



An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood. In the foreground, there is a school complex with several large, modern buildings, a large parking lot, and a green athletic field with a blue track. The field has "LA GRANGE" and "LEOPARDS" written on it. Surrounding the school are residential streets with houses and trees. The text "CHAPTER 2" is overlaid on the right side, and "LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT" is overlaid in the center.

CHAPTER

2

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The Land Use and Development chapter provides a framework for guiding the community's future growth and development. Its purpose is to balance residential, commercial, industrial and recreational needs while protecting the City's character and natural environment. This chapter introduces the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP), outlines the land use categories and presents a vision for future development.

This chapter includes:

- Land Use & Resilience
- Existing Land Use
- Population Projections
- Future Land Use Map
- Future Land Use Dashboard
- Managing Development in Hazard Areas

What We've Heard

Top Three Priorities for Land Use:



Comments:



"It is a great town as it is. But change and growth is coming like it or not. City government must get ahead of development with development plans, ordinances, and good zoning and planning."

"River seems like it could be utilized. Kayaks, rentals, water play area, cafes along the water with decks, etc."

"Attract development to grow the city while maintaining the small town feel."

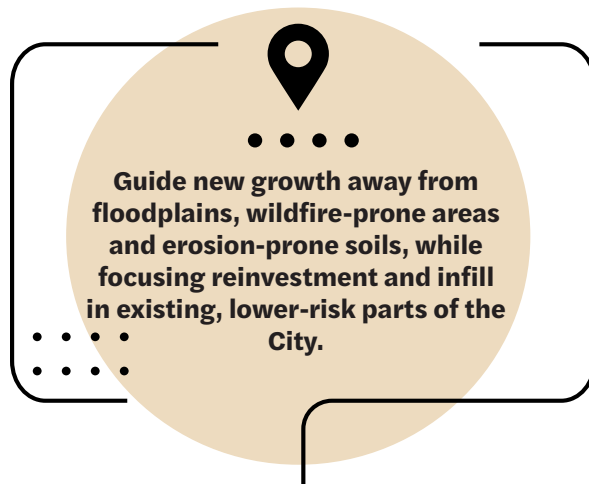
"There needs to be something for our youth to do after 8pm. Right now the only things open are Whataburger, bars, vape shops and Walmart."



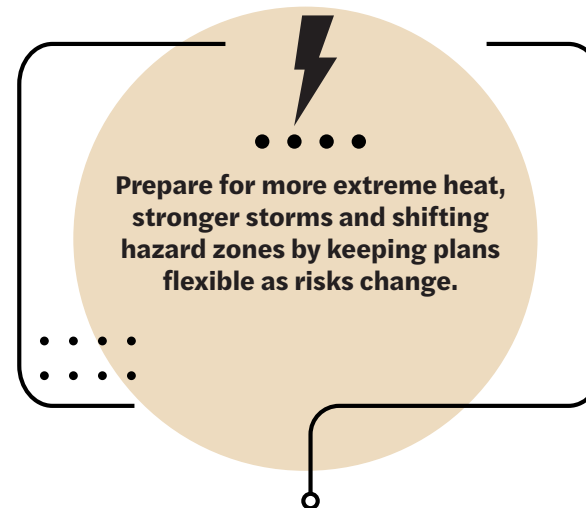
Land Use & Resilience Policies

Land use decisions shape how effectively a community responds to and recovers from hazards. Where and how the City grows influence both risk and resilience. The Future Land Use Plan reduces risk by directing growth to lower-risk areas, protecting natural systems, and encouraging development that can adapt to changing conditions.

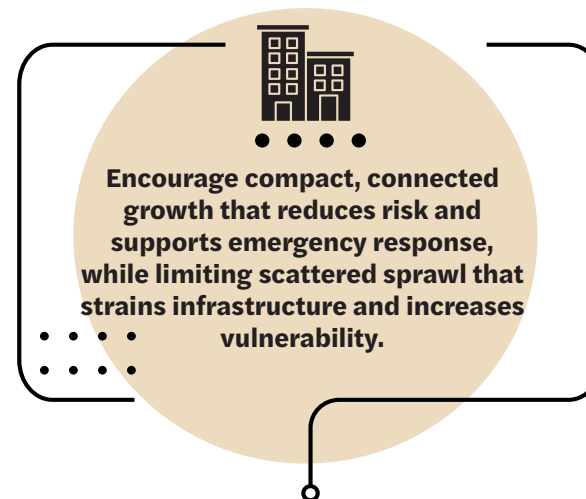
Direct Growth Away from Hazards



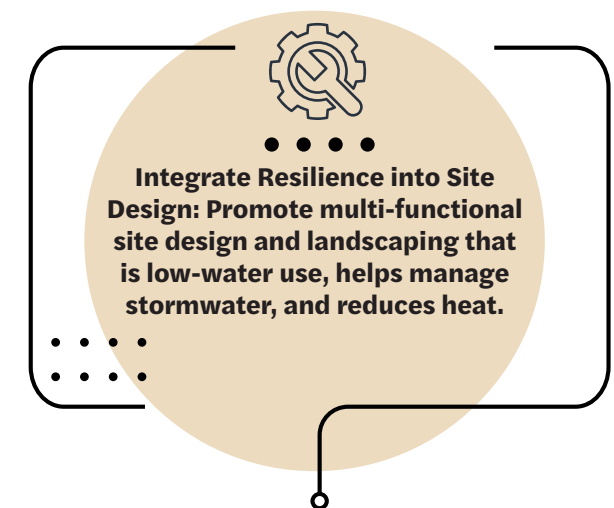
Plan for Emerging Risks



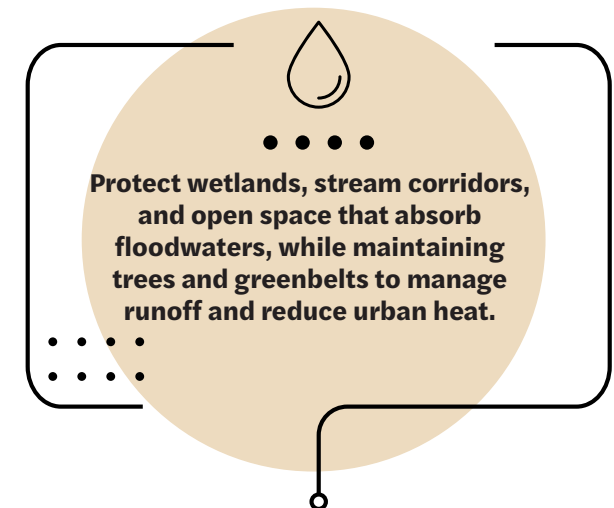
Support Safe, Sustainable Development Patterns



Integrate Resilience into Design Standards



Preserve and Strengthen Natural Buffers



Existing Land Use

Existing land use provides context for identifying key issues and opportunities within the City and serves as the basis for developing the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). Map 3 illustrates existing land uses in La Grange and the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

Development Trends

The majority of developed land in La Grange is currently Rural or Agricultural in use, accounting for 65% of the total land area within both the city limits and the ETJ. By comparison, Medium Density Residential makes up only 0.5% of the total land area, while Manufactured Housing accounts for 0.8%. A significant focus of the Future Land Use Plan will be to diversify housing options in order to better meet the needs of the community.

Currently only 3% of La Grange's land is classified as Vacant. This limited supply of available land presents a challenge when planning for future development. However, while the inventory of vacant parcels is small, there is still meaningful opportunities for growth. As rural or agricultural lands gradually transition, either through market demand, sales or the conclusion of operations, additional opportunities for redevelopment and infill may emerge.

Strategically guiding both the use of existing vacant parcels and the conversion of rural/ agricultural land can facilitate more balanced growth, strengthen the City's infrastructure and economic base and expand the range of housing options available to residents.

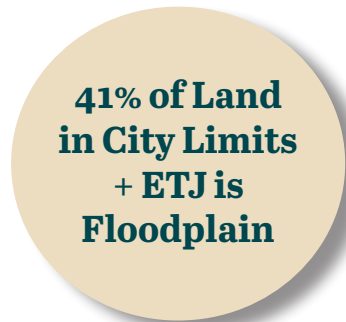


Figure 11. Existing Land Use Acreages Breakdown (Total)

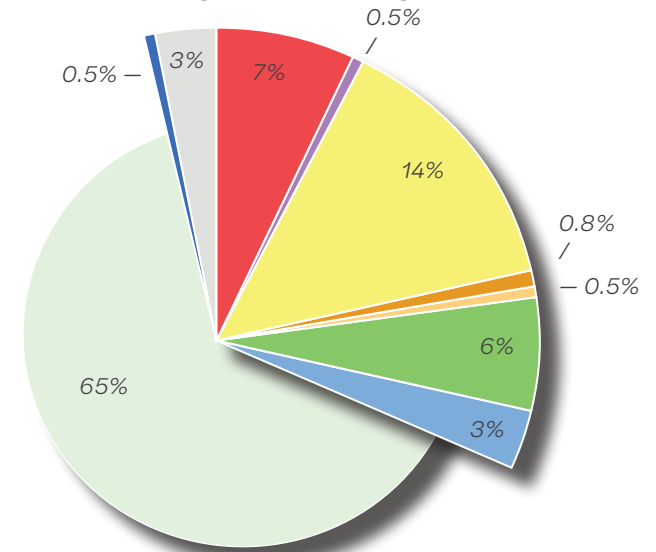


Figure 12. Existing Land Use Acreages

Existing Land Use		City Limits		ETJ		Total	
		Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
	Low Density Residential	623	28%	340	8%	962	14%
	Medium Density Residential	26	1.2%	10	0.2%	37	0.5%
	Manufactured Housing	55	2%	0	0%	55	0.8%
	Retail/Commercial	381	17%	57	1.3%	437	7%
	Industrial	35	2%	12	0.3%	47	0.7%
	Public/Semi-Public	172	8%	0	0%	172	3%
	Parks and Open Space	135	6%	293	7%	428	6%
	Agricultural/Rural	676	30%	3,685	82%	4,361	65%
	Utility	34	2%	1	0%	35	0.5%
	Vacant	105	5%	78	2%	183	3%
Total		2,242	100%	4,476	100%	6,717	100%

Population Projections

Studying growth trends in nearby Texas cities provides useful context for evaluating the future of La Grange. Examining how other communities in the region have evolved highlights broader economic forces, demographic shifts, and social factors that may also influence La Grange's trajectory. These comparisons offer insights that can help the City plan for future growth, including housing needs, infrastructure demands, and economic opportunities. The cities selected for comparison share similarities with La Grange in terms of location and economic conditions, making their experiences particularly relevant.

Regional Growth Comparison

The Texas Water Development Board's (TWDB) municipal population projections show that La Grange and nearby cities are expected to experience little to no growth over the coming decades. La Grange's population is projected to decline slightly, from 4,677 in 2020 to 4,426 in 2060, with similar modest or downward growth trends in neighboring cities. These forecasts suggest potential challenges in sustaining workforce capacity, housing demand and municipal services if regional growth bypass the community.

Figure 13. Regional Growth Comparisons

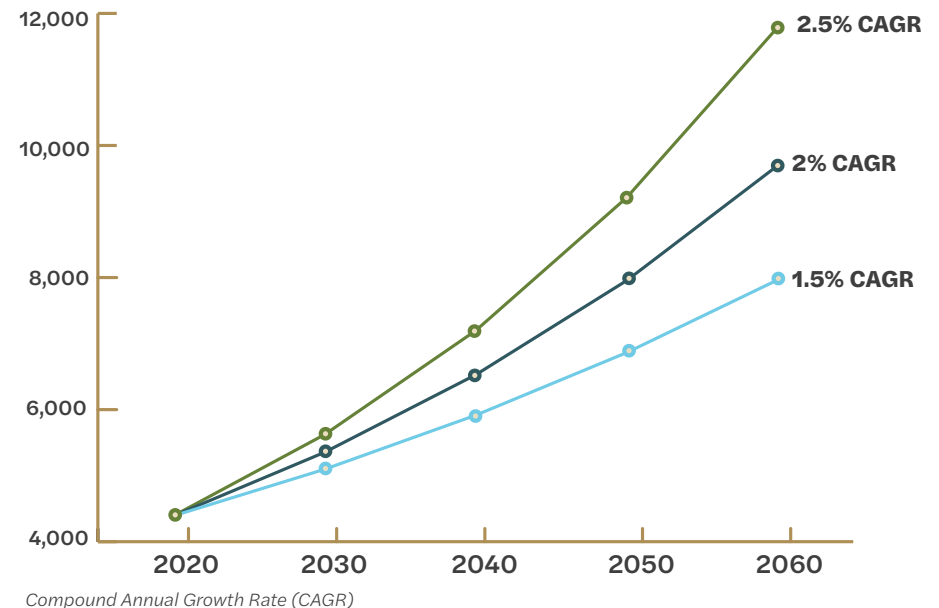
Texas City	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
La Grange	4,677	4,645	4,553	4,449	4,426
Bastrop	9,164	11,346	14,029	17,208	20,819
Flatonia	1,473	1,427	1,399	1,365	1,358
Columbus	3,302	3,369	3,424	3,460	3,470
Smithville	3,475	3,686	3,960	4,274	4,635
Giddings	5,137	5,497	5,576	5,497	5,394

Source: Texas Water Development Board

Growth Rate Scenarios

In recent years, La Grange's population has decreased, but broader patterns in Central Texas point toward opportunities for stronger growth. With its strategic location between Houston, Austin, and San Antonio, coupled with economic opportunities and ongoing development, La Grange could realistically capture higher growth rates. Annual increases between 1.5% and 2.5% are potentially achievable if regional trends extend into Fayette County. The following scenarios illustrate how La Grange's population might grow through 2060 if these opportunities are realized, contrasting with the conservative TWDB projections.

Figure 14. La Grange Growth Scenarios Line Graph

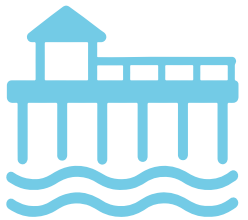


Opportunities



Regional Growth

La Grange is well positioned to capture population and economic growth moving southeast from Bastrop and along the SH 71 corridor. As nearby communities continue to urbanize and become less affordable, La Grange's relative affordability, small town charm and central location make it an increasingly attractive option for new residents and businesses.



River Access

The Colorado River serves as a key asset to expand recreation options and foster economic activity in the City. Enhancing public access and supporting river-oriented uses such as kayak rentals, outfitters, cafés and event venues can boost local tourism, provide new amenities for residents and attract more visitors to the area.



Infill and Redevelopment

Vacant lots, underutilized parcels and aging structures within the City create opportunities for strategic reinvestment. These sites can be redeveloped in a way that expands housing options, supports walkability and leverages existing infrastructure.

Constraints



Floodplains

Large portions of the City lie within the 100-year and 500-year floodplains, limiting where new growth can occur. The hazard of severe flooding can increase development costs, restrict certain uses, and require careful planning to ensure safety, resilience, and long-term viability in vulnerable areas.



Aging Built Environment

Much of La Grange's housing and infrastructure was built before 1980, resulting in a significant need for maintenance and modernization. Older homes, utility infrastructure and public buildings may contain hazardous materials such as lead or asbestos and may require major upgrades to meet current safety standards.



Limited Commercial Options

Residents have expressed a desire for more dining, big-box retail and family entertainment uses in La Grange. The limited commercial market pushes local spending to nearby communities and weakens the City's sales-tax base. Expanding and diversifying the commercial sector will help retain local spending, strengthen the tax base, and enhance residents' daily lives.

Future Land Use Plan

What is a Future Land Use Plan?

The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) is an essential tool for planning La Grange's future development. It outlines the intended land uses and growth patterns within the City, guiding decisions on zoning, housing, transportation, infrastructure and community amenities. This Plan provides a blueprint for development that meets the needs of residents while preserving the area's character and environmental assets. The FLUP consists of two key elements: the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and the accompanying land-use category descriptions.

Future Land Use Map

The FLUM included in this Plan illustrates the desired growth pattern expressed by La Grange's residents, business owners, civic organizations and other stakeholders. The FLUM, along with the land use descriptions and strategies in this chapter, will guide decision-making related to development, land use and growth.

It is important to note that the FLUM is not a zoning map. Instead, it provides a long-range framework that shapes future zoning decisions and guides day-to-day land use planning. The FLUM also helps the City manage growth and change by addressing future development, strengthening established neighborhoods and supporting revitalization efforts in central areas.

The FLUM is especially useful when:

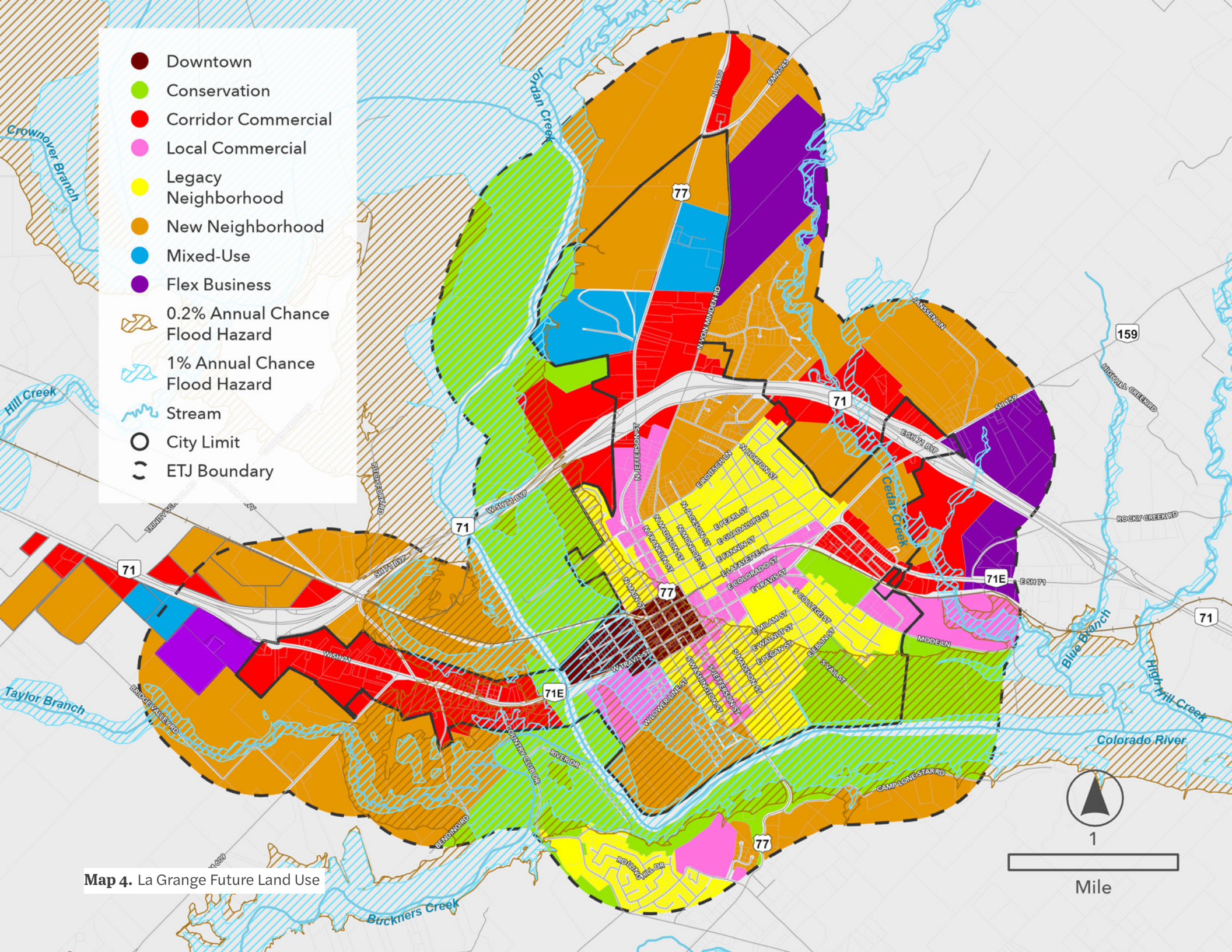
- Evaluating development proposals
- Coordinating infrastructure and transportation improvements
- Planning for parks, schools and public facilities
- Aligning growth with available utilities and natural topographic features
- Making updates to zoning and development regulations

Future Land Use Categories

The Future Land Use Plan identifies 8 land use categories ranging from single-family residential to flex business uses. Figure 15 illustrates the range of land use categories and their corresponding colors as shown on the FLUM.

Figure 15. Future Land Use Categories

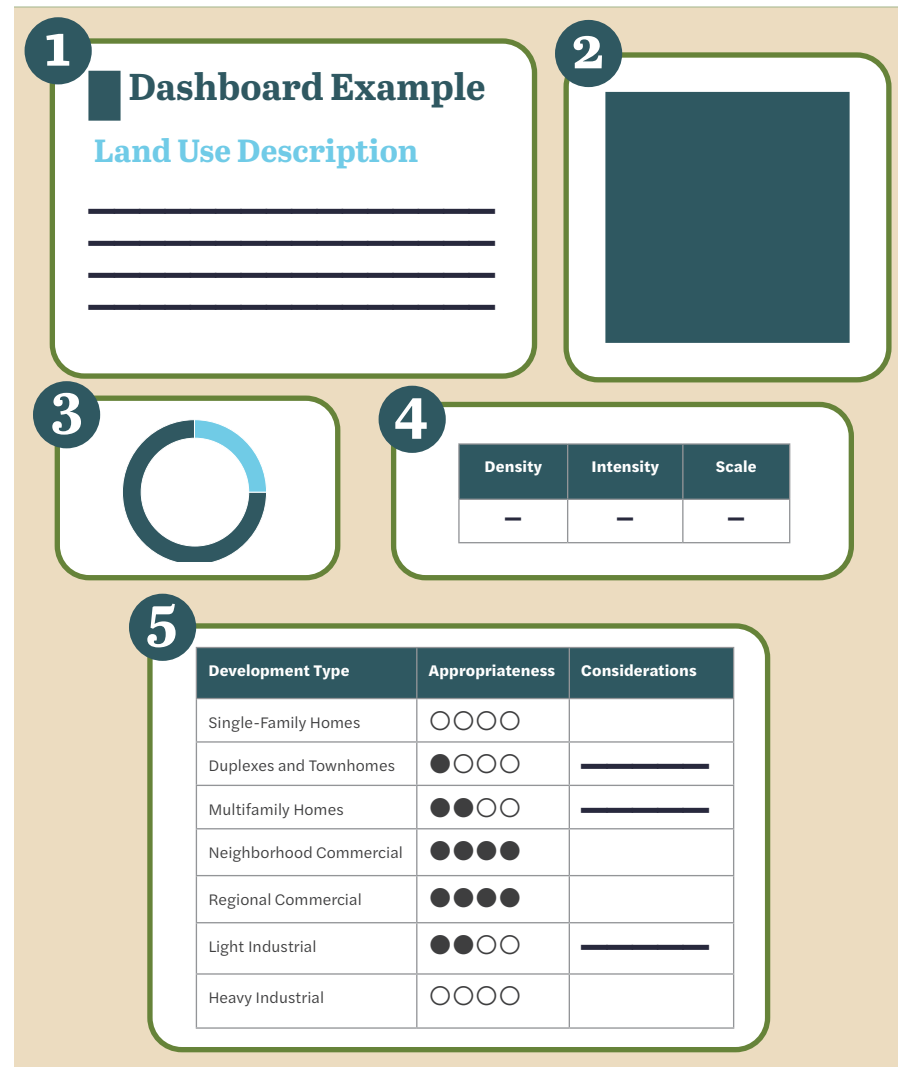
Future Land Use Categories		Total Acres	Projected Capacity (Residents)
	Downtown	94	2,181
	Conservation	1,570	851
	Corridor Commercial	1,076	15,034
	Local Commercial	364	5,086
	Legacy Neighborhood	622	5,793
	New Neighborhood	2,654	15,352
	Mixed-Use	233	4,883
	Flex Business	569	0
Population Estimate 2060: Low Scenario: 4,426 residents High Scenario: 12,560 residents		Maximum Land Use Capacity (Full Build Out): Approximately 49,181 residents	



Map 4. La Grange Future Land Use

Future Land Use Dashboards

Land Use Dashboards provide staff, appointed officials and elected representatives with a one-stop location for information related to the future land use categories established in the FLUM. The components of each dashboard are described in the following sections. Numbers assigned to each component may be referenced with the corresponding dashboard example.



1 Land Use Description

Each dashboard begins with a general description of the land use category, providing narrative details about the overall intent and land use make up of each category. The descriptions provide a framework for how each area is expected to develop or redevelop in the future. Each land use category will vary in development types, density, intensity and scale, as noted in the development ratio and appropriateness tables featured in the dashboard.

2 Visual Examples

Descriptions for each land use are accompanied by sample imagery to help visually demonstrate the category's look and feel. Photo examples are intended to provide visual representation of the type of development appropriate for the land use. These examples are not comprehensive and may not illustrate all appropriate uses.

3 Development Ratio

The development ratio dial provides guidance on the overall mix of residential to non-residential development types envisioned for the areas within the land use category. Parks and civic uses are considered appropriate across all land use categories and are not called out separately.

4 Density, Intensity and Scale

The recommended density, intensity (lot coverage), and scale for each land use category are shown beneath the development ratio dial. Density is measured in dwelling units per acre (DUA) and should guide land use decisions involving new or redeveloped housing. Intensity and scale should reflect a project's relationship to nearby buildings, particularly adjacent neighborhoods, where limiting the scale of non-residential structures may be appropriate. Scale is measured in stories, with one story equaling approximately 12–14 feet in height.

5 Development Types & Appropriateness Table

Within each appropriateness table, seven common development types are used to describe the compatible uses within each future land use category. Appropriate ranges are provided for each development type, on a scale of zero to four markers. Where there is no marker, it means a use should be prohibited within the land use category, whereas four markers indicate a use should likely be allowed by right. Where additional considerations related to the application of the development type within a land use category are necessary, additional clarifications are provided in the last column. A description of the different development types is provided below.

Single-Family Homes

Generally consist of detached dwelling units on individual lots. These homes are typically individually owned and may be constructed as standalone residences or as part of a larger neighborhood development.

Duplex and Townhomes

Duplexes include two dwelling units connected by at least one shared wall or arranged in a stacked configuration. They are similar in character and style to single-family homes. Townhomes are typically tall, narrow houses (often 2 to 3 stories) consisting of one unit on a small single lot and built up to the side property lines so that they share walls with adjacent townhome units.

Small Multifamily Homes

Buildings containing more than two individual dwelling units that typically accommodate multiple households within a single structure, such as condominiums or apartment complexes. Multi-family development represents the highest-density form of residential use and may include support facilities like parking garages and leasing offices. “Small” multi-family refers to more modestly scaled buildings designed to be compatible with surrounding lower-density residential areas.

Large Multifamily Homes

Similar to small multi-family, but in larger-scaled buildings that may include multiple structures arranged as a single complex, and that are generally less compatible with lower-density residential uses due to their scale and intensity

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood Commercial uses are located close to existing and anticipated residential subdivisions and offer residents the opportunity to buy goods and services conveniently. This type of development includes retail and offices intended to serve nearby residents.

Regional Commercial

Regional Commercial uses are usually located on major thoroughfares and include large employers such as big-box retailers. They are not appropriate in scale for local neighborhoods. This type of development includes retail and offices intended to serve a regional market.

Light Industrial

Development that provides a mix of commercial services, offices and business parks, light industrial uses, indoor manufacturing, technology, research and development, warehousing and related ancillary uses. Commercial services may vary in form and scale and may be compatible with retail and industrial uses depending on the context.

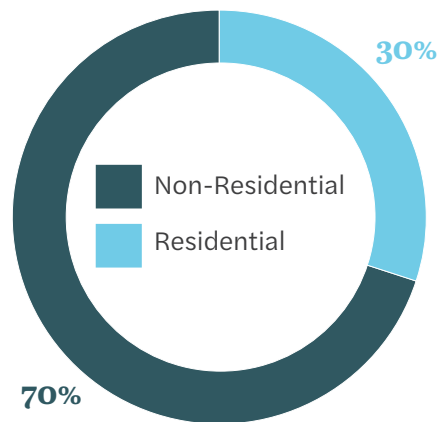
Open Space and Civic Uses

Open spaces range from parks to riparian buffers and serve both conservation and recreational purposes. Parks and open spaces promote social and physical well being and are an important part of the City’s infrastructure. Civic uses are public or semi-public facilities that serve the people of La Grange, such as libraries, recreation centers, schools, other government functions, churches, utility infrastructure, etc. Open space and civic uses are allowed in all land use categories. and so are not called out specifically in the appropriateness table.

Downtown

Land Use Description

Centered around the Fayette County Courthouse, Downtown is the historic heart of the City characterized by commercial and civic uses that transition into residential neighborhoods with opportunities for compatible infill and mixed-use development.



Density	Intensity	Scale
8-24 DUA	High	Mid
	100%	1-3 Stories

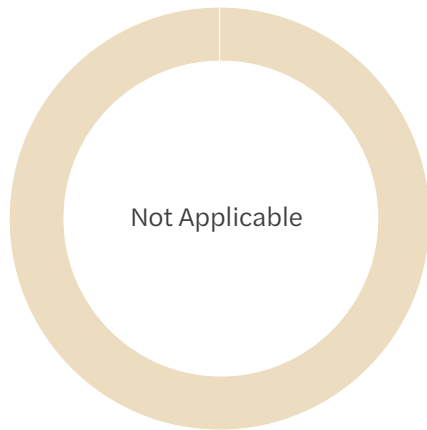


Development Type	Appropriateness	Considerations
Single-Family Homes	● ● ○ ○	May be appropriate if higher-density, small lot product integrated into the overall fabric of Downtown. Accessory dwelling units should be encouraged in this area.
Duplex and Townhomes	● ● ● ○	Most appropriate toward the fringe of the Downtown area as it transitions to legacy neighborhoods.
Small Multifamily Homes	● ● ● ○	Multifamily units are appropriate located above ground floor retail along primary frontage, and minimally on the bottom floor to accommodate accessibility needs.
Large Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Neighborhood Commercial	● ● ● ●	Focus on uses that activate the public realm, such as hospitality, small shops and restaurants, as well as cultural institutions.
Regional Commercial	○ ○ ○ ○	
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○ ○	

Conservation

Land Use Description

Land primarily located within floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas, intended for conservation of natural areas or agricultural uses to preserve natural resources and support compatible low-impact recreational or seasonal activities.



Density	Intensity	Scale
<0.2 DUA	Low < 10%, depending on floodplain regulations	Low 1-2 stories, exceptions for working agricultural uses

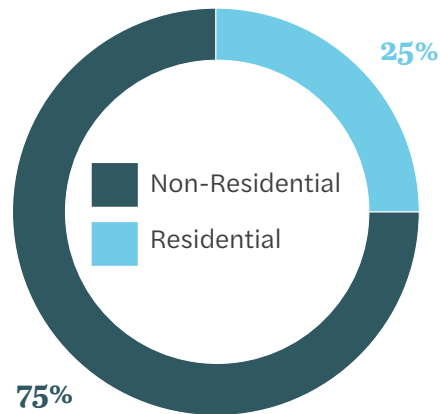


Development Type	Appropriateness	Considerations
Single-Family Homes	● ● ○ ○	Appropriate alongside agricultural uses and when located outside of the floodplain.
Duplex and Townhomes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Small Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Large Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Neighborhood Commercial	● ● ○ ○	Individual businesses serving surrounding agricultural, residential and recreational uses.
Regional Commercial	○ ○ ○ ○	
Light Industrial	● ● ○ ○	As needed for working agriculture uses.

Corridor Commercial

Land Use Description

Areas designated for regionally serving commercial uses, including big-box retail, auto-oriented businesses and other services along major highways and arterial corridors, with opportunities for higher density residential uses such as apartments.



Density	Intensity	Scale
24 to 60 DUA	Medium ≤ 80%	Mid 1-5 stories

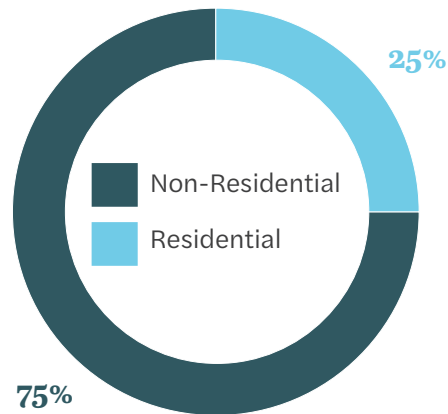


Development Type	Appropriateness	Considerations
Single-Family Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Duplex and Townhomes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Small Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Large Multifamily Homes	● ● ● ○	Apartment-style multifamily is most appropriate, and should be integrated to support associated commercial uses and provide convenience for residents.
Neighborhood Commercial	● ● ○ ○	Appropriate if at a similar scale as surrounding residential and commercial uses.
Regional Commercial	● ● ● ●	The primary intent of this land use category.
Light Industrial	● ● ○ ○	Light industrial should not generate nuisance to commercial or nearby residential uses. Placement along thoroughfares should consider design and aesthetics to support attractive gateways into the City.

Local Commercial

Land Use Description

Areas intended to serve nearby neighborhoods with small-scale retail, service, and commercial uses that meet daily needs of residents.



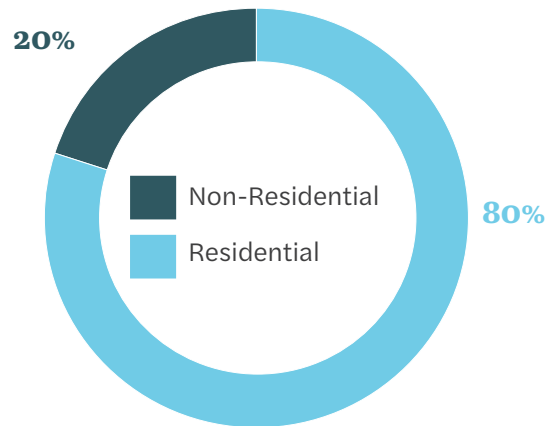
Density	Intensity	Scale
8 to 24 DUA	Medium ≤ 80%	Low 1-2 stories

Development Type	Appropriateness	Considerations
Single-Family Homes	● ● ● ○	Generally considered compatible with this land use category.
Duplex and Townhomes	● ● ● ○	Generally considered compatible with this land use category.
Small Multifamily Homes	● ● ● ○	Generally considered compatible with this land use category.
Large Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Neighborhood Commercial	● ● ● ●	The primary intent of this land use category.
Regional Commercial	● ● ○ ○	Only considered appropriate to provide commercial and retail options at a compatible scale, with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses.
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○ ○	

Legacy Neighborhood

Land Use Description

Established residential neighborhoods that are largely developed, with opportunities for infill, redevelopment, and compatible neighborhood-serving uses such as small-scale commercial services, apartments and civic uses.



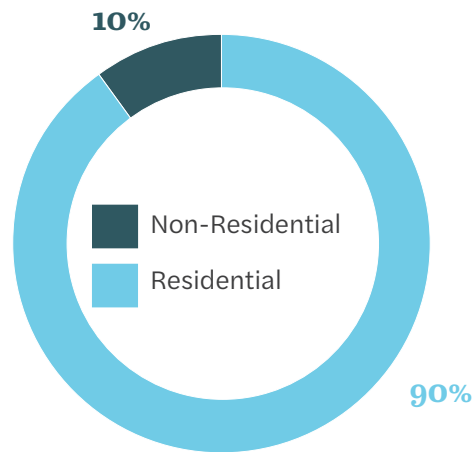
Density	Intensity	Scale
≤ 16 DUA	Medium	Low
	≤ 50%	1-2 stories

Development Type	Appropriateness	Considerations
Single-Family Homes	● ● ● ●	Accessory dwelling units are appropriate as a secondary use to single family homes.
Duplex and Townhomes	● ● ● ○	Generally appropriate for use as infill development.
Small Multifamily Homes	● ● ○ ○	Small-scale infill multi-unit buildings can be appropriate if in line with the scale and character of single-family homes.
Large Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Neighborhood Commercial	● ● ○ ○	Should be placed to support walkability, convenience, and cohesively integrated with the surrounding neighborhood. Especially appropriate if it's an adaptive reuse of an older home. Most appropriate at roadway intersections within neighborhoods.
Regional Commercial	○ ○ ○ ○	
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○ ○	

New Neighborhood

Land Use Description

Areas designated for new residential development on the City's periphery, intended to accommodate future population growth, with supporting small-scale commercial services and housing options ranging from low to high density.



Density	Intensity	Scale
≤ 10 DUA	Low	Low
	≤ 50%	1-2 stories

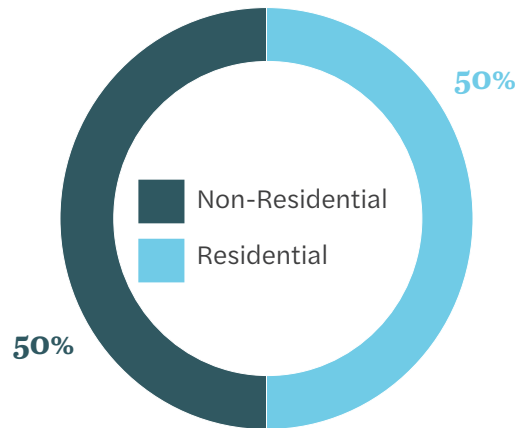


Development Type	Appropriateness	Considerations
Single-Family Homes	● ● ● ●	
Duplex and Townhomes	● ● ○ ○	Appropriate in limited quantities along major corridors as a transition between neighborhood commercial and single-family homes.
Small Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Large Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Neighborhood Commercial	● ● ○ ○	Appropriate if serving and in scale with surrounding residential neighborhoods. Most appropriate at major roadway intersections.
Regional Commercial	○ ○ ○ ○	
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○ ○	

Mixed-Use

Land Use Description

Areas that support an integrated mix of residential, commercial, and related uses designed to promote walkability and efficient land use, including entertainment, hospitality, parks and residential components.



Density	Intensity	Scale
≤ 45 DUA	Medium	Mid
	≤ 80%	2-5 stories

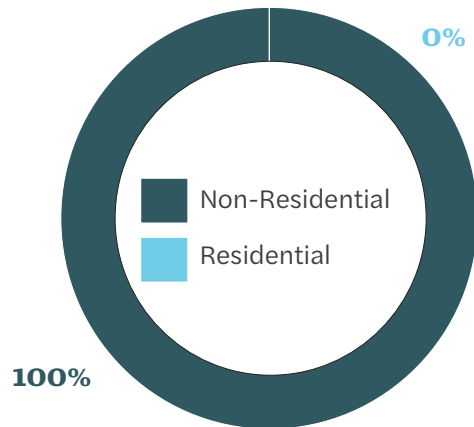


Development Type	Appropriateness	Considerations
Single-Family Homes	● ○ ○ ○	Appropriate in limited situations as part of a wider mixed use vision and with higher density single-family products.
Duplex and Townhomes	● ● ○ ○	Most appropriate at the edges when transitioning into other uses.
Small Multifamily Homes	● ● ● ○	This can be appropriate provided that the overall area also contains mixed-use buildings and/or shopping centers with which this product integrates in a manner to promote walkability and access. Can be utilized as a transition between other uses.
Large Multifamily Homes	● ● ● ●	Most appropriate if in a vertical mixed-use building with commercial space on the ground floor.
Neighborhood Commercial	● ● ● ●	Most appropriate as a ground floor use within a vertically mixed use building.
Regional Commercial	● ● ● ○	May be appropriate if it is at the same scale as surrounding neighborhood commercial uses and supports a walkable environment. Hospitality uses may also be suitable.
Light Industrial	● ○ ○ ○	Can be appropriate if particularly small in scale and included alongside more appropriate development types and does not produce any nuisances

Flex Business

Land Use Description

Areas designated for business parks, flex office, warehousing, light manufacturing, or R&D type activities, while also accommodating compatible commercial uses.



Density	Intensity	Scale
0 DUA	High ≤ 80%	Low 1-2 stories, should be flexible to accommodate industrial floorplates needs

Development Type	Appropriateness	Considerations
Single-Family Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	Not considered appropriate, as this district can contain uses and businesses that may be considered a nuisance to residents, such as noise and truck traffic.
Duplex and Townhomes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Small Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Large Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○ ○	
Neighborhood Commercial	● ○ ○ ○	Overall appropriate; retail and services such as restaurants, lodging, etc. that cater to the needs of the workers and businesses in this area should be encouraged.
Regional Commercial	● ● ● ○	
Light Industrial	● ● ● ●	

Managing Development in Hazard Areas

Existing Development in Hazard Areas

Substantial portions of La Grange contain homes, businesses and infrastructure built prior to modern floodplain mapping or updated development regulations. For these already developed areas located within flood zones, the City will need to pursue a combination of risk-reduction, adaptation and long-term transition strategies.

Mitigation Measures for Existing Development

- Elevate structures as redevelopment happens so that finished floors sit above the base flood elevation, including additional freeboard for added protection.
- Use dry or wet floodproofing techniques for non-residential buildings, such as anchoring structures, adding waterproofing methods and installing protective barriers.
- Improve on-site stormwater management through bioswales, rain gardens and enhanced conveyance systems.
- Pursue voluntary property buyouts to convert the highest-risk parcels back to conservation land uses.
- Offer relocation incentives such as impact-fee reductions or density bonuses in safer infill areas.
- Support adaptive reuse or partial redevelopment that reduces impervious cover, reduces people living in floodplains and increases open space within hazard-prone areas.
- Consider major flood-prevention infrastructure, such as levees or similar protective systems, to safeguard existing development located within floodplains.

New Development in Hazard Areas

The Future Land Use Plan aims to steer new development away from hazard areas, however some land uses may intersect with mapped floodplains. Developments proposed in hazard-prone areas must avoid the highest-risk portions of the site, use flood-resilient construction techniques, provide strong natural buffers and stormwater control and limit development intensity where risks remain. Areas that cannot be safely developed should be preserved as open space or riparian corridors to support long-term resilience and reduce people residing in floodplains.

Mitigation Measures for New Development

- Elevate finished floors above the base flood elevation with additional freeboard to reduce future flood risk.
- Use flood-resilient construction methods, including reinforced foundations, flood-resistant materials, and protected mechanical systems.
- Place buildings, utilities, and roadways outside the most hazardous parts of a site whenever feasible.
- Preserve and expand natural buffers such as riparian corridors, wetlands, and vegetated open spaces to reduce flooding and erosion.
- Incorporate stormwater systems that capture and slow runoff, including bioswales, detention basins, native landscaping, and permeable surfaces.
- Maintain safe and reliable emergency access during hazard events by designing routes that remain passable during floods or other disruptions.
- Ensure development does not increase flood risk to nearby properties by providing adequate storage, drainage improvements, and no-rise conditions where required.
- Integrate long-term resilience into site layout and architectural design to reduce vulnerability over the life of the development.



Riverfront condos, San Marcos, TX