

CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM

DEPARTMENT: Development Services / Planning Division
AGENDA DATE: Introduction 12/19/06; Public Hearing 01/09/07
CONTACT PERSON/PHONE: Christina Valles, Senior Planner – 541-4930
DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: # 4

SUBJECT:

An Ordinance incorporating the El Paso Water Utilities Public Service Board Northeast Master Plan as a Specific Study Area Plan into the City's comprehensive plan, the Plan for El Paso, and which plan shall amend the Plan for El Paso and the year 2025 General Land Use Map incorporated therein.

Subject Property: North of US Highway 54 and East of the Franklin Mountains State Park. Applicant: City of El Paso. (District 4)

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

See attached report

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

N/A

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:

Development Coordinating Committee (DCC) – Approval Recommendation
City Plan Commission (CPC) – Approval Recommendation

*****REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION*****

LEGAL: (if required) N/A

FINANCE: (if required) N/A

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Alan Shubert

APPROVED FOR AGENDA: Patricia D. Adauto, Deputy City Manager

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE INCORPORATING THE EL PASO WATER UTILITIES PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD NORTHEAST MASTER PLAN AS A SPECIFIC STUDY AREA PLAN INTO THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, THE PLAN FOR EL PASO, AND WHICH PLAN SHALL AMEND THE PLAN FOR EL PASO AND THE YEAR 2025 GENERAL LAND USE MAP INCORPORATED THEREIN.

WHEREAS, *The Plan for El Paso*, as subsequently amended, was initially adopted by the El Paso City Council on April 27, 1999 pursuant to provisions of the Texas Local Government Code now found at Section 213.003, as the comprehensive plan for the City; and

WHEREAS, the comprehensive plan serves as a general guide for the future growth and development of the City to promote public health, safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, a specific recommendation of *The Plan for El Paso* is the creation of specific study area plans that will serve as separate policy documents which give general support to the objectives of the City's comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Public Service Board and the El Paso City Council previously approved a Northeast Master Pan for a portion of the Northeast Planning area, and the Northeast projected land use was subsequently amended on July 26, 2005; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso Water Utilities Public Service Board has approved a modified Northeast Master Plan for a portion of the Northeast Planning Area that was the result of public stakeholder meetings and public input; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council on December 7, 2006, directed the City Plan Commission to proceed with a recommendation to amend applicable portions of the approved Northeast Master Plan as a specific study area plan addendum to *The Plan of El Paso* and that all future land sales containing portions of the subject tract should conform to the study area plan and include covenants effectuating the study area plan; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council on December 7, 2006, also directed the City Plan Commission to proceed with the following directives:

1. In order to ensure its protection, the Natural Transition Buffer area will be placed under a conservation easement prior to the sale of any developable land within the study area.
2. Along the southern boundary of the study area, a minimum 250 feet wide parkland/preserve will be set aside.
3. A mix of housing types, nodal neighborhood commercial services at ground level and community gathering areas are encouraged throughout the residential areas, specifically outside the town center areas,
4. Explore adding a 25 acre community park which would be beyond the neighborhood park dedication requirements.

WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission, after conducting a public hearing, recommends adoption of the changes stated above, with the exception of adding a 25 acre community park, to *The Plan for El Paso* as herein enumerated, as detailed in Exhibit 'A', which is a specific study area plan titled Smart Growth Plan for the Northeast; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council finds that the amendment to *The Plan for El Paso* as herein enumerated will have no negative impact upon the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the City, and that the study area plan will carry out the purpose and spirit of the policies expressed in *The Plan for El Paso*.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

1. That the El Paso City Council hereby adopts the proposed Specific Study Area Plan for PSB Northeast Master Plan Properties attached hereto as Exhibit "A" as a specific study area plan for Phase I of the subject area, and that same shall be incorporated into The Plan for El Paso for all purposes, including amending the Year 2025 Projected General Land Use Map for the long-range development of the Northeast Planning Area.

2. *The Plan for El Paso* and its related documents, as herein modified, shall remain in full force and effect as to the long-range general policies for guiding growth and development in the City.

PASSED AND APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2007.

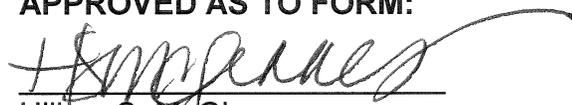
THE CITY OF EL PASO

John F. Cook
Mayor

ATTEST:

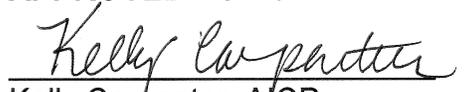
Richarda Duffy Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Hillary S. McGinnes
Assistant City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:



Kelly Carpenter, AICP
Deputy Director of Development
Services Department

JOHN COOK
MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON
CITY MANAGER

R. ALAN SHUBERT
DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



CITY COUNCIL
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BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
PLANNING DIVISION**

December 12, 2006

TO: The Honorable Mayor and City Council
Joyce A. Wilson, City Manager

FROM: Christina Valles, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Specific Study Area Plan amendment to the Plan for El Paso
LOCATION: North of US Highway 54 and East of the Franklin Mountains State Park
REQUEST: Amendment to the 2025 Projected General Land Use Plan for the NE

The City Plan Commission (CPC), on December 7, 2006, voted (6-0) to recommend **APPROVAL** of amending the 2025 Projected General Land Use Plan for the Northeast Planning Area and adopting the Smart Growth Plan for the Northeast as a specific study area plan amendment to the Plan for El Paso. The CPC further recommended the incorporation of the following directives into the final document:

1. In order to ensure its protection, the Natural Transition Buffer area will be placed under a conservation easement prior to the sale of any developable land within the study area.
2. Along the southern boundary of the study area, a minimum 250 feet wide parkland/preserve will be set aside.
3. A mix of housing types, nodal neighborhood commercial services at ground level and community gathering areas are encouraged throughout the residential areas, specifically outside the town center areas.

The CPC found that this amendment is in conformance with The Plan for El Paso. The CPC also determined that this change protects the best interest, health, safety and welfare of the public in general; and that the proposed uses are compatible with adjacent land uses.

Attachment: *Draft:* Smart Growth Plan for the Northeast.

STAFF REPORT

**Amendments to Plan for
El Paso**

Proposed General Land Use Map

Representative:

El Paso Water Utilities-Public Service Board (EPWU-PSB)

Legal Description:

The site is located near Patriot Freeway (US 54) and consists of portions of the Texas and Pacific Railroad Surveys, Township 1, Block 80, Sections 17, 18, 19 and 20; and Block 81, Sections 13, 14, 18, 19, 20 and 23, El Paso County, Texas.

Location:

The changes affect approximately 6,200 acres of vacant land located northwest of US 54, and east of the Franklin Mountains State Park. This proposal only concerns land owned by the City of El Paso and administered by the El Paso Water Utilities (EPWU)-Public Service Board (PSB)

Representative District:

4

Area:

~6,200 acres

Zoning:

R-F, PMD

Existing Use:

Vacant

Proposed Use:

Residential, Mixed use, Parks & Open Space

Surrounding Land Uses:

North - R-F / Vacant
South - R-3, R-3A /Residential, Vacant
East - R-F / Vacant
West- Franklin Mountains State Park

Year 2025 Designation:

Residential, Mixed-Use, Commercial, Industrial, and
Parks & Open Space

**CITY PLAN COMMISSION HEARING, CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 2ND FLOOR,
CITY HALL, DECEMBER 7, 2006, 1:30 P.M.**

**SMART
GROWTH
PLAN
FOR THE
NORTHEAST**

APPROVED
BY
THE
CITY COUNCIL
(DATE) _____







PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL: (DATE) _____

JOHN COOK, MAYOR
JOYCE WILSON, CITY MANAGER

ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1
SUSANNAH M. BYRD, DISTRICT 2
J. ALEXANDRO LOZANO, DISTRICT 3
MELINA CASTRO, DISTRICT 4

PRESI ORTEGA, JR., DISTRICT 5
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PURPOSE

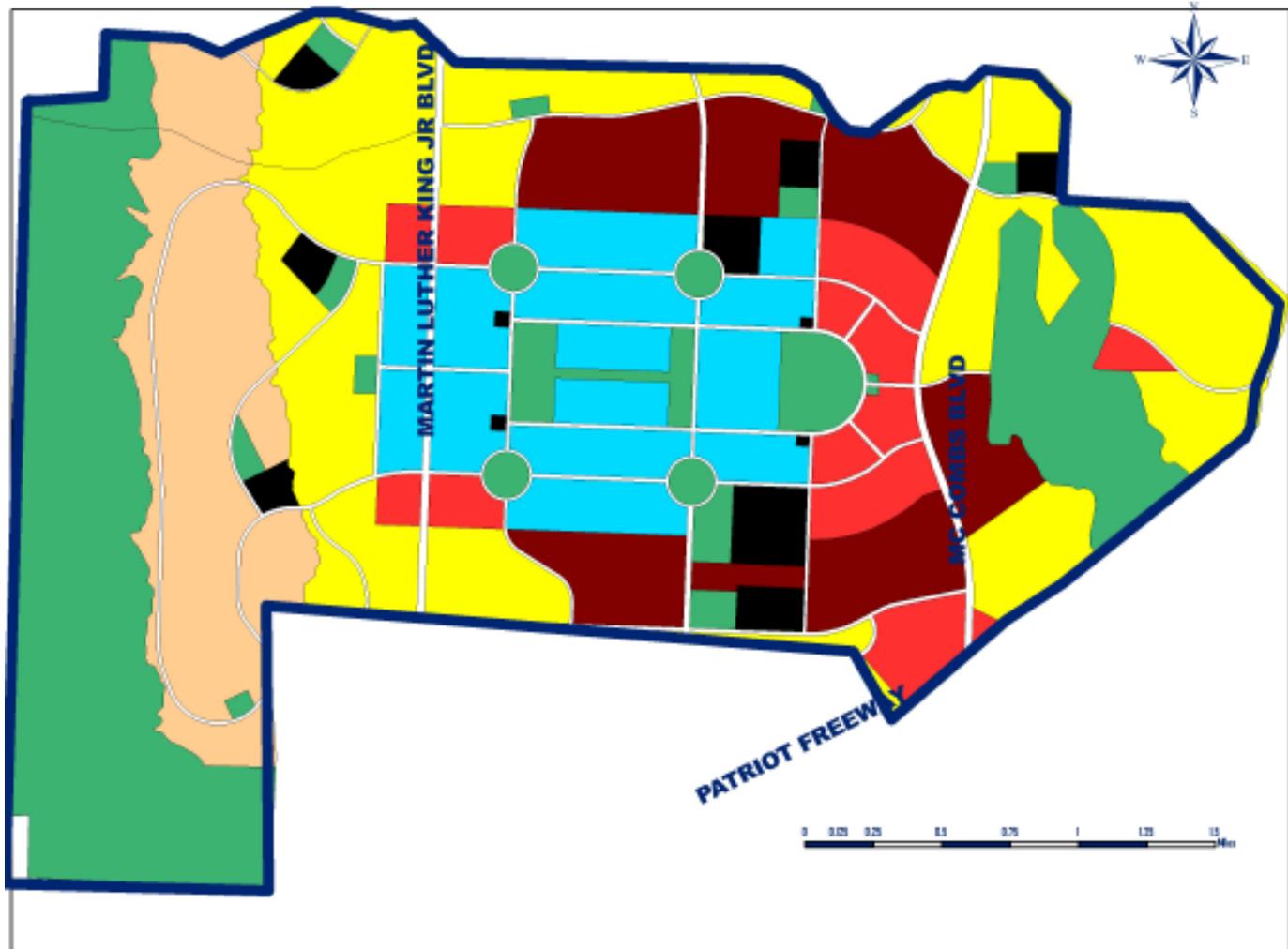
This document, to include the attached maps, constitutes a specific study area plan amendment to *The Plan for El Paso*. There are approximately 16,000 acres of City owned land between US 54 and the New Mexico state line. This Specific Study Area Plan will affect approximately 6,750 acres as shown on Map 1. The study area is located on the east side of the Franklin Mountains State Park and north of the Patriot Freeway (US 54). The study area is bounded to the south and east by US 54 and the gas line easement and bounded to the north by a line approximately two miles north of Loma Real Avenue. Approximately 10% of the acreage is in the Planned Mountain Development District. The area is primarily vacant with the exception of the Painted Dunes Golf Course.



Map 1: Study Area Boundary

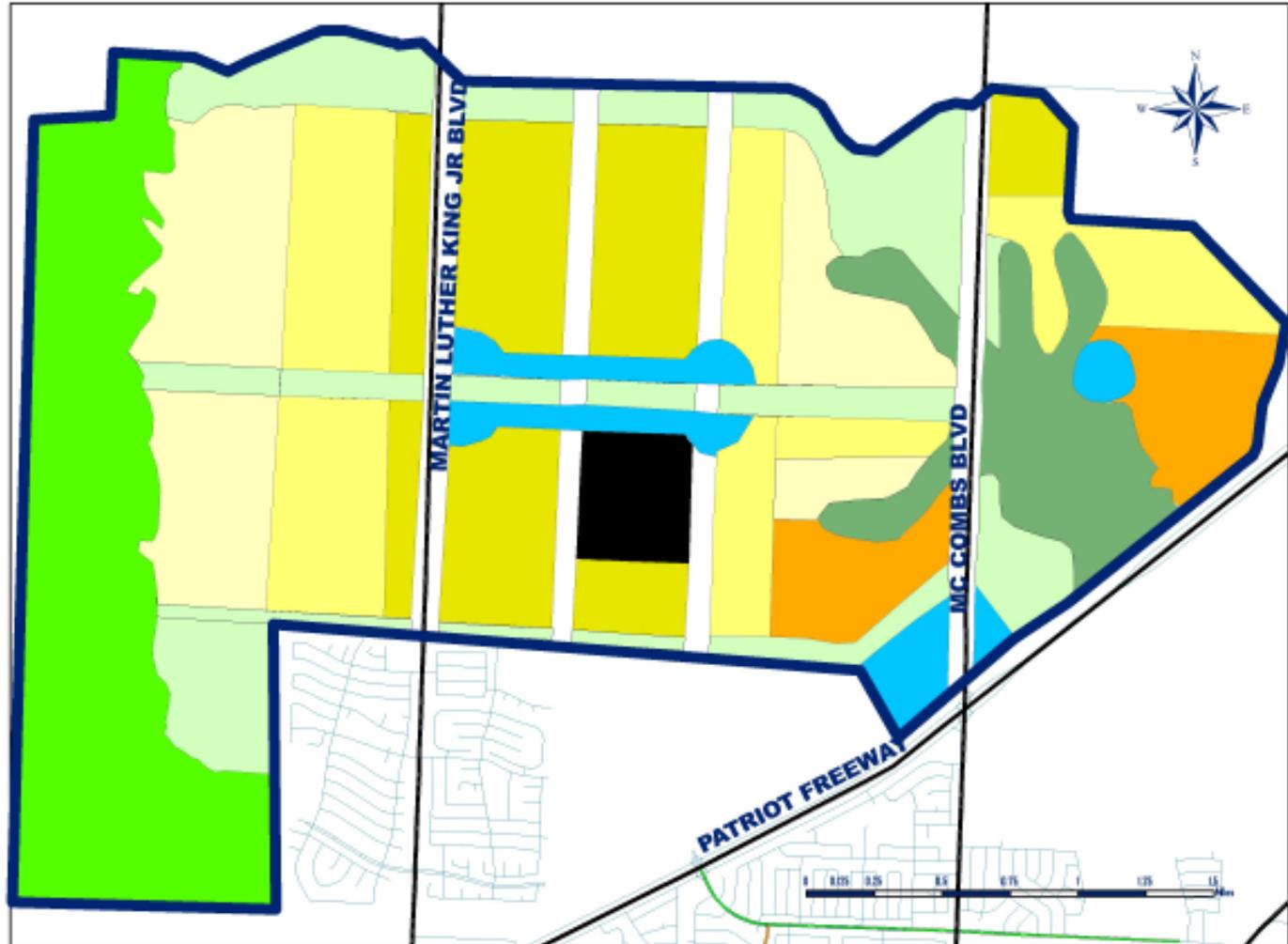
CURRENT PROJECTED GENERAL LAND USE

The current Projected General Land Use map is shown to the right (Map 2). This Specific Study Area Plan amends the Projected General Land Use Map to that shown in Map 3. The Projected Land Use Map as amended by this plan for the study area contains a mix of land uses including Commercial, Residential, Mixed-Use, Parks, and Open Space, and a Natural Transition Buffer between development and the State Park. Taken together, these land uses are designed to create a desirable quality-of-life for all future residents.



Map 2: Current Projected General Land Use for the NE (Legend on Page 3)

AMENDED PROJECTED GENERAL LAND USE

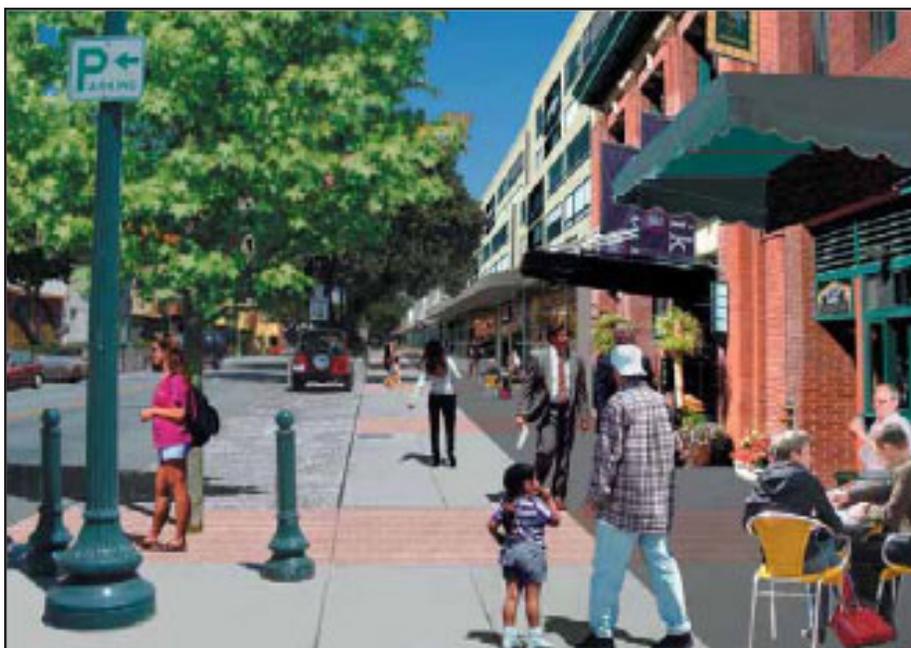


Map 3: Amended Projected General Land Use for the NE

GOALS

In recent years the City of El Paso has begun incorporating Smart Growth concepts into policy decisions in an effort to foster vibrant, sustainable communities with a strong sense of place. The Northeast area Public Service Board (PSB) managed land affords the City a unique opportunity to create a truly exemplary development with quality of life amenities based on recognized Smart Growth Principles.

The following design guidelines have been developed with these Smart Growth Principles in mind, in order to encourage the development of a truly unique community that will serve as a model for smart growth in El Paso. The goal of this smart growth plan for the area encompassed by the proposed Northeast URS Land Study is to encourage development that will form a vibrant, sustainable and walkable community, based on the following smart growth principles and incentives, where the citizens of El Paso can live, work and play.



Key Smart Growth Principles

- Mixed Land Uses
- Take advantage of Compact Building Design
- Create a range of Housing Opportunities and Choices
- Create Walkable Neighborhoods
- Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a strong sense of Place
- Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environment

Developer Incentives for Smart Growth

- Higher density
- Increased building heights and lot coverage
- Flexible setbacks
- Shared parking facilities
- Reduced/shared landscaping areas

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives and guidelines will be incorporated into the Northeast URS Land Study, PSB bid and land sale documents in order to ensure compliance with this plan. Non-compliance with a particular principle shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as part of the master development plan and detailed site plan approval. It is not intended that every project within the mixed-use area conform to all or any set number of the enumerated objectives, however conformity to these objectives is strongly encouraged.

1. That the natural infrastructure and visual character of the development area be retained, as derived from existing topography, riparian corridors and other environmentally sensitive areas.
2. That transportation corridors be planned and reserved in coordination with land use patterns.
3. That natural or man-made green corridors and open space areas be used to define and connect neighborhood to other facilities within the development, and that these areas allow for connectivity outside of the development where feasible.
4. That the development include a framework of transit, pedestrian and bicycle systems that provide alternatives to the automobile.
5. That neighborhoods with a mixed-use town center be the preferred pattern of development and that developments specializing in single use be discouraged.
6. That a mixture of housing types and densities be distributed throughout the mixed-use development.
7. That neighborhoods be compact, pedestrian-friendly, and composed of diverse housing types.
8. That there be opportunity for ordinary activity of daily living to occur within walking distance of most dwellings.
9. That interconnected networks of streets be designed to disperse and reduce the length of vehicle trips.

10. That within neighborhoods, a range of housing types and price levels be provided to accommodate people of diverse ages and incomes.
11. That appropriate building densities and land use be provided within walking distance of transit stops.
12. That civic, institutional and commercial activity be embedded, and not isolated, in the development.
13. That a range of open space including parks, squares, and playgrounds be distributed within the development.
14. That a development have sufficient size to accommodate the mixed-use concentration of uses.
15. That well-configured squares, plazas, greens, landscaped streets, preserves, greenbelts, or parks be dedicated to the collective social activity, recreation, and visual enjoyment of the neighborhood.
16. That buildings and landscaping contribute to the physical definition of streets as civic places.
17. That the design of streets and buildings reinforce safe environments.
18. That architecture and landscape design grow from local climate, topography, history and building practice.
19. That public gathering spaces be provided in locations that reinforce community identity.
20. That Principal buildings and facades, where possible, be located parallel to the frontage line to encourage a community-friendly environment.
21. That buildings, spaces, and other features act as landmarks, symbols, and focal points for community identity.
22. That Compatibility of buildings and other improvements as determined by their arrangement, bulk, form, character, and landscaping establish a livable and harmonious environment.

OBJECTIVES

LAND USE

The amended map (Map 3) proposes land use categories designated by color and defined in the legend. The categories reflect the future land uses and development intensities intended for that segment of the study area. The land use map and text is the major implementation tool for carrying out development review processes. It does not specify zoning for any area. Instead, it should be used to guide future zoning decisions in a way that ensures that any proposed zoning conforms to the density guidelines issued herein. The Building and Zoning Advisory Committee (BZAC) review process has recommended the establishment of new mixed-use zoning districts that contain guidelines similar to those detailed in this plan. Specific urban design standards for the mixed use town centers, street design, and open space will need to be incorporated into the land study, bid and land sale documents, as well as the zoning ordinances, to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.

Land uses and approximate total acreages:

Low Density Residential	665
Medium Density Residential	1,190
Medium High Density	1,235
Planned Residential	400
Mixed Use Town Center	260
Linear Park/Boulevard	175
Parkland/Preserve/Floodplain	664
Natural Transition Buffer (Open Space)	1,086
Golf Course	257+

Land use characteristics:

Total Developable Area	3,750
Potential Number of Dwelling Units	14,533
Gross Developable Acres	Residential 3,750
Net Developable Residential Acres	2,812
(Roads and Infrastructure 25%)	938
Average Dwelling Units/Gross Residential Acre	3.9 du/acre
Average Dwelling Units/Net Residential Acre	5.2 du/acre

LAND USE

There are approximately 260 acres of mixed-use area, distributed among three town center nodes. The mixed-use town center development may have the highest concentration of varied land uses, however a mix of uses is expected throughout the study area. The study area is divided into general land uses that will have different characteristics. These may include a neighborhood center area, a mixed residential area, a neighborhood edge area, or a combination thereof.



Neighborhood Center

A neighborhood center may contain retail, commercial, and other services that meet the daily needs of neighborhood residents. It is pedestrian-oriented, and it is designed to encourage pedestrian movement between the center and a mixed residential area.

Mixed Residential

The mixed residential area shall include a variety of residential land uses. Residential scale office and retail uses are permitted within the mixed residential area and are required to blend into the residential character of the neighborhood. Pedestrian activity shall be promoted through varied streetscapes that also provide for safe and efficient movement of vehicular traffic.



Neighborhood Edge

A neighborhood edge area has the least residential density characterized with larger lots and greater setbacks than the rest of the mixed-use development. Only residential dwellings are permitted and shall be designed to appropriately adjoin existing or platted conventional housing.

MIXED-USE

LAND USE



The area within the town center mixed-use development should have a distribution of diverse land use categories. The amounts of land allocated to a particular land use category should be reasonably proportional throughout the town center.

Neighborhood Center Areas

These areas are defined as the most concentrated mixed-use areas along Painted Dunes Boulevard and other defined town center nodes. These areas should have a balanced distribution of neighborhood commercial services and offices along the street front and may have multi-family residential on second and third floors.



Open Space

Open space as a character and place defining feature should be incorporated into the design of the town center. A major lateral park is proposed along Painted Dunes Boulevard, however, other parks, plazas and drainage facilities should be planned and developed in a manner that will contribute to the overall sense of place.



Civic Use

Civic uses should be planned for prominent locations in the town center and be integrated into an open public plaza or space for pedestrian and neighborhood activity.

MIXED-USE

LAND USE

Residential Land Use Categories

The land use map designates three residential land use categories that provide for single-family and multi-family housing at varying densities. Gateways and street design are two of the most critical elements of good neighborhood design. Therefore, design in residential subdivisions should include a pedestrian friendly theme including walkways/alleys to connect blocks, and street layouts should avoid, however reasonably possible, a grid-type pattern.

The type and intensity of development for each category is described below and applies to this specific study area only. These land use and density designations are not meant to be mutually exclusive. A mix of housing types at ground level, nodal neighborhood commercial services and community gathering areas are encouraged throughout, specifically outside of the town center areas.

Low Density Residential

The Low Density Residential Land Use (LD) shall have no more than 3 dwelling units/acre. There are approximately 665 acres of LD residential land use within the land study area.

Medium Density Residential

The Medium Density Land Use (MD) shall have no more than 3.5 dwelling units/acre. There are approximately 1,190 acres of MD residential land use within the land study area.

Medium High Density

The Medium High Density Land Use (MHD) shall have no more than 5.5 single-family dwelling units/acre. There are approximately 1,235 acres of MHD residential land use within the land study area.

Planned Residential

The Planned Residential (PR-1) Land Use shall be a mixture of town homes, detached single-family homes and condominium units located adjacent to the Painted Dunes Golf Course. There are approximately 400 acres of senior housing. The number of units for this area will vary, but a conservative estimate is 1,600 units.

RESIDENTIAL

LAND USE

Parks and Open Space

When the public in El Paso is asked about quality-of-life, parks and recreation services usually make the top of the list. Parks and open space are critically linked to quality developments and can take on various forms including active recreation parks, linear parks, hike-bike trails, passive open space, etc. Language ensuring that the intent of this plan’s open space and parkland goals will be carried out will need to be incorporated into the Land Study, bid and land sale documents.

The Parks Department Planning Area of the entire northeast currently has 16 neighborhood parks and 1 mini park, totaling approximately 126.7 acres and the proposed 58 acre Northeast Regional Park located immediately south of the subject area. Additional land set aside by the master developer under the current park dedication ordinance will provide the neighborhood parks in the study area. Walking, jogging, and bike trails are essential amenities throughout the city and connections between parks, using these paths must be encouraged. Language to that effect should be written into the Land Study, bid and land sale documents to ensure the planning and development of these amenities.



PARKS & OPEN SPACE

LAND USE

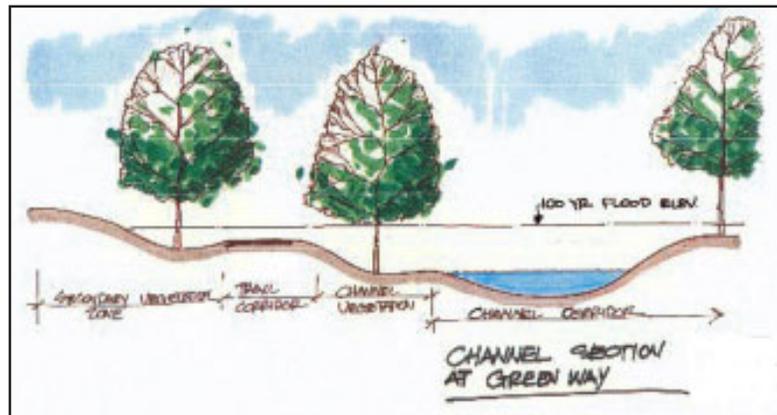
Parks and Floodplain preserve

The Specific Land Study proposes to set aside land for major open space corridors, in addition to the park dedication that will be required as the community develops. These proposed corridors will include a lateral park along Painted Dunes Boulevard with a drainage channel running in the middle. The lateral park will extend from McCombs Drive to the Franklin Mountain State Park. Also, along the southern boundary of the study area, at least a 250 feet wide parkland/preserve will be set aside. Furthermore, as a minimum, the 100-year flood plain, also known as Flow Path No. 11, and Flow Path No. 53 will be preserved in their natural state for drainage purposes.



Natural Transition Buffer (Open Space)

Quality-of-life is enhanced by open spaces. Open space will define the area between Low Density Residential and the State Park, in the form of a Natural Transition Buffer. The Franklin Mountain State Park offers scenic, geological, biological, ecological, and recreational resources. The intent of this plan is that development shall not occur within the Natural Transition Buffer, except for primitive trails. In order to ensure its protection, the Natural Transition area will be placed under a conservation easement prior to the sale of any developable land within the study area.



Illustrations: (Above & to the right) from the Kimley-Horn El Paso Water Utilities North-east Master Plan Report 2005



PARKS & OPEN SPACE

**DESIGN
STANDARDS**

A coherent architectural theme should be maintained within each mixed use area. As part of the review of the master development plan and detailed site plan, architectural and design standards should achieve the following objectives:

- a. Architectural compatibility,
- b. Human scale design,
- c. Integration of uses,
- d. Encouragement of pedestrian activity,
- e. Buildings that relate to and are oriented toward the street and surrounding buildings,
- f. Residential scale buildings in any mixed residential area,
- g. Buildings that contain special architectural features to signify entrances to the mixed-use development, and
- h. Buildings that focus activity on a neighborhood open space, square or plaza,
- i. Street and pedestrian connectivity,
- j. Varied roadway design in order to lend character to the neighborhood (The design of the linear park/ boulevard, Painted Dunes Boulevard, should be maintained as adopted by the City Plan Commission on December 7, 2006.),
- k. Reduced setbacks for all uses, unless otherwise required by the City Council as part of the review of the master development plan and detailed site plan,
- l. Reduction of landscaping requirements as detailed in Title 18 (Building & Construction) of the El Paso Municipal Code. Landscaping, streetscape, and other green areas should be shown and considered as part of the master development plan and detailed site plan approval process for each mixed-use area.

DESIGN STANDARDS

Pedestrian Amenities for Major Trails and Walking Paths

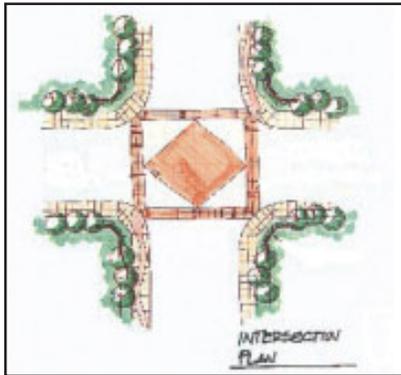
Resler-Type Trail System - Accomplished by providing similar amenities of landscaping and park furniture such as benches, but strategically locating them at nodes. Research on “walk-able communities”, indicates that pedestrians will comfortably walk ¼ mile distance. Instead of lining the entire length of the hike and bike trail system with intense landscaping and furniture, placing these amenities at strategic intervals could create a positive impact while minimizing the overall costs.

Concrete Finish - The details of the concrete finish on the trail could be altered in such a way to create a more pedestrian friendly look than a typical sidewalk. Alternative paving surfaces are also encouraged.

Hike and Bike Trail Placement - If the trail is placed next to the arroyo (within or adjacent to the 100-year flood plain) pedestrians can have a more pleasing experience. Instead of separating the hike and bike trails from the community (using fences, barriers, or poor land use planning) the goal is to integrate these uses into the community neighborhood experience.

Key Intersections - Changing the monotonous pavement by adding pavers or stamping the pavement could identify this intersection “a place”. Changing the pavement in the intersection is also recognized as a traffic calming measure and a pedestrian friendly design feature.

Medians - Landscape all medians (a “safe haven” for pedestrian crossing).



Illustrations: (On this page) from the Kimley-Horn El Paso Water Utilities Northeast Master Plan Report 2005

PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

