

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map and Plan together provide broad guidance for land use decisions and form the basis for the zoning regulations and capital investment decisions to help meet Plan objectives. This Plan will guide future decisions related to acceptable locations of the City's Zoning Districts, which are each assigned a more specific set of allowed uses and dimensional standards in the Zoning Ordinance. This chapter reviews the influential factors and general goals relating to future land use and outlines the resulting land use categories displayed on the Future Land Use.

Relationship to the Midland Urban Growth Area (MUGA)

Seven townships located in three different counties make up the area known as the MUGA. Each of these townships has their own future land use and zoning plans in place. The City of Midland Master Plan does not change the designation of any land outside the City limits. However, Michigan law allows the City to plan beyond its borders to help ensure coordinated and compatible development in the future, especially where the land is intended to be added to the City. The Future Land Use Map plans for all areas in the Midland City Limits and the MUGA.

Influential Factors

The Future Land Use Plan reflects input from residents of Midland and its surrounding areas, and discussions with local decision makers and agencies. The Plan considered existing land use patterns, zoning, the MUGA, other factors and generally accepted planning principles, described below.

Existing Land Use

Many areas within the City Limits are already highly developed with an urban land use pattern and are not proposed to redevelop as part of this plan. The most significant changes proposed are in areas where the existing land use pattern provides the opportunity for new development infill or in areas outside the City Limits where water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure are not currently available. Existing use does not automatically preserve that land use designation for the future.

Midland Urban Growth Area (MUGA)

The MUGA was initially established in 1969 as the area around the City that could eventually be provided water and sewer service as the City Limits were expanded. Over the last four decades, the MUGA boundaries have been modified and the City limits have expanded incrementally into the MUGA. Accordingly, the MUGA is a band around the City limits that serves as the potential, long-range City limits. Properties in the MUGA must be annexed by the City if the land owners desire City water and sanitary sewer services for their property. The Future Land Use Map and plan illustrate recommended long-term land uses within the MUGA in the event that those areas are annexed into the City. Because development in the outlying MUGA areas may not occur for many years to come, the proposed Future Land Use Map boundaries are more general than the precise plan boundaries within the more significantly developed City

limits. The policies that regulate the MUGA include requiring any area requesting water and sewer service be contiguous with the current City Limits, and ultimately annex into the City before services are provided. These policies allow the City to promote orderly growth by coordinating and controlling the type and pattern of higher intensity uses developing in the MUGA. To improve the compatibility of land uses between the City and adjacent Townships, the existing and planned land use patterns and current zoning designations of neighboring Townships were considered when determining Midland's future land use designations.

Existing Zoning

Existing zoning designation was another factor considered in determining the use categories and locations. However, there is no vested interest that guarantees existing zoning will remain unchanged. Throughout the Master Plan process, existing zoning regulations and district boundaries were considered to prevent as many conflicts as possible.

Relationship of Incompatible and Non-Conforming Uses One of the objectives of the future land use plan is to prevent, reduce, or eliminate incompatible land use relationships throughout the MUGA. Providing a sufficient transition or adequate buffering between land uses, especially those with certain conflicting characteristics, is essential. Although some areas throughout the City and MUGA may presently be developed and/or zoned for a use that is more intense than or incompatible with the proposed future land use designation, redevelopment or reuse of these sites in the future will provide an opportunity to eliminate or improve these situations.

Infrastructure and Public Facilities/Services

In addition to the planned land use and current zoning, the intensity of use that can be developed is limited based on the availability and capacity of the infrastructure. This includes utilities, streets, parks, schools, and municipal services and facilities. Factors such as the quality and capacity of the road network limit the type and intensity of uses due to the potential impacts on traffic operations. The City's planned transportation improvements and those recommended in the Transportation Chapter of this Plan were considered in determining the land use boundaries and intensities on the Future Land Use Map.

General Market Conditions

While this Plan establishes the future land use designation for property throughout the City and MUGA, it also considers the total land planned for each future land use category. The current and future demand for any one type of land use must be compared to the planned land use area in the MUGA to promote sustainable, high-quality development throughout the City. The Master Plan process included consideration of current market conditions and opportunities being studied in the City. Future updates of this Plan should include a reevaluation of market opportunities to ensure that the City's near term economic development goals are adjusted to build on successes and include external influences.

Natural Features

Wetlands, woodlands, rivers, floodplain areas, poor soils, steep slopes and other natural features all impact the types of land use that are most appropriate throughout the City and MUGA. Federal or State laws regulate many of these areas and will impact the intensity of development on a given site. While the natural features were considered in choosing the type of land use for a given area in the City or MUGA, the intensity and density of use will ultimately be constrained naturally by the development site features.

Previous City Master Plan

The previous City Master Plan, adopted in 2007 and subsequently amended several times through 2018, was used as a base for the Future Land Use Map and categories included in this chapter. Any major changes between the previous and new versions were evaluated based on the various factors discussed in this chapter to ensure a change was warranted.

Desires of the City

The land use categories and configuration desired by City residents and officials have been expressed through a variety of public input events, meetings, surveys, and other engagement activities.

Goals

Based on the influential factors identified above, the following are the land use goals for the City of Midland and the MUGA. These should be considered along with the general goals of the Plan in future decision making.

- Integrate and mix appropriate uses to create great places, promote a healthy, walkable community, and reduce vehicle trips.
- Provide walkable, neighborhood-oriented commercial opportunities throughout the City.
- Create opportunities for dense Live-Work-Play housing, co-working, and shared working spaces.
- Promote flood resiliency by removing or retrofitting structures that are located in the floodplain and using flood resilient design practices for new development in and around critical waterways.
- Integrate usable open spaces within walking distance of all new development.
- Continue to encourage the transformation of the City's major commercial areas into walkable, mixed use regional centers that provide a variety of retail, restaurant, service, and residential options.
- Leverage past public infrastructure investments by facilitating quality redevelopment and in-fill development within the existing footprint of the City.
- Provide a diversity of housing types and costs to meet the needs of all age and income groups.
- Promote efficient and coordinated capital improvements.
- Support the long term vitality of existing neighborhoods.
- Strengthen and diversify the major employment opportunities in the City.
- Encourage the adaptation of existing buildings into new uses.

- Expand industrial areas to continue to create opportunities for business growth and to attract industries relocating due to climate change.

Future Land Use Categories

Land Use Category	Planned Acreages	Percent of Total Planned
Conservation Residential	3,835	9.6
Neighborhood Residential	13,661	34.4
Neighborhood Mixed Use	2,535	6.4
Recreation and Open Space	3,199	8.0
Institutional and Civic	2,432	6.1
Downtown	163	0.4
Regional Mixed Use	1,770	4.5
Light Industrial	6,255	15.7
Heavy Industrial	5,894	14.8
Total	39,744	100

Conservation Residential

Specific Objectives. Conservation Residential development in Midland is intended for areas of the City that have or are near naturally constrained lands (eg. woodlands, wetlands, floodplain). Developments utilizing an open space clustered design to preserve the area's natural resources and create high-quality residential developments, are strongly encouraged.

General Location. Conservation Residential is envisioned primarily in the far northwest and west areas of the City. These areas are in close proximity to the Tittabawassee River, Chippewa River, Sturgeon Creek, State Drain, and other critical waterways for the City and region. Portions of this area fall within the 100-year or 500-year flood plain.

Intended Land Uses. The Conservation Residential land use designation is intended to promote very low density residential development with an emphasis on preserving and protecting critical waterways. Residential density in these areas shall not exceed two dwelling units per acre. Clustered development with permanently dedicated open space is strongly encouraged to preserve Midland's natural resources. Accessory and support uses such as churches, parks, schools, home occupations, and small-scale care facilities may also be allowed.

General Character Description. Development in Conservation Residential areas should be designed in a manner that minimizes impact to Midland's natural systems and incorporates flood resilient design principals. Conservation Residential areas must be compatible with the surrounding environment, including the scale and character of the existing neighborhood. Street design in new Conservation Residential developments should include interconnected street and sidewalk systems, street trees and adequate lighting. Design flexibility may be permitted when such flexibility is necessary to protect natural features or promote flood resilience.

Neighborhood Residential

Specific Objectives. Neighborhood Residential development in Midland should support the vitality of existing residential neighborhoods. In addition, areas developing as Neighborhood Residential that are located on naturally constrained lands (eg. woodlands, wetlands, floodplain) should promote use of an open space clustered design to allow a reasonable number of homes while preserving the area's natural resources and creating high-quality residential developments.

General Location. Neighborhood Residential is the predominant existing land use in the City, mostly concentrated within the loop formed by US-10, M-20, and North Saginaw Road. The Future Land Use Map envisions additional Neighborhood Residential development to the west, north, and east of the City limits. Neighborhood Residential areas should incorporate parks and other civic uses within walking distance, should include appropriate buffering when adjacent to more intensive land uses, and should generally be geographically isolated from Heavy Industrial land uses.

Intended Land Uses. The Neighborhood Residential land use designation is intended to accommodate traditional residential development. In cases where natural features constrain the buildable area of a development, clustered development with permanently dedicated open space should be encouraged to preserve Midland's natural resources. Accessory and support uses such as churches, parks, schools, neighborhood commercial, home occupations, and small-scale care facilities may also be allowed. Residential density in these areas shall not exceed six dwelling units per acre.

General Character Description. To protect the vitality of the existing Neighborhood Residential areas in the City, development should continue to follow the traditional neighborhood design principles that currently prevail in these areas. Infill and redevelopment in existing Neighborhood Residential areas must be compatible with the surrounding environment, including the scale and character of the existing neighborhood. Street design in new Neighborhood Residential developments should include interconnected street and sidewalk systems, street trees and adequate lighting. Homes will generally maintain traditional design elements such as prominent front entryways, and recessed attached or rear yard detached garages.

Neighborhood Mixed Use

Specific Objectives. Neighborhood Mixed Use development in Midland addresses multiple needs of the community in an attractive, walkable format. Neighborhood Mixed Use areas permit a wide variety of housing types and price ranges to accommodate residents in all lifestyle stages, especially young professionals and older adults. Housing formats range from detached homes to attached homes in townhouse, low-rise and mid-rise apartment formats, and housing in mixed-use buildings. Neighborhood Mixed Use areas also provide office service and neighborhood-oriented commercial activity to offer convenient access to daily needs to adjacent, primarily residential neighborhoods. Neighborhood mixed-use developments should be designed to permit safe and convenient pedestrian circulation within the development and to nearby areas. Neighborhood Mixed Use areas will sometimes serve as a transitional buffer between Neighborhood Residential areas and higher intensity areas. Uses within the Neighborhood Mixed Use areas must be carefully planned to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses.

General Location. Neighborhood Mixed Use areas are planned throughout the City and MUGA area. Specific locations of note include:

- North and east of Downtown;
- Areas adjacent to Center City, including areas south of Ashman Circle and West of S. Saginaw Road;
- Existing neighborhood commercial nodes at Jefferson and Sugnet, Swede and Wheeler, and along N. Saginaw Road; and
- As conceptual areas of walkable activity adjacent to planned Neighborhood Residential areas in the undeveloped edges of the City, including within the MUGA area.

Intended Land Uses. The intended land uses within Neighborhood Mixed Use areas include single-, two-, and multiple-family housing in a variety of formats; office and service uses serving the local market area such as professional offices, personal service establishments, and financial institutions; and commercial uses that meet the day-to-day shopping and service needs of residents in surrounding neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Mixed Use developments should include high-quality, innovative design, that emphasizes pedestrian connections with nearby developments. Other accessory and support uses such as churches, parks, schools, and home occupations may also be allowed.

General Character Description. Neighborhood Mixed Use developments should utilize design and building materials, appropriate lighting, and significant landscaping to promote high-quality commercial development and mitigate impacts on surrounding uses. For larger developments, emphasis should be placed on high-quality design and materials, including the design and activity taking place along rear property lines where residential developments may be abutting.

Recreation and Open Space

Specific Objectives. Recreation and Open Space lands in the City are intended to provide residents and visitors with a full spectrum of both private and public facilities for the enjoyment and pursuit of fitness, leisure, competition, and enjoyment of nature.

The City currently has a Parks & Recreation Plan, which more specifically discusses the existing and planned facilities and outlines goals and objectives to address the fulfillment of these needs for the community.

General Location. Recreation and Open Space areas are located throughout the City. As residential developments occur, park space should be provided within each development. The ratio of Recreation and Open Space area should be monitored as the City expands to ensure current levels-of-service are maintained or increased and that Recreation and Open Space opportunities are available within walking distance to all residents.

Intended Land Uses. Land uses that are included in the Recreation and Open Space category are public and private recreation facilities such as playgrounds, pathways and nature trails, picnic areas, soccer fields, public softball and baseball fields, indoor sports facilities, and open space areas. Generally, these areas include uses that provide active and passive recreation sites. In addition, new private commercial recreational facilities may be located in certain commercial and industrial areas.

General Character Description. High-quality and diverse park offerings promote a higher quality of life for families and visitors alike. Recreation and Open Space facilities should continue to be integrated into the City's new and existing neighborhoods to create a comprehensive system. Recreation and Open Spaces should offer opportunities for a variety of activities. The City should also strive to connect these areas to each other and to their service areas via convenient, safe and well-maintained non-motorized facilities.

Institutional & Civic

Specific Objectives. The main objective of Institutional & Civic uses is to continue to provide high quality services, meet future needs of the population and employers, and to locate new facilities at accessible sites compatible with other planned land uses.

General Location. Institutional & Civic uses are scattered throughout the City and create a network of resources that make up the “City of Science and Culture.” These designations include government facilities, the hospital, utility-related buildings, schools and churches, along with regional cultural amenities such as the Midland Center for the Arts, Herbert H. Dow Historical Museum, Dow Gardens, and the Herbert D. Doan Midland County History Center.

Intended Land Uses. Institutional & Civic uses include existing places of worship, community buildings, and public and private schools. These sites also provide future opportunity for adaptive reuse or redevelopment to provide walkable, infill housing and neighborhood-scale commercial uses in the event an institutional or civic use ceases in the future.

General Character Description. Institutional & Civic uses are encouraged to have buildings located and designed to promote integration with the surrounding area. Institution & Civic facilities may have unique and distinctive architecture consistent with their public purpose and should be sited in prominent locations where they add to the character and image of the community. Institution & Civic uses shall be connected to the pedestrian network and feature site design that compliments surrounding development.

Downtown

Specific Objectives. Downtown Midland is the heart of the community, providing critical governmental and administrative facilities, dining, entertaining, housing, retail, and other services. Downtown also provides a vital venue for community events, leveraging its connections to the City's riverfront and The Tridge. Updated streetscaping along Main Street and the creation of The Commons have significantly increased activity in the district, along with the continued development of new housing within the district. The area designated as Downtown on the Future Land Use Map supports the goals of expanding and enhancing the vibrancy of the Downtown by adding density and mixed-use development and building strong connections between Downtown and other vital districts including Center City, Discovery Square, and Midtown.

General Location. Downtown generally includes the portion of the City from Ripley Street on the northwest to Haley Street on the southeast, and from the Tittabawassee River on the southwest to approximately Grove Street on the northeast. It includes several notable community facilities including Midland City Hall, Midland County Courthouse, the Midland County Administrative Building, and Dow Diamond.

Intended Land Uses. Downtown is intended to include a variety of uses important to a vibrant, walkable, regional-service district, including dining establishments, entertainment, residential, retail, offices, civic uses and lodging. These uses will often exist in combination within a single building or development. Parking, where provided, will generally be public in nature and offered on-street or in managed off-street facilities.

General Character Description. Downtown development should include high-quality, higher-density design and materials, with building facades that are close to the front lot line and on-site parking, if any, provided away from the street. Outdoor eating areas and other design features that promote interaction between the activity inside the building and on the street are encouraged. Mixed-use development is highly desired as a means of increasing district vibrancy and supporting walkability. These elements will continue to strengthen as the historic core of Downtown continues to expand north and east.

Regional Mixed Use

Specific Objectives. Regional Mixed Use areas provide significant venues for commerce, employment, and service for the Midland community and the larger region. Today, these areas are generally auto-oriented and composed of only commercial land uses. Many of these areas are showing signs of distress, including vacancy and disinvestment. Reasons for these issues include macroeconomic factors impacting retail nationally such as increased online commerce, and local issues such as competition between older and emerging commercial areas.

The future success of Regional Mixed Use areas will require Midland to be creative and flexible. These areas will continue to include auto-oriented, single-use commercial development, but should be expanded to include a larger variety of land uses. This includes medium-to-high density housing in most areas and research, technology, and other light industrial activities southeast of Downtown and in areas along Bay City Road. Regulations should be as flexible as possible to encourage the adaptive reuse of existing structures and promote innovative and attractive places that are conveniently and safely accessible by all modes of transportation, including walking and transit. Particular attention should be paid to the following planning considerations:

- Regional Mixed Use centers should be sized and located to best interact with surrounding uses while also providing convenience and limiting unnecessary congestion.
- Impacts on the sustainability of existing regional centers of Midland, including Downtown, Center City, and the Midland Mall area must be considered when planning for additional commercial in the City.
- High intensity Regional Mixed Use centers, particularly those with significant traffic generation, should be buffered from Neighborhood Residential areas with Neighborhood Mixed Use areas, where practical.
- Development regulations should align with adopted redevelopment plans of the City, where applicable.

General Location. Regional Mixed Use areas are generally concentrated in the following locations in Midland:

- Center City;
- Midland Mall and the adjacent retail centers along Eastman Avenue and Joe Mann Boulevard;
- North Saginaw Road at Eastman, Dublin and Stark;
- Bay City Road at Waldo Avenue, Fast Ice Drive, Rockwell Drive and US-10;
- Waldo Avenue and Wheeler Street north of US-10; and
- M-20 west of Downtown

Intended Land Uses. Regional Mixed Use areas are intended to have a variety of uses supporting both the local and regional marketplace. These areas may include hotels, restaurants, movie theaters, drive-through restaurants, large retailers, medium-to-high

density residential, office and service uses. These uses will often exist in combination within a single building or development. In areas southeast of Downtown, a mixture of high-tech industrial, commercial and offices uses that compatibly bridge the area between residential uses to the north and the higher intensity industrial uses to the south and southeast are also expected, while housing is not appropriate in this area.

General Character Description. Regional Mixed Use areas should focus on encouraging redevelopment and requiring consistent site upgrades as development occurs, including improved site design, access management, building facades and landscaping. Pedestrian circulation should be carefully planned to reduce unnecessary trips and increase the vitality and sense of place within each development as well as the broader community. Generally, parking areas should be in the rear or side rather than in the front of the building.

Light Industrial

Specific Objectives. Light Industrial developments are an important source of employment and tax base, and have significantly less impact on surrounding uses than Heavy Industrial. This designation is intended to provide concentrated areas throughout the City and MUGA that accommodate coordinated industrial parks with high-tech, low-intensity industrial uses. Existing Light Industrial uses located outside of these districts, especially those that are isolated or obsolete facilities, should be encouraged to relocate to planned Light Industrial areas when the opportunity arises.

General Location. Planned Light Industrial areas are generally located in the following areas:

- North of the Stark Road interchange with US-10;
- North of M-20/Waldo interchange, including the existing Eagle Ridge Industrial Park;
- Along Schuette and Centennial Roads;
- Southeast of the Bay City Road/US-10 interchange;
- South side of Gordonville Road west of Mapleton; and
- South of US-10 along the M-47 corridor in Bay County, southeast of the City.

Intended Land Uses. Appropriate intended uses for the Light Industrial district include high-tech industries, research laboratories, light assembly operations and corporate offices. Commercial uses that support industrial activities are also appropriate in these areas. Heavy, smokestack industries and large warehouse operations dependent on heavy trucking or rail are not intended for this district. External nuisances, such as noise and odors, should be minimized through design and activity restrictions. These areas are intended to play an integral role in the community's desire to cluster complimentary industries in the general area of one another. These areas also support the public's desire for expanded employment opportunities in the City.

General Character Description. Redevelopment of existing Light Industrial development designated to remain Light Industrial on the Future Land Use Map should include improved site design, access management tools, attractive building facades and appropriate buffers to adjacent, non-industrial land uses.

Heavy Industrial

Specific Objectives. Areas designated as Heavy Industrial on the Future Land Use map include high-intensity industrial uses that require special buffering and consideration in the surrounding areas. These areas are not intended to expand beyond their current boundaries.

General Location. The only two areas of Heavy Industrial are located in the southeast quadrant of the City and on the City Landfill property east of US-10.

Intended Land Uses. Areas with facilities involved in chemical production, heavy assembly, large warehousing, trucking and waste management are intended for this designation.

General Character Description. Areas with Heavy Industrial designations require special planning and site design. The operation of these uses may involve heavy truck traffic, outdoor storage, rail access, odors and noise. Development and redevelopment of these areas should minimize the impacts of these activities by requiring large setbacks and full screening of loading and outdoor storage areas and siting near routes designed to handle expected truck and rail traffic volumes.