

CHAPTER 5: LAND USE AND COMMUNITY IMAGE





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 Plan 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, Community Growth** 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 Plan 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 on 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 **Figure 5.4, 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

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.

consistent. The influence of high-tech 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 (page 5-3), which reflects the existing conditions based on County Appraisal District (CAD) data, 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. 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 development, or awaiting market-driven demand and infrastructure improvements. Together, these changes illustrate a community in transition and preparing for its next phase.

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%

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.

The city has 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.

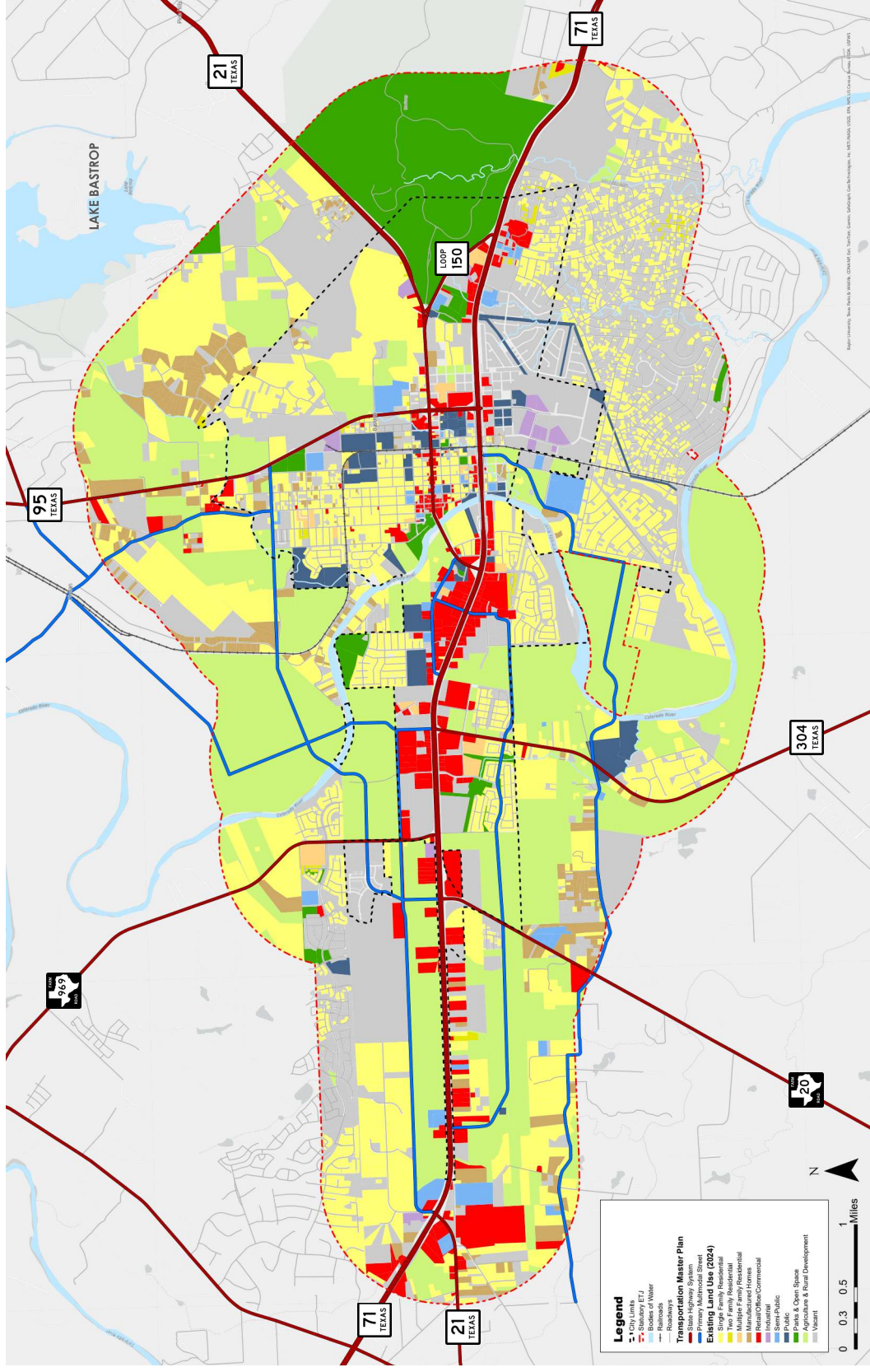
FIGURE 5.3. DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY, NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

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.

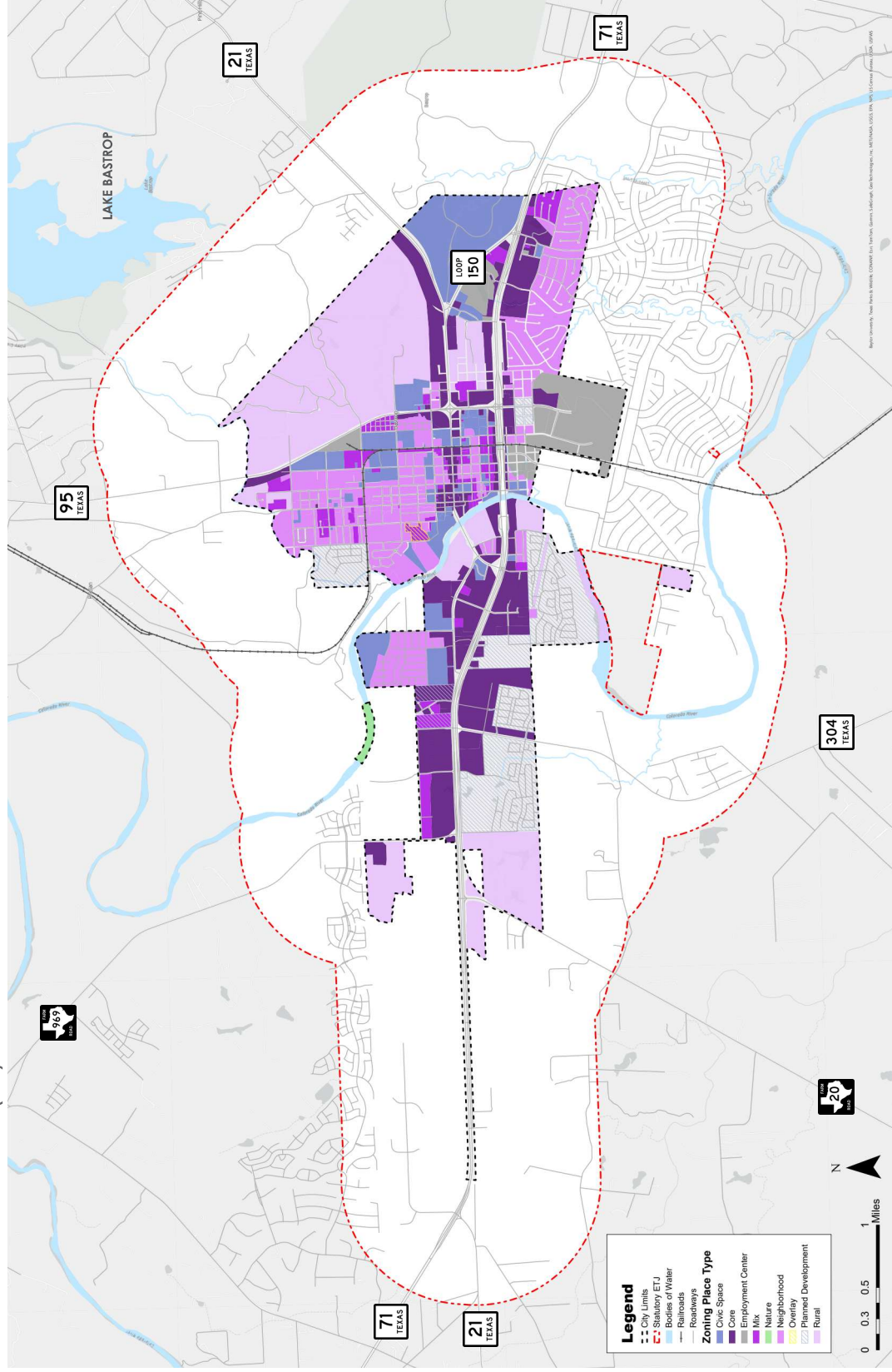
BASTROP EXISTING LAND USE (2024)

FIGURE 5.4. BASTROP EXISTING LAND USE (2024)



BASTROP EXISTING ZONING (2025)

FIGURE 5.5. BASTROP EXISTING ZONING (2025)



FUTURE LAND USE PLAN UPDATE

One of the main drivers of Bastrop's future 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 **Figure 2.12, Growth Potential Map** (page 2-14) to create a land use framework that considers current conditions and future needs.

WHY THE FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES AND MAP MATTERS

The FLUM and categories are not just administrative tools. They are 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. For example, it helps direct growth to certain parts of the city, such as areas zoned P5 (Core) where higher lot coverage and existing infrastructure can support more intensive development. Conversely, it helps preserve lower-intensity areas, such as those zoned in P2, by guiding development away from sensitive or rural parts of the city that are better suited for slower growth.

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 "authenticity."

BALANCING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LIVABILITY

The Employment Center (EC) 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, key qualities for a livable, vibrant community.

MAKING INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS COUNT

By concentrating growth and guided its form, 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 also informs where development is most viable and resilient.

UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FUTURE LAND USE AND PLACE TYPES (ZONING)

While the FLUM sets the long-term vision, Place Types in the B3 Code, are the legal tool that implement that vision. This distinction is important for understanding how the City guides development over time.

The FLUM is conceptual and policy-driven. It reflects the community's desired development patterns, values and priorities. It is not regulatory and does not control what can be built on a parcel today. Place types (zoning) on the other hand, are zoning categories that define specific building forms and rules. They are regulatory and enforceable, determining what is allowed on a site right now. Each future land use category may be implemented through a range of compatible Place Types (zoning), allowing for flexibility within a consistent framework.

As Bastrop continues to refine its Place Types (zoning) and building standards, the FLUM will provide guidance so that updates to the Place Types remain aligned with the community's evolving goals. Similarly, when a Place Type (zoning) change is proposed or modified, the City uses the FLUM as a key reference in evaluating whether that change is appropriate.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP APPLICABILITY

The FLUM 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 updated plan

Character Areas have been renamed as *land use categories* to eliminate confusion.

These 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.

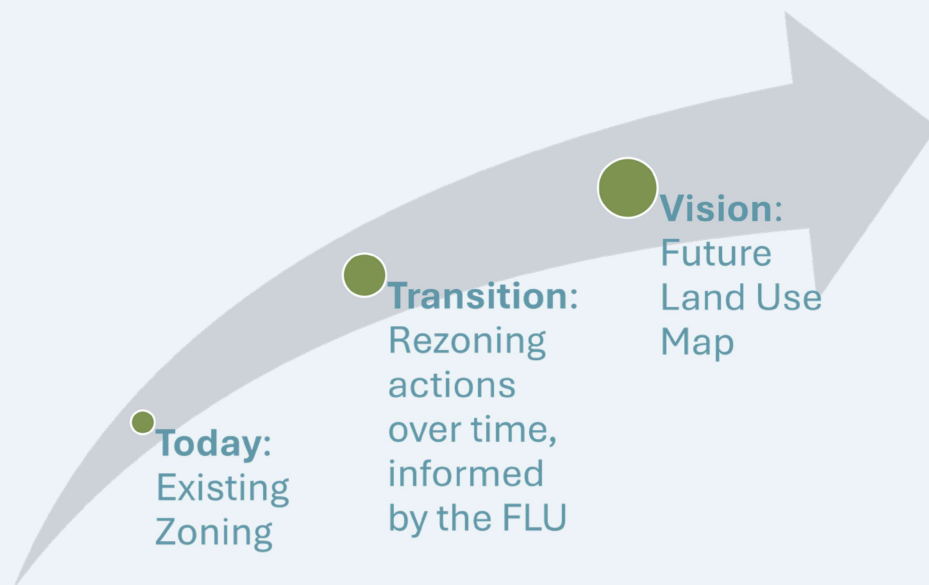
The goal is to ensure that new development aligns with existing and surrounding uses while maintaining a cohesive built environment in terms of design, site layout, and scale. Each Land Use Category corresponds to the descriptions provided in **Figure 5.6, Future Land Use Categories** on page 5-9.



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FUTURE LAND USE & PLACE TYPES (ZONING)

FUTURE LAND USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Best to be adaptable (broad categories for flexibility) ■ Guidance for growth and development through rezonings ■ Ensures compatibility between adjacent land uses ■ Identifies areas for commercial growth, environmentally-sensitive areas, places for transformation
PLACE TYPES (ZONING)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Best to be rigid (more specific and parcel focused) ■ Enforceable by state law ■ Controls density (building height, lot size, etc.) and community character (architectural style, set backs, landscaping requirements, etc.) ■ Re-zonings must be consistent with the Future Land Use Map










HOW THESE TWO CONCEPTS ALIGN



BASTROP LAND USE CATEGORIES: GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS

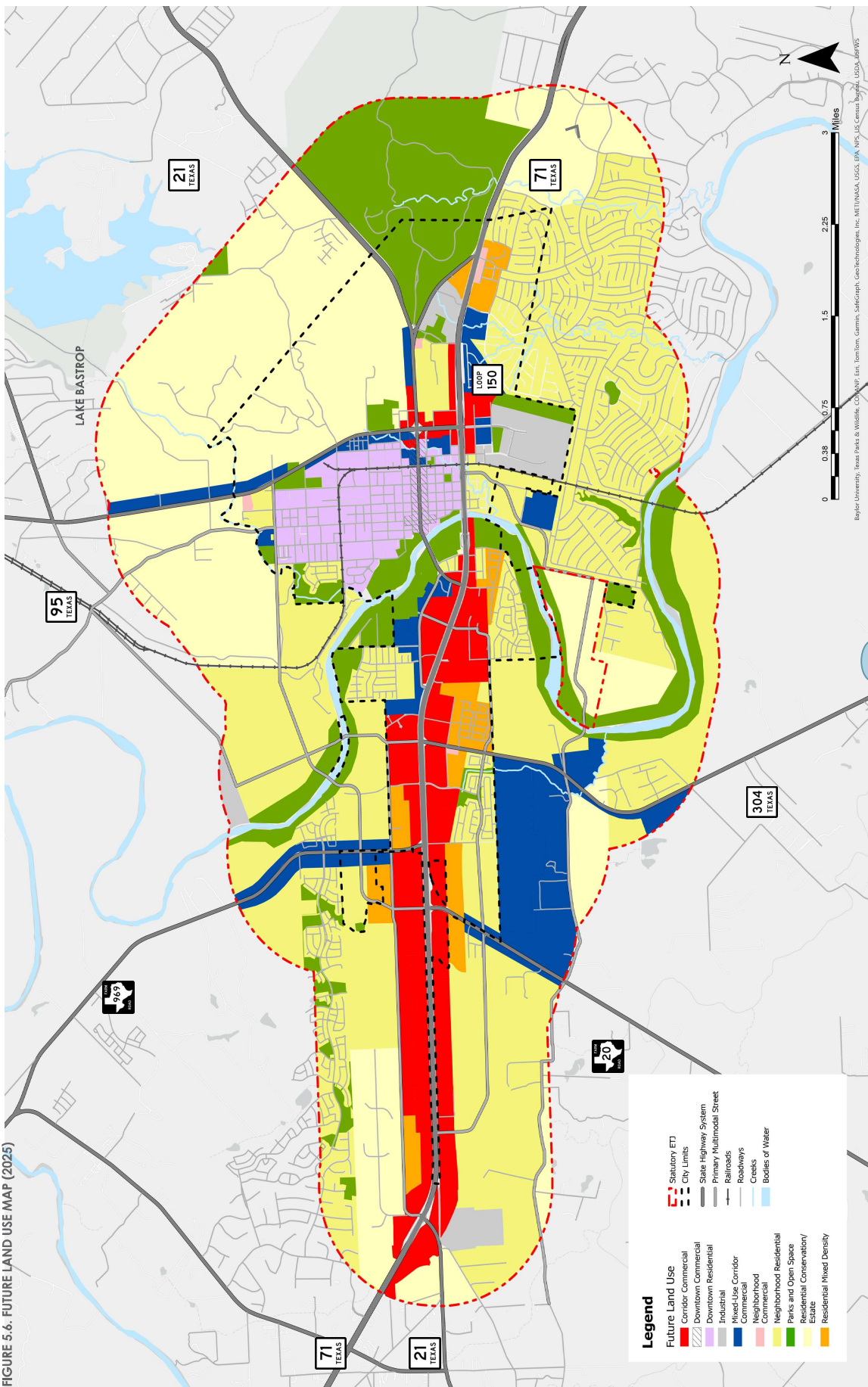
Figure 5.7, Future Land Use Map (2025) on page 5-10, illustrates nine land use categories within which certain types of building and site development should be promoted, and/or natural features preserved. Bastrop's Land Use Categories are described below.

FIGURE 5.6. FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

NEW LAND USE CATEGORIES		DESCRIPTION	NOTABLE CHANGES FROM 2016 FRAMEWORK
	Parks 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>

FUTURE LAND USE MAP (2025)

FIGURE 5.6. FUTURE LAND USE MAP (2025)



FUTURE LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS

The FLUM 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 B3 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, walkability where appropriate, tourism opportunities along the river, preservation of Old Town and Downtown, and more opportunities in the Arts and Cultural District.

USAGE AND INTERPRETATION

The FLUM 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.

FIGURE 5.8. 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.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY TARGETS

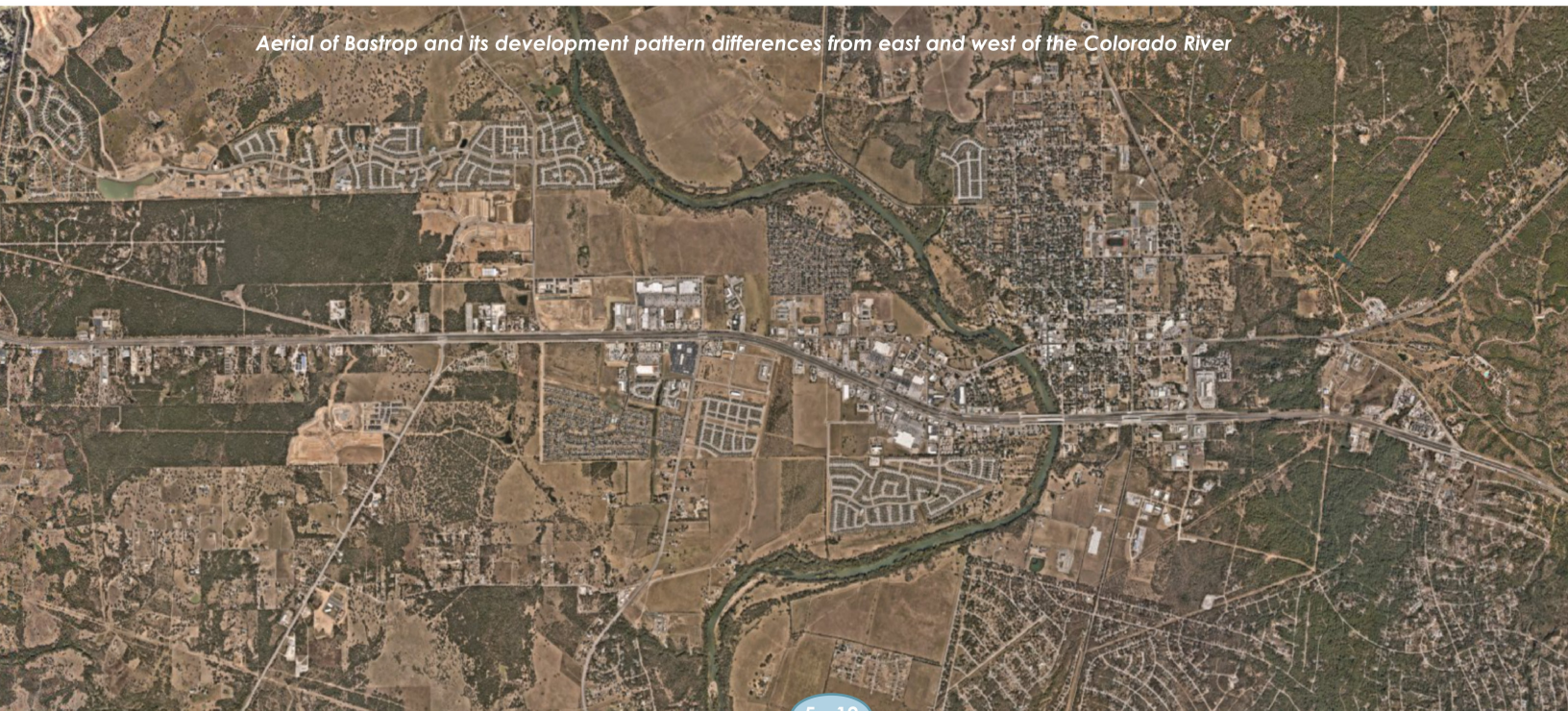
Most land use categories encourage a mix of uses to create balance and synergy. Each category has target densities and suggested residential-commercial percentages, but these are guidelines, not strict rules. These targets help assess zoning proposals and the overall mix of uses across larger areas rather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

Development proposals that do not align with the FLUM must undergo an amendment before or during the rezoning process. City staff will evaluate consistency with the , 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.

Aerial of Bastrop and its development pattern differences from east and west of the Colorado River



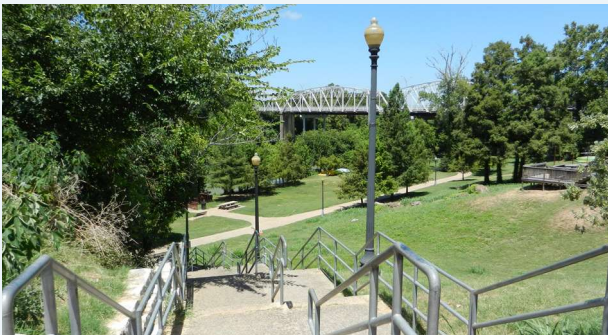


PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

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 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.



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

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.

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.



Examples of detached, single family homes.

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.

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.



Examples of multifamily housing including duplexes and four-plexes.

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, of 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: 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



Examples of auto-oriented commercial such as large retailers and a large medical facility.

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, stand-alone businesses, and office developments.

B3 CODE CONSIDERATIONS

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

- Align street functionality standards with the '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.



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

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.

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.

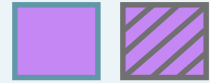
GUIDANCE AND INTERPRETATION

- *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:
 (Page 5-8)



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



Examples of historic structures in a downtown setting.

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 category includes two distinct subareas: historic residential neighborhoods that should retain their residential character, and a commercial code that accommodates a mix of retail, services, and potentially residential uses.

The FLUM reflects this distinction by applying the Downtown Bastrop category across the area and identifying the commercial core with a hatching overlay. The broader category prioritizes preservation both historic structures and established neighborhoods, ensuring that new development enhances the area's character while allowing for context-sensitive growth and revitalization.

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.

INDUSTRIAL

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: Residential and live-work uses may be conditionally appropriate within light industrial areas, especially in rural or suburban settings where industrial activity is low-impact, such as artisan manufacturing, tech assembly, or warehousing. However, residential uses should be avoided in or adjacent to heavy industrial areas involving noise, emissions, or high traffic volumes. Compatibility should be evaluated based on operational intensity, environmental impact, and access to infrastructure.

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:

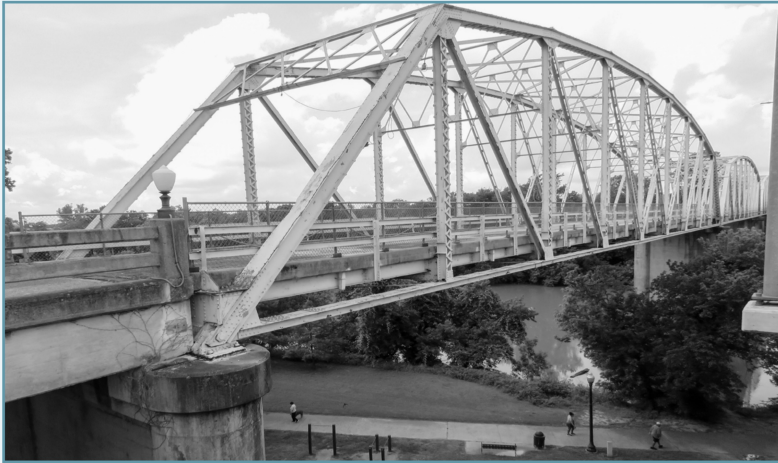
- Incentives for local businesses, artisan markets, and cultural events can encourage entrepreneurship while strengthening community ties.
- Encouraging locally owned businesses in downtown and key activity centers helps foster a sense of place to enhance walkability and mobility

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 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 goals and 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.



Downtown McKinney, TX

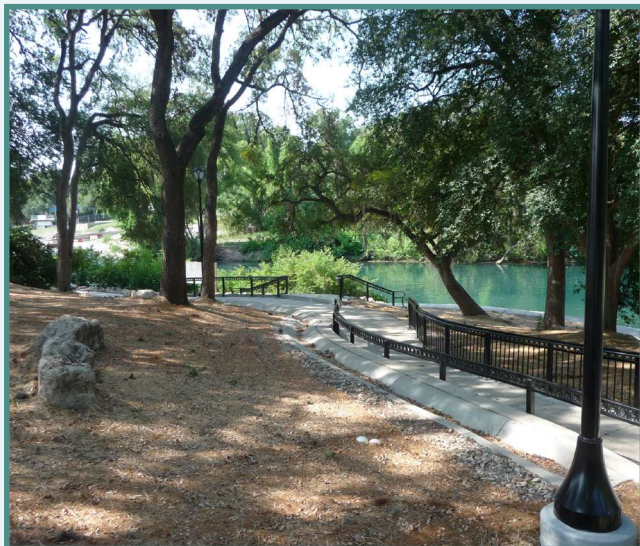
CITY OF ROUND ROCK

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.



New Braunfels, TX

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 Community Image update establishes the City's policies for future land use and development. 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 Corridor Commercial land use category through ordinance amendments.

FIGURE 5.9. LAND USE AND COMMUNITY IMAGE, 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 Plan Update 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 in alignment with the City's long-term growth potential strategy as depicted in the Growth Potential Map.
Strategy 5.1.4: Regularly evaluate plan consistency and update tools to reflect evolving land use trends and community feedback.

COMMUNITY IMAGE.

FIGURE 5.9. LAND USE AND COMMUNITY IMAGE, 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 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.
Strategy 5.5.3: Update zoning to ensure clarity regarding where mixed-use developments are appropriate, while maintaining the integrity of established residential neighborhoods.
Strategy 5.5.3: 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: Community Growth** and **Chapter 5: Land Use and Community Image** 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 Plan 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 Plan Update will influence other plan elements such as infrastructure, transportation, and economic development.

Implementation should be coordinated with the broader 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 Plan Update into action, the following next steps are recommended for City Council and staff consideration:

1. **Align Decision-Making with Updated Goals.**

Ensure that all components of the plan, including the Growth Principles, Growth Policies (Chapter 2) and the Goal, Objectives, and Strategies outlined throughout, are consistently used to inform development decisions such as 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 Plan 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.

