

# Nacogdoches Comprehensive Plan Update

## Land Use

## CHAPTER 5

The purpose of the Land Use element is to provide a framework for individual land use decisions, both in government and the private sector, and thereby ensure the orderly growth and development of Nacogdoches in the coming decades. Quality development is another desired outcome of long-range land use planning.

The element includes a new Future Land Use Plan, which is a graphic representation of the City's desired long-term growth pattern. The Future Land Use map is supported by goals and objectives plus more specific policy statements regarding the community's ongoing growth and development. All of these tools will serve as the basis for development review recommendations and decisions and potential adjustments to the City's development-related ordinances and growth management policies.

Truly comprehensive planning requires coordination of the various elements of urbanization: land use, transportation, utility infrastructure, parks, community facilities, public services, housing, economic development, and so on. Other valued items must also be considered during the land use planning process, such as historic preservation, environmental protection and community aesthetics and beautification. The Land Use element is linked to every other element of the Comprehensive Plan, and particularly to the Housing and Neighborhoods element with regard to the protection and promotion of quality neighborhood settings in Nacogdoches.

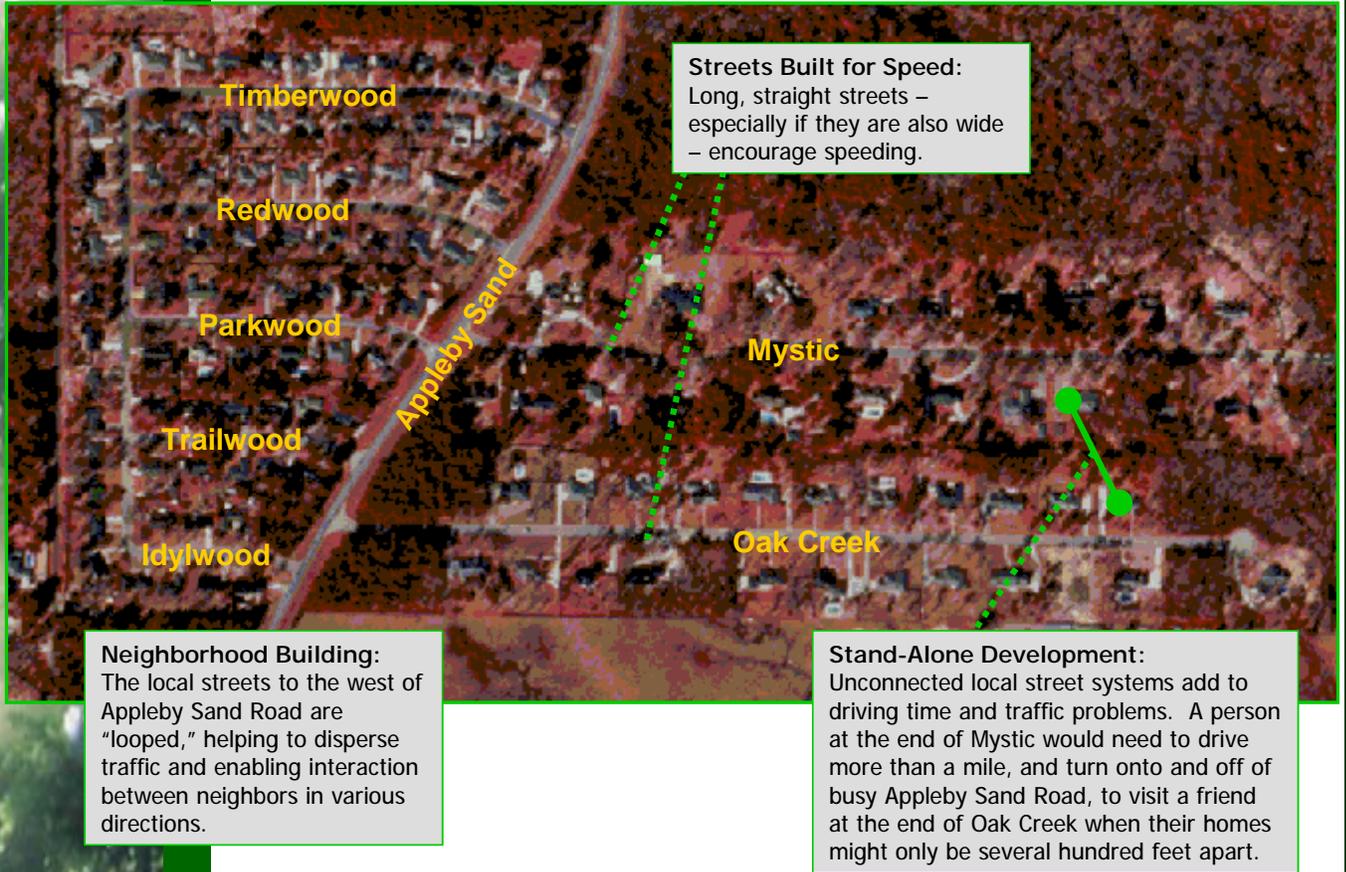
### Key Issues

Review of current conditions and trends, previous plans and studies, and community input brought to the forefront a set of key issues regarding existing and future land use in and around Nacogdoches. These issues

were assembled into several broad categories that provide the basis for Land Use goals, objectives and actions, as well as the Future Land Use Plan map later in this chapter.

- ◆ **Growing Inward** – While growth slowed in Nacogdoches during the 1990s, much of the growth that did occur, particularly on the residential side, was outside the city limits or toward the fringe of the existing developed city. Given the extent of undeveloped land inside the city, such a pattern suggests that development opportunities within the city limits are being bypassed for various reasons. In the process, demand for public infrastructure and services is shifting geographically and emerging in new locations, challenging both the City and County to respond in a timely and cost-effective manner. As in many other suburbanizing communities, considerable duplication of services is likely resulting as further road miles must be constructed and maintained, water and sewer lines extended, and police, fire and emergency medical services stretched to cover ever larger service areas.
- ◆ **Building Neighborhoods** – Nacogdoches has wonderful examples of strong, established neighborhoods with interconnected street systems, convenient access to schools and parks, and stable, quality housing. Unfortunately, as in many communities, some newer areas have been built in a stand-alone fashion and without some essential elements that turn a subdivision into a true neighborhood. As highlighted in **Figure 5.1**, long, wide and straight streets set the stage for speeding vehicles and eventually lead to calls for speed humps and other “traffic calming” measures. Unconnected street systems, and wide separation of residential and commercial areas, means that most every part of the daily routine requires extended vehicle trips, adding to traffic woes across the city. A strong, unceasing commitment to code enforcement and effective zoning implementation is also necessary to protect older neighborhoods even as newly-developing areas are being built.
- ◆ **Supporting Economic Development** – An important task for long-range land use planning is to protect and enhance the community’s existing economic assets – downtown, the university area, and local medical facilities, among others – while also preparing to accommodate future developments that will boost local employment and income. Some establishments will require large, relatively flat sites with maximum transportation access and utility capacity. Others will be drawn primarily by a city with quality neighborhoods, cultural and recreational pursuits, and retail shopping opportunities. The key is to ensure that the Future Land Use Plan is consistent with and supportive of the community’s economic aspirations.
- ◆ **Avoiding Undesirable Development Outcomes** – Nacogdoches has the opportunity to avoid and/or minimize development patterns and trends that have saddled other communities with excessive service demands relative to their tax base, ever-increasing traffic problems, and unattractive corridors and gateways into the community. The south entry into town, along U.S. 59, has already followed a “strip development” pattern that creates traffic safety headaches, leads to more concrete than green along the corridor, and leaves little hope for a walkable environment. As a hub

**FIGURE 5.1**  
**Implications of Street System Design**  
 Nacogdoches Comprehensive Plan Update  
 Nacogdoches, Texas



for the regional highway network, Nacogdoches has many other less intensely developed corridors around the city where a more efficient and attractive development pattern can still be achieved. In addition, just as communities nation-wide are trying to avoid the adverse effects of “urban sprawl,” Nacogdoches must also be careful that major location decisions, such as the development of new schools or publicly-financed housing or economic development projects, do not contribute to sprawl development patterns but instead become anchors for future, neighborhood-focused development.

### Goals, Objectives and Actions

The goals, objectives and action steps outlined in this element of the Nacogdoches Comprehensive Plan Update are based on traditional urban planning principles as well as input from community residents and leaders during the planning process. These principles establish a framework in which land development and redevelopment practices are more likely to result in an economically vital, fiscally responsible, environmentally aware, and more livable community. The desired result is well-managed, orderly growth that enhances residents' quality of life. The goals, objectives and actions appear in no particular priority order.

## *Growing Inward*

**Goal:** Long-term growth in appropriate areas to achieve an efficient, diverse and balanced pattern of land uses both within the City and urbanizing portions of its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

### Objectives

- ◆ Promote growth where adequate infrastructure exists.
- ◆ Encourage infill development where appropriate (utilities, compatibility, etc.).
- ◆ Ensure that development within targeted growth areas will not reduce the adequacy of public facilities and services.
- ◆ Coordinate the location, type and density of land use activity with utilities and transportation planning to ensure desired development outcomes.
- ◆ Plan for mixing and/or separation of land use types based on desired, location, density and pattern of development.
- ◆ Undertake annexation and extension of services in a coordinated and timely manner to protect public interest and assure continued orderly growth and development.
- ◆ Annex key growth areas when and where appropriate.

### Actions

- Maintain Future Land Use Plan consistent with development trends and patterns.
- Identify targeted, preferred growth areas just beyond the existing city limits (through utility extension planning, advance parkland and school site acquisition, Thoroughfare Plan implementation, annexation planning).
- Monitor changes in land use allocation over time relative to Future Land Use Plan.
- Review zoning and other development ordinances to ensure they support infill strategies and desired land use intensities and patterns.
- Adopt infill/redevelopment incentives (flexibility in development regulations, waiver of development fees, direct grants, tax incentives).
- Offer tax incentives or other financial participation for infill and/or redevelopment projects.
- Begin incremental implementation of long-term annexation strategy, both through landowner-requested as well as City-initiated annexations.
- Prepare a formal Annexation Plan as required by state statute, including necessary service planning and coordination with utility/infrastructure plans.
- Use capital improvements planning to focus road and utility upgrades in preferred growth, infill and redevelopment areas.
- Utilize capital cost recovery techniques to capture the true cost of development (e.g., impact fees).
- Consider "Adequate Public Facility" provisions to ensure infrastructure concurrent with new development.
- Maintain communications with major ETJ landowners (and new subdivisions) regarding future development plans, service provision, and annexation potential.

- Offer incentives or financial/technical assistance for rehabilitation of substandard buildings.

### ***Building Neighborhoods***

**Goal:** A variety of safe, high-quality residential areas that meet the needs of Nacogdoches residents.

#### Objectives

- ◆ Provide suitable areas for a variety of residential types and densities.
- ◆ Preserve the character of existing neighborhoods, and ensure that future neighborhoods live up to this standard.

#### Actions

- Identify appropriate residential development areas on Future Land Use Plan (site suitability, access, utilities).
- Include neighborhood conservation provisions in zoning (residential buffering, performance standards, protection against encroaching incompatible uses).
- Establish open space easements and/or linear parks and trails around residential areas.
- Coordinate City, County and school district facilities planning and land acquisition (joint school/park opportunities).
- Create guidelines for more effective design of local street networks (interconnection, appropriate cross sections and layout to reduce speeding potential and avoid "cut-through" traffic).
- Encourage neighborhood-scale retail and service establishments in or near major new residential developments at the city's edge.
- Take advantage of the sketch plan and conceptual subdivision design phase to encourage effective and creative development planning.
- Develop sidewalk and crosswalk requirements/standards.
- Extend trail systems and linear park linkages through new development.
- Coordinate with SFA regarding development plans and benefits/impacts to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Enforce codes to eliminate health and safety risks (and continued removal of unsafe/substandard structures when necessary).
- Aggressively enforce and monitor deed restrictions plus new/revived neighborhood restrictions in areas where they have lapsed or never existed.
- Address any gaps in infrastructure and public service standards in existing neighborhoods, and ensure their provision in new developments (streets, sidewalks, neighborhood parks, street lighting, drainage, traffic control, neighborhood policing and fire protection, etc.).
- Screen residential areas from highways and major thoroughfares.
- Allow for Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) approaches that can involve higher densities, narrower local streets, walkability, mixing of land uses, neighborhood focal points, and themed development.
- Explore options in lieu of parkland dedication requirements through the subdivision process.

## *Supporting Economic Development*

**Goal:** Vibrant and viable commercial and industrial areas, supported by a quality community offering many assets and opportunities for economic development.

### Objectives

- ◆ Designate areas that can support industrial development in the Future Land Use Plan and zoning map (transportation access, adequate utilities, protection of residential areas).
- ◆ Expand upon existing commercial and industrial development nodes, appropriately separated or buffered from residential areas.



- ◆ Preserve and enhance downtown character and economic investment.
- ◆ Highlight quality neighborhoods as a prerequisite for economic development.

### Actions

- Extend/upgrade utilities and roadways to prime locations for potential development (through CIP, economic development sales tax funds).
- Rezone key areas designated for growth or preservation.
- Provide economic development incentives and expansion/relocation assistance for existing businesses.
- Provide for clustering of small businesses within industrial areas.
- Locate major commercial and industrial activities along roadways with the greatest traffic-handling capacity.
- Identify locations for future commercial development clusters (versus scattered and/or "strip" development).
- Review zoning and other development ordinances (appropriate regulations and districts to keep older commercial areas viable, encourage redevelopment, ensure quality new development).

- Encourage more mixed-use, live/work development opportunities downtown and in other appropriate areas.
- Attract specific desired uses (retail, cinema, entertainment, etc.) through targeted recruiting, incentives and/or other means.
- Review Central Business District (B-3) zone for potential adjustments or enhancements.
- Coordinate with SFA and major existing businesses and developments regarding long-term development/expansion plans, needed improvements, and viability issues.
- Ensure quality development through industrial development standards (outside storage, parking/loading areas, landscaping, lighting).

### *Avoiding Undesirable Development Outcomes*

**Goal:** High-quality development that respects community character and the natural environment and does not overburden public services and infrastructure.

#### Objectives

- ◆ Manage development along highways and major thoroughfares (transportation efficiency and safety, aesthetics).
- ◆ Ensure compatible development when differing land use types or intensities are located in close proximity.
- ◆ Assure the quality of development in both residential and non-residential areas.
- ◆ Coordinate future development with the physical environment to preserve and protect natural features.
- ◆ Require pedestrian-friendly design in new development and redevelopment.



#### Actions

- Establish corridor overlay districts through zoning.
- Develop access management regulations or guidelines/standards for highways and major thoroughfares.
- Buffer residential areas as part of the Future Land Use Plan.
- Review and amend the City's development ordinances and zoning map to reflect the Future Land Use Plan.
- Provide for transitions in land use intensity through the Future Land Use Plan and zoning map.
- Use the Environment and Natural Resources chapter and accompanying map to remain aware of areas with potential development constraints (floodplains, soils, slopes, etc.).

- Propose a future bond issue devoted to land acquisition for parks, trails and/or open space preservation.
- Purchase and remove structures in flood-prone areas.
- Establish additional access points to area creeks and trails, coordinated with nearby development projects.
- Use public projects (schools, libraries, community centers, etc.) as “anchors” for newly-developing or redeveloping areas.
- Remove regulatory constraints to more compact, clustered, mixed-use development in appropriate areas.
- Continue stringent floodplain management regulation and practices.
- Establish incentives for joint access, shared parking and coordinated development planning.
- Create design guidelines/standards for use in designated residential and non-residential districts.
- Encourage/participate in land assembly and redevelopment efforts along older corridors (e.g., North Street).
- Enact effective subdivision regulations in the ETJ to ensure that infrastructure meets City standards.
- Take advantage of the sketch plan and conceptual design phase to encourage effective and creative development planning.
- Utilize Planned Development (PD) provisions under zoning to encourage quality developments.
- Encourage deed restrictions/covenants for commercial and industrial developments.
- Maintain high standards of site maintenance and appearance at City properties and facilities.
- Provide incentives/assistance for existing businesses to come up to the standards of more recent developments and ordinance requirements.
- Under zoning, subdivision and other development regulations, allow for the use of cluster development and large-scale preservation of open space in accordance with conservation subdivision techniques.

### **Existing Land Use and Development**

An inventory of existing land use is a basic data collection activity that is necessary to understand the various ways land is currently utilized and the location, pattern and extent of development both within the corporate limits of Nacogdoches as well as the surrounding extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Such an inventory was conducted for this Comprehensive Plan Update in late Summer and Fall 2002, involving extensive field work across the area as well as use of recent aerial imagery of Nacogdoches County. Land use information outside the city limits, and in relatively undeveloped portions of the City, is more generalized given the lesser extent of urbanization to date.

The existing land use inventory is an essential input to future land use planning. This information helps to either confirm the desire for continuation of current development trends or help to build consensus for new or enhanced development styles and patterns.

#### ***Development Pattern***

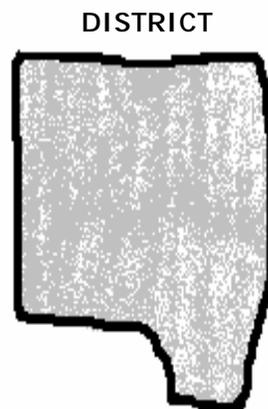
To begin the transition from existing land use analysis to future land use planning, a widely-used method for evaluating community layout and activity patterns was

applied to Nacogdoches. This method involves five elements identified by Kevin Lynch, a renowned urban planner and keen observer of effective community design:

- ◆ **Paths.** Paths are channels for residents and visitors to travel from one destination to another. These may include roads, sidewalks, waterways, or railroads. Paths create the framework of the community on which all other components fit. Examples of paths in Nacogdoches include North Street, Loop 224, La Nana Creek Trail, FM 225 between town and Lake Nacogdoches, and the rail lines that cross the City. On a smaller scale, paths include the local and collector streets within various neighborhoods.

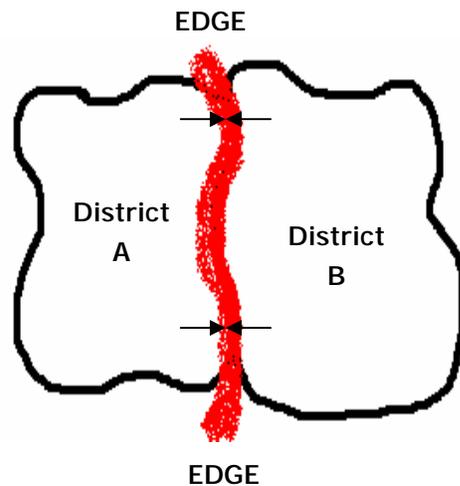


- ◆ **Districts.** Districts are identifiable areas within a community or neighborhood. Each has a distinct character that is separate from other areas that people enter and leave as they travel along various paths. That character is generally physical and can be as simple as a stark change in land use, such as an industrial district, or a transition in development styles. Within a community, neighborhoods can function as districts or can be combined into larger "residential districts." Within Nacogdoches, district examples include the historic downtown area and the Stephen F. Austin State University campus and vicinity.



- ◆ **Nodes.** Nodes are significant destinations where people eventually arrive. They primarily include focused concentrations of land uses, a major feature (perhaps at the intersection of several paths), or any other location or event that commonly draws individuals together. For communitywide analysis, a node may include such destinations as the Medical Center, A. L. Mangham Jr. Regional Airport, or Nacogdoches High School and football stadium. At the neighborhood level, a node may include more local destinations such as Maroney Park, Fredonia Elementary School, or a neighborhood grocery store. Some features of the community may fall into several categories, such as downtown and SFA being both Districts and Nodes.

- ◆ **Edges.** Edges are the distinct ending of one area and, if well designed, the obvious beginning of another. An edge is always a physical presence, such as where a residential neighborhood abuts a non-residential district, but it can also include a social perception of boundaries. Some edges within Nacogdoches include the various boundaries of the SFA campus, the combination of University Drive and La Nana Creek in the center of



town, and stretches where the U.S. 59 bypass is built to limited-access freeway standards. On the neighborhood level, railroads and long, uninterrupted fence lines can form edges. These physical elements provide very definite borders. Sometimes the activities on either side of an edge are not compatible, leading to problematic *edge conditions*. Managing edge conditions is a major focus of city planning and development regulations. Edges should not be confused with gateways, which are limited to high-profile entries and exit points.

- ◆ **Landmarks.** Landmarks are focal points. They help to orient the resident or visitor within the community or neighborhood, and they often imprint a mental image of an area. The impact of a landmark, however, depends not on its magnitude but its uniqueness. In urban areas such as Nacogdoches, a landmark may include a major monument or structure or an obvious feature, such as the Old Stone Fort, various tall church steeples, or the Old University Building. In a more rural setting, items such as a barn, large house, an unusual sign, or even a particularly recognizable tree can become landmarks.



LANDMARK

Nacogdoches has its own unique versions of these city “building blocks.” Their location and nature are determined by the community’s historical development pattern as well as the needs and desires of its residents. A general depiction of these physical features was prepared during the comprehensive planning process as a hand-drawn sketch map, which is on file with the City of Nacogdoches Planning Department and was instrumental in drafting the Future Land Use and Thoroughfare Plans.

### *Expectations for Ongoing Growth and Development*

In advance of preparing a new Future Land Use Plan for Nacogdoches, the following anticipated trends and features of ongoing urban development in the area were considered:

- ◆ Continued commercial and office development along Loop 224 (and a potential new development focus in the area of the new middle school).
- ◆ Continued strength of medical-related development around Nacogdoches Medical Center and Memorial Hospital.
- ◆ Continued non-residential development along the U.S. 59 west bypass.
- ◆ Continued vitality of downtown (More residential occupancy? More entertainment activities?).



- ◆ Potential for long-term redevelopment and enhancement of the North Street corridor (as was discussed by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee using Figure 5.2).
- ◆ Industrial development focus on the City's north side.
- ◆ Gradual attraction of development to the West Austin Street corridor.
- ◆ Continued residential development activity outside the existing city limits, particularly along Appleby Sand Road and Loop 224.
- ◆ Increased demand for affordable off-campus student housing with renewed enrollment growth at Stephen F. Austin State University.
- ◆ Continued potential for "strip" development along the major corridors leading in and out of Nacogdoches.
- ◆ Continued challenge of housing conditions and neighborhood quality in older, lower-income areas of Nacogdoches.
- ◆ More aggressive trail system development and linking of parks.
- ◆ An amphitheatre/festival park or other major public improvement near downtown that periodically draws many residents and visitors to the area.
- ◆ Continued challenge of neighborhood integrity in areas with greater student presence.
- ◆ Potential for larger master-planned developments, especially for retirement-age population.

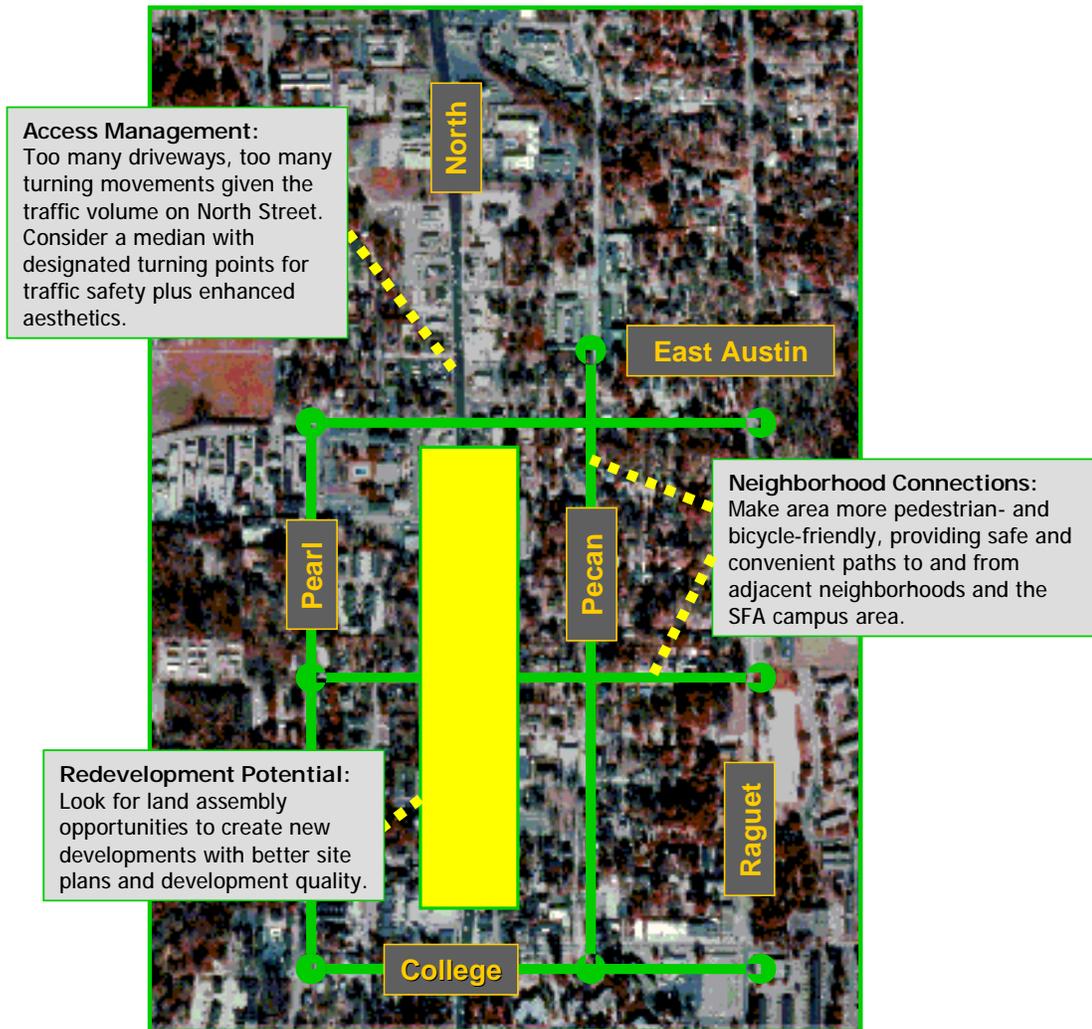
## Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan, as displayed in Figure 5.3, is the City's general guide for managing growth in terms of the location, type, scale and density of land development and redevelopment. One purpose of the Future Land Use Plan is to capture and build into City policies and regulations the community's values regarding how, when and where Nacogdoches should develop in the future. This is significant since the findings and recommendations contained in the City's Comprehensive Plan provide the legal basis for various development ordinances, which are the major tools available for implementing the City's plan and achieving an efficient and desirable land use pattern. The plan also includes considerations related to the City's future annexation policy and planning.

However, the generalized plan map does not constitute zoning regulations nor establish zoning districts. The graphic representation on the Future Land Use Plan map is intended only to help the City's elected and appointed officials and residents visualize the desired future land development pattern in the community. It is not a rigid, parcel-specific mandate for how land shall be developed. When proposed development differs somewhat from the generalized land use pattern depicted for an area, it is the responsibility of the Planning and Zoning Commission, supported by City staff, to determine whether the development will otherwise be in keeping with the goals and objectives of the City's Comprehensive Plan, as well as the Land Use Policies included later in this chapter.

In considering potential amendments to the Future Land Use Plan, evaluation factors should include the appropriateness of the use for the proposed site in terms of compatibility with surrounding land uses, utilities availability and system impacts, potential drainage concerns and storm water management needs, and

**FIGURE 5.2**  
**North Street Corridor Enhancement**  
 Nacogdoches Comprehensive Plan Update  
 Nacogdoches, Texas



traffic and parking impacts. For example, since the location and timing of apartment development is highly market-driven and difficult to reflect on the Future Land Use Plan map, a proposed multi-family residential development could receive a favorable review even if the potential site is not depicted as such on the general plan map. This plan element also highlights the buffering and neighborhood protection measures that should be applied to all such developments to ensure land use compatibility.

**Land Use Classifications**

The land use categories displayed on the Future Land Use Plan differ from the City's Official Zoning District Map. The categories are intentionally different to avoid confusion since the land use map is solely for planning guidance and is not the equivalent of the City's adopted zoning map. The following categories are used in Figure 5.3:

- ◆ Single-Family Residential (Yellow): Conventional one-family detached dwellings (also includes duplexes).
- ◆ Multi-Family Residential (Orange): Attached dwellings with three or more units, including apartments, townhouses, condominiums, patio homes, rooming/ boarding houses, and nursing homes and assisted-living developments.



- ◆ Commercial (Red): Shopping and service facilities for the sale of goods and services, including small shops and larger retail stores and centers, restaurants, hotels and motels, service stations, and various other customer-oriented establishments. Also stand-alone offices as well as larger office buildings and planned developments (such as “business parks”) involving professional and administrative functions versus retail sales activities. Also appropriate for places of worship and other non-government facilities where people frequently gather (private schools, lodges, meeting halls).
- ◆ Industrial (Purple): Lower-intensity manufacturing and/or assembly/warehousing/distribution/maintenance of products. Also larger-scale manufacturing and/or processing/distribution activities, often accompanied by outdoor activity areas or storage.
- ◆ Public (Blue): Government buildings, offices, facilities and non-park properties (including public cemeteries) and public schools and other institutions (university campus).
- ◆ Central City Mixed Use (Brown): Central core of the City, in and around the traditional downtown, where a mix of retail, office, residential and public uses is permitted and encouraged subject to development and compatibility standards.

- ◆ Parks and Recreation (Dark Green): Public parks and trails, other public and private recreation areas and facilities, golf courses, and undeveloped reserves and greenways.
- ◆ Rural Development (Light Green): Sparsely-populated areas with limited development that are still distinct from more urbanized areas. This typically encompasses relatively large tracts of unsubdivided land used for agriculture, forestry, resource extraction, widely-scattered homesteads and business establishments, natural open space, or activities not requiring permanent structures or improvements. Also includes areas that are gradually transitioning into urban uses and development.

### *Key Features of the Future Land Use Plan*

Some highlights and priorities of the new Future Land Use Plan include:

- ◆ Ensuring adequate acreage in appropriate locations for a range of needed housing types, from single-family residential to multi-family developments (including development potential along the West Austin Street corridor and near the new middle school on the southeast side; upper University Drive and Park Street for additional higher-density housing; and, around existing developed neighborhoods to minimize scattered, stand-alone subdivision development).
- ◆ Reducing the “strip commercial” potential along the City’s major roadway corridors compared to the 1994 plan and the current zoning map, instead encouraging clusters and nodes of commercial development within convenient distance of residential population concentrations and at major highway interchanges (this will also avoid “dilution” of the City’s existing commercial districts, such as the North Street and University Drive corridors as well as the Central Business District downtown).
- ◆ Encouraging a vibrant and walkable Central City area that includes a mix of compatible retail, office, residential and public uses while preserving the traditional character of downtown and protecting nearby residential neighborhoods from encroachment and adverse impacts.
- ◆ Making a significant commitment to planned industrial development by designating substantial acreage on the north and south sides of the City, close to major highways and rail access, for industrial park uses and light industrial development.
- ◆ Expanding the City’s parks and trails system to serve a growing population and newer residential development as outlined in more detail in the Parks and Recreation element (and protecting the 100-year floodplain from further urban encroachment whenever possible).
- ◆ Classifying significant acreage within the city limits as Rural Development to preserve environmental resources and maintain a reserve of vacant land and green open space within the incorporated city, particularly where development and utility extension constraints are greatest.
- ◆ Keeping as much future, urban-scale residential development within or near the Loop as possible versus mostly low-density, truly “rural development” in the ETJ.

The scope of the Comprehensive Plan study did not allow for the same detailed scrutiny of existing and projected population and land use in the Nacogdoches ETJ and long-range planning area as was completed for the city limits and existing developed areas. However, the plan recognizes that some unincorporated portions of Nacogdoches County are experiencing steady population growth as indicated by increased traffic and the pace of subdivision and land development activity. More detailed study of future land use in the larger planning area will occur as the Comprehensive Plan is updated over time to keep pace with the City's growth and in preparation for future annexation initiatives.

The application of the City's zoning authority over an expanded area through municipal annexation activities is the most direct means of regulating the long-term development pattern in areas currently outside the City's jurisdiction. In the meantime, and given the more challenging annexation situation for Texas cities since passage of Senate Bill 89 in 1999 by the Texas Legislature, the City can exert some influence through its subdivision review authority in the ETJ, utility extension and capacity financing policies, capital improvement strategy, and through ongoing coordination and communication with property owners and potential developers regarding the City's outlook and intentions. Even though formal land use plans are much more difficult to accomplish in areas outside the corporate limits, it is prudent to attempt to guide how such areas will develop to plan effectively for the future extension of public services and infrastructure improvements and to encourage high-quality, sustainable development in areas that could eventually be incorporated into the community.

## Land Use Policies

Communities across the country are attempting to achieve "Smart Growth." While the name is somewhat new, this is really nothing more than the fundamentals of sound urban planning. A community can grow sensibly by balancing economic development and environmental protection, focusing new development where public services and utilities are already available, actively supporting redevelopment of older areas and vacant buildings, valuing its traditional downtown and vibrant mixed-use areas, maintaining an efficient street network and infrastructure systems, providing convenient neighborhood shopping and attractive parks, and ensuring pedestrian-friendly commercial districts and walking connections between neighborhoods, parks and schools. Through effective land use planning and urban design, a city fulfills its paramount responsibility to promote the public health, safety and welfare while also providing predictability in the development process.

Policies serve as a guide and reference for planning officials and City staff and should be utilized when making decisions regarding future development within the City and ETJ. In particular, policies should be utilized in implementing goals, objectives and actions, and in reviewing zoning classification changes or amendments to the land use plan. The following policy statements reflect sound land use planning practices and are intended to supplement the Future Land Use Plan map.

### *In General*

- ◆ Neighboring land uses should not detract from the enjoyment or value of properties.

- ◆ Potential negative land use impacts (noise, odor, pollution, excessive light, traffic, etc.) should be considered and minimized.
- ◆ Transportation access and circulation should be provided for uses that generate large numbers of trips. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be addressed where appropriate.
- ◆ Compatibility with existing uses should be maintained. Well planned, mixed uses which are compatible are to be encouraged.
- ◆ Floodplain areas should not be encroached upon by future development unless there is compliance with stringent floodplain management practices. These areas should be used for parks or recreational or related purposes, or for agricultural uses.
- ◆ Environmentally-sensitive areas should be protected, including wildlife habitat areas and topographically constrained areas within the floodplain.

### *Residential*

- ◆ Schools, parks and community facilities should be located close to or within residential neighborhoods.
- ◆ Residential areas should not be next to industrial areas.
- ◆ Residential and commercial areas may be adjacent if separated by a buffer.
- ◆ Houses should have direct access to residential streets but not to primary streets.
- ◆ Houses should not be adjacent to major highways.
- ◆ Neighborhoods should be buffered from primary streets.
- ◆ Residential developments should include adequate area for parks and recreation facilities, schools and churches.
- ◆ Manufactured homes should be located at appropriate sites within the City where there are similar homes.

### *Retail/Office*

- ◆ Neighborhood retail and service uses should be located at intersections of arterial or collector streets or at the edge of logical neighborhood areas unless appropriately placed within a planned development.
- ◆ Retail development should be clustered throughout the City and convenient to residential areas.
- ◆ Buffers should separate retail/office uses and residential areas.
- ◆ Downtown should be the major focus of office, retail and service activities, particularly through adaptive reuse of existing structures or redevelopment of vacant or industrial use parcels.
- ◆ Office and professional uses should be compatible with nearby residential areas and other uses through appropriate building height limitations and adequate buffering and landscaping.
- ◆ Low-intensity office and professional uses should provide a transition between more intense uses and residential areas.



## *Commercial*

- ◆ The City's commercial areas should include a range of development types to serve regional as well as local needs, from large commercial developments to smaller, free-standing commercial sites.
- ◆ Commercial development should be concentrated in nodes at intersections and along major thoroughfares that are designed and constructed to accommodate heavy traffic.
- ◆ Parcels should be large enough to accommodate commercial use.
- ◆ Commercial uses with more intensive operational or traffic service characteristics should be located away from most residential areas.
- ◆ Buffers should separate commercial uses from residential areas, especially where the commercial use involves visible storage or display of merchandise or materials.

## *Industrial*

- ◆ Industrial development should have good access to truck routes, hazardous material routes and railroads.
- ◆ Industrial uses should be targeted in selected industrial development areas.
- ◆ Industrial development should have good access to primary streets and major highways.
- ◆ Industrial development should be separated from other uses by buffers.
- ◆ Industrial development should not be directly adjacent to residential areas.

## *Parks and Open Space*

- ◆ Parks should be evenly distributed throughout the City and include larger community parks and smaller neighborhood parks.
- ◆ There should be linkages between parks, schools, employment centers and residential areas.
- ◆ Parks are a desirable use for floodplain areas.

- ◆ Parks and open space may be used to buffer incompatible land uses.
- ◆ Natural features should be used as buffers or open space between or around developed areas.

### *Community Facilities*

- ◆ Community facilities should be located adjacent to major streets to accommodate traffic.
- ◆ Community facilities should be centrally located in easily accessible areas within the community.
- ◆ Downtown should continue to be enhanced as a civic and cultural entertainment/tourism center.
- ◆ Community facilities should be well buffered from nearby residential areas.