

Land Use Category Descriptions

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Suburban Neighborhood

This land use category is and will continue to be the dominant land use in Sugar Land. This category consists primarily of detached single-family homes on lots less than 1 acre set behind front lawns on residential streets. The essential character of a Suburban Neighborhood is created by separation from commercial activity, homes located on local streets rather than major corridors, and buffering from other uses. Suburban Neighborhood streets should be linked to the citywide pedestrian and bicycle network that connects to parks, schools, recreation, and activity centers.

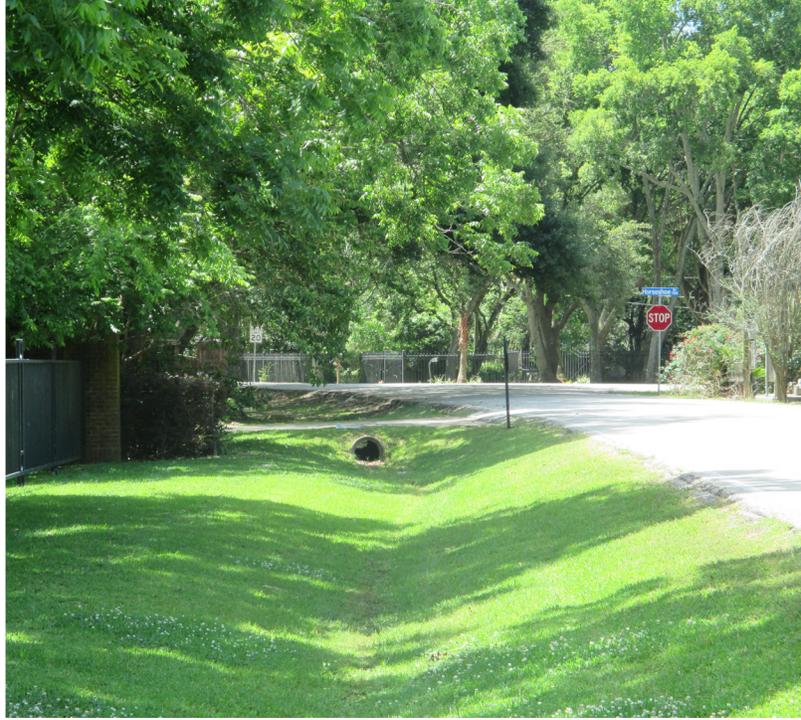


In addition, the Suburban Neighborhood land use category includes schools, religious institutions, recreation amenities, parks, and other facilities serving the residential neighborhoods. In some cases, small-scale commercial along arterial roads may be appropriate in the areas designated as Suburban Neighborhood. This limited commercial or office would only be appropriate for the reuse or redevelopment of existing non-residential sites. Such uses might include professional offices, small cafes or coffee shops. Any non-residential land uses located within an area designated as Suburban Neighborhood

should be low-rise. A conditional use permit will be required for schools, religious institutions and small-scale commercial to ensure they do not negatively impact the surrounding residential area. The conditional use permit process will mitigate traffic congestion and a high standard of site, landscape, and architectural design will be utilized in order to maximize compatibility of these uses with adjacent single-family residential.

This category could be implemented through the R-1, R-1Z, R-1R, and R-1E zoning districts.

Low Rise: 1-3 stories Mid Rise: 4-6 stories High Rise: 7+ stories



Estate Neighborhood

This category is similar to the Suburban Neighborhood category but is intended for areas that contain larger lots of 1 acre or more and are rural in character. They may have open ditch streets, instead of curb and gutter, and in some cases may allow limited numbers of livestock such as horses on larger lots. As with the Suburban Neighborhood category, the Estate Neighborhood category may include complementary non-residential uses such as schools, religious institutions, recreation amenities, parks, and other facilities serving the residential neighborhoods. In some cases, small-scale commercial along arterial roads may be appropriate in the areas designated as Estate Neighborhood. Any non-residential land uses located within an area designated as Estate Neighborhood should be low-rise. A conditional use permit will be required for schools, religious institutions and small-scale commercial to ensure they do not negatively impact the surrounding residential area. The conditional use permit process will mitigate traffic congestion and a high standard of site, landscape, and architectural design will be utilized in order to maximize compatibility of these uses with adjacent single-family residential.

This category could be implemented through the R-1E zoning district.

Low Rise: 1-3 stories *Mid Rise: 4-6 stories* *High Rise: 7+ stories*



Medium Density Single-Family Residential

This category comprises medium density single-family residential products like townhomes, urban homes, and cottage court homes that can provide a buffer between standard single-family dwellings and other uses. This category is applied to existing townhome developments that are surrounded by Suburban Neighborhood areas and are located along streets that are Minor Collectors or below (as defined by the Thoroughfare Plan) where Medium Density Mixed Use would not be appropriate. In the future, Suburban Neighborhood areas located within a quarter mile of Regional Activity Centers or Neighborhood Activity Centers could be changed to Medium Density Single-Family Residential to allow for the creation of more compact single-family areas within walking distance of services. New Medium Density Residential areas that abut Activity Centers should provide for pedestrian connectivity between the uses. Buildings located within an area designated as Medium Density Single-Family Residential should be low-rise.

This category could be implemented by the Planned Development (PD) zoning districts, a revised R-3 zoning district, or the City may pursue creation of new zoning districts.





Medium Density Mixed Use

This category applies to existing stand-alone multi-family and townhome sites where, if redeveloped, the predominant land use would be residential; however, some limited commercial and service-type uses should also be included. Where existing multi-family is included in a Medium Density Mixed Use area, multi-family (condo ownership or rental) is appropriate in the redevelopment of the area and should be vertically mixed with other uses, with the upper floors for residential and the ground floor for commercial and service uses. Where townhomes are incorporated into Medium Density Mixed Use, allowances for live-work townhomes should be considered. Stand-alone commercial or pad sites are not appropriate. Medium Density Mixed Use developments should provide an appropriate buffer when adjacent to single family residential. Buildings within Medium Density Mixed Use may be low-rise to mid-rise; however, mid-rise buildings should be located at least 250 feet away from any detached single-family residential. Medium Density Mixed Use is appropriate along Major Collectors and above (as defined by the Thoroughfare Plan).

This category can be implemented by the Planned Development (PD) zoning district or the City may consider the creation of a new zoning district that identifies appropriate commercial and service uses that maximize compatibility, provide for a high standard of site, landscape and architectural design for development to meet the intent of this land use category.

Low Rise: 1-3 stories

Mid Rise: 4-6 stories

High Rise: 7+ stories

Company Town – Neighborhood

This category is intended for the original residential areas of the city, owned and developed by the Imperial Sugar Company for its workers. It includes The Hill, Belknap, and Mayfield Park neighborhoods. Preserving the characters of each neighborhood requires specific regulations to guide remodeling, additions or redevelopment of existing homes. Buildings located within an area designated as Company Town – Neighborhood should be low-rise.

- **The Hill Neighborhood** – The Hill was one of Sugar Land’s first neighborhoods primarily established for the workers of the sugar factory. At the time, it was the area at the highest elevation in town. It is generally the area bound by Main Street, Seventh Street and Lakeview Drive. Streets were built, and remain today, as curb and gutter in a grid-pattern lined with sidewalks and trees. The architecture of homes in The Hill is varied and includes both wood-framed houses on pier and beam as well as brick homes on slab and are primarily single-story. Other characteristics include detached garages, reduced front setbacks, and houses featuring front porches.
- **Mayfield Park Neighborhood** – Mayfield Park is located north of the former Imperial Sugar Company refinery site, in the horseshoe bend of Oyster Creek. Like the two other areas with the Company Town – Neighborhood designation, the workforce housing located in this neighborhood was built by the sugar company for refinery workers. In the 1950s, houses were replaced with the brick homes existing today although some wood-frame homes are seen in the neighborhood as well. Houses are primarily single-story situated along curb and gutter streets laid out in a grid pattern and lined with sidewalks.
- **Brookside/ Belknap Neighborhood** – The Brookside/ Belknap subdivision is located generally between Brooks Street on the west and Oyster Creek on the east. This area was known as The Flats when originally developed. Houses in this area are primarily single-story and are a mixture of wood-siding houses and brick houses. Streets generally north of Terry Street are open ditch and do not have sidewalks, whereas streets south of Terry Street have curbs and gutters and have a sidewalk along at least one side of the street.

This category could be implemented through the HR-1, R-1, R-1R or a new zoning district.





Company Town - Mixed Use

This category includes a mix of single-family and limited commercial uses, and is intended for the area generally along the west side of Brooks Street and a few lots fronting Oyster Creek along Venice Street north of Guenther Street. This area was part of the town developed by the Imperial Sugar Company. The buildings in this area (originally built for residences) have a distinct form and now include a unique mix of uses, with small scale office and commercial alongside single-family residential. Preserving this character requires specific regulations to guide remodeling, additions, and redevelopment of existing structures. Buildings located within an area designated as Company Town – Mixed Use should be low-rise.

This category is implemented through the MUC zoning district.



Neighborhood Commercial & Services

This category consists of conventional car-oriented retail and services, such as small offices, religious institutions, and other low impact commercial uses that serve local neighborhoods. Buildings are set back behind parking lots and landscaping strips, and parking consists of surface lots. Because they are adjacent to neighborhoods, buildings should be low to mid-rise, and located on Collectors or Arterials. Though these areas are currently developed in a conventional car-oriented manner, designations as Neighborhood Commercial and Services does not preclude an area from being developed or redeveloped into a more walkable center. Where possible, pedestrian and bicycle connections should be retrofitted to provide easier access from nearby residential to Neighborhood Commercial and Services areas.

Neighborhood Commercial and Services are often adjacent to residential development. To avoid negative visual, sound, and light impacts, sites should be designed with enhanced buffers and screening.

This category could be implemented through the B-1 or B-O zoning districts.



Low Rise: 1-3 stories *Mid Rise: 4-6 stories* *High Rise: 7+ stories*



Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC)

This category envisions Neighborhood Activity Centers to be small commercial centers that act as a “main street” for nearby neighborhoods. Neighborhood Activity Centers will be mixed use and walkable and they will be small in scale and designed to serve the surrounding neighborhoods. They should include retail, may also include office space for small companies and professionals, and compact forms of residential such as townhomes, urban homes, cottage court homes, senior living and multi-family (condo ownership or rental). Where multi-family is included in the redevelopment of an area designated as a Neighborhood Activity Center, it should be vertically mixed with other uses or activate the adjacent pedestrian realm in another way (See Goal 3, Policy c).

Buildings in Neighborhood Activity Centers can range from low-rise to mid-rise, but mid-rise buildings should be located at least 250 feet away from any detached single-family residential. Each Neighborhood Activity Center should be designed to be walkable, with buildings facing onto wide sidewalks that provide lighting, shade, and other pedestrian amenities. Each should have a small central public space for gathering.

Neighborhood Activity Centers are located on Arterial streets (as defined by the Thoroughfare Plan) and should be linked to the surrounding neighborhoods by hike and bike trails.

Low Rise: 1-3 stories *Mid Rise: 4-6 stories* *High Rise: 7+ stories*



Neighborhood Activity Centers may be created through redevelopment of existing commercial properties or as part of new developments. This category could be implemented through the Planned Development (PD) zoning district. The City may also consider creating a standard zoning designation for Neighborhood Activity Centers with development regulations that govern scale, walkability, and compatibility with adjacent uses. A school impact analysis should be performed if residential is proposed in a Neighborhood Activity Center.





Regional Activity Center (RAC)

This category includes areas that are envisioned to be the commercial and civic hubs of the city that attract people from around the city and across the region to work, shop, eat, and attend events. Each should contain a mix of uses such as offices, retail, residential and civic institutions, integrated together in a compact, walkable area and have its own unique character. Uses should be mixed vertically in buildings and the first floors should engage pedestrians and activate the street. Employees working there can walk to lunch or to run errands; residents of the Activity Center can access many of their needs within walking distance; and visitors can park once but make several stops. Regional Activity Centers are located near major highway corridors for easy vehicular access. The easy vehicular access, integration of uses, and ability to share parking make Regional Activity Centers suitable locations for park-and-ride facilities in structured parking. For employees utilizing the park-and-ride to travel to regional employment destinations, the mix of uses within a Regional Activity Center will provide easy access to retail and entertainment after work. New corporate and Class A office buildings are envisioned for Regional Activity Centers. The employment destinations within Regional Activity Centers will draw employees from around the region, and having a park-and-ride facility would enable the service to capitalize on reverse trips being made from regional destinations into Sugar Land. RACs could provide areas to accommodate ride-sharing and/or transit pick-up and drop-off areas. Hike-and-bike trails will link Activity Centers to nearby neighborhoods. The streets within Activity Centers should be narrow and designed to slow traffic and make walking pleasant. The buildings should be built up to a wide pedestrian zone with their primary entrances opening onto it. In addition to the sidewalk, the pedestrian zones can include trees for shade, café seating, lighting, street furniture and planter boxes. Each Activity

Low Rise: 1-3 stories *Mid Rise: 4-6 stories* *High Rise: 7+ stories*

Center is envisioned to have a major civic space surrounded by buildings designed for everyday activity and for holding special events. Parking will be shared among uses and mostly structured. Buildings should vary in height, from low rise to high rise buildings.

Regional Activity Centers should be designed to minimize impacts on adjacent land uses. Density and level of activity should be maximized at the core and reduced at the edges. Appropriate residential uses include multi-family (condo ownership or rental) and Medium Density Single-family. Medium Density Single-family residential may be located at the edge to serve as a buffer between adjacent single-family residential and other uses in the Regional Activity Center.

Five specific Regional Activity Centers are identified on the Future Land Use Map. The majority of these Regional Activity Centers will be formed through the redevelopment or infill development of existing commercial areas. New buildings may replace existing buildings, or new buildings may be added alongside existing buildings to add new uses and make the area more walkable.

This category could be implemented through the Planned Development (PD) zoning district. The City may also consider creating a standard zoning designation for Regional Activity Centers, with development regulations that regulate the mix of uses, the form of buildings, pedestrian connectivity, open space and street standards. Each Regional Activity Center will require a full multi-modal transportation analysis to ensure levels of service for pedestrians and bicyclists are considered equally with vehicular traffic. A school impact analysis should be performed if residential is proposed in a Regional Activity Center.



Photos courtesy of Midway





Regional Commercial & Services

This category consists of conventional car-oriented retail, services, office, hotels, major medical facilities, and religious institutions serving the city and the region. This category is typically located on major freeways and highways and on nearby arterials for easy access. Buildings are set back behind landscaping strips and surface parking which is generally dedicated to one use or serving many uses within a commercial strip center-style development. Buildings may vary in height, from low rise to high rise buildings.

Most of the Regional Commercial and Services land use shown in this plan are already developed, but a few greenfield sites remain. These are best suited for retail and services that do not work well in activity centers, like certain “big box” stores and may also include limited office. Though most areas designated as Regional and Commercial Services are developed in suburban car-oriented manner, areas are not precluded from redeveloping into more walkable centers or being enhanced with improved pedestrian features.

This category could be implemented through the B-2 or B-O zoning districts.

Low Rise: 1-3 stories

Mid Rise: 4-6 stories

High Rise: 7+ stories



Institutional

This category is located throughout the City and include major municipal or other governmental facilities that are 5 acres or greater and not within a Regional Activity Center. These include the City's Imperial Park Recreation Center/ T.E. Harman Center, Houston Museum of Natural Science at Sugar Land, wastewater treatment plants, surface water treatment plant, Public Works facility, Police and Municipal Courts facility and the Fort Bend ISD Administration/ Mercer Stadium complex. Smaller municipal and school district facilities, such as fire stations and elementary schools, are incorporated into the surrounding land use categories.

This category is implemented through all zoning districts.



Airport

This category is assigned to the Sugar Land Regional Airport and is a unique component of Sugar Land's economy. Accordingly, the Airport category is specifically designated on the Future Land Use Map for the property owned by the City and operated as the Sugar Land Regional Airport. This area is intended only for the airport and for associated uses located on airport property as identified in the Airport Master Plan.

This category could be implemented through the M-1 or a new zoning district. Areas surrounding the Airport are subject to FAA regulations related to height and uses. Additionally, the City has Airport zoning that is applied to areas surrounding the airport.





Light Industrial

The category is a business park like setting that includes offices, light manufacturing, small-scale assembly, warehouse and distribution, research and development, scientific technology and other uses included on the City's Targeted Industries List. It may also include services that support these uses such as restaurants and business-to-business services. Buildings may vary in height, from low rise to high rise buildings, and are generally set back behind surface parking lots and landscape buffers. Outside storage may exist but should be screened from public view. Light Industrial areas are located on Highways and Major Arterials (as defined by the Thoroughfare Plan), and where access to freight rail is available.

Where Light Industrial areas are adjacent to residential, performance-based development standards, such as enhanced buffers and screening, should be applied to protect adjacent uses from potential adverse impacts associated with these uses (i.e. truck traffic, outside storage, service areas, lighting, noise, etc.).

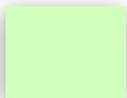
This category could be implemented through the M-1 or B-O zoning districts.

Manufacturing uses that have the potential of emitting substantial smoke, odors, and/or noise, and that have a high impact on surrounding uses and on the visual quality of the area are considered heavy industrial and are not envisioned for the future of Sugar Land. Although heavy industrial uses are permitted within the M-2 zoning district, no new M-2 zoning is recommended to be approved in the City.

Low Rise: 1-3 stories

Mid Rise: 4-6 stories

High Rise: 7+ stories



Rural & Agricultural

This category applies to properties in the floodplain and floodway along the Brazos River and other rural areas south of FM 2759 where development and access is limited. The existing fragmented development pattern includes farm and ranch land acreage, homes on farms and ranches, and homes on lots of over 5 acres. Streets are open ditch and asphalt, and private wells and septic systems are typically used instead of public utilities. Buildings are and will continue to be low-rise in height.

This land use designation is intended to accommodate very low levels of population, remain rural in character even as surrounding areas develop. The continued use of rural style infrastructure is anticipated.

The limited development in this area helps preserve the natural feel of the Brazos River. Over time, some of these properties may be acquired as part of the expansion of the greenbelt along the Brazos River.

This category could be implemented through the BR and R-1E zoning districts, or the City could consider creating a new zoning district to implement this category.



Regional Parks and Open Space

This category applies to regional parks and other open spaces of city-wide significance which are expected to remain as open space, such as golf courses and large linear greenways along major drainage channels and significant detention facilities. However, smaller neighborhood-serving parks and public spaces are included in the surrounding land use category, such as Suburban Neighborhood, or Regional or Neighborhood Activity Center.

Regional parks, potential future large-scale park acquisitions, as well as smaller neighborhood-serving parks are identified in the City's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. Regional parks draw people from across the city and the region and host major events. As such, they should be located to take access from arterials, where they are easy to access by vehicle, and should be linked to surrounding areas with hike-and-bike trails. Parks and open spaces are intended to be developed throughout the city and may be part of any land use category.

This category is typically implemented through the R-1 zoning district or the BR zoning district for property along the Brazos River. The City may consider the creation of a new zoning district to apply to city parks to both help identify their locations and to provide general development regulations.

