

LAND USE

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LAND USE

INTRODUCTION:

Patterns and relationships of land use have a significant influence on the vitality, character and quality of a community. The City of Elko, like other cities of comparable size, is a complex network of housing, parks, retail outlets, service facilities, institutions and industry.

The City will continue to grow, consume resources and evolve through development and redevelopment of land. However, unbridled growth does not automatically bring increased prosperity and economic strength to a community. Improper or conflicting patterns of land use activity can have long-range financial impact on the value of land, buildings and other improvements, and can place stress on streets and other public infrastructure. Premature development of land in combination with the by-passing of under utilized or vacant land may require excessive expenditure of public funds to provide services and other public improvements.

The Land Use Plan is intended to identify, illustrate and express preferences for use of land in the City based on physical features and constraints, the characteristic of areas and neighborhoods, site suitability for particular types of land use activities, economy and availability of public services and infrastructure and the relationship to streets, highways and the overall transportation system.

Additionally, the Land Use Plan will provide policy, guidance and assistance in the decision making process relative to land use and land development issues affecting the community.

GOAL:

To provide for orderly growth and efficient use of land that promotes a preferred, integrated pattern of community development.

OBJECTIVES:

- To provide for a mixture and variety of land uses in appropriate locations throughout the community.
- To provide for a mixture and diversity of housing types.
- To promote quality industrial growth and development within the City.
- To identify and set aside prime land areas for future quality industrial growth and development.
- To promote the neighborhood concept as a component of the community.

- To create stable, attractive, safe residential neighborhoods which contain a range of supportive commercial, institutional, and public facilities.
- To develop criteria for pro-active annexation of land adjacent to the corporate boundaries of the City which have become urban in character.
- To modify and update Zoning Ordinance regulations and development policies as a means to assist with the advancement of the Land Use Plan.
- To create stable and functional commercial centers and districts based on site suitability and compatibility with adjacent land uses.
- To provide for the appropriate location and distribution of public facilities particularly parks and schools throughout the community.
- To promote rehabilitation and improvement of the living environment in older neighborhoods and areas characterized by conflicting patterns of land use.
- To promote land use activities appropriate to the features and characteristics of the natural landscape.
- To support and promote consistency between the Land Use Plan and zoning district classifications.
- To correlate land use activities with the appropriate street and roadway classifications to ensure a proper balance and relationship with street and roadway function and adjacent land use.
- To provide for adequate transitioning and buffering between residential uses and industrial and commercial uses.
- To correlate land use activities with designated truck routes.
- To encourage in-fill type development to conserve infrastructure costs.
- To promote growth in areas adjacent to existing urban development so that public services and facilities may be provided efficiently and economically.
- To recognize the significance of the downtown commercial district and the influence of peripheral areas to the vitality of that district.
- To encourage government office and appropriate public facilities, including City, County, State and Federal agencies to locate, when practicable, in or adjacent to the downtown commercial district.

NATURAL LAND FEATURES:

The City of Elko occupies a physical setting within an elongated valley oriented southwest to northeast between two roughly parallel mountain ranges. The dominant physical feature is the Humboldt River, an exotic stream with a relatively flat gradient and a meandering, braided channel. The flood plain of the Humboldt River is not only flat, but narrow as well, ranging in width from one-half to three-quarters of a mile with an elevation of 5,025 feet above sea level just southeast of the City of Elko. Contributing to this valley setting is the Elko Mountain Range which rises sharply on the south side of the City to elevations of more than 7,000 feet and the Adobe Range to the north which ascends more gradually from the valley floor through river terraces and alluvial fans to about the same elevation.

The Elko Area can be divided into three general classifications of natural land forms which include the following:

LOWLANDS

This area includes the Humboldt River flood plain, peripheral and river bench lands characterized by a slope of less than 10%. Most of the City's urban core development, including institutional, commercial and industrial land use activity occurs within this area. A residential component, consisting primarily of older housing stock, is also present.

LOWER FOOTHILLS

This area consists of land with a slope between 10% and 25%. A significant portion of the City's low density residential development along with peripheral retail and service centers occurs within this area. Much of the City's anticipated growth over the next ten to twenty years is expected to take place within this lower foothills area.

UPPER FOOTHILLS

This area consists of the more rugged, mountainous terrain of 25% or greater slope. At the present time, there is limited development within this area. However, as the City continues to grow and expand and available land resources become more scarce, low density residential development, clustered development as well as preservation of open space will likely emerge as a prevailing pattern of land use.

EXISTING PATTERNS OF LAND USE:

The City of Elko can be divided into three basic geographical areas which help to define current prevailing patterns of land use throughout the community. These include the following:

- Northern Sector - Area generally north of Interstate 80
- Central Sector - Area generally between Interstate 80 on the north and the Humboldt River on the south.
- Southern Sector - Area generally south of the Humboldt River.

RESIDENTIAL

Residential patterns of land use exist throughout the various sectors of Elko. An older, mixed housing stock characterizes the core area of the City between Interstate 80 and the Humboldt River. Areas to the north of the freeway reflect newer housing and more contemporary patterns of development. Areas to the south of the river feature mixed housing that includes units of moderate age as well as units of a more recent vintage.

Projected high growth areas for residential development include both the northern and southern sectors of the City. The central sector is expected to experience a more moderate residential growth rate involving in-fill type development and housing rehabilitation and reconstruction. A general forecast of new housing distribution by area is summarized as follows:

1. Northern Sector - 40% to 45%
2. Central, Core Sector - 10% to 20%
3. Southern Sector - 40% to 45%

COMMERCIAL

Commercial patterns of land use exist within the downtown core area, adjacent to points of ingress and egress with Interstate 80 along major arterial roadways such as Mountain City Highway and Idaho Street. A general profile of existing principal commercial and retail services is summarized as follows:

- 8 Shopping Centers, varying in size, scale from neighborhood, community and regional in service orientation.
- 4 Casinos
- 6 Supermarkets / Grocery Stores
- 32 Hotels / Motels
- 49 Restaurants
- 13 Financial Institutions

INSTITUTIONAL

Institutional patterns of land use are clustered primarily within the older, core area of the City (Central Sector) between Interstate 80 on the north and the Humboldt River on the south.

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial patterns of land use are situated at the east end of the City generally between East Idaho Street and railroad corridor and also at the west end of the City generally between the airport and the railroad corridor. Quality land available for future industrial development is limited. A significant percentage of industrial zoned property is either inappropriately zoned or comprised of marginal land within or adjacent to the Humboldt River floodplain.

The industrial sector of the local economy is strongly influenced by the mining industry and a number of major mines located beyond the corporate limits of the City but within the Elko vicinity.

BLIGHTED AREAS

Portions of the older, core area of the community (Central Sector) are characterized by blighted conditions. In general, these conditions of blight and deterioration are influenced by a number of contributing factors which are summarized as follows:

- ***Subdivision and sale of lots of irregular and inadequate size and configuration for proper usefulness and development:*** Many of the lots within this area were created at or near the turn of the century before the establishment of any Subdivision Ordinance regulations and are in desperate need of consolidation and reconfiguration in order to accommodate development and access to streets and utility services.
- ***Age, obsolescence and deterioration of buildings and structures:*** Many buildings within the area are in a state of disrepair, primarily because of age and are in desperate need of rehabilitation and/or removal.
- ***Defective design and character of physical construction; faulty interior and exterior spatial arrangements:*** Because of the age of many buildings and the fact that construction predated the existence of modern, zoning, building and fire codes, faulty or defective designs are in desperate need of correction.

- ***The existence of inadequate streets:*** Many streets are in a state of disrepair, partially improved or not improved at all. Major reconstruction is needed to the street system to address drainage, traffic congestion and circulation, and economic dislocation.
- ***Mixed and conflicting patterns of land use:*** Certain areas exhibit conflicting patterns of land use involving industrial, commercial and residential uses within close proximity such as in confined block area which contributes to overcrowding, improper utilization of land and depreciating property values. Problems associated with conflicting patterns of land use are compounded by inappropriate zoning in many circumstances.

VACANT LAND

Northern Sector	Approximately 40% of this sector, or 790 acres, consists of vacant, unimproved land. Most of this land area is located north and northeast of Exit 303 or along the Mountain City Highway corridor.
Central Sector	Approximately 15% of this sector, or 450 acres, consists of vacant, unimproved land. Most of this land area is located within the east end and west end industrial area along the Manzanita Lane and West Main Street corridors and within the Humboldt River floodplain area.
Southern Sector	Approximately 50% of this sector, or 920 acres, consists of vacant, unimproved land. Most of this land area is located south, southwest and southeast of Lamoille Highway.

A relatively high percentage of this vacant, undeveloped land within the City is constrained in some fashion by topography or floodplain locations. Another important characteristic is that a significant portion of land within the urban fringe area adjacent to the corporate limits of the City is under ownership of the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. This area represents an additional 6,000 acres of land available for long term public use, urban growth and development.

NEIGHBORHOODS:

It is the intent of the land use plan to recognize different areas of the City for their unique character or identity based on location, physical features, cultural and social factors through the concept of neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are ideally characterized by a complete and balanced complement of elements which contribute to a quality residential living environment within a defined geographical area. These elements include opportunity for a variety of housing types, parks, open space, recreation, and leisure activities, convenience shopping, educational, cultural and religious facilities. The various planning neighborhoods of Elko are illustrated on the Elko Neighborhood Map and are more particularly described as follows:

NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD

This area is bordered on the south by Interstate 80 and by Mountain City Highway on the east. Land to the north and west transitions to low density semi-rural type development and generally is capable of sustaining additional growth provided urban-type services and utilities can be extended. Key features associated with this neighborhood include neighborhood and community oriented retail and service activities and a future elementary school site. Future needs for this area include parks and recreational opportunities.

NORTH CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD

This area is bordered on the south by Interstate 80, Mountain City Highway on the west and Ruby View Golf Course on the east. Lands to the north and northwest are predominantly vacant but exhibit strong growth potential. Key features associated with this neighborhood include community and regional oriented retail and service activities, an elementary school, neighborhood and community parks and open space, Ruby View Golf Course and numerous religious facilities. Future needs for this area include convenience shopping and services for local residents.

NORTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD

This area is bordered on the south by Interstate 80, and Ruby View Golf Course on the west. Most of the land within this area and to the north and east remains vacant. However, once services are extended, a mixture of commercial and residential development is anticipated. A key feature associated with this area is Ruby View Golf Course. Parks and educational facilities are examples of future needs for this area.

CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD

This area is bordered by Interstate 80 on the north, Idaho Street and Silver Street on the south, Mountain City Highway on the west and Exit 303 on the east. For the most part, the area is developed with a mixture of residential, commercial, public and institutional type uses. Key features include neighborhood and community parks and recreational facilities, Elko Convention and Visitors Authority, County Fairgrounds, City Hall, Elko County Courthouse, Great Basin Community College, elementary, junior and senior high schools; Elko County General Hospital, religious and cultural facilities including Northeast Nevada Museum and the Western Folklife Center, the downtown commercial district and other community oriented retail and service activities. A key need for this area is to provide for the upkeep, maintenance and modernization of existing older facilities.

SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD

This area is bordered by Silver Street and the Humboldt River on the north and South 5th Street/Lamoille Highway on the east. Land to the south and west is vacant but exhibits strong growth potential provided deficient local utility services and capacities can be upgraded. Key features associated with this neighborhood include a community oriented park and recreational facilities and a future elementary school site. Future needs for the area include a neighborhood park and convenience shopping and services for local residents.

SOUTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD

This area is bordered by Silver Street and the Humboldt River on the north and South 5th Street/Lamoille Highway on the west. Land to the south and east is sparsely developed with a mixture of land uses. Future development in this area, particularly to the south, is likely to be constrained by topography and also landfill operations. Key features associated with the neighborhood include an elementary school. Future needs for this area include parks, recreational opportunities and convenience shopping and services for local residents.

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS:

The land use plan also provides a broad classification of patterns of land use throughout the City. The Land Use Designation Map illustrates the distribution of preferred land use in the following categories:

AGRICULTURAL CATEGORIES

Agricultural - Areas designated agricultural are suitable primarily for the preservation of existing farmland and grazing areas and for the development of single family residences on larger acreage. In many instances, agricultural lands peripheral to the City are in a state of transition and awaiting annexation and the extension of urban services and utilities and are monitored through zoning district classification.

- **General Agricultural** - representative of lands within the City which are being utilized for agricultural purposes while waiting for the extension of urban services.

RESIDENTIAL CATEGORIES

Low Density Residential - Areas designated low density residential are suitable primarily for single family residences. Other appropriate uses within this category include neighborhood parks, schools, churches, public facilities, two family residences and residential planned unit development in select locations. Residential densities will be from 1 to 6 dwelling units per acre and are further divided into the following sub-categories and are monitored through zoning district classification.

- **Residential Suburban** - representative of very low density residential areas within a semi-rural environment.
- **Hillside Residential** - representative of low density residential areas where design, density, structural siting and engineering concerns such as drainage are influenced by steep hillside terrain.
- **Single Family Residential** - representative of low density residential areas appropriate primarily for single family residential development.
- **Two Family Residential** - representative of medium density residential areas appropriate for single family and two-family residential development.

High Density Residential - Areas designated high density residential are suitable primarily for multi-family residences such as apartments, mobile home parks, townhouses, condominiums and other forms of compact residential development. Other appropriate uses within this category include churches, schools, day care facilities, and limited office and commercial uses in select locations. Residential densities will be from 7 to 20 dwelling units per acre and are further divided into the following sub-categories and are monitored through zoning district classification.

- **Single Family and Multiple Family Residential** - representative of areas appropriate for a mixture and variety of housing types at higher densities.
- **Multiple Family Residential** - representative of residential areas, usually along arterial roadway corridors, appropriate for higher density housing.
- **Mobile Home Park and Mobile Home Subdivision Residential** - representative of areas appropriate for a mixture of mobile and manufactured housing types at varied densities.
- **Residential Office** - representative of areas appropriate for a mixture of housing types at varied densities complemented by limited office and commercial land use activity.

PUBLIC / QUASI-PUBLIC CATEGORY

Public / Quasi-Public - Areas designated public / quasi-public are suitable for a wide range of public and semi public uses such as parks, airports, hospitals, educational facilities, public administrative offices and other institutional uses, and are monitored through zoning district classification.

- **Public / Quasi-Public** - representative of areas readily accessible to the community and appropriate for a wide range of public / semi-public use and development.

COMMERCIAL CATEGORIES

Commercial - Areas designated commercial are suitable for a wide range of commercial, retail, office and service uses and are further divided into the following sub-categories and are monitored through zoning district classification.

- **Neighborhood Commercial** - representative of small enclaves of commercial activity for light retail service uses that meet the needs of residents in the immediate vicinity or neighborhood.

- **Commercial Transitional** - representative of less intense areas of commercial activity along higher volume traffic corridors and adjacent to established residential districts.
- **Planned Commercial** - representative of areas for large shopping centers and concentrated grouping of retail and service outlets accessed by common circulation, parking system and characterized by special site design features.
- **General Commercial** - representative of areas for a wide range of retail and service uses including more intense commercial uses and activities.

INDUSTRIAL / MANUFACTURING CATEGORIES

Industrial - Areas designated industrial are suitable for a wide range of manufacturing, processing, wholesaling and warehousing land use activities and are further divided into the following sub-categories and are monitored through zoning district classification.

- **Industrial Business Park** - representative of areas appropriate for corporate offices, office parks, limited light industrial uses and support commercial activity with emphasis on special setback, landscape and site design features along with limitations on noise, smoke, dust, odors, lighting, vibrations, that contribute to a higher quality or standard of land use than normally associated with an industrial area.
- **Industrial Commercial** - representative of areas appropriate for more intensive commercial activities and complementary less intensive industrial uses which are not associated with excessive levels of noise, dust, odor, vibration or smoke.
- **Limited Manufacturing** - representative of areas appropriate for less intensive industrial uses which are associated with minimal or mitigated levels of noise, dust, odor, vibration or smoke.
- **General Manufacturing** - representative of areas appropriate for more intensive industrial uses.

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The following table illustrates the relationship between land use designations of the Elko City Master Plan and zoning district classifications of the Elko City Zoning Ordinance. Typically, land use designations associated with the Master Plan are more generalized and schematic. Zoning district classifications are more comprehensive and specific with district boundaries following a more definitive boundary, such as a property line or a center line of a street.

Master Plan Land Use Designations	Zoning District Classifications
AGRICULTURAL	A (General Agricultural)
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	RS (Residential Suburban) HR (Hillside Residential) R1 (Single Family Residential) R2 (Two Family Residential)
HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	R (Single Family and Multiple Family Residential) R3 (Multiple Family Residential) RMH (Mobile Home Park and Mobile Home Subdivision Residential) RO (Residential Office)
COMMERCIAL	CN (Neighborhood Commercial) CT (Commercial Transitional) PC (Planned Commercial) C (General Commercial)
INDUSTRIAL / MANUFACTURING	IBP (Industrial Business Park) IC (Industrial Commercial) M1 (Limited Manufacturing) M2 (General Manufacturing)

POLICIES / ACTION STRATEGIES:

The following items represent basic strategies for implementation of the identified goals and objectives of the Land Use Plan:

- The City will promote and support the preparation of a comprehensive Economic Development Program and work cooperatively with other agencies such as the North East Nevada Development Authority.
- The City will coordinate planning efforts with Elko County and implement an agreement for the consistent, orderly development of urbanizing areas within the fringe areas of the City.
- The City will annex enclaves of land within its incorporated boundaries or contiguous properties having the benefit of municipal services or having become urban in character and when such annexations have received a fiscal impact analysis and are determined to be in the best interests of the City.
- The City will continue to modify and update the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance and other development policies in order to promote the advancement of the Land Use Plan.
- The City will adopt and maintain a Land Use Map for the incorporated areas as well as unincorporated areas within the sphere of influence of the City. The map will define preferred land uses which are determined to be reasonable in the context of projecting infrastructure needs and accommodating the sustained long term growth of the City.
- The City will designate ample areas on the Land Use Map distributed throughout the City to satisfy anticipated demands for a wide range of residential development.
- The City will designate preferred land uses to correlate with the adopted Elko streets and highways plan.
- The City will identify and designate areas on the Land Use Map for future quality industrial use as a strategy of economic development to help diversify the local and regional economy.

- Areas for industrial use and development shall be located in close proximity to designated truck routes and infrastructure appropriate to serve this type of land use activity.
- The City shall evaluate and identify areas within the community that are improperly zoned and implement a systematic program to reclassify such areas to a more appropriate zoning consistent with the long term objectives of the Land Use Plan.
- Residential planned unit development and mixed use will be encouraged by the City and may be approved as a means of infilling by-passed vacant land, promoting area redevelopment, or allowing for the provision of a variety or mixture of housing types not possible by strict interpretation of the subdivision and zoning ordinances.
- The City will maintain or develop adequate levels of public facilities and services, including police and fire protection, utilities, street improvements, cultural and recreational facilities, to serve existing as well as emerging neighborhoods.
- Low density residential subdivisions and development shall be discouraged from developing immediately adjacent to arterial roadways which are anticipated for long range widening and improvements, unless appropriate transitional zoning or buffering is provided.
- The City will promote a pattern of zoning and development along the Humboldt River that is sensitive to and compatible with the natural riparian habitat and character of this area.
- The City will encourage recreational development and opportunities in areas adjacent to the Humboldt River including provisions of facilities for walking, hiking, cycling, fishing, picnicking, wildlife and natural habitat observation along with a variety of active recreational facilities where appropriate.
- The City will identify and adopt programs, such as the establishment of a Redevelopment Agency, targeted specifically for revitalization and rehabilitation of areas characterized by blighted conditions.

