



City of Leander, Texas - Comprehensive Plan

The Future Land Use Plan

Introduction

In 2009 the City of Leander adopted a Comprehensive Plan that called for the creation of a Future Land Use Plan based upon the concept of activity nodes at major intersections. In 2013 the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council adopted as a priority the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan action item.

This Future Land Use Plan and Map will serve as a guide for planning staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council in determining appropriate zoning districts and land use concept plans for properties within the City Limits and ETJ.

The guiding principal of the Future Land Use Plan is the protection of the value of single-family neighborhoods through the concentration of mixed use activity centers at major transportation intersections. This principle provides for the separation of incompatible uses while also providing easy access for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists to areas of retail and commercial development that serve the neighborhood, community and regional needs.

By concentrating mixed use activity centers at major nodes and discouraging strip commercial development, the City's current and future transportation system is more efficient and provides for the expansion of public transit as the City's population grows. By integrating a network of pedestrian and bicycle corridors into the Future Land Use Plan, residents who do not have the option or choose not to use automobiles are provided with viable options to reach their destinations on foot or by bicycle.



City of Leander, Texas - Comprehensive Plan

Section 1 - The Land Use Categories

1.1 - Intent

The Future Land Use Plan includes several categories of land use as described below. The intent of the plan is to provide for well integrated land uses that make efficient use of infrastructure systems such as transportation, water, sewer and drainage while protecting sensitive land and providing for a system of open space and parks. The plan also encourages mixed use development in activity centers that provide services to neighborhoods, the community and the region. The plan calls for the protection of the quality of life in existing and future residential neighborhoods by providing appropriate transitions from lower densities to higher densities of development, by encouraging a mix of housing products within neighborhoods and adjacent activity centers and by creating connections between neighborhoods and activity centers. The plan also recognizes the importance of areas for primary employment uses and establishes those areas in order to provide for a strong and diverse economy for the community.

1.2 - Residential Neighborhoods

Residential neighborhoods are the predominate land use within the City and it's ETJ. Neighborhoods are primarily composed of single-family detached housing and include other compatible uses including parks, schools, and places of worship. Neighborhoods may be low to moderate density depending upon the topography and the feasibility of providing organized sewer service. Areas with steep topography, flood plain or other natural features that are intended to be preserved and served by on-site sewage systems will be the lowest density while areas that are relatively flat and where organized sewer systems are feasible will be of medium density. Residential neighborhoods provide connections to each other and to neighborhood, community and town center nodes. A variety of lot and house sizes are encouraged within residential neighborhoods.

Compatible Zoning Use Components

SFR, SFE, SFS, SFU, SFC, SFL, SFT, PUD



City of Leander, Texas - Comprehensive Plan

1.3 - Neighborhood Center

The Neighborhood Center land use node is intended to be located at the intersection of collector streets. These nodes are approximately one quarter mile in diameter and incorporate approximately 30 acres. These areas are intended for neighborhood scale commercial, retail and office uses that serve the immediately adjacent neighborhoods. These areas are also intended for higher density single-family, two-family and other compatible housing types including townhouses and condominiums. Development within these nodes should be integrated through internal streets and should provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Compatible Zoning Use Components

LC, LO, TF, SFT, SFL, PUD

Target Land Use Mix

The following graph shows the target mix of land uses within the Neighborhood Center node.

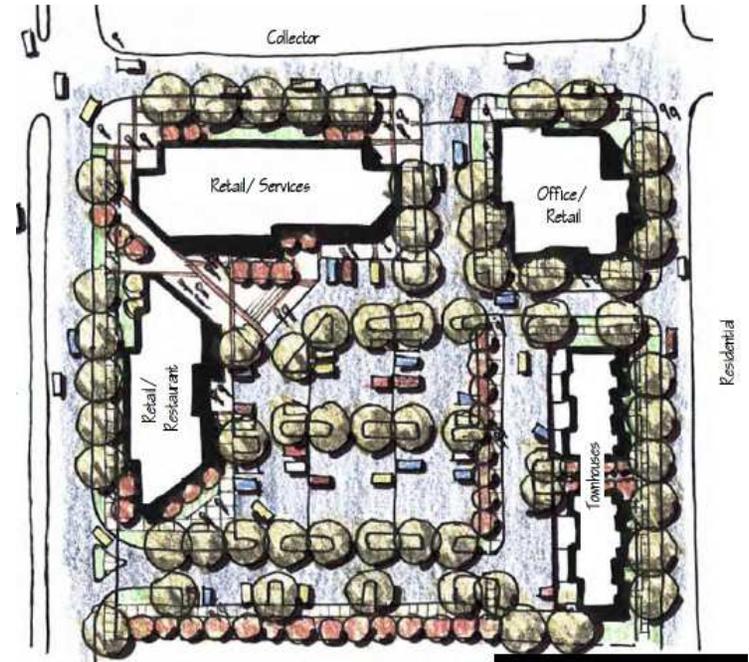
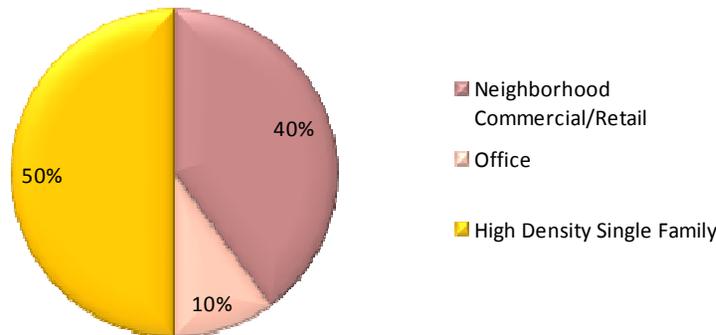


Figure 1.1 Illustrative site plan: Neighborhood Center



City of Leander, Texas - Comprehensive Plan

1.4 - Community Center

The Community Center land use node is intended to be located at the intersections of arterial streets or arterials and major collectors. These nodes are approximately one half mile in diameter and incorporate approximately 125 acres. These areas are intended for commercial, retail and office uses that primarily serve residents within the community. These areas are also intended for medium density multi-family and high density single-family housing. Development within these nodes should be integrated through internal streets and should provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Compatible Zoning Use Components

GC, LC, LO, MF, TF, SFT, SFL, PUD

Target Land Use Mix

The following graph shows the target mix of land uses within the Community Center node.

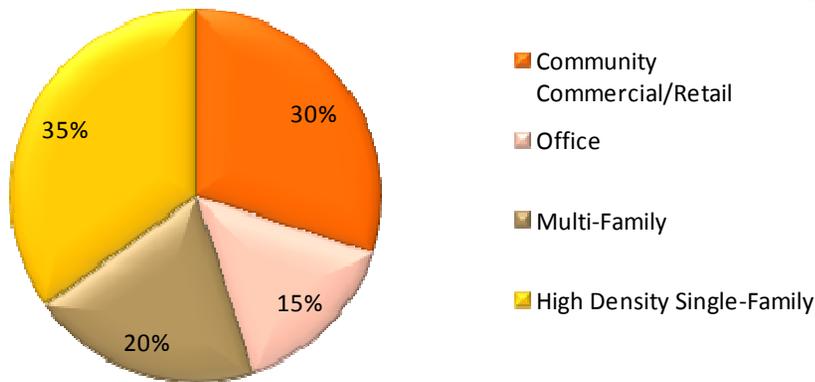


Figure 1.2 Illustrative site plan: Community Center



City of Leander, Texas - Comprehensive Plan

1.5 - Town Center

The Town Center land use node is intended to be located at the intersections of major arterials within the community. These nodes are approximately one mile in diameter and incorporate approximately 500 acres. These areas are intended for large scale commercial, retail and office uses that require locations with direct access to major arterials and that serve both the community and a larger trade area outside the city limits. These areas are also intended for high density multi-family and single-family housing. Development within these nodes should be integrated through internal streets and should provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Compatible Zoning Use Components

GC, LC, LO, MF, TF, SFT, PUD

Target Land Use Mix

The following graph shows the target mix of land uses within the Town Center node.

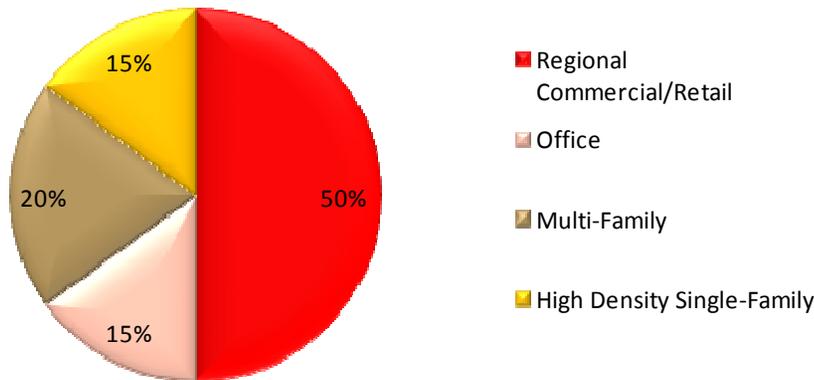


Figure 1.3 Illustrative site plan: Town Center



City of Leander, Texas - Comprehensive Plan

1.6 - Industrial District

The Industrial District land use category is intended to be located in close proximity to major transportation systems including highways, tollways, railroads, etc. These areas are intended for industrial and employment land uses that may generate traffic and noise and that may require outdoor areas for storage or manufacturing/assembly. These are important for the City's economic development and should be developed in a way to minimize negative impacts on surrounding uses. Industrial land uses should be concentrated in the areas shown on the Future Land Use map in order to create synergy among similar land uses and to encourage coordinated design and the potential for shared infrastructure such as parking, drainage facilities and utilities. Industrial uses should be developed with attention to aesthetics through the provision of landscaping along street frontages, screening of outdoor storage and assembly areas, and high quality building design and materials where buildings are visible from roadways or adjacent residential development areas.

Compatible Zoning Use Components

HC, HI, PUD

1.7 - Transit Oriented Development District

The TOD is the area in the northeast quadrant of the City, including "Old Town", areas west of US 183, south of FM 2243, and going north, almost to the San Gabriel River. The Traditional Sectors of the TOD are governed by the Leander Smart Code and the Conventional Sectors have the option of developing under the SmartCode or the Composite Zoning Ordinance with additional Conventional Sector standards. In the SmartCode, emphasis is placed on the location and public interface of development, i.e. "form", rather than the use of the property. The SmartCode is based upon New Urbanism principals designed to create traditional pedestrian-oriented communities with neighborhoods and town centers with a mix and integration of residential, commercial and retail uses. The Conventional Development Sectors are intended to provide a seamless transition from the Traditional Sectors.

Compatible Zoning Use Components

TOD - PUD



City of Leander, Texas - Comprehensive Plan

The Future Land Use Plan

Section 2 - The Future Land Use Map

2.1 - Intent

The Future Land Use Map geographically allocates the various land use categories described in this plan. Unlike zoning, which establishes specific land development standards for a parcel of land, the Future Land Use Map is a policy tool that depicts the City's vision for the future development and redevelopment of the community. Because the Future Land Use Map is a policy tool and is focused on defining the desired future land development patterns, it does not necessarily correlate to existing land use and zoning.

2.2 - Effect on Existing Residential Neighborhoods

The Future Land Use Map is intended to guide decisions related to requests for rezoning. In certain areas, the Future Land Use Map identifies land use categories over existing residential neighborhoods that allow for uses other than single-family detached housing. In circumstances where a property owner in an existing, platted single-family neighborhood requests a rezoning that is consistent with the Future Land Use Map, the rezoning shall not be approved unless a redevelopment plan for the neighborhood has first been prepared in consultation with the neighborhood and approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.

2.3 - Revisions to the Map

Except in rare circumstances, rezoning requests that are not consistent with the Future Land Use Map shall not be granted without first amending the Future Land Use Map. Individual revisions to the Future Land Use Plan and/or Map related to a rezoning request shall follow the same notice and hearing requirements as a rezoning case.

Illustration credits for Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3: *City of Colorado Springs, Colorado - Mixed Use Development Design Manual and Ron Bevans, Landscape Architect*