

6.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

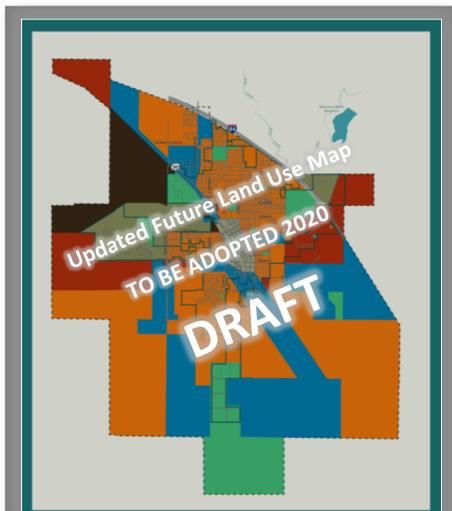


Land use planning by definition is the process of regulating the use and development of land in an effort to promote desirable social and environmental outcomes, as well as to strive for an efficient use of resources. With proper land use planning government can plan for the needs of the community while safeguarding natural resources and quality of life.

In essence, the purpose of the land use element of the Comprehensive Plan is to guide development and growth, while balancing and managing land use changes with community sentiment.

Key considerations of land use planning include a myriad of elements such as land use types or designations (such as commercial, residential, industrial, etc); land use composition; transportation networks; utility infrastructure; natural resources in and surrounding the community; economic factors; public sentiment; and more.

As land use planning takes place goals are identified, some short-term and some long-term, along with strategies for achieving the goals. The foremost tool and visual reference for land use planning is the **Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map (this Chapter and at Appendix M)**. The land use map designates planned land uses within the City and the City's Area of Impact, illustrating the City's goals and objectives for the framework of the community and future development.



The **CURRENT** Land Use Map (January 2019 version) can be found in this Chapter and at APPENDIX M.

Likewise, the land use map serves as a planning tool for those parties interested in developing in the community; it assists developers, companies and investors in ensuring that their project aligns with the goals and objectives of the overall Comprehensive Plan (which is a specific requirement for all land development submittals and applications).

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LAND USE MAP

- The map dictates orderly and efficient development patterns which saves tax dollars
- The map prevents conflicts that can occur with unregulated development decisions
- The map saves time for developers and applicants by providing a clear picture of what the City's objectives are for growth and development

To be clear, **the land use map is not a zoning map**. Land use maps reflect general designations indicative of the intended use and development for a particular area, whereas a zoning map shows zoning districts—which specifically define areas for allowable uses and prescribe the design and development guidelines for those intended uses.

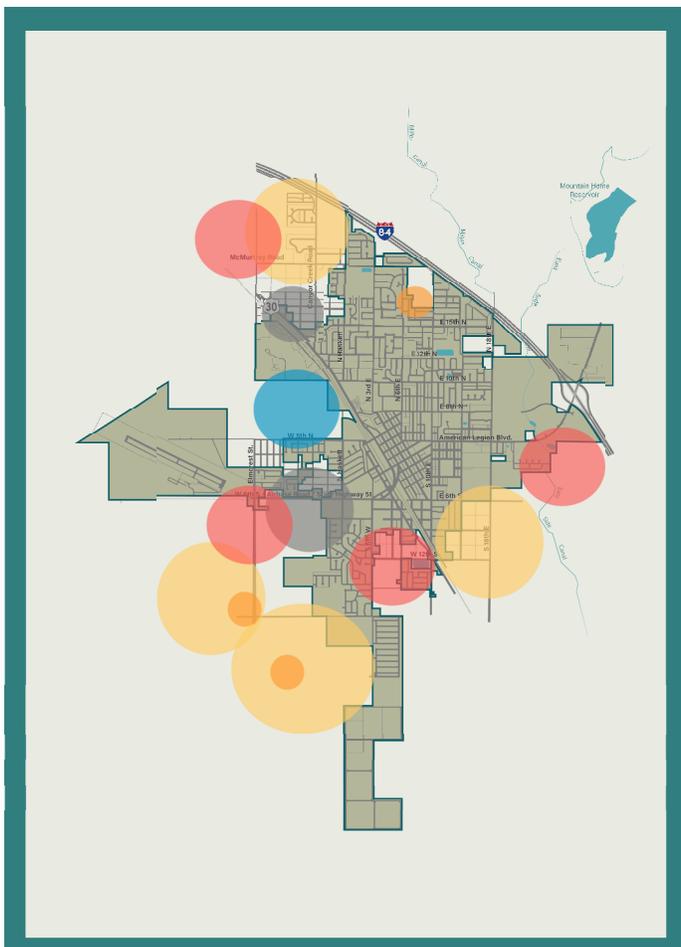
6.2 BACKGROUND / EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City's current land use patterns reflect a fairly clear order. Commercial and employment locations are relatively evenly spaced within veins of development that provide connectivity; densities transition from core areas; and for the most part transportation corridors form distinct neighborhood units. The allocation of public facilities and services generally conform to community needs, and areas where expansion is possible with infrastructure readily available.

A challenge that comes with the growth, that Mountain Home is currently experiencing, and that is expected to continue, is that the City has built-out almost to the city limits, in nearly all directions, with little vacant land left to develop. At this point there remains no Agricultural land uses within the City limits (except for sewage ponds). Some of the unutilized land is allocated for industrial use. The southwest and northwest regions remain the only areas with land quantity and environmental suitability for further growth. **Map 6.1** shows areas of feasible growth; the Land Use Map (**Appendix M**) reflects the City's desired land growth pattern.

Anticipated Growth Areas

Map 6.1



This map represents “Anticipated Growth Areas” within Mountain Home city boundaries and Area of Impact.

The color-coded bubbles match the land use types on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.

6.3 FUTURE: GROWTH ACCOMMODATION

The goal of the Land Use chapter is to effectively manage and plan the remaining land available for growth and development within the city limits, before the City will be forced to look at annexation of county land.

ANNEXATION?

While typically an unpopular option to landowners of county land, annexation is a known eventually for those that own land within close proximity to city limits; and it's a certainty for land situated within the City's Area of Impact.

Even so, it has been a mantra of City officials and staff that annexation be approached by the City only when initiated by a landowner, and that the City will not endeavor to proceed with forced annexations. However, a harsh reality is that in order to grow economic stability in the community, land utilization plays an integral role in the feasibility of that stability.

When a city has run out of land to expand into and to develop, the city runs the risk of facing harsh economic consequences.

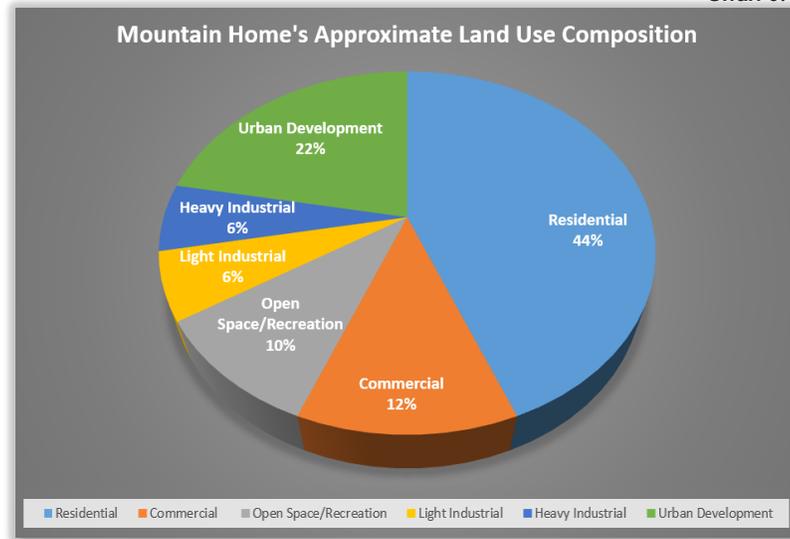
The City of Mountain Home will continue to look toward landowner willingness for annexation. This Plan update will continue the theme of annexation as a land use need, in order to address the continued growth that is occurring, and will continue to come.

6.4 LAND USE COMPOSITION IN MOUNTAIN HOME

There is no real “standard” for an ideal composition of land use types in any given community (there are too many factors to consider), but a high level look at a city’s composition could forecast areas that need particular attention.

For example, if a remote community is 85% residential, city services of every type would suffer for lack of funding and there would be a severe job shortage. Alternatively, a rural community with only 13% residential make-up would suffer economically with lack of population to support the economy, in both jobs and commerce. Finding the right balance of land use and development is imperative to the success of any municipality. **Chart 6.1** shows the approximate composition of Mountain Home.

Chart 6.1



*Source: City of Mountain Home

Since the Urban Development designation has a number of uses, including residential (as defined at **Section 6.7**), the chart is not a concise breakdown; however, it appears from this particular data that Mountain Home could benefit from additional economic land use (jobs), along with more effective planning in residential land development—meaning the 44+% of residential area infers a healthy percentage of residential percentage—except for the known fact that that the City is currently in the midst of a housing crisis.

A Solution? Add Density.

Pressure for housing in Mountain Home is a multi-faceted topic. People are worried that growth is unmanaged and happening too fast, so it would help them to know that based on research a large portion of the pressure for housing is from existing city, county and Air Force populations.

With that said, an inventory of housing types in Mountain Home, along with the land use composition (above), point to the clear lack of, and need for, multi-family and higher density housing.

To be clear, that does not mean Mountain Home needs to start building a conglomerate of apartment complexes. It does mean that existing land uses need to be capitalized upon and better developed, and need to be redeveloped and further built out in order to establish the highest and best use of the land.



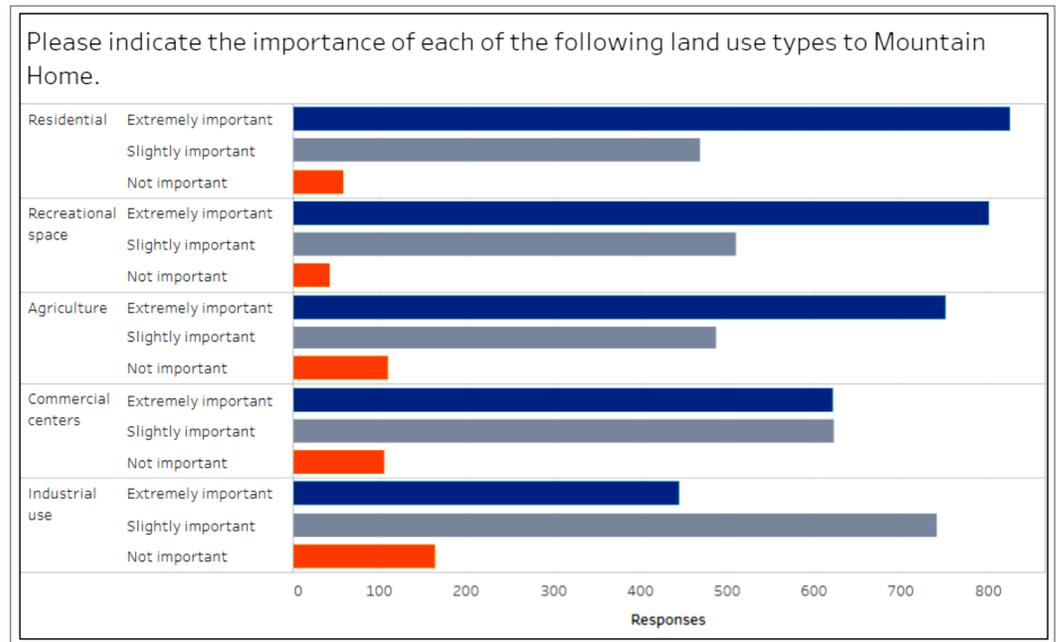
6.5 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

A key question asked on the public survey was **what land use types residents felt were important** to the make up of their community. Understanding how the citizens envision their city, and how it should grow and evolve, assists in community planning and development efforts on the part of the City. Below is a summary of what residents reported was important to them:

95.63% of residents believe in the need for more residential development

92.21% want more commercial development

87.85% indicated some level of need for more industrial land use — a nod toward the desire for more jobs in the economic development sector



On a general level, the residents of the community see the need for growth—based on the right type of land use—which seems to be land use that focuses on immediate needs: jobs and housing.

6.6 LAND USE UPDATES



The updates that have been proposed to the future land use map reflect both citizen input, as well as City planning efforts. The updates contemplated are in the form of a reorganization of existing land use types, of creating overlay districts, of adding a new land designation type, and of expanding the Area of Impact boundaries.

As of the time of adoption of this updated Comprehensive Plan, the City and County were in the midst of reviewing and adopting the updated map, *which will become an Appendix to this document once adopted*. **Until the updated land use map is adopted, the 'January 2019' Land Use Map shall remain in effect as the map to reference for land development applications and decisions.**

The City is looking forward to the adoption of the updated land use map as the reorganization of land use designations—which were based on the smart growth planning principles discussed in the Community Design chapter—will work to assist in creating balanced and sustainable community growth. The amendments to the designations will also do much to aid the city's existing transportation network by clustering development, which may ease congestion on major arterials.

6.7 LAND USE DESIGNATION TABLE

Color coding here matches that shown on the Land Use Map	Residential¹	The largest area shown on the land use map is for residential land use, extending south, north and northwest from the city center. The designation provides for the full range of residential uses and limited office land uses.
	Commercial	This category includes office, retail, multi-family residential and personal services. The area shown for commercial uses include the downtown commercial core, and along the major highway corridors.
	Industrial: 1) Light 2) Heavy	The intent of this land use category is to provide areas of clean industrial land uses, including both light industrial uses like warehousing, technology and manufacturing within an enclosed building; and heavy industry such as processing plants and manufacturing.
	Open / Green Space <small>(does not include Agricultural)</small>	This category reflects existing and proposed areas of park and open space land. Included are the golf course and existing City parks.
	Urban Development	The areas designated for Urban Development are outside the City limits and within the Area of City Impact. These are areas in transition where city services, including water and sewer are expected to be provided within the next twenty years. <i>(Note: This designation allows for the continued existing use of the land, including agriculture, until such time as a property owner desires urban development and annexation into the City. At that time the areas will be zoned based on the compatibility of the proposed zoning with surrounding land uses. Some agricultural uses such as large scale dairies, stock yards or agricultural food packing and storage are not compatible in this district because of the intended future urban uses.)</i>
	Central Business	TO BE ADDED IN 2020 <i>The District of the downtown core that will center around pedestrian-focused activity, along with mixes in business, shopping, entertainment and residential uses.</i>

¹The updated Land Use Map, anticipated to be adopted in spring of 2020, will reflect updates to the Land Use Designations. In the interim, the City reserves the right to allow development based on compatibility with existing adjacent uses including, but not limited to, the transition of lot sizes, compatibility of use, the intensity of use, the overall design of a project, the impact to infrastructure, and the ability to serve a specific use or project.

6.8 FUTURE LAND USE MAP



While the January 2019 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map currently includes six (6) land use types, **the updated land use map that will become an Appendix to this update** is expected to include seven (7).

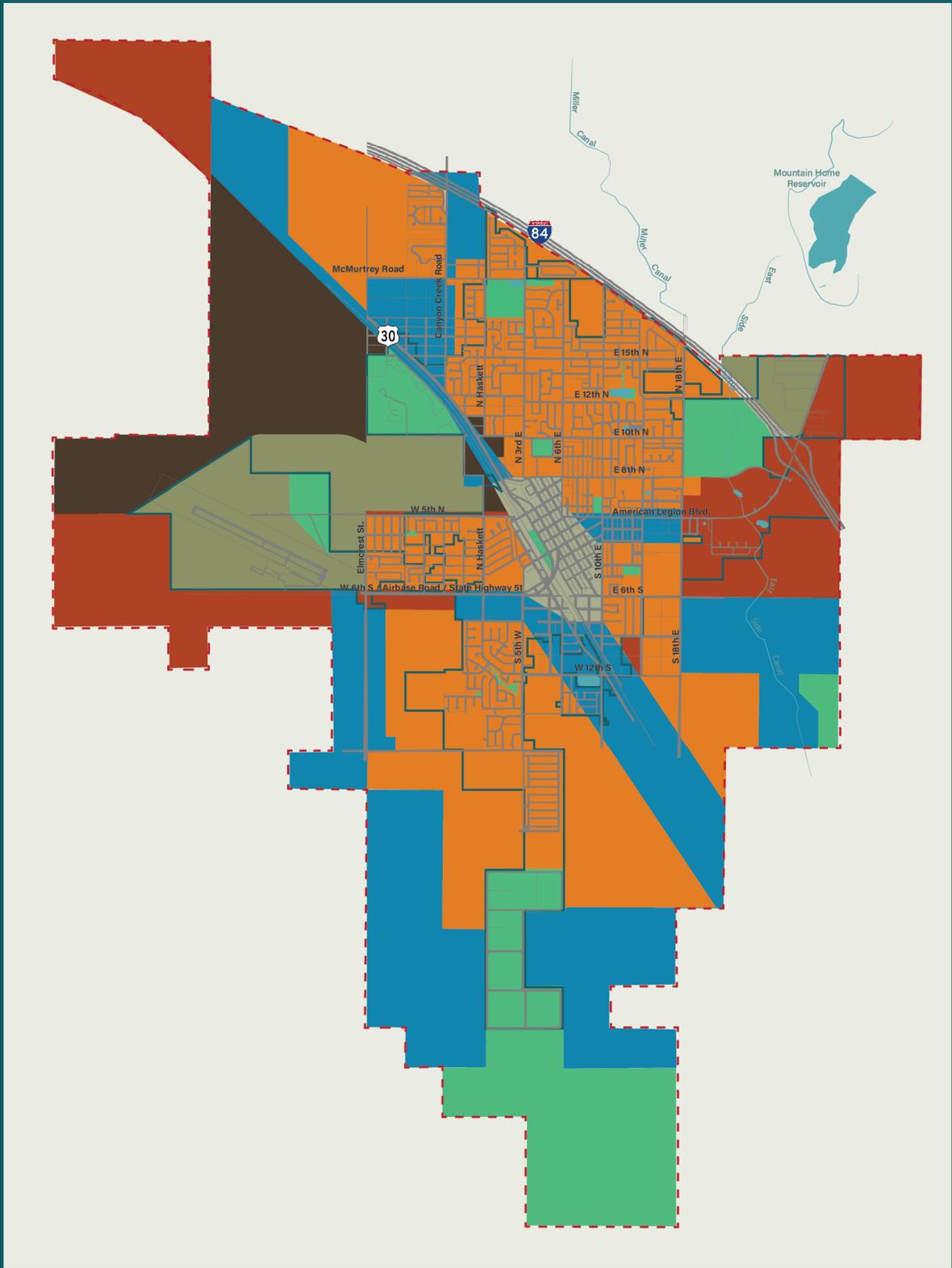
- A “Central Business” designation will be added which will facilitate necessary amendments to existing zoning and ordinances. These amendments will provide for more innovative and progressive development, and redevelopment, to occur in the downtown area.

As the City compiled data on historic land use in Mountain Home and compared it to the visions the City has for the future, the methods that created the past versus what will be needed to realize the future, didn’t align. Former land use was tightly restricted and tied to specific zoning which—while maintaining code and ordinance—created a limiting development pattern.

Part of the strategy for reorganizing land use designations on the land use map was to provide an opportunity to allow areas to evolve organically, potentially permitting the creation of character-driven districts to evolve and develop. In other words, as mentioned in **Section 6.6**, the reorganization of uses are meant to catalyze and launch smart growth planning principles throughout the community, and this is a first step.

6.9 JANUARY 2019 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LAND USE MAP

Map 6.2



- Residential
- Central Business
- Open Space / Recreational
- Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Urban Development / Transition

— 2019 City Limits
- - - Area of Impact



6.10 GOAL 1

Community development will be guided by utilizing and implementing smart growth management and land planning principles.

- A. Promote and approve orderly, compatible development that aligns with the goals of this Comprehensive Plan.
- B. Tie development approvals to availability of infrastructure, both existing and proposed.
- C. Require use of spatial transitions, design buffers or similar techniques between incompatible land uses.
- D. Prevent and discourage sprawl that jeopardizes smart growth principles and main street practices.
- E. Encourage in-fill development and redevelopment within matured areas with readily available infrastructure by allowing reasonable flexibility with setbacks and other appropriate ordinances in some residential and downtown areas.
- F. Coordinate with other jurisdictions and agencies in the review of proposed development.
- G. Encourage multi-family residential developments adjacent to major streets or in close proximity to major retail and employment centers, including the downtown, in order to capitalize on existing transportation network and facilitate more efficient development.
- H. Protect residential property from major streets and more intensive uses through transitional uses or districts, or special standards such as setbacks, buffers and height restrictions.
- I. Encourage commercial uses which are intended to provide basic services to residential neighborhoods when they are designed in such a manner as to blend with their surroundings. The City shall not permit buildings that are not consistent in scale or would create significant traffic impacts.
- J. Work to minimize strip development, and where strip commercial already exists, concentrate future development within mixed use nodes along the streets.
- K. Perform audits of zoning codes and ordinances to ensure that areas are properly zoned for their intended or updated designations, and to ensure standards are in place to protect neighboring uses.
 - Regular audits should be performed at least biannually thereafter.



