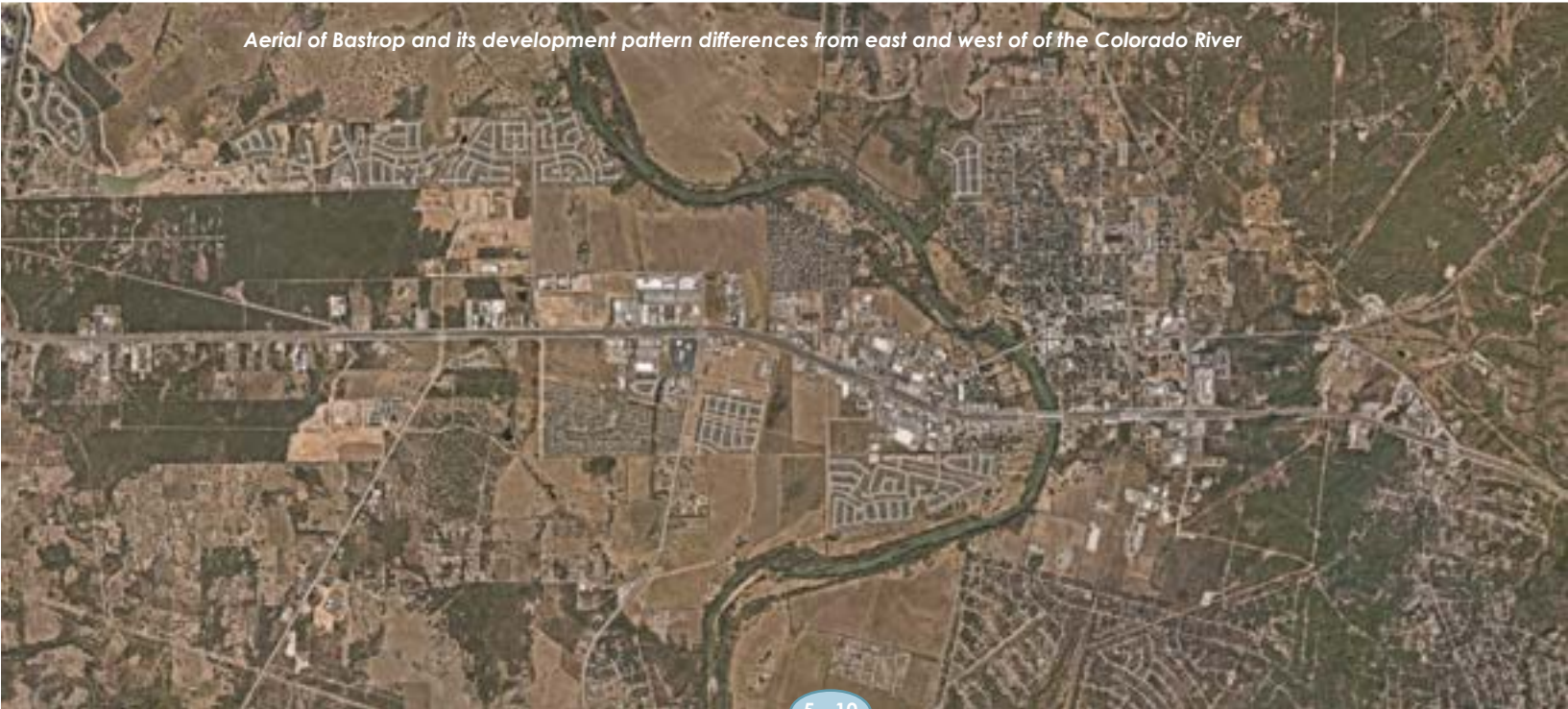
Some developments may have a single use while still supporting the overall mix, especially if the parcel is too small for multiple uses. Timing also matters. Early developments in a mixed-use area may lean more residential based on market demand, but reducing commercial space should be carefully considered. Each proposal should be reviewed in context to ensure it aligns with the land use vision. Tools that provide clarity on land use and timing should be encouraged.

AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND USE MAP

Development proposals that do not align with the Future Land Use Map must undergo a comprehensive plan amendment before or during the rezoning process. City staff will evaluate consistency with the comprehensive plan, and the amendment process will allow appointed and elected officials to consider the proposed change. All map amendment requests should be assessed for their impact on surrounding development patterns, infrastructure, and environmental conditions.

FIGURE 5.5. LAND USE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

Land Use Categories	
Attribute	DEFINITIONS
Intent and Character	A general description of the desired intent and character of development.
Development Intensity Targets	Recommended density ranges and desired land use mix
Appropriate Land Use Types	Guidance for the primary, and in many cases, secondary uses that may be appropriate in certain areas.
Guidance and Interpretation	Recommendations for decision-making in regards to zoning proposals, location and site considerations, and interpretation.
Representative Imagery	Photo or graphic examples compatible with each land use category. These are intended to help provide a visual guide to the types of uses, structures, and scale that would be appropriate.
B3 Code Considerations	Guidance as to which established zoning district(s) may be most appropriate to implement the intent of the future land use category. This section also includes recommended considerations in a review or revision to the B3 Code, which may be warranted to fully achieve the envisioned character of each land use category.



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

MAP LEGEND:
(Page 5-8)



The Parks and Open Space land use category should be applied to all tracts of substantial size designated for recreational use or conservation.



Parks and open spaces of smaller size may be incorporated into other residential, commercial, and mixed-use character areas.

INTENT AND CHARACTER

The Parks and Open Space land use category incorporates public park land, trails, and open space, as well as privately owned areas that have been set aside for the protection of natural resources, or for the common use and enjoyment of their users. These areas provide balance of active and passive recreation areas, undeveloped land, conservation lands, and community gathering spaces.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- Development in these areas should prioritize preserving open space while allowing for recreational and community-oriented uses.
- Community parks with high visitor activity, such as sports complexes, should be located along collector or arterial roadways for adequate access.
- Park infrastructure should complement the surrounding character.
- Regional parks should emphasize natural landscapes with minimal built features.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Commercial: Limited appropriateness within parks and open spaces but highly appropriate adjacent to trails and community parks to encourage retail activation or recreational amenities such as cafés, bike shops/rentals, or visitor centers. Any commercial uses within parks should be small-scale and directly supportive of recreational functions.

Residential: Highly appropriate nearby to maximize access to parks and trails. Residential developments should include safe, well-connected pedestrian and bicycle routes to open spaces. Higher-density residential developments are particularly suitable adjacent to major parks and trail corridors to support active use.

Industrial: Limited appropriateness—not suitable within parks and greenways but may exist adjacent to open spaces with strict buffering requirements to minimize noise, visual, and environmental impacts. Parks and trails near industrial zones should incorporate landscaped buffers, sound barriers, and access controls to maintain recreational quality.

Institutional: Highly appropriate, particularly for public parkland, nature centers, schools, and community facilities that integrate educational, cultural, or recreational functions. Private land with public access easements can contribute to greenway systems, expanding connectivity.

Other: Parks, open spaces, and trails may incorporate stormwater management facilities from adjacent developments, but these should be designed as naturalized features that enhance aesthetics, support biodiversity, and maintain public access.

Features like detention ponds, bioswales, or wetlands should be integrated seamlessly into park landscapes.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- **Connectivity & Access:** Parks and open spaces should be easily accessible and visually connected to surrounding land uses. Avoid placing parks in isolated or leftover parcels with limited accessibility.
- **Buffering & Compatibility:** Use natural buffers, such as tree plantings, to minimize conflicts between active recreation areas and adjacent land uses.
- **Integration with Natural Features:** Floodplains and trail corridors should be prioritized for conservation and multi-use trail development.
- **Mobility & Safety:** Enhance pedestrian and bicycle accessibility near parks with wider sidewalks, crosswalks, and traffic calming measures.
- **Stormwater Design:** Stormwater facilities within greenways should complement the natural environment and maintain public access where feasible.

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

- Applies mostly to: P1 (Natural), P2 (Rural), and some P3 (Neighborhood)*
- Encourage Park Dedications in Placetypes by requiring or incentivizing developers to dedicate land or fees-in-lieu for parks in new residential or mixed-use projects. Priorities may include:
 - Eight (8) Pocket Parks to serve middle and higher density areas (P3)
 - Three (3) Neighborhood Parks to meet local recreation needs (P1, P2)
 - Four (4) Community Parks to support larger gatherings and events (P1, P2)
 - Create a park and green space development checklist for new developments to ensure all parks meet the city's recreational and aesthetic standards.

RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION/ESTATE

MAP LEGEND:
(Page 5-8)



Rural residential land use categories are intended to promote development that is compatible with agriculture, ranching, and other rural land uses.



INTENT AND CHARACTER

The Residential Conservation/Estate category is intended to preserve rural character while allowing for low-density residential development. These areas typically feature large-lot single-family homes, estate housing, or conservation subdivisions that integrate open space, agricultural land, and natural features. The intent is to minimize environmental impact, maintain scenic landscapes, and provide a transition between urban development and rural areas.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- Low-density residential development with lot sizes generally ranging from 1 to 5 acres or larger.
- Conservation subdivisions may allow for clustered housing to preserve open space.
- Minimal infrastructure requirements, with some areas relying on private wells and septic system.



Rural residential development patterns should incorporate preserved open space and productive agricultural/pasture lands.

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

Applies mostly to: P1 (Natural), P2 (Rural)

- Integrate specific provisions into the B3 Code for rural preservation zones, limiting higher-density development in these areas and ensuring smooth transitions from urban to rural areas.
- Encourage gradual transitions in density to preserve Bastrop's rural and open spaces while supporting appropriate growth.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Commercial: Limited to low-intensity uses, such as equestrian facilities, bed and breakfasts, or agricultural-related retail that complement the rural character.

Residential: Primary land use, including estate homes, large-lot single-family housing, and conservation subdivisions.

Industrial: Limited appropriateness, not suitable within parks and greenways but may exist adjacent to open spaces with strict buffering requirements to minimize noise, visual, and environmental impacts. Parks and trails near industrial zones should incorporate landscaped buffers, sound barriers, and access controls to maintain recreational quality.

Institutional: Schools, churches, and community-serving facilities may be appropriate but should blend with the rural aesthetic and minimize impacts on surrounding properties.

Agricultural and Open Space: Includes working lands, conservation areas, and natural buffers that enhance the rural landscape and limit conflicts between residential and agricultural uses.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- **Agricultural Compatibility:** Some lands within this category may continue to support farming, ranching, or agricultural operations, which can lead to nuisances such as noise, dust, and odors. To reduce conflicts, barns, pens, and storage facilities should be located as far from property lines as feasible. Future residents should be aware of Right-to-Farm protections that may limit nuisance complaints against existing agricultural operations.
- **Environmental Considerations:** Development should respect natural topography, water resources, and tree coverage. Conservation subdivisions should prioritize open space preservation and wildlife corridors.
- **Infrastructure and Access:** Roads and utilities should be designed to fit rural development patterns, with an emphasis on private drives, shared access points, and minimal street lighting to maintain the dark-sky environment.
- **Transitions to Urban Areas:** Where these areas border higher-intensity development, appropriate buffering and screening should be used to maintain the rural character and reduce conflicts.

NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL

MAP LEGEND:
(Page 5-8)



Future Neighborhood Residential development should incorporate building, site, and streetscape characteristics that enhance visual interest.



INTENT AND CHARACTER

The Neighborhood Residential category is intended to support a variety of single-family housing options in a suburban setting with well-planned streets, green spaces, and community amenities. These areas provide a balance between residential development, open space, and connectivity, creating stable, long-term neighborhoods that foster a strong sense of community.



Development should preserve natural features where possible and encourage thoughtful transitions adjacent land uses, ensuring that new development is compatible with the surrounding character.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- Primarily single-family detached housing on a minimum lot size of 1/3 of an acre.
- Typical residential densities range from four to six units per acre (exclusive of ADUs) depending on infrastructure capacity, road access, and adjacent land uses.
- Development should integrate curvilinear or grid street layouts with sidewalks and trails to provide safe, accessible connections.



REPRESENTATIVE IMAGERY

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS
Applies mostly to: P3 (Neighborhood)

- Introduce design standards and guidelines that limit urban-style features in neighborhoods with established low-density character.
- Establish transition zones between higher-density and low-density areas to preserve the small-town feel while accommodating growth.
- Create new overlay districts for mixed-use and multi-family developments in areas that can accommodate them without disrupting residential or commercial areas.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Residential: Predominantly single-family detached housing, with limited options for alternative single-family where appropriate (e.g., cottage homes, ADUs)

Commercial: Not appropriate.

Industrial: Not appropriate.

Institutional: Schools, places of worship, and community facilities are encouraged when designed to blend with the surrounding residential character.

Parks and Open Space: Parks, greenways, and storm water integrated open spaces should be incorporated to provide recreation and natural preservation opportunities.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

Neighborhood Connectivity: Streets should support efficient vehicular circulation while ensuring safe pedestrian access to parks, trails, and community spaces.

Transitions Between Uses: Where residential areas meet other land uses, appropriate buffering, landscaping, and density transitions should ensure compatibility.

Green Space Integration: Parks, open spaces, and natural buffers should be incorporated, especially near floodplains, drainage corridors, and environmentally sensitive areas.

Infrastructure Considerations: New development must account for adequate road access, utility capacity, and stormwater management to avoid negative impacts on existing neighborhoods.

Preservation of Character: Design standards should maintain neighborhood identity by encouraging consistent setbacks, architectural styles, and landscaping while allowing for some housing variety.

Established vs. New Neighborhoods: Traditional neighborhoods tend to have lower densities and uniform housing types, whereas newer developments may incorporate greater housing diversity at slightly higher densities. When new neighborhoods are adjacent to established ones, careful consideration should be given to:

- Density transitions – Gradual shifts in lot sizes and housing types to ensure compatibility.
- Mobility impacts – Sidewalks, trails, and traffic-calming measures to enhance connectivity.
- Design consistency – Architectural and landscaping elements that respect existing neighborhood character.

RESIDENTIAL MIXED DENSITY

MAP LEGEND:
(Page 5-8)



Proposed Residential Mix-Use Development parameters should improve the compatibility of mixed housing types and densities.



INTENT AND CHARACTER

The Residential Mixed Density category supports a variety of housing types, including single-family homes, townhouses, and small-scale multifamily developments. This designation encourages diverse living options and accommodates a range of household needs while maintaining compatibility with surrounding residential areas. It was previously referred to as Transitional Residential and serves as an important “missing middle” housing option.



Variation in form, scale, and density is allowed but appropriate transitions must be provided between land uses. In some cases, Residential Mixed Density uses may be included as part of a larger planned development within areas otherwise designated as Neighborhood Residential, Neighborhood Commercial, or Mix-Use Corridor Commercial. Likewise, Residential Mixed Density may also include associated amenities such as parks, trails, open spaces, and public uses such as schools, fire stations, and more.



DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- Moderate density, with a mix of detached and attached housing options.
- Designed to provide seamless transitions between lower-density neighborhoods and higher-intensity residential or mixed-use areas.
- Encourages walkability and connectivity to nearby amenities, parks, and services.

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

Applies mostly to: P4 (Neighborhood), contextually in P3 (Mix) or P5 (Core) depending on the surroundings.

- Neighborhood Compatibility: Transitions should be carefully managed to respect adjacent lower-density residential areas through setbacks, height limits, and buffering.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Residential: Single-family homes, townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, small-scale multifamily (e.g., garden-style apartments or four-plexes).

Commercial: Not appropriate.

Industrial: Not generally appropriate; however, light industrial or live-work units may be considered if carefully integrated and buffered.

Institutional: Schools, places of worship, and community facilities that support neighborhood life.

Parks and Open Space: Pocket parks, greenways, and shared community amenities to provide recreational opportunities and natural buffers.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- Neighborhood Compatibility: Transitions should be carefully managed to respect adjacent lower-density residential areas through setbacks, height limits, and buffering.
- Connectivity and Walkability: Developments should integrate sidewalks, trails, and pedestrian connections to encourage walkability and access to services.
- Design and Scale: Housing types should be appropriately scaled to fit within the surrounding neighborhood context, avoiding abrupt shifts in density.
- Housing Diversity: Encourages a mix of housing types to support a range of incomes, ages, and household sizes.
- Infrastructure Considerations: Adequate transportation, utilities, and stormwater management should be planned to accommodate increased density without negatively impacting existing neighborhoods.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

MAP LEGEND:
(Page 5-8)



New Neighborhood Commercial uses should be designed to provide better transitions between residential areas and high-intensity land uses.



Neighborhood commercial development is small in scale and serves surrounding residents - even if aesthetic improvements are warranted.

INTENT AND CHARACTER

Neighborhood Commercial areas provide small-scale, pedestrian-friendly retail and service options that support nearby residential neighborhoods. These areas are designed to be local-serving and easily accessible, fostering walkability and convenience while maintaining compatibility with surrounding residential development. This designation was previously in General Commercial but has been redefined to encourage a mix of retail, office, and service uses that align with neighborhood needs. Primarily located along multi-modal streets identified in the transportation plan to support transit access, pedestrian connectivity, and bike-friendly environments.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- Generally low- to moderate-intensity commercial development, with buildings designed to complement surrounding residential character.
- Encourages clustered, small-scale businesses rather than large standalone commercial centers.
- Typically located at key intersections, along neighborhood corridors, or within planned developments.

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

Applies mostly to: Edge areas of P3 (Mix), P4 (Neighborhood)

- Set parking requirements that balance the needs of various types of development while supporting walkability and reducing congestion.
- Implement stronger design guidelines and review processes for development near historic or residential assets, ensuring compatibility with scale and context.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Commercial: Small retail shops, cafés, restaurants, personal services (e.g., salons, dry cleaners), and small-scale office spaces. Excludes uses such as bars, liquor stores, pawn shops, and other establishments that may negatively impact the residential character of the neighborhood.

Residential: Not a primary land use but may include mixed-use buildings with upper-story residential units where appropriate.

Industrial: Not appropriate, except for limited artisan or maker-space uses integrated within a mixed-use setting.

Institutional: Community-oriented uses such as daycare centers, co-working spaces, and small medical offices.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- **Pedestrian Orientation:** Development should prioritize walkability, with sidewalks, street trees, and pedestrian-scale lighting to create a welcoming environment.
- **Neighborhood Compatibility:** Design should reflect the character of surrounding residential areas, with appropriate building scale, setbacks, and landscaping. Consideration should be given to excluding uses such as bars and pawn shops that may disrupt the neighborhood's residential atmosphere.
- **Access and Connectivity:** Sites should be accessible by multiple modes of transportation, including walking, biking, and local transit where available.
- **Parking Considerations:** Parking should be located behind or beside buildings where possible, minimizing large surface lots that disrupt the pedestrian experience.
- **Mixed-Use Encouragement:** In some areas, integrating residential units above commercial spaces can enhance activity and provide housing diversity.

CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL

MAP LEGEND:
(Page 5-8)



Large-format retail establishments that serve regional shopping needs. These stores are typically located along major corridors and are designed for high vehicle access and visibility



The percentage of impervious cover permitted in commercial development should be reduced.

INTENT AND CHARACTER

Corridor Commercial areas provide larger-scale retail, services, and employment opportunities along state highways identified in the transportation plan. These areas accommodate auto-oriented businesses while also integrating multimodal access and pedestrian-friendly design where feasible. Corridor Commercial development serves both local and regional markets, offering a broader range of goods and services than Neighborhood Commercial areas.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- Moderate to high-intensity commercial development, typically located along major state highways and arterial roads.
- Designed for regional accessibility while incorporating elements that support multi-modal transportation.
- May include a mix of large retail centers, standalone businesses, and office developments.

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

Applies mostly to: P5 (Core), sometimes transitional P4 (Neighborhood Mix)

- Align street functionality standards with the Comprehensive Plan's vision for pedestrian-friendly and multi-modal streetscapes.
- Establish clear street infrastructure standards, including defined right-of-way widths and access provisions.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Commercial: Large and mid-size retail stores, shopping centers, restaurants, hotels, entertainment venues, and auto-oriented services (e.g., gas stations, car dealerships).

Residential: Not a primary use, but upper-story residential or nearby mixed-use developments may be appropriate.

Industrial: Light industrial and flex spaces may be allowed, particularly where compatible with commercial and office uses.

Institutional: Civic buildings, hospitals, educational facilities, and community services that support commercial activity.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- **Site Design and Layout:** While auto-oriented access is prioritized, buildings should still incorporate inviting facades facing the street, minimizing blank walls and integrating pedestrian-scale design elements.
- **Parking:** Traditional suburban parking is located in front of buildings to allow for easy access from the highway. However, parking areas should still include landscaping and pedestrian connections to improve aesthetics and walkability.
- **Lot Configuration:** Large commercial parcels should provide internal circulation and connectivity to adjacent properties where possible, reducing congestion on major roadways.
- **Buffering and Transitions:** When adjacent to residential areas, appropriate landscaping, fencing, and step-down transitions in building scale should be used to mitigate impacts.
- **Signage and Aesthetic Considerations:** Signage should be appropriately scaled, and architectural design should be consistent with community character to maintain an attractive commercial corridor.

MIXED-USE CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL

MAP LEGEND:
(Page 5-8) 



A Mixed-Use Corridor Commercial supports dynamic development area along key corridors that supports a mix of commercial, office, residential, and institutional uses.



INTENT AND CHARACTER

The Mixed-Use Corridor Commercial category supports a pedestrian-friendly, well-planned development that blends retail, office, and residential uses in a vibrant corridor environments. These areas are envisioned as dynamic, complete neighborhoods that foster a strong sense of place. Development is intended to be flexible, focused on pedestrian activity, building-street relationships, and public life. These areas serve as community hubs that provide goods, services, and employment opportunities for surrounding neighborhoods.



This category promotes an active, walkable environment with development that supports multi-modal access and context-sensitive site design. It accommodates public and institutional uses such as libraries, schools, and civic buildings and may include upper-floor residential or live-work units where appropriate. Uses that are incompatible with the intended community character, such as bars, pawn shops, or heavy commercial activity, are discouraged or restricted.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- Moderate to high, depending on the surrounding context.



This category encourages active ground-floor uses, integrated public spaces, and context-sensitive design that supports complete neighborhoods and community-serving businesses.

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

Applies mostly to: P5 (Core), P4 (Neighborhood Mix)

- Encourage the creation of overlay districts that allow for adaptable commercial and employment uses, such as retail, office, light industrial, and maker spaces, especially in transitional areas between residential neighborhoods and higher-intensity corridors. These overlays should support context-sensitive flexibility while maintaining compatibility with adjacent development.
- Encourage vertical and horizontal mixed-use development, with active ground floors and residential or office uses above.
- Support moderate setbacks and landscape buffering along corridors, while promoting internal pedestrian connections between buildings, parking areas, and public spaces.
- Require transitions and buffers between corridor commercial and adjacent residential neighborhoods, using setbacks, landscaping, and step-down building heights.
- Encourage low- to mid-rise buildings with a focus on form, facade articulation, and visibility from the public right-of-way.

- Allows multi-story mixed-use development, typically with commercial on the ground floor and office or residential above.
- Intended to evolve with market needs, offering flexibility without compromising compatibility.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Commercial: Retail and office uses that are context-sensitive to the corridor (neighborhood to regional scale). Personal services, restaurants (excluding drive-thru-only), co-working spaces, and hotels. Ground-floor activation encouraged.

Residential: Middle housing types such as townhomes, cottage courts, lofts, and apartments integrated into walkable environments. Residential above commercial is encouraged. Stand-alone apartments may be considered only where pedestrian access and connectivity are strong.

Industrial: Not appropriate, though maker spaces or light creative production may be conditionally permitted if compatible with form and context.

Institutional: Civic and public facilities, such as libraries, clinics, and educational/training facilities.

Recreational: Parks, plazas, open spaces, trails, and water quality features should be integrated into the development fabric to support public gathering and walkability.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- *Site Design and Layout:* Flexible building configurations should allow for adaptation to different uses over time. Buildings should address the street and create a walkable, pedestrian-friendly frontage.
- *Multi-modal Connectivity:* Sites should be connected to sidewalks, transit routes, and bike facilities.
- *Parking:* Should be designed to accommodate various business needs, with shared parking strategies encouraged to maximize efficiency. Excessive surface parking should be avoided.
- *Buffering and Transitions:* When located near residential areas, appropriate screening, landscaping, and step-down building heights should be implemented to minimize conflicts.

DOWNTOWN BASTROP

MAP LEGEND: 

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The Downtown Bastrop land use category will accommodate the existing residential and local commercial beyond historic Main Street.



INTENT AND CHARACTER

The Downtown Bastrop category represents the city's historic and cultural core, supporting a vibrant, walkable environment with a mix of commercial, residential, cultural, and civic uses. This district prioritizes preservation of both historic structures and existing neighborhoods, ensuring that new development enhances the area's character while allowing for context-sensitive growth and revitalization.

This area includes the Main Central Business District along Chestnut Street and extends to the Old Town and Downtown Character Districts, as defined by the B3 Code.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- Medium density development that respects the scale and character of Downtown Bastrop.
- New development should respect historic structures and neighborhood patterns, ensuring a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Encourage mixed-use buildings that integrate ground-floor retail, offices, and residential units while maintaining a pedestrian-oriented environment.

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

Applies mostly to: P5 (Core)

- Expand preservation districts to include areas at risk of losing their historic character due to development pressures.
- Prevent high-intensity development near significant historic areas through special review or permitting.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Commercial: Small-scale retail, boutique shops, restaurants, professional offices, and creative workspaces.

Residential: A mix of lofts, townhomes, live-work spaces, and established single-family housing that aligns with the historic character of Downtown and Old Town.

Adaptive Reuse & Office Conversion: Older homes may transition to professional offices, studios, or small business spaces, preserving their historic charm while supporting economic activity.

Institutional: Government buildings, libraries, cultural facilities, and museums.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- *Adaptive Uses:* Encourage adaptive reuse of historic properties for offices, professional services, and mixed-use spaces while retaining architectural character.
- *Context Sensitive:* Support context-sensitive residential development that blends with the existing fabric of Downtown and Old Town.
- *Parking:* Parking for residential uses may be permitted in the front. Commercial parking should be located at the side or rear to maintain an active and visually engaging streetscape. Promote shared parking solutions where feasible to reduce surface lots and enhance walkability.
- *Street Design:* Streets should prioritize pedestrians, with wide sidewalks, shade trees, and outdoor gathering areas.
- *Connectivity:* Strengthen connections between key destinations through wayfinding signage and cohesive urban design elements.

INDUSTRY

MAP LEGEND:
(Page 5 - 8) 



Available sites remain in the Bastrop Industrial Park to support the recommended uses in the Industrial land use category area.



INTENT AND CHARACTER

The Industrial category is designated for job-generating uses such as manufacturing, production, warehousing, distribution, food processing, high-tech industries and related activities. It may also encompass technology hubs, research and development (R&D) facilities, and other innovation-driven industries, supporting economic growth and employment opportunities in the area.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

- **Light Industrial:** Less disruptive to residential or commercial areas, often involving less noise, pollution, and traffic.
- **Heavy Industrial:** More intensive uses that might include large factories, chemical plants, or manufacturing facilities.
- **Mixed-Use Industrial:** Combining industrial uses with other types of development, such as commercial, often in urban areas or within redevelopment zones.



Business parks, public utility operations, and outdoor storage areas are appropriate in the Industry character area..

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

Applies mostly to: P5 (Core)

- PDDs (Planned Development Districts) could be used here to establish custom standards, transitions, and buffer zones between incompatible uses.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Commercial: Offices, professional services, and support retail for employees.

Residential: Live-work units and mixed-use residential above ground-floor commercial where appropriate.

Industrial: Light to moderate industrial, film production studios, high-tech manufacturing, and logistics facilities with proper buffering from non-industrial areas.

Institutional: Manufacturing, production, warehousing, distribution, food processing, high-tech industries and related activities.

GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- **Location:** Employment Centers are strategically located along state highways and major roadways identified in the transportation plan for easy freight, workforce, and commuter access.
- **Parks and Open Space:** Business parks and office campuses should incorporate green spaces, pedestrian pathways, and sustainable design elements.
- **Buffering/Transition:** Industrial and production facilities should be buffered from adjacent residential areas with landscaping and screening.
- **Multimodal Access:** These areas should be well-served by major roadways, transit routes, and freight corridors to support workforce accessibility and logistics.
- **Parking & Loading:** Adequate off-street parking and loading areas should be provided, with separate truck access where applicable to reduce conflicts. Site Layout &
- **Design:** Business parks and office campuses should incorporate green spaces, pedestrian pathways, and sustainable design elements.

TOOLS FOR COMMUNITY IMAGE

BASTROP’S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY

Preserving Bastrop’s unique character requires a comprehensive strategy that embraces its natural environment, cultural heritage, and community values. While the physical form of the built environment plays a role, sustaining Bastrop’s identity extends beyond architecture alone.

PROTECTING HISTORIC FABRIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Bastrop’s rich history is reflected in its downtown, neighborhoods, the Colorado River, and iconic landmarks. To maintain this heritage:

- Policies should encourage the preservation of historic buildings and structures through incentives for restoration and adaptive reuse.
- Heritage tourism efforts can showcase Bastrop’s past, drawing visitors to experience its unique identity and historical significance.
- Efforts should prioritize retaining authentic cultural elements rather than allowing gentrification to alter Bastrop’s historical roots.
- Investing in sidewalks that connect public spaces and natural resources to promote social interaction.
- Streetscape standards such as landscaping and lighting, can further enhance the aesthetic appeal of Bastrop.

PRESERVING THE PINEY WOODS AND HOUSTON TOAD HABITAT

Bastrop is home to the Piney Woods ecosystem and the endangered Houston Toad, both of which are vital to the region’s ecological balance and identity. To preserve these assets:

- Conservation easements, habitat restoration programs, and partnerships with environmental groups can help protect sensitive areas.
- Trail systems and parks should be designed to provide recreational opportunities while safeguarding critical habitats.
- Educational programs can promote awareness about the Houston Toad and the importance of environmental stewardship.

SUPPORTING A VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY

A thriving local economy built on small-scale enterprises and locally-owned businesses is essential to Bastrop’s character. To support this:

- Incentives for local businesses, artisan markets, and cultural events can encourage entrepreneurship while strengthening community ties.
- Encouraging locally owned businesses in downtown and key activity centers helps foster a sense of place to enhance walkability and mobility

PROMOTING HERITAGE AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Promoting cultural and community events in downtown Bastrop is crucial to maintaining its unique identity and fostering social connections. To support this:

- Organizing festivals, parades, and seasonal events can celebrate Bastrop’s rich heritage and attract visitors.
- Supporting local artists, musicians, and performers can enhance the cultural vibrancy of the downtown area.
- Collaborations with local businesses and organizations can ensure these events reflect the town’s values and traditions.

By blending historic preservation, environmental protection, economic vitality, improved mobility, and promoting heritage events, Bastrop can maintain its small-town character while adapting to future growth in a way that celebrates its past, protects its environment, and fosters a strong sense of community.



Photos from Bastrop that capture the town’s cultural heritage, historical depth, and emotional connection with residents.

BEST PRACTICES FOR PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS (PDDs)

CITY OF FRISCO

PDDs FOR MIXED-USE AND WALKABILITY

Best Practice: Frisco's Planned Development (PD) Ordinance integrates PDDs into their Comprehensive Plan by requiring them to align with specific place types such as Urban Centers, Mixed-Use, or Transit-Oriented Developments (TODs).

- Require clear design standards in PDDs, including pedestrian-friendly streets, mixed-use compatibility, and transitions between residential and commercial.
- Use Form-Based Code elements in PDDs to ensure walkable, aesthetically cohesive developments.
- Example: Frisco Square (a PDD-designed walkable district with retail, offices, and residential uses).

CITY OF MCKINNEY

PDD PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Best Practice: McKinney requires that PDDs meet performance-based zoning criteria, ensuring compatibility with nearby development through land use intensity, connectivity, and design.

Establish a review framework that requires PDD proposals to demonstrate how they:

- Support Comprehensive Plan goals and Future Land Use Map (FLUM).
- Provide measurable public benefits, such as infrastructure improvements or park space.
- Include a phased development plan with clear timelines.

Example: McKinney's District 121, a business and entertainment district, uses PDD zoning with strict architectural and connectivity standards.



CITY OF ROUND ROCK

PDDs FOR EMPLOYMENT AND INNOVATION

Best Practice: Round Rock's PDDs support employment centers and industrial growth while ensuring compatibility with residential areas through buffering, landscaping, and traffic management.

- Create Employment-Based PDDs that allow for a mix of office, light industrial, and business park uses.
- Require that industrial and commercial PDDs include green buffers and enhanced infrastructure, similar to Round Rock's strategy.

Example: Round Rock's La Frontera PDD, a mixed-use employment and residential center near major highways.

CITY OF GEORGETOWN

PDDs FOR HISTORICAL AND CHARACTER-BASED DEVELOPMENT

Best Practice: Georgetown uses PDDs to preserve historic areas and guide infill development. Their PDDs in the Old Town District focus on architectural standards, adaptive reuse, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.

- Require PDDs in Downtown Bastrop and historic areas to follow architectural compatibility guidelines.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings within PDDs to maintain Bastrop's unique character.

Example: Georgetown's Old Town Historic Core PDD, which balances preservation and new investment.

CITY OF NEW BRAUNFELS

PDDs FOR CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

Best Practice: New Braunfels uses PDDs to protect environmentally sensitive areas while allowing controlled development. These PDDs integrate parks, trails, and conservation easements into the land use framework.

- Establish Conservation-Oriented PDDs that require open space dedication, tree preservation, and waterway protection.
- Use PDDs as a tool for clustered development, keeping sensitive areas intact while allowing for housing or commercial uses.

Example: The Veramendi PDD, a master-planned community that integrates nature preservation with mixed-use development.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BASTROP'S PDDs

DEFINE PDD CATEGORIES

- Mixed-Use PDDs (similar to Frisco & McKinney) for downtown areas and corridors.
- Employment & Innovation PDDs (like Round Rock) to attract business and light industry.
- Conservation-Based PDDs (like New Braunfels) to protect Bastrop's natural resources.

UPDATE PDD REVIEW CRITERIA

- Require a public benefit statement (e.g., infrastructure upgrades, parks, affordable housing).
- Establish performance measures (traffic impact, open space requirements, pedestrian access).

ENHANCE COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS

- In historic or scenic areas, require PDDs to follow strict architectural guidelines (like Georgetown).
- Use buffering and transition zones for PDDs near single-family neighborhoods.

INCORPORATE FORM-BASED CODE PRINCIPLES

- Require building form, street design, and walkability elements in PDD approvals.
- Limit excessive parking lots and encourage shared parking and pedestrian-friendly layouts.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Chapter 5, Land Use and Urban Design Update establishes the City's policies for future land use and development through the Future Land Use Map. Recommended code updates are tied to these policies and serve as the primary tools for achieving the City's preferred development vision. These ordinance initiatives are also consolidated into a handful of Land Use and Community Image goals and objectives. Many of these goals and objectives can be directly applied to zoning decisions or amended to align with updates to the development code. The land use categories referenced in this chapter correspond to those established in the City's development code, where specific land uses and standards apply.



Two of the three homes pictured above were constructed after 2000 in accordance with locally adopted design guidelines. The image illustrates how provisions on building scale and placement (and in this case architectural style) can be transferred to Neighborhood Commercial or Mix-Use land use category through ordinance amendments.

FIGURE 5.6. LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN, GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

GOAL 5.1: UTILIZE THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN AND B3 CODE PLACE TYPES TO GUIDE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT DECISIONS IN BASTROP AND ITS ETJ.
Objective 5.1: Ensure all development decisions are aligned with the adopted Future Land Use Plan and Place Types
Strategy 5.1.1: Interpret and apply the recommendations of the Future Land Use Plan, and other applicable provisions of the Update Bastrop Comprehensive Plan, to applications and other solicitations of City support that are related to land use or development in the City of Bastrop's area of jurisdiction.
Strategy 5.1.2: Pro-actively implement Future Land Use Plan recommendations through the initiation of ordinance amendments or special studies.
Strategy 5.1.3: Direct new development to areas west of the Colorado River, in alignment with the City's long-term growth potential strategy while preserving the riverfront for recreation, conservation, and community purposes
Strategy 5.1.4: Initiate targeted ordinance amendments or special planning studies to implement key recommendations of the Future Land Use Plan.
Strategy 5.1.5: Regularly evaluate plan consistency and update tools to reflect evolving land use trends and community feedback.

COMMUNITY IMAGE.

FIGURE 5.6. LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN, GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

GOAL 5.2: ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER BY USING CONTEXT-SENSITIVE REGULATIONS OR INCENTIVES
Objective 5.2: Ensure all development decisions are aligned with the adopted Future Land Use Plan and Place Types
Strategy 5.2.1: Establish overlay districts (e.g., historic preservation, neighborhood conservation, river districts) to reinforce the identity and character of Bastrop's neighborhoods.
Strategy 5.2.2: Engage residents in identifying key neighborhood character elements to inform overlay districts and conservation efforts.
Strategy 5.2.3: Encourage the inclusion of public art, culturally reflective design, and placemaking elements in new development and redevelopment through voluntary guidelines, incentives, and partnerships with local artists and cultural groups.
Strategy 5.2.4: Implement stronger design standards and guidelines for new developments near historical assets to ensure compatibility with Bastrop's heritage, including transitional zoning standards to protect low-density residential areas.
GOAL 5.3: EXPAND PARK ACCESS BY INTEGRATING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES INTO LAND DEVELOPMENT.
Objective 5.3: Expand park and river access by integrating recreational opportunities into land development.
Strategy 5.3.1: Use development regulations to require or incentivize the dedication of land or fees-in-lieu for neighborhood parks and trail corridors in new subdivisions.
Strategy 5.3.2: Using the Parks Master Plan identify priority areas for trail and park connectivity and integrate them into the City's development review process.
Strategy 5.3.3: Strengthen open space requirements for residential developments to preserve natural features and provide recreational amenities.
Strategy 5.3.4: Enhance public access to the Colorado River through new park amenities, trails, and public entry points
Strategy 5.3.5: Partner with regional and state agencies to improve recreational infrastructure and wayfinding along the riverfront.
Strategy 5.3.6: Identify key opportunity sites for riverfront development that balances public access, environmental conservation, and floodplain management.
GOAL 5.4: PROTECT THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF LOW-DENSITY NEIGHBORHOODS AND MAINTAIN THE CITY'S SMALL-TOWN ATMOSPHERE.
Objective 5.4: Guide growth and development in a way that protects Bastrop's historical, cultural, and environmental assets.
Strategy 5.4.1: Direct growth away from key historical and environmental assets (i.e., Colorado River and Houston Toad Habitat) east of the Colorado River, promoting sustainable development patterns to the west.
Strategy 5.4.2: Implement buffer zoning standards between higher-density and low-density areas to preserve Bastrop's small-town character while accommodating growth and preserving historic assets.
Strategy 5.4.3: Use design guidelines and place type regulations to ensure new development reinforces the small-town character and scale of Bastrop.
Strategy 5.4.4: Coordinate land use and conservation planning to protect ecological corridors and cultural landscapes.
GOAL 5.5: PROMOTE BALANCED, CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT THAT RESPECTS THE CHARACTER OF ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS.
Objective 5.5: Encourage growth patterns that preserve natural assets and reflect the community's vision for appropriate development locations.
Strategy 5.5.1: Establish development limits east of the Colorado River, ensuring that new development focuses on preserving the river corridor, floodplain, and natural habitat while encouraging growth to the west.
Strategy 5.5.2: Encourage growth to the west where infrastructure and future land use plans support long-term development.
Objective 5.6: Encourage growth patterns that preserve natural assets and reflect the community's vision for appropriate development locations.
Strategy 5.6.1: Update zoning to ensure clarity regarding where mixed-use developments are appropriate, while maintaining the integrity of established residential neighborhoods.
Strategy 5.6.2: Maintain the integrity of established residential neighborhoods through context-sensitive zoning and development standards.

IMPLEMENTATION

FINAL GUIDANCE

The updated goals and strategies for the **Chapter 2: Growth and Infrastructure** and **Chapter 5: Land Use and Urban Design** reflect a thoughtful response to shifts in development trends, community feedback, and the City's desire to move away from a form-based code approach.

The 2025 Update aims to guide growth in a way that is more flexible, context-sensitive, and aligned with Bastrop's values and long-term vision. Revisiting the planning framework, land use categories, and goals served as a way to recalibrate and manage future growth. Though limited in scope, the Update will influence other plan elements such as infrastructure, transportation, and economic development.

Implementation should be coordinated with the broader Comprehensive Plan and prioritized based on:

- Timing and location of development activity;
- Availability of funding and staff resources;
- Opportunities for partnerships and grants; and
- Alignment with ongoing or upcoming planning efforts.

NEXT STEPS

To put this update into action, the following next steps are recommended for City Council and staff consideration:

- 1. Align Decision-Making with Updated Goals.** Ensure that the revised goals and strategies are used to inform development decisions, including zoning changes, subdivision approvals, annexations, and infrastructure investments. Staff reports and recommendations should explicitly reference the updated goals as part of the evaluation criteria.

- 2. Prepare Targeted Amendments to the Zoning Code.** While the update moves away from a form-based approach, the B3 Code and zoning map should be refined to better reflect the new direction. Priority updates could include:

- Clarifying where and how mixed-use development is appropriate;
- Establishing development limits and conservation overlays east of the Colorado River; and
- Enhancing open space and buffer requirements to protect neighborhood character.

- 3. Coordinate Across Plan Elements and Departments.** As such, implementation should be coordinated with:

- Upcoming capital improvement planning efforts;
- Park and trail connectivity priorities from the Parks Master Plan;
- Infrastructure capacity assessments in target growth areas.

- 4. Develop an Implementation Matrix.** A tracking tool will support transparency and accountability, consider creating a matrix that links each goal and objective to:

- Lead departments or staff roles; Suggested timelines (short, mid, or long term);
- Potential funding sources; and
- Key performance indicators for tracking progress.

- 5. Continue Community and Stakeholder Engagement.** The City should engage neighborhood groups, developers, and regional partners to:

- Communicate the purpose and direction of the updated land use strategy;
- Build consensus around conservation and growth priorities;
- Identify challenges and opportunities for implementation.

- 6. Reassess Regularly.**

- As Bastrop grows and evolves, the land use framework should remain a living tool. Annual reviews, coordinated with budgeting and CIP discussions, can help assess progress, identify needs, and adjust strategies based on new development patterns, market shifts, or community feedback.

