

3 | FUTURE LAND USE

Land Use Guiding Policies

Land Use Policies are concerned with the physical development and redevelopment of land within the City of Lancaster. The Land Use Policies in this section are derived from the Guiding Principles and are intended to work in combination with the preferred land use scenario to create a prosperous future for the City of Lancaster. These policies were used to help guide the development of the Place Types and determine the appropriate locations for each type within the Preferred Scenario. Land use policies, as discussed and vetted with the comprehensive plan advisory committee, are as follows:

LAND USE POLICY 1: Keeps existing neighborhoods vital by retaining their residential character.

LAND USE POLICY 2: Includes non-residential uses that support neighborhoods – like local shopping – next to residential areas.

LAND USE POLICY 3: Does not support encroachment of incompatible uses into neighborhoods.

LAND USE POLICY 4: Adds new neighborhoods so people have more housing choices.

LAND USE POLICY 5: Identifies locations for businesses that add jobs.

LAND USE POLICY 6: Provides for diverse businesses so Lancaster’s economy is more stable and resilient.

LAND USE POLICY 7: Provides trails and open spaces to enhance Lancaster’s existing parks system.

LAND USE POLICY 8: Emphasizes investment in existing City facilities and investments.

LAND USE POLICY 9: Creates gateways at entrances to the City so visitors know when they are in Lancaster.

Introduction

This chapter provides a formal Land Use Strategy for the City of Lancaster, vetted and developed by the citizens of Lancaster. This Land Use Strategy is one of many important tools for identifying a path forward for the City that ensures fiscal stability and a high quality of life for residents. This direction was established through stakeholder interviews, community meetings, and a series of strategy meetings with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, the Lancaster Planning and Zoning Commission and Lancaster City Council. It is to help City leaders make important decisions regarding the future land use pattern of the community, in particular current and future zoning for the city. These decisions will impact the City’s infrastructure, municipal services and economic resiliency. The strategy establishes an overall framework for the preferred pattern of development within Lancaster by designating various geographical areas within the City for particular land uses based principally on the specific policies outlined in this chapter and vetted through a citizen based Steering Committee. The Land Use Strategy is depicted in graphic form as the “Preferred Scenario” (Figure 3.01).

Chapter 212 of the Texas Local Government Code states, “A Comprehensive Plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning boundaries.” The Preferred Scenario is not a zoning map which deals with specific development requirements on individual parcels. Rather, it is a high-level policy document designed to help guide decision-making related to rezoning proposals and for assessing the appropriateness of a particular land use at a specific location within the community. A property owner may choose to develop under the existing zoning regulations regardless of the Preferred Scenario related to land use. However, if a property owner makes an application for rezoning, the Comprehensive Plan, and in particular this chapter, should be an important consideration in the City’s approval or disapproval of the proposal.

This chapter generally addresses only the Land Use Principles, Policies and Preferred Scenario. Additional detail related to the following elements is provided in the appendix section of this Comprehensive Plan:

- Guiding Principles
- Land Use Policies
- Future Land Use Plan
- Place Types

Future Land Use Plan (Preferred Scenario)

The future land use plan, or Preferred Future Land Use Scenario, has been drafted based on numerous meetings with the public, the Advisory Committee, the City Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission and City staff. The Preferred Future Land Use Scenario is a graphic depiction of the ideal land use pattern for Lancaster, as vetted and approved by the residents of Lancaster. It should be used by the City to guide future decisions on proposed zoning, development and redevelopment applications and development standards. While the Preferred Scenario is an integral part of the overall strategy of this Plan, the land use policies referenced in the previous section that support the scenario are also important. The place type descriptions, corresponding map colors and representative pictures on the next few pages are provided to clarify the various Place Types identified on the draft Preferred Scenario for future land use.

Place Types

Place Types represent the various categories of land use permitted in the city. Place Types are assigned to general geographic areas of the city expected to exhibit characteristics similar to those outlined below and that are consistent with the over-arching policies and land planning policies which have been developed through this planning process. The Preferred Future Land Use Scenario builds upon 11 different Place Types, identified and described on the following pages.

Rural Living

Character & Intent

Rural living is focused on areas of the community that has the ability to preserve a rural character. This includes estate residential type areas. The high-end character of this housing is primarily focused on serving the needs of executives with densities less than 2 dwelling units per acre.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Single-family detached homes

Secondary Land Uses

Civic & institutional uses, parks, open space

Precedent Photos



Suburban Neighborhood

Character & Intent

Suburban neighborhoods will continue to be the dominant place type in Lancaster providing a variety of residential products ranging from townhomes to single family detached. These neighborhoods would generally be formed as subdivisions with residential densities ranging from 2 to 8 dwelling units per acre..

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Single-family detached homes, duplexes

Secondary Land Uses

Civic & institutional uses, parks

Precedent Photos



Urban Neighborhood

Character & Intent

Urban neighborhoods provide a range of housing choices, including higher densities that target residents from young professionals to empty nesters. The urban neighborhood will encourage active living, walkable streets and open space access.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Townhomes, urban residential, live/work/shop units

Secondary Land Uses

Single-family detached, civic and institutional uses, parks and community buildings

Precedent Photos



Mixed-Use Neighborhood

Character & Intent

Mixed-use neighborhoods will offer Lancaster residents the ability to live, work and play in the same location. These neighborhoods will offer a mix of housing types and residential densities ranging from single-family attached units to urban residential structures within walking distance of the goods and services required for daily living. They will include both vertically and horizontally integrated mixed-use buildings in a highly walkable environment.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Retail, restaurants, townhomes, urban residential, senior housing, professional office, live/work/shop units

Secondary Land Uses

Civic and institutional uses, parks, community buildings

Precedent Photos



Town Center

Character & Intent

The Town Center will be the focal point for economic, entertainment and community activity, focusing as an employment center and shopping destination. A civic component is envisioned for City administration and operations as well as community gathering and event space. This area will include active living and is highly walkable.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Single family detached, duplex, urban residential, senior housing, restaurants, retail, professional office, live/work/shop units

Secondary Land Uses

Civic and institutional uses, parks, community buildings

Precedent Photos



Village Center

Character & Intent

The Village Center will be an area for entertainment and community activity while serving as an employment center and shopping destination. It will be an active living area that is highly walkable with areas for community gathering and events. This will be achieved through vertically and horizontally integrated buildings.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Single-family detached, duplex, townhomes, urban residential, senior housing, restaurant, retail, professional office, live/work/shop units.

Secondary Land Uses

Civic and institutional uses, parks, community buildings.

Precedent Photos



Suburban Mixed-Use Center

Character & Intent

The Suburban Mixed-Use Center will create regional destinations, including entertainment venues, regional oriented retail and lifestyle centers.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Regional retail, urban residential, senior housing, hotels, professional office, restaurants, multi-tenant commercial, live/work/shop units

Secondary Land Uses

Civic and institutional uses, parks

Precedent Photos



Commercial Corridor

Character & Intent

The Commercial Corridor focuses on single and multi-tenant commercial developments along major transportation routes in the City. Typically, commercial corridors are adjacent to the Suburban Neighborhood Place Types providing everyday goods and services for residents. Commercial corridors are also automobile oriented and readily accessible by car from nearby neighborhoods.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Retail, restaurants, multi-tenant commercial, junior anchor commercial

Secondary Land Uses

Civic and institutional uses, parks

Precedent Photos



University Research Center

Character & Intent

The University and Research Center is higher education focused with potential research components and providing ancillary space for businesses and corporations supporting the core purpose of the university. The University Research Center will also support the residential and commercial needs for students and employees.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Higher education, research and technology, professional office, townhomes, urban residential, restaurant, retail

Secondary Land Uses

Civic and institutional uses, parks

Precedent Photos



Logistics/Distribution

Character & Intent

Logistics and Distribution place types will focus on creating and retaining large floor plate, clean warehouse space and flex space in the City.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Transportation related distribution centers, technology/data centers, flex office

Secondary Land Uses

Supporting logistics suppliers, retail and office uses, incubators, training facilities, civic and institutional uses, parks

Precedent Photos



Aviation

Character & Intent

Aviation Place Types serve as an employment base for southern Dallas County focused on businesses that benefit from proximity to an airport and airport operations.

Land Use Considerations

Primary Land Uses

Primary flex industrial/office space

Secondary Land Uses

Retail, civic and institutional uses, parks

Precedent Photos



Preferred Future Land Use Scenario

The Preferred Scenario for future land use was identified by the Advisory committee and public in a series of community involvement opportunities and refined through numerous meetings with the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission and the steering committee. It balances a healthy mix of residential and non-residential land uses to create a more sustainable community with respect to the appropriate placement and mix of uses, providing for higher densities in key areas where the public infrastructure is already in place and additional capacity is available, and upholding the goal of responsible stewardship of the limited amount of developable land remaining within the city.

The Preferred Land Use Scenario aligns market opportunities, physical opportunities and community desires in order to establish a realistic, fiscally balanced plan for the future. It strives to take advantage of short-term development opportunities and leverage those opportunities to ready the environment for longer-term opportunities. At a community-wide charrette in February 2014, participants were asked to share their opinions on a series of strategic choices and to rank them as Very Important (VI), Somewhat Important (SI), Neutral (N), Not Very Important (NVI) or Very Unimportant (VU). The table below highlights the top eight strategic choices identified by the community as being Very Important or Somewhat Important.

Table 3.01 Strategic Choice Importance

Strategic Choice	VI/ SI	Neutral	NVI / VU
Take advantage of existing City facilities & investments	93.8%	1.5%	4.6%
Keep existing neighborhoods vital	93.7%	3.2%	3.2%
Expand and enhance the Medical District	88.9%	4.8%	6.4%
Add new neighborhoods so people have more choices	85.5%	3.2%	11.3%
Use the Lancaster Airport to help diversify our economy	84.4%	6.3%	9.4%
Stay competitive in capturing logistics jobs and businesses	78.1%	9.4%	9.4%
Build on the investment at UNT-Dallas	75.8%	11.3%	11.3%
Build on the assets of the historic Town Square	73.4%	18.8%	7.8%

The Preferred Scenario was established with intent of being in total alignment of these strategic choices. The majority of new future development in the community is focused on areas north of Ten Mile Creek in order to take advantage of the previous City investments in facilities including parks, recreation and civic facilities, and existing infrastructure including roads, sewer and water systems. The Scenario keeps existing neighborhoods vital by retaining their residential character, discouraging encroachment of incompatible uses into neighborhoods, and including non-residential uses that support neighborhoods – like local shopping – next to residential areas.

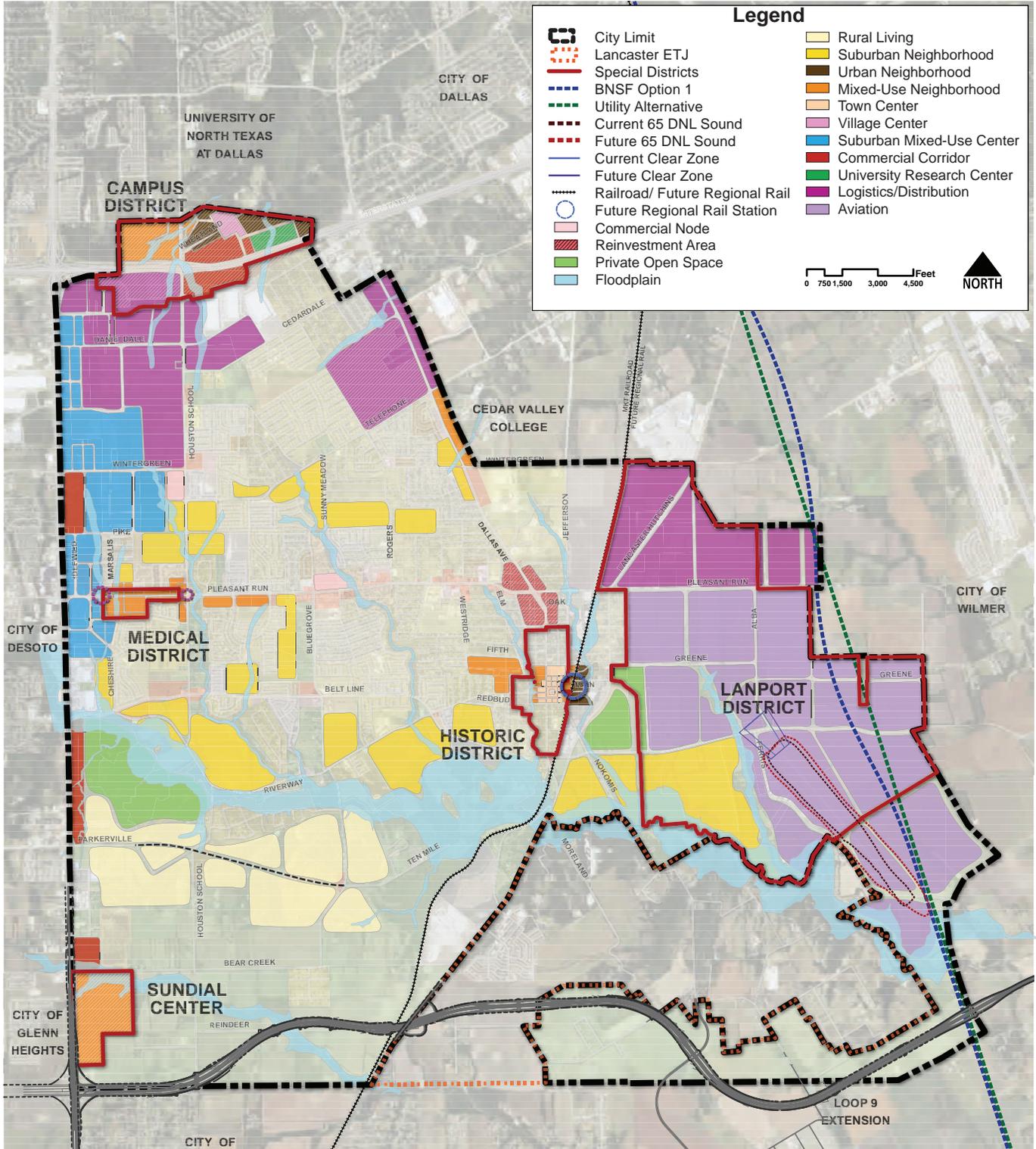
The Preferred Scenario for future land use remains unchanged in most areas of the City where stable and sustainable land uses exist (Figure 3.02). In these areas, the focus will be upon strategic reinvestment in properties and infrastructure, code compliance and a focus on adding elements such as trails, park improvements and urban design elements to keep these parts of the community desirable and economically viable. The major updates to the land use pattern are identified by the application of certain Place Types as previously described in this chapter. Additional detail related to the specific vision for each of the special districts identified in the Preferred Scenario is located in Appendix 2 of this report.

The Preferred Scenario adds new neighborhoods so people have more housing choices that will allow the community to support a range of housing types for the various demographics that will be attracted to the community to support a diverse workforce, and to support “aging in place”. Among the housing products being encouraged to provide a well-rounded housing stock in the community are larger Estate Residential products to provide locations for doctors and professionals that are desired to be attracted to the Medical District, educators to support UNT Dallas and Cedar Valley College, and business executives that will want to locate in Lancaster to be close to the businesses locating in the Medical District, Campus District or logistics areas, or those who are attracted to Lancaster to be close to the Lancaster Airport which can serve as a base for locating corporate jets. The plan also supports Cottage Homes and Urban Townhomes for “empty nesters” that want to downsize but stay in the Lancaster community and be close to family, friends, religious institutions, schools and shopping, or for mature singles who desire a smaller, low maintenance residence with high end finishes and amenities. Urban apartments would be focused on providing housing for younger or mature singles that are either retired, or supporting the workforce as young professionals working in the Medical District, Campus District, Historic District or in the logistics areas in the community.

The Preferred Scenario identifies locations for businesses that add jobs, and focuses on creating diverse businesses so Lancaster’s economy is more stable and resilient. While much of the focus of the plan is on establishing reasonable boundaries to the logistics development that has been occurring in the northwest sector of the community, and readying the environment for Phase 2 of logistics development in the far eastern sector of the community, the diversity of businesses in the community will be achieved through a focus on the Medical District, Campus District, Historic District, the Lancaster Airport, IH 35E corridor and the Sundial Center which will provide focused development areas for educational, research and development, corporate, medical, retail and service related jobs in the community.



Figure 3.02 - Preferred Scenario - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Implementation Strategy

The following implementation strategies are essential to realizing the potential of the Preferred Future Land Use Scenario. Further detail related to phasing, priorities, time frames and partnerships related to these strategies is located in the Implementation Chapter of this report and in Appendix 1.

- Evaluate the City's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance districts, procedures and application. Update these to effectively implement this plan – specifically focusing on providing regulations that will permit the place types as described in this chapter to be created.
- Evaluate the City's Subdivision Ordinance and update the ordinance to effectively implement this plan as current standards and regulations may not be geared towards a dense, urban mixed use pattern as identified in several place type scenarios.
- Consider these specific areas for potential rezoning to support plan implementation. Areas identified to date include: Waters & Criswell and areas within Campus / Logistics that are zoned residential.
- Review regulations and procedures and revise as necessary to streamline mixed use area development.
- Review zoning and other development regulations to streamline development of the full range of housing for seniors.
- Update the City's annexation plan to encourage annexation in areas expecting near-term development.
- Establish buffer requirements to minimize safety, visual and noise impacts of potential High Speed Rail.
- Increase City staffing levels to support plan implementation projects.
- Communicate with the development community, property owners, Lancaster ISD, and other stakeholders about the new opportunities resulting from this Comprehensive Plan's development policies.
- Conduct a detailed land use and design study for the areas along the potential Loop 9 right-of-way and implement this study through rezoning and other changes to the City's development regulations.
- Consider proactive, city initiated rezonings for areas where such rezoning will remove an important barrier to development or revitalization.
- Working with neighborhood leaders, develop programs, infrastructure priorities, regulatory changes, and code compliance strategies to keep existing neighborhoods desirable.