

Land Use refers to how land is currently being used and how it should be used in the future. The City of Bryan guides land use to ensure that land resources appropriately encourage economic development, promote a variety of housing developments, preserve natural and historic resources, and accommodate transportation routes and public facilities in order to protect and improve Bryan's quality of life.

This element of the Comprehensive Plan serves as the means of establishing a direct link between the amount and type of development that occurs and the capability of the City and other utility providers to provide access and to serve adequate supplies of water, sewer, electricity and other services required by the development. This means the Land Use element must be carefully coordinated with, and made consistent with, the provisions of both the Transportation and Utilities elements of the plan. The Land Use element helps facilitate this relationship by guiding the zoning code and map. Zoning governs the type, intensity and location of land uses.

This chapter includes a description of existing and projected land uses, policies to guide zoning decisions, and goals and objectives to direct efforts associated with development and redevelopment.

5.1 Factors Influencing Land Use

A number of factors influence land use decisions. Some of the most important are discussed below.

- **Population** – As Bryan's population grows, the demand for developable residential land will increase, as will secondary uses such as neighborhood commercial, institutional and parks.
- **Economy** – Due the ongoing positive economic outlook for Bryan, a significant amount of land is likely to be needed for construction of new single-family homes, businesses and industrial development.
- **Market** – Distinct from the overall economy, the amount and cost of appropriately zoned land has a great impact on when and where land is developed.
- **Transportation** – Land use decisions are largely based upon proximity to the transportation system. Freeways and arterials will attract commercial, industrial and high-density residential uses. Minor arterials and major collectors attract limited commercial, office uses and multi-family. Rail lines and airports attract industrial uses and discourage residential development.
- **Infrastructure** – The availability of water, sewer and electrical service are predominant factors influencing the location of all land uses. The costs of extending utility services impact the timing and density of development.
- **Environment** – Topography, soil type, floodplain and plant and animal species may impact the suitability of land for any particular development and affect the cost of development.
- **Regulations** – Zoning and subdivision regulations determine many aspects of development. Land must be appropriately zoned for the requested use. Also, required parking areas, lot coverage, setbacks, density and on-site utilities are determined by local codes.

5.2 Existing Land Use

Existing land use reflects how property is currently being used, not how it is zoned. Existing land uses may not be consistent with established zoning districts, as they may have been established prior to the initiation of zoning. What follows is a list of land uses and what they consist of:

- Single-family residential – Conventional detached dwellings
- Two-family residential – Duplexes
- Multi-family residential – Triplexes, fourplexes and apartments
- Manufactured residential – Manufactured and mobile homes
- Public and semi-public – Public buildings, schools and hospitals

- Commercial – General retail, wholesale and office
- Industrial – Manufacturing and production
- Parks and recreation – Parks and golf courses
- Agricultural – Cultivated cropland, orchards, vineyards and ranches
- Vacant – Undeveloped with no current use

In 2005 the distribution of land in Bryan by use is illustrated in the following figure.

Source: Brazos County Appraisal District

5.3 Future Land Use

In the next two decades, the needs of the growing local population will require additional acreage for development. Assuming a 2025 population of 93,466 (reference section 3.4) a consistent vacant property rate and constant development rates and patterns, the need for land by use type will be as follows:

Table 5.1

2025 Projected Land Use

Year:	2005 Estimate	2025 Estimate
Population:	69,396	93,466
Use	Acreage	Est. Acreage
Single-Family	13,466	18,136
Two-Family	2,258	3,041
Multi-Family	367	494
Manufactured Residential	550	741
Commercial	1,587	2,138
Industrial	953	1,284
Public/Semi-Public	277	373
Parks and Recreation	790	1,064
Rights-of-Way	3,563	4,799
Agricultural	1,915	2,579
Vacant	2,324	3,130
TOTAL	28,050	37,779

Source: Brazos County Appraisal District, IPS Group

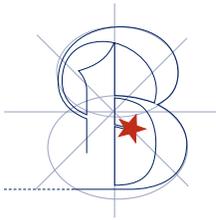
Note: Numbers have been rounded.

If the scenario illustrated above is borne out, the greatest demand for land over the next twenty years will be for single-family lots, followed distantly by acreage for rights-of-way and duplexes. The table projects an additional 9,729 acres being annexed into the City of Bryan if all forecasted future development is to take place within the city limits, assuming a consistent vacant property percentage and development densities.

5.4 Land Use Issues

The following issues related to land use were identified by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) and the public:

- **Sustainable Mix of Land Uses** – There was a repeatedly stated desire to identify and locate suitable land for future residential and commercial uses. This was sought to house the growing population and provide opportunities for the commercial uses needed to serve them. As sales and ad valorem taxes are critical to the fiscal health of Bryan, it was requested that appropriate changes to the zoning map be recommended once appropriate land use locations are identified.



- **Redevelopment** – A number of older commercial areas along major corridors contain vacant or underutilized buildings. The best local examples of redevelopment are Downtown Bryan and the Tejas Center at the corner of Texas Avenue and Villa Maria. The adaptive reuse of buildings and redevelopment of existing commercial structures supplements the tax base and beautifies the area. Residents sought to translate Bryan’s success in Downtown and with the Tejas Center for other areas in need of redevelopment. Because of the number of areas in need of redevelopment, this effort was viewed by most as a top priority for Bryan.
- **Infill** – Bryan has a large inventory of parcels that were bypassed by development and remain undeveloped to this day. Since these parcels almost always have access to existing utilities, their development saves the cost of extending water and sewer service. Building within the urban core also lessens the number of vehicle trips that burden our thoroughfares. Infill was also seen as a way to revitalize older residential areas and was a topic of discussion at several public input venues.
- **Mixed-Use Development** – Many comments were made in regard to the growing acceptance of mixed-use development. Because of the growing cost of transportation and land and the general aging of the population, it was proposed that residential and scalable commercial uses, built within the same development or in close proximity, would serve a growing segment of the population. It was agreed that there are many opportunities for mixed-use development in Bryan.
- **Maintaining Neighborhoods** – A reoccurring theme was the need to maintain and revitalize Bryan’s neighborhoods. The proposed approaches to this need were varied. Some thought a property maintenance code was in order while others thought a program of incentives could be formulated to assist with reinvestment in targeted areas. All agreed that stable, attractive neighborhoods are vital to Bryan’s future.
- **Facilitating Development** – There was broad consensus that development in Bryan needs to be attractive and efficient while also making the best use of available land, investment and staff resources. In order to accomplish this it was proposed that Bryan update its codes regularly and that utilities be strategically extended and revamped to guide development and make redevelopment a viable option for developers.
- **Housing** – The availability of housing in various markets was a concern for many citizens. The concerns were divided along two lines. The first was for affordable housing for lower income residents. Demand far outstrips supply. The clustering of this type of construction in one or two areas was also viewed as potentially detrimental. The second concern was the lack of middle-market housing. Some fear that this market has been ceded to College Station and that the lack of new construction will have a negative impact on BISD.
- **Annexation** – Cities expand their corporate limits periodically to manage land development in new growth corridors, ensure orderly extension of infrastructure and expand their tax bases. Realizing the need for Bryan to grow in a planned and logical fashion, residents commented on the need for an annexation plan for the City. Bryan’s extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) has seen unprecedented rural development in recent years. Many thought the City should study the impacts of this development on Bryan and factor them into a plan for future annexations.

5.5 Land Use Policies

Owing to the fact that Bryan developed without zoning for most of its history, clear development patterns are not always distinguishable. Older neighborhoods are sprinkled with small commercial areas containing scaleable storefronts, offices and service uses such as barber shops. This pattern, although prohibited by most modern Euclidian zoning codes is not view as altogether undesirable by Bryan’s residents. Many feel that the character of older subdivisions and historic areas, such as the Downtown, are formed, in part, by this mix of uses.

Because of Bryan's unique pattern of development, it was decided that well-formulated land use policies in conjunction with a graphical representation of those policies (a future land use map) should guide decision-makers when considering development proposals. These land use policies were developed and refined by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) over the course of several months. Two types of policies were developed: policy statements that refer to general land use relationships and use-specific policies that refer to specific land use categories. Both general and land use-specific policies should be considered and weighed in any given instance to achieve the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan. These policies that follow are the fundamental guidelines for land planning in Bryan.

Citywide Land Use Policies

All land uses should be located such that:

- Appropriate buffers separate dissimilar uses. Buffers include, but may not be limited to transitional land uses, floodplain areas, parks, landscaping or natural and man-made features;
- Where incompatible land uses must be adjacent, zoning boundaries should be drawn along rear property lines such that activities face away from each other to avoid potential negative impacts;
- Potential negative impacts on historic areas or environmentally sensitive areas, including wildlife habitat areas and topographically constrained areas within the floodplain should be avoided or adequately mitigated;
- Floodplain areas should be preserved but may be incorporated into parklands where appropriate and / or reclaimed for development in accordance with the City of Bryan's drainage regulations;
- Residential uses are generally close to schools, parks and other community facilities;
- Where feasible parks, schools, employment centers, residential areas and shopping areas should be linked by walkways and bikeways;
- At the time of or concurrently with development, the property can be adequately served by utilities and transportation routes and access; and
- Noise sensitive and high-rise uses are not near airport environs.

Use-Specific Land Use Policies

The land uses listed below should meet all of the specific policies below in addition to the Citywide Policies listed above.

Low Density Residential land serves to provide housing and living units for a variety of people with a range of incomes and needs. It predominantly consists of detached single family dwellings but may consist of other housing types as long as densities remain low; up to 8 dwelling units per acre. These uses should be located in areas that are:

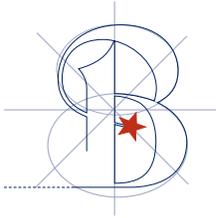
Protected from but accessible to the major roadway network, commercial establishments, work places and entertainment areas;

- Accessible to collector and arterial streets, but directly access only local streets; and
- Not adjacent to major arterials and freeways without adequate buffering and access management.

High Density Residential land will predominantly consist of housing types such as apartments but may consist of other housing types as long as densities are high, ranging from 9 to 24 dwelling units per acre. These uses should be located in areas that are:

- Along collector or arterial streets at mid-block locations, where appropriate.

Regional Retail land serves as a commercial resource for the greater metropolitan area and generates vital sales and ad valorem income. These uses should be located in areas that are:



- At points of highest visibility and access; and
- In close proximity to major intersections (freeway/expressways and freeways, freeways and major arterials, and major arterials and major arterials).

Office / Light Commercial land provides locations for lower intensity commercial activities that serve local needs. It also serves as a location for professional offices and low-impact service uses. These uses should be located in areas that are:

- At points of high visibility along non-residential arterials and major collectors and at intersections of minor arterials and major or minor arterials, major collectors and major or minor arterials, and minor collectors and major arterials;
- Convenient and accessible to residential areas;
- Providing a transitional land use between residential uses and higher intensity commercial land uses; and
- The convergence of minor arterials and minor collectors and the convergence of major collectors and minor collectors may be appropriate for office uses but not light commercial uses.

Industrial land provides locations for manufacturing activities where impacts to less intense uses can be substantially buffered. These uses should be located in areas that are:

- Along arterial thoroughfares, in proximity to freeways, rail lines and/or areas with access to airports or other transportation outlets.

Parks and Recreational land includes public land and facilities for active and passive recreation to serve Bryan citizens. These uses should be:

- Located where need has been determined by the City of Bryan Parks Master Plan and as administered through the City of Bryan parkland dedication ordinance;
- Located on land where there is sufficient useable space for organized recreation equipment and / or activities appropriate to the type of park;
- Reasonably accessible to residents and appropriately dispersed throughout the City of Bryan; and
- Buffered from nearby residential areas if the facility contains ball fields, lights and potential noise.

Public and Institutional uses include uses such as hospitals, schools, churches, government buildings etc. These uses are generally located in areas that are:

- Convenient and accessible to all residents while providing buffering where appropriate.

Redevelopment and Infill Policies

The level of importance placed on redevelopment and infill drove the need for policies specific to those types of development.

Redevelopment involves the improvement of an area that was developed at some time in the past. It refers to the adaptive reuse of existing buildings or the demolition and replacement of older buildings and parking lots with newer structures. Infill generally involves the development of land that has remained vacant and, over time, has become surrounded by development. In both cases the areas are typically in the inner core of the City and not areas on the periphery. Bryan has numerous opportunities for commercial and residential redevelopment and infill. Areas appropriate for redevelopment include:

- Areas where broad agreement exists that redevelopment would be beneficial, i.e. areas targeted for redevelopment according to adopted area plans:
 - Texas Avenue corridor
 - South College corridor

- Martin Luther King / Old Reliance Corridor
- Downtown, north of 23rd Street
- Areas where there is potential for efficient transportation access between jobs, housing, and services.
- Areas of outdated development originally built at the fringe of the city that have become more central as the city has grown around them.
- Areas already undergoing redevelopment.
- Areas where infrastructure capacity exists.
- Areas where public investment is warranted from a policy perspective.
- Areas with special opportunities, such as where major public or private investment is already planned.
- Existing employment centers.

Policy Statements:

- The City of Bryan will encourage and promote compatible infill and redevelopment in areas where these activities will benefit the city as a whole and the area specifically.
- Consideration will be given to the extension and augmentation of public services and facilities to accommodate infill and redevelopment.
- Areas appropriate for redevelopment and or infill should be delineated so that it is clear where the city’s efforts will be targeted.
- The City will encourage flexibility when drafting regulations geared toward infill and redevelopment.
- Residential redevelopment and infill shall be sensitive to the context within which it occurs. Contextual standards shall be included to ensure compatibility with surrounding residential areas, to include lot size, setbacks, density, building height and mass and architectural design
- The adaptive reuse of residences fronting upon arterial thoroughfares will be considered during rezoning requests where impacts to area residences can be addressed.

5.6 Goals, Objectives and Action Statements

The following goals, objectives and action statements were developed to address land use concerns facing Bryan in the next twenty years.

GOAL #1: Achieve a Balance of Land Uses Within the City

Objective A Achieve a sustainable mix of land use types in suitable locations, densities and patterns.

Action Statement 1: Reevaluate the zoning map annually.

Action Statement 2: Identify areas for future commercial development and preserve them with appropriate zoning

Action Statement 3: Identify areas for future industrial development and expansion and preserve them with appropriate zoning.

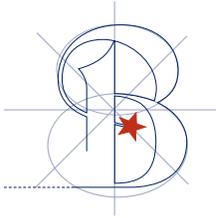
Action Statement 4: Limit the locations of large-scale multi-family developments to areas within an identified proximity to Blinn College and Texas A&M University.

Action Statement 5: Protect the area around identified future school sites with appropriate zoning.

GOAL #2: Facilitate orderly, efficient and attractive development, redevelopment and infill.

Objective A: Provide for an efficient development process.

Action Statement 1: Reevaluate the current zoning code to identify inconsistencies and impediments to development.



Action Statement 2: Develop specific requirements for contextual infill and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods and commercial areas.

Action Statement 3: Reevaluate the current development review process.

Objective B: Produce proactive area plans.

Action Statement 1: Develop a corridor plan for Texas Avenue.

Action Statement 2: Develop an area plan for the Medical District.

Action Statement 3: Develop a corridor plan for MLK/Old Reliance and promote planning for major transportation improvements.

Action Statement 4: Develop a streetscape plan.

GOAL #3: Maintain and revitalize Older areas and neighborhoods.

Objective A: Develop strategies and programs to assist with the rehabilitation of the current housing stock.

Action Statement 1: Form a Neighborhood Task Force to research successful neighborhood programs and formulate options for Bryan.

Action Statement 2: Develop strategies and programs to assist residents and developers with the rehabilitation of the current housing stock.

Objective B: Foster the redevelopment of older and blighted areas.

Action Statement 1: Continue to facilitate the redevelopment of Downtown Bryan.

Action Statement 2: Formulate broad and area-focused redevelopment initiatives.

Action Statement 3: Continue to fund the Neighborhood Grant Program.

GOAL #4: Promote Quality Affordable Housing Development.

Objective: Encourage the development of affordable housing tailored to the particular needs of the community.

Action Statement 1: Investigate successful programs and develop a plan for affordable housing.

Action Statement 2: Seek the dispersal and integration of low-income housing through infill and small subdivision development. Provide support for mixed-income federal tax credit projects with fair market rental value.

Action Statement 3: Identify areas for likely future high-density residential development and apply appropriate zoning

GOAL #5: Conduct Timely, Well-considered Annexation.

Objective: Plan for future annexations.

Action Statement 1: Develop and adopt an annexation plan.

5.7 Future Land Use Policy Map

The Future Land Use Policy Map (Figure 5-1) is a graphic representation of the community's policies regarding land use, as described in this section. The map is intended to broadly illustrate land use policies and to assist with decisions about the location of land uses; however, in all cases, the written policies contained within this section shall supersede the map. It is important to keep in mind that the Comprehensive Plan is a "living document" which may need to be updated or changed as land use conditions within Bryan change.

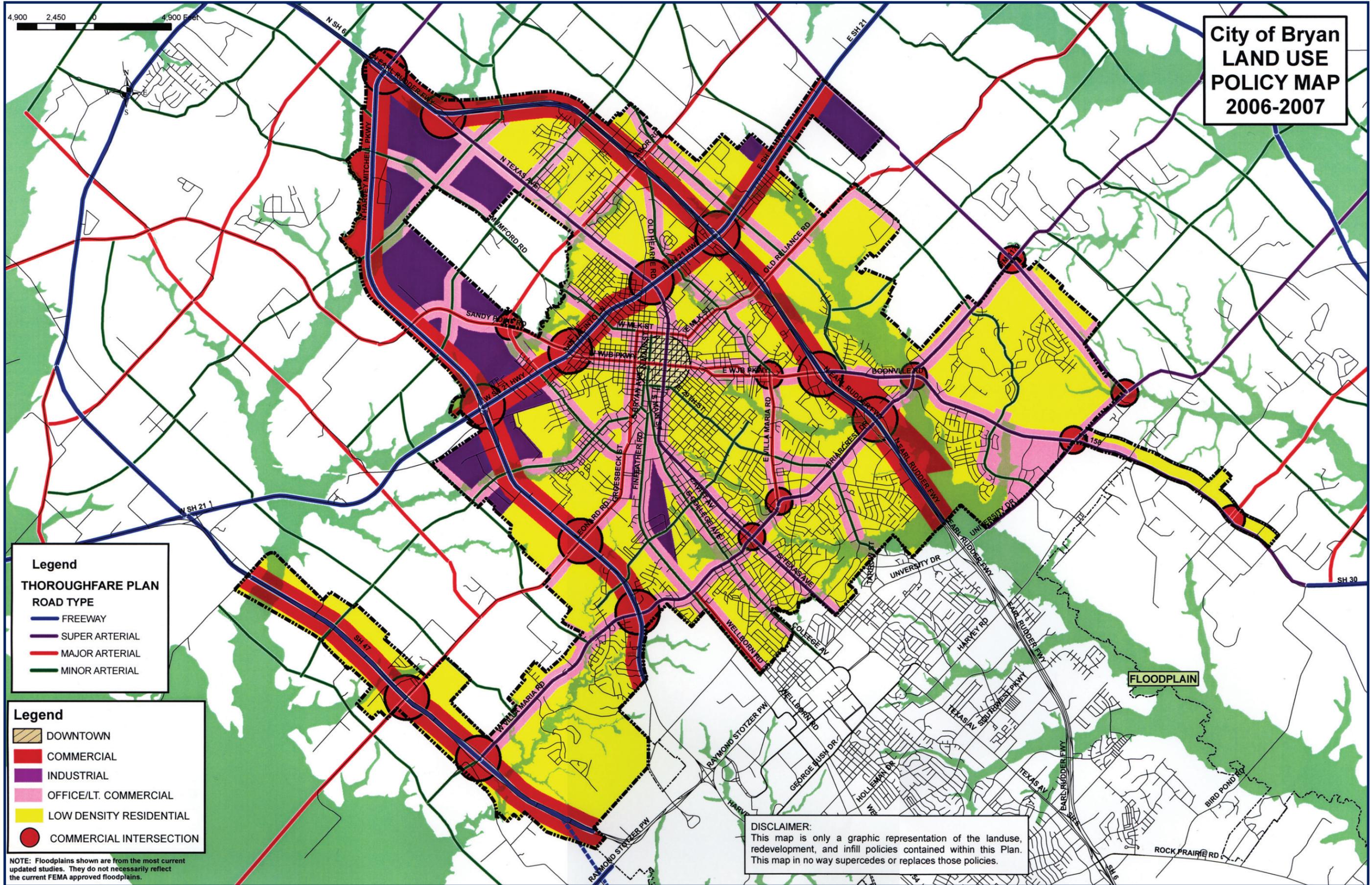


Figure 5-1 Land Use Policy Map 2006-2007