

FUTURE LAND USE designations, definitions, & guidelines

Commercial and Mixed Use Designations



Regional Activity Center (RAC)

Definition: The purpose of the Regional Activity Center (RAC) category is to provide for areas that can support a high intensity of development, which serves a regional market. Typical land uses in these areas include high-rise office buildings, regional malls and varying densities of residential development. RAC's include sub-area classifications.

Allowable Zones: RM-8, RM-12, RM-16, FST, RSL, UC, LRO, OI, OHR, OMR, OS, CRC, GC, LRC, NRC, PSC, RRC, TS, PVC, UVC, RRC.

RAC Guidelines: FAR < 2 for office and mixed use, <1 for retail; Regional Office and retail encouraged to locate in RAC; RAC's shall be located in close proximity to freeway intersections and access ramps to/from arterial streets; RAC's locate where adequate water and sewer services available; Allows for self contained mixed use projects; Floodplain and wetlands shall be subtracted to determine density of residential projects. For office and retail, no more than 80% of site may be covered with impervious surface; For residential no more than 70%; If streams/floodplains prohibit development, retail is encouraged to be two or more stories; Parking requirements may be reduced in order to limit impervious coverage; Shared parking is encouraged; streams and floodplain shall be identified as open space.



Community Activity Center (CAC)

Definition: The purpose of the Community Activity Center (CAC) category is to provide for areas that can meet the immediate needs of several neighborhoods or communities. Typical land uses for these areas include low to mid-rise office buildings and department stores.

Allowable Zones: RSL, SC, LRO, OI, CRC, GC, LRC, NRC, PSC, TS, PVC, UVC.

CAC Guidelines: Low/medium intensity office, retail and commercial; Office limited to 4 stories; Dallas Hwy limited to 3 stories; FAR <.75 for office, <.25 for retail; located near intersection of freeway interchange or intersection of 2 arterials; retail encouraged with direct access to arterial; inter-parcel access encouraged; transition in building scale/type should be provided; more intense office located near center of CAC; nodal development encouraged; commercial services with outdoor activities should be encouraged but screened and buffered; floodplain and wetlands shall be subtracted to determine density of residential projects; office/retail no more than 70% impervious surface; if streams/floodplains prohibit development, retail is encouraged to be two or more stories; parking requirements may be reduced in order to limit impervious coverage; shared parking is encouraged; streams and floodplain shall be identified as open space.



Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC)

Definition: The purpose of the Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) category is to provide for areas that serve neighborhood residents and businesses. Typical land uses for these areas include small offices, limited retail and grocery stores.

Allowable Zones: RSL, SC, LRO, LRC, NRC, PVC.

NAC Guidelines: Low intensity office, retail and commercial; Office/retail limited to 2 stories; FAR <.5 for office, <.25 for retail; transition in building scale/type should be provided; floodplain and wetlands shall be subtracted to determine density of residential projects; office/retail no more than 70% impervious surface; if streams/floodplains prohibit development, retail is encouraged to be two or more stories; parking requirements may be reduced in order to limit impervious coverage; shared parking is encouraged; streams and floodplain shall be identified as open space; retail uses should also be limited in total floor area; adequately buffered to protect residential neighborhoods.



Mableton Town Center (MTC)

Definition: The purpose of the Mableton Town Center (MTC) category is to provide for areas that institute development standards and incentives to assist residences and businesses in having a desirable mixed-use community that is a walkable, green and a vital hometown and will be an even better place to live, work, and play.

Allowable Zones: Land uses will be determined by the specific transect zone from T3 which is Sub-Urban Zone focusing more on low density residential developments to T6 which is Urban Core Zone consisting of higher intensity uses.

MTC Guidelines: Compatible with density and intensity of uses based on building function; lot layers, building disposition, and height should be defined by specific transect zone; exterior designs should be compatible with frontage standards and general requirements; permitted building functions, including residential, lodging, office, retail, civic and other functions, should be compatible with allowable functions of the appropriate transect zones; quantity of required parking should be consistent with building function; Landscaping should be consistent with established frontage types.

Parks, Open Space, & Civic Designations



Park/Recreation/Conservation (PRC)

Definition: The PRC category is to provide for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses, either publicly or privately owned including playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers, etc. While the future land use map reflects existing uses, it's important to realize that PRC uses have the potential to be developed at a regional, community or neighborhood scale. Conservation is a sub-category within PRC

Allowable Zones: All zones; protected lands dedicated to passive recreation and protection of water quality, wetlands, stream banks, buffers, scenic views, and historic or archaeological resources

PRC Guidelines: Any use with PRC should be consistent with other policies of this plan; future land use designations will be given consideration with emphasis on adequate buffering, step-down to uses of different intensity and preserving environmentally sensitive areas, including floodplains and wetlands; Conservation is a sub-category of PRC for permanently protected public/private land dedicated to passive recreational uses and land set aside to protect water quality, wetlands, areas with erodible soils, stream banks, riparian buffers, scenic views, historic and archeological resources and to reduce erosion through protection of steep slopes



Public Institutional (PI)

Definition: The PI category provides for certain state, federal or local government uses and institutional land uses such as government building complexes, police and fire stations, colleges, churches, hospitals, etc. While the future land use map reflects existing uses, it is important to realize that uses in this category have the potential to be developed at a regional, community or neighborhood scale.

Allowable Zones: All zones; state, federal, or local government uses and institutional uses

PI Guidelines: Provide for state, federal or local government use and institutional land uses such as government buildings complexes, police and fire stations, colleges, churches, and retirement communities; Any PI use should be developed in a manner consistent with other policies in this plan.

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Residential Designations



High Density Residential (HDR) 

Definition: The purpose of the High Density Residential (HDR) category is to provide for areas that are suitable for higher density housing between five (5) and twelve (12) dwelling units per acre. Density on any particular site should be sensitive to surrounding areas and should offer a reasonable transition of land use.

Allowable Zones: RR, R-80, R-40, R-30, R-20, R-15, RM-8, RM-12, FST, MHP, RR, SC, PVC

HDR Guidelines: Should be located only in areas with direct access to arterial or collectors; can serve as a transitional category between more intensive uses and less intensive uses; affordable housing with open space and high quality design is encouraged; floodplain and wetlands shall be subtracted from aggregate area prior to the calculation of residential density



Medium Density Residential (MDR) 

Definition: The purpose of the Medium Density Residential (MDR) category is to provide for areas that are suitable for moderate density housing between two and one-half (2.5) and five (5) dwelling units per acre. This category presents a range of densities.

Allowable Zones: RR, R-80, R-40, R-30, R-20, R-15, RA-5, RM-8, RD, FST, MHP, SC, PVC, RSL

MDR Guidelines: Proposals at low end of the range of densities shall be encouraged in areas that are at similar densities; high end of the range of densities are encouraged in areas with adequate services and facilities and where such proposed densities are similar; Single-family developments with densities greater than 4 upa may be limited in overall acreage due to intense deforestation, drainage, erosion, and sedimentation concerns; proposals should be developed that help protect the character of the area; can serve as a transitional category; can serve as a transitional category between more intensive uses and less intensive uses; affordable housing with open space and high quality design is encouraged;



Low Density Residential (LDR) 

Definition: The LDR category is to provide for areas that are suitable for low density housing between 1 and 2.5 units per acre, and non supportive senior living housing that in certain circumstances may reach 5 units per acre, depending on existing conditions such as product type and mix, structure/building height, tract size, topographic conditions, etc. in order to provide compatibility with adjacent residential uses.

Allowable Zones: RR, R-80, R-40, R-30, R-20, R-15, RA-5, OSC, RSL

LDR Guidelines: Proposals at the low end of the range of densities shall be encouraged in areas developed at similar densities; high end of the range of densities are encouraged where adequate services and facilities can accommodate such densities and where such densities do not adversely affect the existing character; new residential uses should be developed in a manner that helps protect the character of these areas; floodplain/wetlands shall be subtracted from the aggregate area of the site prior to the calculation of residential density.



Very Low Density Residential (VLDR) 

Definition: The VLDR category is to provide for areas that are suitable for very low density housing, particularly in locations which may not have basic services such as sewer, or where the existing or desired residential development pattern is 0 to 2 units per acre.

Allowable Zones: RR, R-80, R-40, R-30, R-20, OSC

VLDR Guidelines: Areas that do not have basic services of water and sewer; should be developed in a manner that helps protect the rural/estate character of the area; floodplain/wetlands shall be subtracted from the aggregate area of the site prior to the calculation of residential density.



Rural Residential (RR) 

Definition: The RR category provides for areas that are suitable for Cobb County's lowest density housing development. Includes those areas difficult to sewer, furthest from major activity centers, public services, and transportation corridors, or have particular sensitive environment features or scenic value. The RR category provides for development that is 0 to 1 unit per acre.

Allowable Zones: RR, R-80, R-40, OSC

RR Guidelines: Areas not projected to have basic services or water or sewer due to topographical or other constraints; areas located furthest from employment centers and major transportation corridors; should be developed in a manner that helps protect the rural character and environmentally sensitive nature of these areas; floodplain/wetlands shall be subtracted from the aggregate area of the site prior to the calculation of residential density.

Infrastructure Designations



Transportation/Communication/Utilities (TCU) 

Definition: The purpose of the Transportation/Communication/Utilities (TCU) category is to provide for uses such as power generation plants, railroad facilities, telephone switching stations, airports, etc.

Allowable Zones: The TCU category is to provide for uses such as power generation plants, railroad facilities, telephone switching stations, airports, etc.

TCU Guidelines: The TCU category is to provide for uses such as power generation plants, railroad facilities, telephone switching stations, airports, etc.

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Industrial Designations



Industrial Compatible (IC)

Definition: The purpose of the Industrial Compatible (IC) category is to provide for areas that can support light industrial, office/warehouse, and distribution uses. Typical land uses for these areas include professional business parks and distribution centers.

Allowable Zones: OS, TS, LI

IC Guidelines: Regional serving employment areas; Office uses should be limited in height and floor area; FAR <.75 and < 4 stories; buffering and screening of outdoor storage shall be required; Industrial processes and activities should be located inside and should not produce substantial noise, vibration, or noxious by-products; can serve as transitional category; should be located where there is safe, direct access to regional freeway system; floodplain/wetlands shall be subtracted from the aggregate area of the site prior to calculation of residential density.



Industrial (IND)

Definition: The IND category provides for areas that can support heavy industrial and manufacturing uses. Typical land uses for these areas include plants that convert raw materials into a finished product.

Allowable Zones: OS, TS, LI, HI

IND Guidelines: Should include industrial and manufacturing uses; Office uses should be limited in floor area and intensity; FAR <.5; should be located where there is safe, direct access to regional freeway system; should not be located immediately adjacent to residential areas; new industrial development proposals an assessment of environmental impact and impact mitigation should be conducted; floodplain/wetlands shall be subtracted from the aggregate area of the site prior to calculation of residential density.



Priority Industrial Area (PIA)

Definition: The (PIA) future land use category is to support the strategic protection of the most important Industrial and Industrial Compatible land areas in unincorporated Cobb County, the Board of Commissioners has identified specific priority industrial areas. These industrial areas are considered most important to provide future industrial type job producing sectors. The PIA does have sub-categories.

Allowable Zones: Determined by the PIA sub-categories

PIA Guidelines: Evaluation and data analysis should be conducted when the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners are considering a land use or zoning changes that alters a PIA property or areas adjacent to PIA properties from its existing industrial or industrial compatible land use category to any other future land use category; considerations in evaluation should include job impacts, tax base impacts, viability, transition, adjacency to viable industrial areas.