

# City of Austin Neighborhood Planning

## Guide to Land Use Standards



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## WHAT IS LAND USE?

Land use is a self-explanatory term in that it refers to how the land is generally used – whether that is residential, commercial, industrial, open space, etc. A general definition of land use planning is "a systematic attempt to minimize the adverse effects land changes have on society and environments and to maximize human benefits." Another definition states that "land use planning is defined as the process of protecting and improving the environments in a city through the proper use and development of land." <sup>1</sup>



*Land developed for residential, commercial, and other uses.*

Land use planning is a process for determining how land will be used, both now and in the future. In Austin, the land use planning process involves significant public participation through the neighborhood planning process.

### Why do we practice land use planning?

Like many other communities Austin has experienced significant growth over recent years. The pressures from this growth, coupled with an increased awareness of environmental, economic and social issues, led to increasing conflicts in how we use our land. A key function of land use plans is to ensure that land use decisions take into account the needs of communities, the economy and the environment.

There are numerous reasons why we undertake land use planning. These include:

#### A Framework for Decision Making

The plans offer guidance to city staff, Planning Commission, City Council, developers, neighbors, and others on what kinds of land uses are encouraged or discouraged in a particular area. This guidance provides direction for decision makers about future land uses and can help developers, who can reference adopted neighborhood plans when conceiving development proposals, to readily determine whether their proposal meets the objectives of the plan and the neighborhood.

<sup>1</sup> Leung, Hok Lin (1989), Land Use Planning Made Plain, University of Toronto Press

### Balance and Certainty

The purpose of land use planning is to promote development of a shared vision. The process is designed to help find balanced solutions to meet social, economic and environmental needs. Ultimately, these solutions are intended to provide land use certainty. A land use plan offers residents and businesses a clearer picture of the type of development that is desired by the neighborhood. This greater level of certainty can help to promote investment opportunities and economic growth, and foster the stability of neighborhoods and businesses. Just as important, land use planning helps to protect the environment, as well as our natural and cultural diversity.

### Better Communication

The planning process encourages increased communication and cooperation among various stakeholders including neighborhoods and developers, individuals and city departments, institutions and residents. This leads to greater knowledge and understanding about the social, economic and environmental implications of land use decisions and how these decisions affect people, the environment, and property.

### Public Participation

Land use planning in Austin promotes public involvement. Through a series of meetings and information sessions, individuals, businesses, neighborhood associations, interest groups, institutions and others are encouraged to participate in the planning process. This gives everyone the opportunity to influence the land use decisions that directly affect their neighborhoods. The plans are strengthened by that input, and local involvement results in neighborhood plans that are uniquely reflective of the different neighborhood areas of Austin.



*Stakeholders at a meeting*

## **What is the process for making land use decisions?**

The planning process is open and community-based. It is structured to encourage participation by all interested stakeholders including property owners, business owners, non-resident property owners, renters, institutions, and others.

The process goes through a number of stages:

1. Land use education

2. Inventory and analysis of current land uses
3. Explore options for desired future land use patterns
4. Decision making of future land use options and the creation of a draft plan
5. Plan adoption
6. Plan implementation

## How are land use decisions made?

It is important in land use planning to adopt a long-term and comprehensive perspective when making decisions. Neighborhood planning areas should be looked at in a broad and integrated way. Land use decisions should mostly be made more at the level of districts, blocks, and corridors rather than on individual lots. Although, neighborhood plans can sometimes impose certain restrictions on some property owners and developers, caution must be exercised to ensure that viable uses of private property are maintained.

Typically, land use decisions are about the type, amount, and location of uses of land:

"Is this land use appropriate on this site?"

"Where is this land use most suitably located?"

"Are the land uses located on the same site or on adjacent sites compatible with one another?"

"How much land is needed for this particular use?"

Other, more general questions include:

- What types of additions to the neighborhood would make it a better place to live and work?
- Is there a need to expand the range of housing options in the neighborhood – either more rental accommodation or more owner-occupied housing; more apartments or more single family?
- Are there parts of the neighborhood that would benefit from a greater variety of housing and/or businesses?
- What areas of the neighborhood should be preserved?
- Are there parts of the neighborhood where it would be beneficial to allow mixed use development?
- Are there under-utilized areas or vacant land where redevelopment or new development should be encouraged?

- What areas of the planning area are best to accommodate employment centers, light industrial, warehouse, or manufacturing type uses?
- How can lower density areas be protected and buffered from higher density uses?

How these questions are answered is not only important to neighborhoods and neighborhood planners but also to public and private developers and users of land. Land use planning provides one of the best opportunities for public involvement in shaping their community. Some stakeholders, however, may choose not to participate in the planning process. Reasons range from lack of capacity to participate, to fundamental concerns about the process itself. The neighborhood planning process continues to evolve and benefit from previous experience, and continual efforts are made to engage all interests in order to create the best plans possible. Experience has shown that those people who do participate in the meetings are more satisfied with the final land use decisions than those who did not.

To assist neighborhood stakeholders to address the above questions, a set of land use principles have been developed that provide guidance for making sound land use decisions.

## **What is the distinction between land use and zoning?**

Land use planning includes a wide-range of policy options used to better manage public and private space. Many individuals confuse land use planning with zoning. Zoning is, however, only one policy option that local officials might choose when they act as stewards of the natural and built environments. They can also consider policies about subdivisions, water and sewage infrastructure, traffic, water quality, public safety, the aesthetics of structures, investments in public education, and the like that affect land use. Regardless, land use decisions—planned or unplanned—affect the interests of property owners, their neighbors, and the public good. Planning and other land use policies ensure the consideration of community interests.

As practiced in Austin, land use defines broad categories and zoning is the tool that is then used to implement the land use plan and to further refine the permitted uses and standards for a site. In the neighborhood planning process we deal with land use and zoning separately. The development of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) sets the broad direction and is then used as a guiding framework, or a blueprint, for the zoning decisions that are to follow, and that will be consistent with the land use map.

# LAND USE PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Land use is a complex issue that is critical to the long-term prosperity, environmental quality, and social well-being of the people and neighborhoods in Austin. The following is a general list of planning principles to guide neighborhoods and planners in addressing future land use issues.

1. Ensure that the decision will not create an arbitrary development pattern;
2. Ensure an adequate and diverse supply of housing for all income levels;
3. Minimize negative effects between incompatible land uses;
4. Recognize suitable areas for public uses, such as hospitals and schools that will minimize the impacts to residential areas;
5. Discourage intense uses within or adjacent to residential areas;
6. Ensure neighborhood businesses are planned to minimize adverse effects to the neighborhood;
7. Minimize development in floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas;
8. Promote goals that provide additional environmental protection;
9. Consider regulations that address public safety as they pertain to future developments (e.g. overlay zones, pipeline ordinances that limit residential development);
10. Ensure adequate transition between adjacent land uses and development intensities;
11. Protect and promote historically and culturally significant areas;
12. Recognize current City Council priorities;
13. Avoid creating undesirable precedents;
14. Promote expansion of the economic base and create job opportunities;
15. Ensure similar treatment of land use decisions on similar properties;
16. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals;
17. Consider infrastructure when making land use decisions;
18. Promote development that serves the needs of a diverse population.



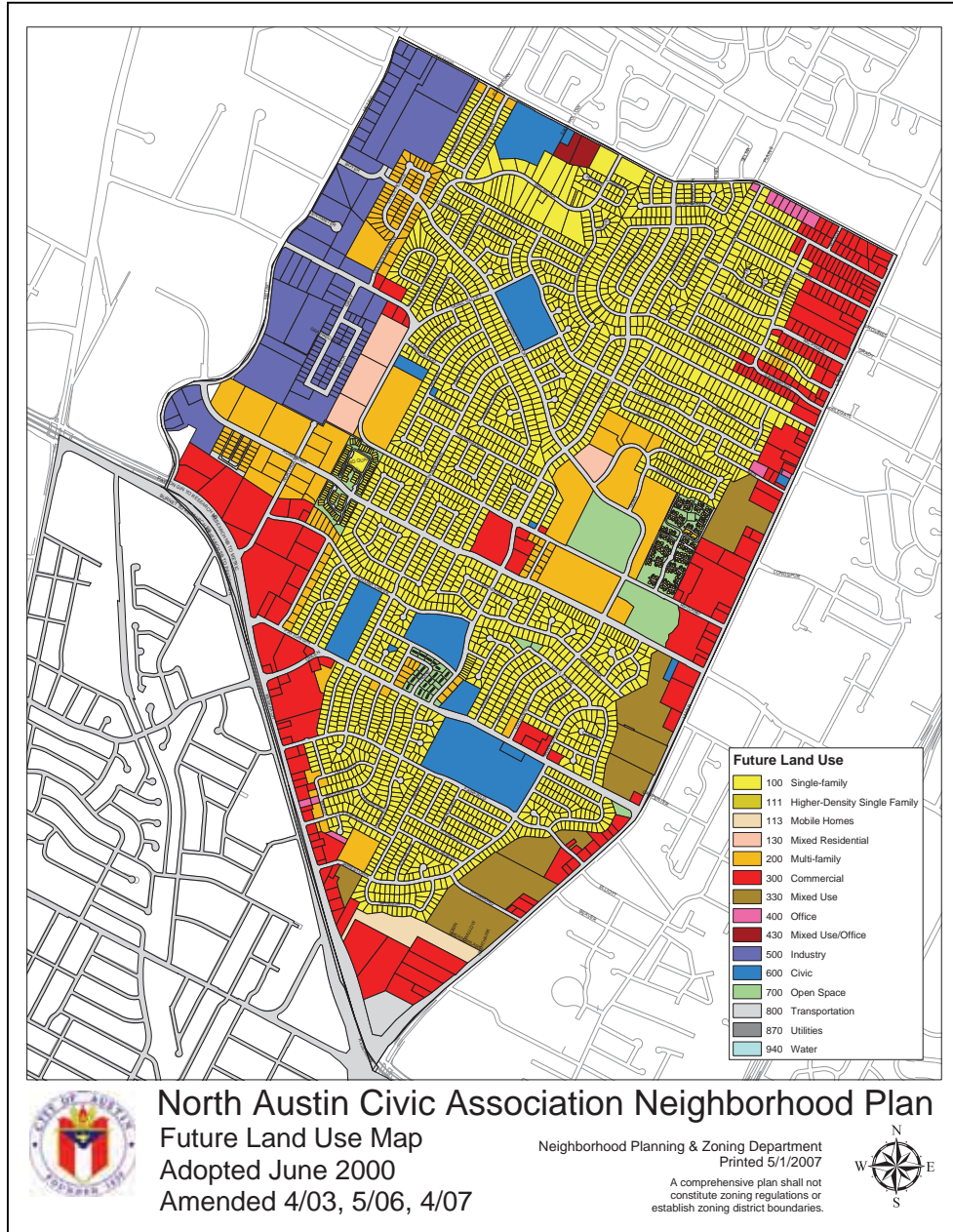


Figure 1. An example of a Future Land Use Map.

## What is a FLUM and how does it relate to the Comprehensive Plan?

By adopting a land use map each neighborhood plan amends the City of Austin Comprehensive Plan. The Texas Local Government Code requires that zoning regulations be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan; without the comprehensive plan we would not have the authority to make zoning changes.

A general definition of a land use plan is a map that serves as a blueprint for future development in a neighborhood planning area. In neighborhood planning we call that map, the Future Land Use Map, or the FLUM.

**Table 1. Land Use Definitions and Colors**

	Land Use	Definition	Color
Residential	Rural Residential	The designation for low-density residential areas that are not suitable or desirable for urban development, generally at densities of one unit per acre or less.	Pale Yellow
	Single Family	Single family detached, or two family residential uses at typical urban and/or suburban densities.	Yellow
	Urban Single Family	Single family detached, small-lot single family, or two family residential uses at urban densities.	Yellow w/ Black Stipple
	Higher-Density Single Family	Single-family housing, generally up to 15 units per acre, which includes townhouses and condominiums as well as traditional small-lot single family.	Goldenrod
	Mixed Residential	An area with a variety of different housing types, including single-family residential, townhouses, duplexes, apartments, and limited neighborhood-serving retail. Single-family residential should comprise at least half of a mixed residential area.	Salmon
	Multifamily	Higher-density housing with 3 or more units on one lot.	Orange
Mixed Use	Neighborhood Mixed Use	An area that is appropriate for a mix of neighborhood commercial (small-scale retail or offices, professional services, convenience retail, and shopfront retail that serve a market at a neighborhood scale) and small to medium-density residential uses.	Brown w/ White Stipple
	Mixed Use/Office	An area that is appropriate for a mix of residential and office uses.	Reddish Brown
	Mixed Use	An area that is appropriate for a mix of residential and non-residential uses.	Brown
	High Density Mixed Use	An area that is appropriate for a mix of residential and non-residential uses with floor-to-area ratios of 3.0 or higher.	Dark Brown
Commercial/Industrial	Office	An area that provides for office uses as a transition from residential to commercial uses, or for large planned office areas. Permitted uses included business, professional, and financial offices as well as offices for individuals and non-profit organizations.	Pink
	Neighborhood Commercial	Lots or parcels containing small-scale retail or offices, professional services, convenience retail, and shopfront retail that serve a market at a neighborhood scale.	Red w/ White Stipple
	Commercial	Lots or parcels containing retail sales, services, hotel/motels and all recreational services that are predominantly privately owned and operated for profit (for example, theaters and bowling alleys). Included are private institutional uses (convalescent homes and rest homes in which medical or surgical services are not a main function of the institution), but not hospitals.	Red
	Industry	Areas reserved for manufacturing and related uses that provide employment but are generally not compatible with other areas with lower intensity use. Industry includes general warehousing, research and development, and storage of hazardous materials.	Purple

**Table 1. Land Use Definitions and Colors continued...**

	Land Use	Definition	Color
Civic/Open Space	Environmental Conservation	Areas intended to be protected from development, including areas in the Drinking Water Protection zone, locations of critical environmental features, and areas where public services or facilities are not available.	Blue-Green
	Recreation & Open Space	This category allows large public parks and recreation areas such as public and private golf courses, trails and easements, drainage-ways and detention basins, and any other public usage of large areas on permanent open land.	Green
	Civic	Any site for public or semi-public facilities, including governmental offices, police and fire facilities, hospitals, and public and private schools. Includes major religious facilities and other religious activities that are of a different type and scale than surrounding uses.	Blue
	Utilities	Land used or dedicated for public and private utilities, including pipelines, utility lines, water and wastewater facilities, substations, and telephone.	Dark Grey
Special Purpose	Agriculture	Rural areas used for agricultural purposes, including productive agricultural lands to be preserved for future farming or ranching activities.	Pale Green
	Major Impact Facilities	Facilities that serve community and regional need but have significant impacts on the surrounding area that require special location and compatibility considerations. Major Impact Facilities include airports, stadiums, landfills, resource extraction, and correctional facilities.	Dark Purple
	Major Planned Developments	Master-planned developments for large multi-acre tracts that incorporate a wide variety of land uses that may include, but are not limited to, single family and multifamily residential, commercial, and clean industrial.	Lavender
	Transportation	Areas dedicated to vehicle, air, or rail transportation. These include existing and platted streets, planned and dedicated rights-of-way, and rail and rail facilities.	Grey
	Water	Any public waters, including lakes, rivers, and creeks.	Light Blue

**Table 2. Other Map Designations**

	Map Designation	Definition	Color
Other	Specific Regulating District	This map designation is intended for areas that have an adopted regulating plan. This district will be identified on the Future Land Use Map, but is not considered a typical land use category. The purpose of this designation is to make the user aware of the Regulating Plan and that it should be reviewed to determine development regulations.	Dark Olive w/ White Stipple

# WHAT IS A LAND USE MAP?

There are two different types of land use maps: a Current Land Use Map (CLUM) and a Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The CLUM documents what types of land uses currently exist through field visits and aerial photography. A FLUM is based on policies and land use principles and is created through the Neighborhood Planning Process. FLUMs show the preferred land use patterns the neighborhood is trying to achieve.

Land uses are shown parcel by parcel with different colors corresponding to different uses, such as single-family residential, office, or mixed use. The City of Austin has a wide-range of land use categories including some of these shown below.

## EXAMPLE OF A LAND USE MAP



Figure 2. An example of a land use map, with designations and corresponding colors.

# LAND USE CATEGORIES

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## RESIDENTIAL

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### Rural/Large-Lot Single Family

The designation for low-density residential areas that is not suitable or desirable for urban development, generally at densities of one unit per acre or less. These areas are without typical urban services such as, public services, sidewalks, curbs and gutters.

#### Purpose

1. Allow limited residential development while protecting environmental quality; and
2. Encourage the clustering of homes for new residential developments to prevent sprawling, large-lot subdivisions.



*A home on a large lot in Oak Hill*

#### Application

1. Use when zoning is least intense necessary to accommodate;
2. Should primarily apply in environmentally sensitive watersheds and predominantly rural areas; and
3. Clustering can include zoning districts other than RR, however residential density should be limited to 1 unit per acre and impervious cover to approximately 15% to 25%, depending on watershed class. However, clustering units on a larger tract with overall 15%-25% impervious cover may be preferable.



*A rural lot in Oak Hill*

## Single Family

Single family detached or two family residential uses at typical urban and/or suburban densities.

### Purpose

1. Preserve the land use pattern and future viability of existing neighborhoods;
2. Encourage new infill development that continues existing neighborhood patterns of development; and
3. Protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible business or industry and the loss of existing housing.

### Application

1. Existing single-family areas should generally be designated as single family to preserve established neighborhoods; and
2. May include small lot options (Cottage, Urban Home, Small Lot Single Family) and two-family residential options (Duplex, Secondary Apartment, Single Family Attached, Two-Family Residential) in areas considered appropriate for this type of infill development.



*Single family home*



*Single family home with garage apt.*



*Duplexes*

## Urban Single Family

Single family detached, small lot single family, or two family residential uses at urban densities.

### Purpose

1. Provide options for the development of higher-density single-family housing in urban areas; and
2. Allow small lot development to make efficient use of urban land while providing new home ownership opportunities.

### Application

1. Small-lot single family is generally most appropriate for larger infill sites in urban neighborhoods with easy access to transportation corridors; and
2. Can be used to provide a buffer between high-density residential and low-density residential areas.

## Higher Density Single Family

Single-family housing, generally up to 15 units per acre, which includes townhouses and condominiums as well as traditional small-lot single family.

### Purpose

1. Provide options for the development of higher-density, owner-occupied housing in urban areas; and
2. Encourage a mixture of moderate intensity residential on residential corridors.



*Townhouses*

## Application

1. Appropriate to manage development on major corridors that are primarily residential in nature, and
2. Can be used to provide a buffer between high-density commercial and low-density residential areas.
3. Applied to existing or proposed mobile home parks.

## Mixed Residential

An area with a variety of different housing types, including single-family residential, townhouses, duplexes, apartments, and limited neighborhood-serving retail. Single-family residential should comprise at least half of a mixed residential area.



*Sketch of a Mixed Residential development*

## Purpose

1. Create multiple housing types of varying densities to provide a high degree of housing choice; and
2. Encourage flexibility and better design for residential development on larger residential parcels.

## Application

1. Appropriate for larger tracts having access to major roadways that are not suitable for commercial or mixed use;
2. Primarily implemented through the Residential Infill special use, but can be achieved with the mixing of different residential districts if the intent is met; and
3. Generally applicable to sites of 1 acre or greater.

## Multifamily Residential

Higher-density housing with 3 or more units on one lot.



## Purpose

1. Preserve existing multifamily and affordable housing;
2. Maintain and create affordable, safe, and well-managed rental housing; and
3. Make it possible for existing residents, both homeowners and renters, to continue to live in their neighborhoods.
4. Applied to existing or proposed mobile home parks.



*Three-story multifamily residential*

## Application

1. Existing apartments should be designated as multifamily unless designated as mixed use;
2. Existing multifamily-zoned land should not be recommended for a less intense land use category, unless based on sound planning principles; and
3. Changing other land uses to multifamily should be encouraged on a case-by-case basis.

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## MIXED USE

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### Neighborhood Mixed Use

An area that is appropriate for a mix of neighborhood commercial (small-scale retail or offices, professional services, convenience retail, and shopfront retail that serve a market at a neighborhood scale) and small to medium-density residential uses.



*Neighborhood businesses with residential located above*

## Purpose

1. Accommodate mixed use development in areas appropriate for a mix of residential uses and neighborhood commercial uses that serve surrounding neighborhoods; and
2. Provide transition from residential use to high intensity commercial or mixed use.

## Application

1. Appropriate for areas such as minor arterials and collectors, small parcels along major arterials that abut single-family residential development, and areas in environmentally sensitive zones where high intensity commercial uses are discouraged; and
2. May be used as a transition from high intensity commercial and residential uses to single-family residential uses.



*Neighborhood restaurants with residential located above*

## Mixed Use/Office

An area that is appropriate for a mix of residential and office uses.

## Purpose

1. Accommodate mixed use development in areas that are not appropriate for general commercial development; and
2. Provide a transition from residential use to non-residential or mixed use.

## Application

1. Appropriate for areas such as minor corridors or local streets adjacent to commercial areas;
2. May be used to encourage commercial uses to transition to residential use; and

3. Provide limited opportunities for live/work residential in urban areas.

### Mixed Use

An area that is appropriate for a mix of residential and non-residential uses.

#### Purpose

1. Encourage more retail and commercial services within walking distance of residents;
2. Allow live-work/flex space on existing commercially zoned land in the neighborhood;
3. Allow a mixture of complementary land use types, which may include housing, retail, offices, commercial services, and civic uses (with the exception of government offices) to encourage linking of trips;
4. Create viable development opportunities for underused center city sites;
5. Encourage the transition from non-residential to residential uses;
6. Provide flexibility in land use standards to anticipate changes in the marketplace;
7. Create additional opportunities for the development of residential uses and affordable housing; and
8. Provide on-street activity in commercial areas after 5 p.m. and built-in customers for local businesses.



*Mixed Use on South Congress Avenue*

#### Application

1. Allow mixed use development along major corridors and intersections;
2. Establish compatible mixed-use corridors along the neighborhood's edge
3. The neighborhood plan may further



*The Pedernales Live + Work Development*

specify either the desired intensity of commercial uses (i.e. LR, GR, CS) or specific types of mixed use (i.e. Neighborhood Mixed Use Building, Neighborhood Urban Center, Mixed Use Combining District);

4. Mixed Use is generally not compatible with industrial development, however it may be combined with these uses to encourage an area to transition to a more complementary mix of development types;
5. The Mixed Use (MU) Combining District should be applied to existing residential uses to avoid creating or maintaining a non-conforming use; and
6. Apply to areas where vertical mixed use development is encouraged such as Core Transit Corridors (CTC) and Future Core Transit Corridors.

### High Density Mixed Use

An area that is appropriate for a mix of residential and non-residential uses with floor-to-area ratios of 3.0 or higher.

#### Purpose

1. Encourage dense, pedestrian-oriented development in downtown, areas near downtown, and sites with exceptional transportation access;
2. Provide a transition between the central core and surrounding districts; and
3. Encourage redevelopment of sites in or near the center city.



*High Density Mixed Use at The Triangle*

#### Application

1. Applicable to most mixed-use/commercial sites in the Central Business District;
2. May be applied to other central areas, such as the Central Urban Redevelopment Area, where existing population and infrastructure can support higher-density development;

3. May also be applied to areas outside of the central core where higher densities can be supported and neighborhood impacts are minimal; and
4. Can be used to accommodate Transit-Oriented Development at existing or proposed transit stations.



*High Density Mixed Use at The Triangle*

## COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL

### Office

An area that provides for office uses as a transition from residential to commercial uses, or for large planned office areas. Permitted uses include business, professional, and financial offices as well as offices for individuals and non-profit organizations.

### Purpose

1. Encourage office-related services in areas that cannot support the traffic generation of commercial uses;
2. Provide for small lot office conversions as a transition from commercial to residential uses; and
3. Preserve sites for employment and office related services.

### Application

1. Appropriate for low volume streets such as collectors and minor arterials; and



*Two-story office building*



*Small-scale office*

2. Can be used to provide a transition between residential uses and more intense commercial and industrial uses.

### Neighborhood Commercial

Lots or parcels containing small-scale retail or offices, professional services, convenience retail, and shopfront retail that serve a market at a neighborhood scale.

#### Purpose

1. Accommodate low-intensity commercial services that serve surrounding neighborhoods; and
2. Encourage small-scale retail within walking distance from residential areas.



*Neighborhood grocery store in Hyde Park*

#### Application

1. Appropriate for areas such as minor arterials and collectors, small parcels along major arterials that abut single-family residential development, and areas in environmentally sensitive zones where high intensity commercial uses are discouraged; and
2. May be used to encourage high intensity commercial to transition to residential uses.



*Neighborhood restaurant*

### Commercial

Lots or parcels containing retail sales, services, hotel/motels and all recreational services that are predominantly privately owned and operated for profit (for example, theaters and bowling alleys). Included are private institutional uses (convalescent homes and rest homes in which medical or surgical services are not a main function of the institution), but not hospitals (see *Civic*).

### Purpose

1. Encourage employment centers, commercial activities, and other non-residential development to locate along major thoroughfares; and
2. Reserve limited areas for intense, auto-oriented commercial uses that are generally not compatible with residential or mixed use environments.



*Retail along South Congress Avenue*

### Application

1. Focus the highest intensity commercial and industrial activities along freeways and major highways; and
2. Should be used in areas with good transportation access such as frontage roads and arterial roadways, which are generally not suitable for residential development.



*Commercial businesses at The Triangle*

### Industrial

Areas reserved for manufacturing and related uses that provide employment but are generally not compatible with other areas with lower intensity use. Industry includes general warehousing, manufacturing, research and development, and storage of hazardous materials.

### Purpose

1. To confine potentially hazardous or nuisance-creating activities to defined districts;
2. To preserve areas within the city to



*Industrial Site*

increase employment opportunities and increased tax base;

3. To protect the City's strategic advantage as a high tech job center; and
4. To promote manufacturing and distribution activities in areas with access to major transportation systems.

### Application

1. Make non-industrial properties in areas with a dominant industrial character compatible with the prevailing land use scheme;
2. Where needed, require a buffer area for industrial property that abuts residentially used land;
3. Industry should be applied to areas that are not appropriate for residential or mixed use development, such as land within the Airport Overlay;



*Industrial in South Austin*

4. In general, mixed use and permanent residential activities are not appropriate in industrial areas. An exception may be the edge of an industrial area along the interface with an area in which residential activities are appropriate. Such exceptions should be considered case by case, with careful attention to both land use compatibility and design;
5. Industry should not be either adjacent to or across the road from single family residential or schools;
6. Use roadways and/or commercial or office uses as a buffer between residential and industry; and
7. Smaller scale "local manufacturing" districts may be appropriate in some locations to preserve employment opportunities and cottage industries of local artisans. In these areas, hazardous industrial uses (i.e. basic industry, recycling centers, and scrap yards) should be prohibited.



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## CIVIC AND OPEN SPACE

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### Environmental Conservation

Areas intended to be protected from development, including areas in the Drinking Water Protection Zone, locations of critical environmental features, and areas where public services or facilities are not available.



*Environmental Conservation Area*

#### Purpose

1. To protect sensitive land where no development should occur except for recreational uses that are primarily passive in nature; and
2. Encourage the environmentally sensitive management of floodplains and promote their use as open space, such as greenways, parks, wildlife habitat, and trails.

#### Application

1. Will generally apply to land that is protected from development by law or ownership;
2. Apply to areas important to water quality, such as Critical Water Quality zones in suburban, rural, and water supply watersheds and to significant undeveloped lands in the DPZ;
3. Any public or private preserve, or land protected by a conservation easement;
4. Any land included in the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan, or any undeveloped endangered species habitat; and
5. All critical environmental features and any land within a 100-foot radius of them.



*Natural Setting*

## Recreational and Open Space

This category allows large public parks and recreation areas such as public and private golf courses, trails and easements, drainage-ways and detention basins, and any other public usage of large areas on permanent open land.



*Basketball Court*

### Purpose

1. Maintain, improve and extend existing parks and recreational facilities;
2. Open spaces that are currently in a naturalistic state should be preserved to the greatest extent possible; and
3. Any undevelopable land should be left as open space.

### Application

1. All existing and planned parks, regardless of jurisdiction;
2. Private recreational areas and open space, such as golf courses, ball fields, and privately owned, dedicated open space; and
3. Land that is likely to remain primarily undeveloped, such as drainage easements, steep slopes, and flood plains in urban watersheds.



*Guerrero/Colorado River Park*

## Civic

Any site for public or semi-public facilities, including governmental offices, police and fire facilities, hospitals, and public and private schools. Includes major religious facilities and other religious activities that are of a different type and scale than surrounding uses.

## Purpose

1. Allow flexibility in development for major, multi-functional institutional uses that serve the greater community;
2. Manage the expansion of major institutional uses to prevent unnecessary impacts on established neighborhood areas;
3. Preserve the availability of sites for civic facilities to ensure that facilities are adequate for population growth;
4. Promote Civic uses that are accessible and useable for the neighborhood resident and maintain stability of types of public uses in the neighborhood;
5. May include housing facilities that are accessory to a civic use, such as student dormitories; and
6. Recognize suitable areas for public uses, such as hospitals and schools, that will minimize the impacts to residential areas.



*City of Austin fire station*

## Application

1. Any school, whether public or private;
2. Any campus-oriented civic facility, including all hospitals, colleges and universities, and major government administration facilities;
3. Any use that is always public in nature, such as fire and police stations, libraries, and museums;
4. Civic uses in a neighborhood setting that are of a significantly different scale than surrounding non-civic uses;
5. An existing civic use that is likely or encouraged to redevelop into a different land use should NOT be designated as civic; and
6. Civic uses that are permitted throughout the city, such as day care centers and



*Austin City Hall*

religious assembly, should not be limited to only the civic land use designation.

## Utilities

Land used or dedicated for public and private utilities, including pipelines, utility lines, water and wastewater facilities, substations, and telephone.

### Purpose

1. Preserve sites for utility distribution facilities that have specific location and sitting requirements.

### Application

1. Applies to any existing or planned facility for the distribution of major utilities, such as electric substations, pumping stations, and telephone switching facilities; and
2. Does not apply to utility production or treatment facilities (See *Major Impact Facilities*).



*Electric substation*

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## **SPECIAL PURPOSE**

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### Agriculture and Rural Preservation

Rural areas used for agricultural purposes, including productive agricultural lands to be preserved for future farming or ranching activities.

### Purpose

1. Protect areas of prime agricultural soils for continued agricultural and



*Lenny the Llama*

agriculturally oriented uses;

2. Preserve open space and significant rural lands; and
3. Minimize development in environmentally sensitive areas without regulated conservation easements (such as creek buffers).

#### Application

1. Typically applies only to areas on the urban periphery with current agricultural uses, or where conditions would accommodate additional agricultural uses; and
2. Rural-Scaled development.

### Major Impact Facilities

Facilities that serve community and regional needs but have significant impacts on the surrounding area that require special location and compatibility considerations. Major Impact Facilities include airports, stadiums, landfills, resource extraction, and correctional facilities.



*Austin-Bergstrom International Airport*

#### Purpose

1. To preserve sites or identify locations for facilities that generate a high level of community opposition; and
2. Locate facilities that may have many negative impacts away from established or planned residential areas.

#### Application

1. All prisons and correctional facilities;
2. Major outdoor entertainment facilities, such as stadiums or amusement parks;
3. Major solid waste facilities, such as landfills and recycling centers;
4. Any airport or aviation facility;

5. Major utility production or treatment facility, including power plants and wastewater treatment facilities; and
6. Large-scale mining and resource extraction activities.

### Major Planned Developments

Master-planned developments for large multi-acre tracts that incorporate a wide variety of land uses that may include, but are not limited to, single family and multifamily residential, commercial, and clean industrial.



*Drawing of a Planned Unit Development*

#### **Purpose**

1. Provides flexibility in development for large sites, but ensures compatibility between uses and good design.

#### **Application**

1. Generally used to designate pre-existing Planned Unit Developments or Planned Development Areas, or in response to proposed multiuse developments for large sites;
2. By designating an area for this land use, the neighborhood plan signifies its support for the entire range of land uses included in the definition; and

This designation should not be applied to single-use developments of any type.

### Transportation

Areas dedicated to vehicle, air, or rail transportation. These include existing and platted streets, planned and dedicated rights-of-way, and rail facilities.



*Traffic Sign*

## Purpose

1. Identify and maintain existing transportation systems and facilities.

## Application

1. Generally applies to any public transportation rights-of-way, including existing and platted streets and rail and rail facilities;
2. Generally does not apply to transportation-related structures, such as terminals (bus and train stations) or maintenance yards; and
3. Not intended to be a prescriptive land use category, but an accurate reflection of future land use where transportation rights-of-way are present.

## Water

Any public waters, including lakes, rivers, and creeks.

## Purpose

1. Identify and preserve existing water features.

## Application

1. Generally applies to any water feature, including lakes, creeks, rivers, and water courses; and
2. Not intended to be a prescriptive land use category, but an accurate reflection of future land use where water features are present.



*Barton Springs Pool*

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## DISCONTINUED LAND USES

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Any land uses that have been discontinued, and no longer used, by the Planning and Development Review Department. However, the following uses continue to be recognized in particular neighborhood planning areas; see the "Areas of Application" section of each use to determine where they are applied.

### Mobile Homes

Areas reserved for mobile home residence parks and mobile home subdivisions.

#### Purpose

1. To accommodate the development of existing or planned mobile home parks.

#### Application

1. Generally applies only to existing or proposed mobile home uses; and
2. Typically not appropriate in urban areas with limited land available for residential development.



*Mobile Home Park*

#### Areas of Application

1. The Mobile Home land use category is recognized in the Govalle/Johnston Terrace Combined, North Austin Civic Association, South Congress Combined, and Southeast Combined Neighborhood Plans.

### Warehouse/Limited Office

An area appropriate for semi industrial uses that do not require highly visible locations, generate substantial volumes of traffic, or adversely affect any nearby residential areas.

#### Purpose

1. Accommodate uses that have low or moderate trip generating characteristics, but



require certain measures to remain compatible with residential uses; and

2. Allow certain warehousing and building trade uses on sites with limited visibility and/or access.

### Application

1. Suitable for sites just removed from major arterial streets or on major non-residential collectors; and
2. Generally not appropriate in areas adjacent to single-family residential unless physical conditions of the site allow for buffering and project design sufficient to mitigate potential adverse impacts.

### Areas of Application

1. The Warehouse/Limited Office land use category is recognized in the Dawson, Govalle/ Johnston Terrace Combined, and Southeast Combined Neighborhood Plans.



*Warehouse in South Austin*

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## OTHER MAP DESIGNATIONS

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### Specific Regulating District

This map designation is intended for areas that have an adopted regulating plan. This district will be identified on the Future Land Use Map, but is not considered a typical land use category. The purpose of this designation is to make the user aware of the Regulating Plan and that it should be reviewed for development regulations.

#### Approved Regulating Plans:

1. Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Plan
2. Martin Luther King (MLK) Boulevard TOD Station Area Plan
3. Lamar/Justin TOD Station Area Plan



*Transit-Oriented Development near Plaza Saltillo*

