

McFarland Land Use Element

Purpose

The Land Use Element determines the allowable use of existing and future parcels of land and ensures that adjacent land uses are compatible with one another. The California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) requires a land use element to include a land use map, a description of the general distribution and location of the different land uses, and the allowable density of the buildings located within these uses (Office of Planning and Research [OPR], 2003). Policies in combination with the land use map provide general guidance on where development can occur, the allowable size of new development, and how development can be used depending upon its location. Taken together, these components of a land use element provide a road map for future development.

Setting

McFarland, CA is a small city surrounded by farmland in Kern County. It is approximately 20 miles North of Bakersfield and 3 miles South of Delano. The City has been experiencing significant population growth in the past decade. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of residents increased from 9,618 people to 12,707 people; a 32 percent rate of growth.¹ A significant portion of the population consists of Latinos who work on farms. 91.5 percent of the population was Latino in 2010.² Of the 3,950 jobs in 2009, 56 percent of these were in the agricultural sector.³

Highway 99 splits the City into two sections. A majority of the community facilities and businesses in the City are located on the West side of Highway 99. As a whole, the City grapples with poverty as indicated by the median income of \$24,190 in 2000.⁴ Another indicator of this poverty and blight is the numerous vacant buildings in the "Business District" which are former businesses.

Planning Area

This land use element focuses upon land within the City's planning area. The planning area consists of a total of 7,220 acres. Of this land within the planning area, there is 1,680 acres of incorporated lands and 5,540 acres of land in the City's sphere of influence (see Figure 2-1). Incorporated land is land which is within the City limits and which the City is responsible for controlling the designation and distribution of land uses. Land within the City's sphere of influence is area which the City does not directly have land use control over but which the City could potentially annex into City limits with approval of the Kern County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Although Kern County has jurisdiction over McFarland's sphere of influence, the City can provide comments to Kern County regarding proposed projects within the City's sphere of influence.

¹ 2000 U.S. Census. Summary File 1. Table DP-1

² 2010 U.S. Census. Table QT-PL.

³ Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics. <http://lehd.did.census.gov/led/>.

⁴ 2000 U.S. Census. Summary File 3. Table QT-P32

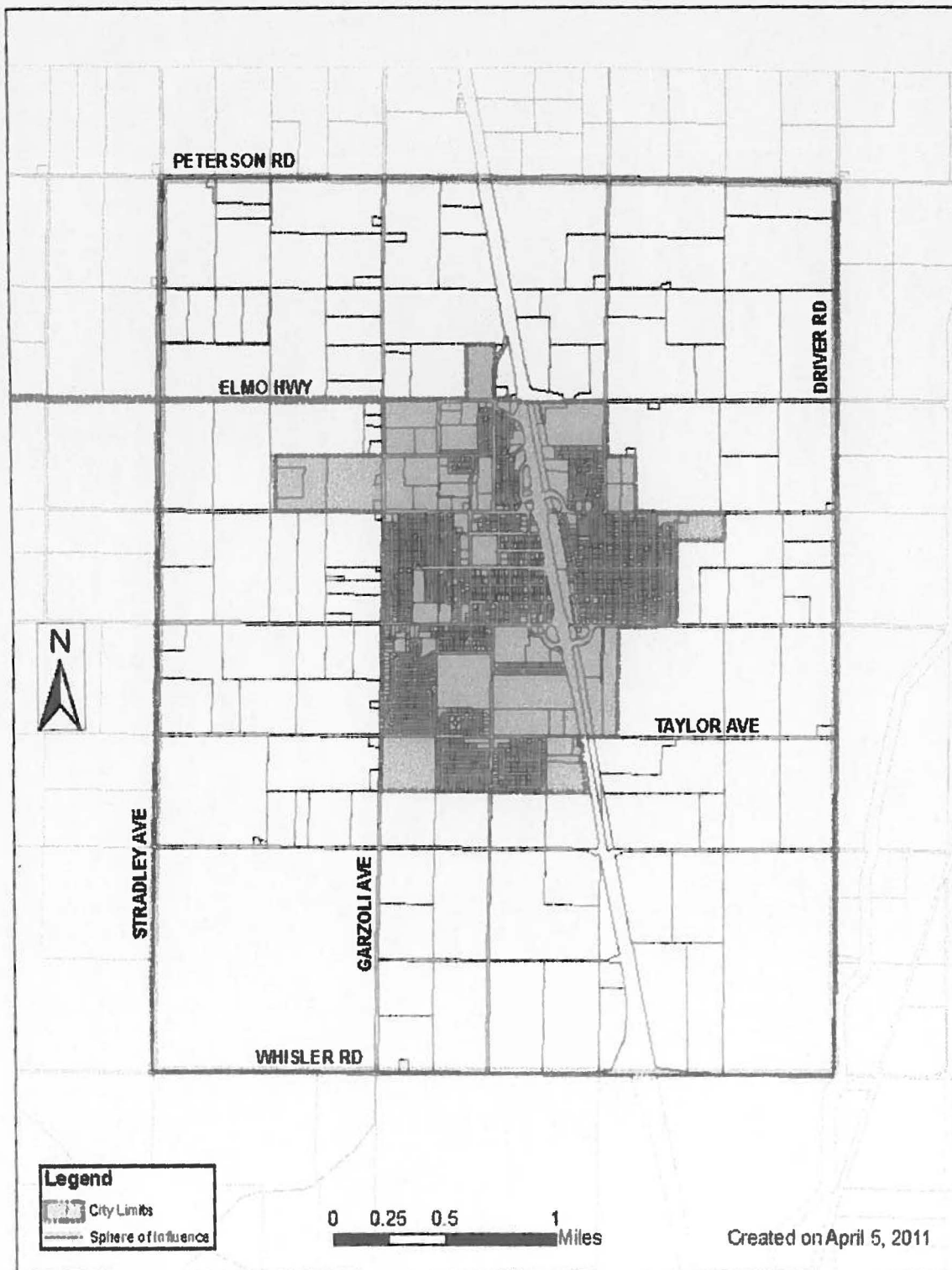
Distribution of Land Uses

Most of the land within City limits is used for institutional and residential purposes or is vacant (see Table 2-1). Institutional land includes the wastewater treatment plant, sumps, City Hall, and water tanks. As Figure 2-2 demonstrates, the predominant land use on the western portion of the City is low density residential and a significant portion of the land is used for medium density residential on the eastern portion of the City. Commercial land is generally located adjacent to Highway 99 on the western edge of the Highway and along Perkins Ave. West of the Highway. The Northwest and Southwest portions of the City contain a significant amount of vacant land.

Table 2-1: Existing Land Use Distribution

Land Use	Incorporated Land		Planning Area	
	Acreage	Distribution	Acreage	Distribution
Institutional (Except schools)	723	43%	723	10%
Residential	394	23%	394	5%
Vacant	296	18%	296	4%
Agriculture	83	5%	5622	78%
School	78	5%	78	1%
Commercial	38	2%	38	1%
Open Space	26	2%	26	0%
Industrial	17	1%	17	0%
Church	12	1%	12	0%
Total	1681	100%	7220	100%

Source: 2010 McFarland Land Use Survey.



The City of McFarland conducted several public workshops to receive input on the development of the Land Use Element. As a result of these workshops several principles, objectives and policies were developed and have been included below. The proposed Land Use Element has been divided into several sections. The first section established the land use designations of the McFarland Planning area, the second section discusses the general principles such as community character that are community wide with each subsequent section dealing with specific land use categories. Each of these three sections contains Objectives and Policies.

Table 1 Established Land Uses:

Land Use	Type and Intensity of Use
Agricultural	This designation provides for agricultural and agriculturally related uses with a 10 acre minimum lot size.
Rural Residential	Maximum 0-2 dwelling units per acre with lots ranging from 20,000 square feet to 2.5 acres in size.
Estate Residential	Maximum 2-4 dwelling units per acre with lots ranging from 8,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet in size.
Low Density Residential	Maximum 5-8 dwelling units per acre with an average lot size of 5,000 square feet to 8,000 square feet in size,
Medium Density Residential	Maximum 9-15 dwelling units per acre with detached single family housing lots ranging from 3,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet in size.
High Density Residential	Maximum 16-24 dwelling units per acre.
Professional Office	This designation allows for professional, executive and administrative offices. This designation includes the conversion of homes to offices when a logical extension of planned or existing office/commercial uses.
Downtown Business	This designation provides the City with a mixed use activity in the downtown area, including retail, office, public, institutional and special residential uses. It is intended to provide for a wide range of uses and to promote the revitalization of the downtown area.
Commercial	This designation provides for clusters of commercial development that include retail opportunities such as convenience stores, grocery stores and other typical retail and service establishments.
Service Commercial	This designation provides for commercial areas with a wide range of retail and service areas along major traffic corridors.
Light Industrial	This designation allows for fabricating and assembly, research and development, warehousing and other such uses where all work, materials and equipment is generally conducted indoors.

Heavy Industrial	This designation allows for a range of activities including manufacturing, wholesale distribution and large storage areas.
Public and Institutional	This designation allows for government and public facilities, schools and parks.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

The following Planning Principles were developed by using public input that was gathered at the General Plan update meetings. These principles are general in nature and are meant to guide the City of McFarland in developing objectives, policies and standards for each specific land use.

- 1) Planning for the City of McFarland should strive to create a complete and integrated city containing housing, shops, work places, schools, park and civic facilities essential to the daily life of the residents.
- 2) The City should be designed so that housing, jobs, daily needs and other activities are within easy walking distance to each other.
- 3) The City of McFarland should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.
- 4) Businesses within the City should provide a range of job types for the community's residents.
- 5) The character of the City should respect its historical heritage.
- 6) The downtown area should have a "center focus" that combines commercial, civic, cultural and recreational uses, and housing.
- 7) The City of McFarland should contain an ample supply of specialized open space in the form of squares, greens and parks whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design.
- 8) Public spaces should be designed to encourage the attention of all people at all hours of the day and night.
- 9) The City of McFarland should have a well-defined edge, such as agricultural greenbelts permanently protected from development.
- 10) Streets, pedestrian paths and bike paths should contribute to a system of fully connected and intersecting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage

pedestrian and bicycle uses and be spatially defined by buildings, trees and lighting and by discouraging high speed traffic.

- 11) The design of the City should help conserve resources and minimize waste.
- 12) The City shall create gateways to provide distinctive entrances to McFarland, particularly at key access points along the SR 99 Corridor and major entrances to the City.

GENERAL:

Objective

- G1. Establish a well-balanced mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and open space/public land which will create and maintain a high quality environment and a fiscally sound economy.

Policies

- G1.1 All development shall conform to the land use density and intensity standards depicted in the General Plan.

Objective

- G2. Minimize conflicts between land uses

Policies

- G2.1 Projects shall incorporate the use of landscaping, walls and other buffers, building location, setbacks, shielding of lighting, condition times and days of operation, and other measures deemed appropriate to minimize potential conflicts related to the noise and vibration, light and glare, and other conflicts determined by the City.

Objective

- G3. Discourage leapfrog and sprawl development

Policies

- G3.1 The City shall not approve the extension of public facilities such as water, sanitary sewer, and storm water drainage to property outside of the incorporated boundaries of the City unless the property owner agrees not to protest annexation of the property for a five year time period.
- G3.2. The City shall not approve annexation of new land until a fiscal impact analysis is submitted to the City to determine the costs of providing services to the annexed parcel versus anticipated revenue.
- G3.3. Annexation projects shall be contiguous to the City and shall be a logical extension of the City's boundary and public facilities and services.
- G3.4. The overall average density for the City shall be six units per acre.

Objective

G4. Ensure consistency of development standards.

Policies

- G4.1 The City shall work with the County of Kern to insure that County land use plans and development standards are consistent with the City's land use plan and development standards within the sphere of influence.
- G4.2 The City shall work with the County of Kern to have the County adopt similar development impact fees as adopted by the City within the sphere of influence.

Objective

G5. Protect Agricultural Land

Policies

- G5.1 Agricultural production areas shall be preserved as an important economic activity.
- G5.2 The City shall ensure that future development occurs in an orderly sequence based on the logical extension of public facilities and services.
- G5.3 The City shall phase future growth and development to provide for orderly growth and prevent the premature conversion of agricultural lands.
- G5.4 New residential development should be substantially contiguous to existing development. Development should not occur unless 35% of a parcel is contiguous to existing urban development.
- G5.5 Development projects shall pay an Agricultural Land Impact fee in accordance with the fee established by the City Council of the City of McFarland.
- G5.6 For single family residential uses, a fee shall be assessed upon the sale of a residential unit within a project that was subject to the Agricultural Land Impact fee in accordance with the fee established by the City Council of the City of McFarland.
- G5.7 Said fee shall be collected by the City for use by a land conservancy entity operating within the County of Kern to conserve agricultural land.
- G5.8 The City shall work with the land conservancy to have the first priority of conserving agricultural land to be within the McFarland area.
- G5.9 A Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model analysis shall be performed for annexation projects to determine the significance of impact to agricultural resources.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES:

Objective

- R1. Provide adequate land in a range of residential densities to accommodate the housing needs of all income groups both residing and expected to reside in McFarland, while ensuring a high quality of residential development.

Policies

R1.1 The following residential designations shall be used:

a. Residential

Allowable densities in residential areas are determined by the ratio of units to net acreage. Net acreage only includes buildable land and excludes streets and public right-of-ways. Allowed population densities for each area can be determined by multiplying the maximum allowed units per acre by the average people per household for the City. The average number of people per housing units was 4.7 in 2010.

b. Residential Rural (0-2 dwelling units per acre)

Rural Residential allows for detached single family houses with lots ranging from 20,000 square feet to a maximum of 2.5 acres. This designation should be used on areas where there are permanent edges or where higher densities may conflict with safety objectives. Rural residential land use is typically associated with the R-S zone district.

c. Estate Residential (2-4 dwelling units per acre)

Estate residential allows for the construction of detached single-family houses with lots ranging from 12,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet in size. Estate residential land use is typically associated with the E zoning districts.

d. Low Density Residential (5-8 dwelling units per acre)

Low density residential allows for the construction of detached single-family houses. A maximum of 8 units per acre is allowed in this land use. Low density residential land use is typically associated with R-1 zoning. Secondary units are allowed in this land use if certain conditions in the Zoning Code are met.

e. Medium Density Residential (8-15 dwelling units per acre)

Allowable housing types in this land use are duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, condominiums, townhouses, and mobile homes in mobile home parks. Medium density residential land use is typically associated with R-2 and R-3 zoning. Areas designated medium high density residential are to be integrated throughout the community adjacent to transportation, community services and commercial developments. To avoid in appropriate concentration of these facilities, such developments shall be limited to 25 contiguous units when integrated into a single family neighborhood and to 50 contiguous unites when developed as a freestanding development. Additional requirements include:

1. Such facilities should be dispersed throughout the community and not concentrated in any one neighborhood.
2. Multiple Unit projects shall be designed to incorporate architectural features in order to present a residential exterior to the street rather than a blank wall.
3. Such facilities should be located adjacent to park facilities where possible.
4. Such facilities should be limited in total size to 50 contiguous units.

f. High Density Residential (16-24 dwelling units per acre)

Housing types in this land use typically consist of apartments and those types listed for medium density residential use. High density residential land use is typically associated with R-4 zoning and usually allows for the construction of apartment complexes. It is intended that this category utilize innovative site planning, provide onsite recreational amenities and be located near major community facilities, business centers, and streets of at least collector capacity. Such developments shall use high quality architectural design features, intensified landscaping, adequate open space, adequate parking and adequate onsite recreational facilities. Additional requirements include:

1. Such facilities should be dispersed throughout the community and not concentrated in any one neighborhood.
2. Multiple Unit projects shall be designed to incorporate architectural features in order to present a residential exterior to the street rather than a blank wall.
3. Such facilities should not be located within ¼ mile of a school facility.
4. Such facilities shall be limited in total size to 100 units.

R1.2. Prior to the approval of a subdivision of land other than a parcel map, a zoning entitlement such as a Conditional Use Permit shall be approved. Said Conditional Use Permit or similar entitlement shall condition the residential development project to be consistent with the dedication requirements of the General Plan.

Objectives

R2. Provide for High Quality of Subdivision Design that supports solar energy

Policies

R2.1. Subdivisions shall be designed so that the predominate orientation of the streets is east-to-west.

Objectives

R3. Provide for High Quality of Subdivision Design that promotes pedestrian and bicycle access.

Policies

R3.1. Subdivisions shall be designed so that a pedestrian/bicycle way is provided from the subject project to adjoining property designated as residential on the General Plan not greater than every 800 feet.

R3.2. Subdivisions shall be designed so that pedestrian/bicycle access from the subdivision to adjoining major streets is provided not greater than every 800 feet, including corners of the project.

R3.3. The pedestrian/bicycle access may be by way of a street or a separate pedestrian/bicycle way. If a pedestrian/bicycle way is used, it shall not be less than 20 feet in width.

R3.4. Cul-de-sacs shall be discouraged except when the size, typography, or configuration of the parcel does not permit a through connection.

R3.5. Block lengths, including intersections, shall not be greater than 1,000 feet.

Objectives

R4. Encourage a mixture of densities

Policies

R4.1 The City may use a zoning entitlement such as a Conditional Use Permit, Planned Unit Development or a Planned Community District to provide density increases of up to 30 percent. Granting of all or part of the bonus will depend upon the developer's demonstration of the quality of design in such areas as access, circulation, building placement, building design, parking, provision of adjacent open space, and architectural compatibility with the surrounding area.

R4.2 The placement of large mass buildings adjacent to smaller scale buildings shall be avoided.

R4.4 Lots within a subdivision, such as corner lots or lots that are greater than 7,000 square feet may be considered for duplex units.

COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Objectives

C1. Ensure the provision of adequate commercial shopping opportunities and office to meet anticipated needs.

Policies

C1.1 Establish the following commercial land use designations:

a. **Professional Office**

This designation allows for professional, executive and administrative offices. This designation includes the conversion of homes to offices when a logical extension of planned or existing office/commercial uses.

b. **Downtown Business**

This designation provides the City with a mixed use activity in the downtown area, including retail, office, public, institutional and special residential uses. It is intended to provide for a wide range of uses and to promote the revitalization of the downtown area.

c. **Commercial**

This designation provides for clusters of commercial development that include retail opportunities such as convenience stores, grocery stores and other typical retail and service establishments.

d. Service Commercial

This designation provides for commercial areas for non-retail commercial uses that provide services to customers. Such uses may have characteristics that require isolation or separation from residential or other commercial uses. This commercial designation may be applied along arterial streets and highway corridors.

- C1.2 Larger commercial land uses should be separated from residential land uses due to traffic needs, and other potential land use conflicts.
- C1.3 Community and regional commercial areas should be designed to also serve as centers for community activity.
- C1.4 Neighborhood commercial uses shall be designed so that they are easily accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- C1.5 The number of curb cuts shall be minimized through the use of common access driveways where feasible.
- C1.6 Drive-through lanes, where allowed, shall be designed to be pedestrian friendly.
- C1.7 Prohibit blank walls along street facades.
- C1.8 In order to maintain the definition of the street edge, development shall incorporate a landscaped setback buffer for parking that must be along a street frontage.
- C1.9 Commercial development shall incorporate the design principals of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.
- C1.10 Parking for commercial uses shall be limited to the minimum number of spaces required to accommodate customers/visitors to the commercial corridor.
- C1.11 Shared parking shall be encouraged among retailers.
- C1.12 Housing may be permitted by Conditional Use Permit in the Downtown Business designation as part of a mixed-use concept. However, housing uses shall be discouraged on the ground floor of commercially designated properties.
- C1.13 A landscaped setback shall be planted and maintained along property line between commercial/office uses and residential properties that have a common property line.
- C1.14 A masonry wall shall be erected along the property line where commercial and office uses have a common property line with residentially designated properties.

Objectives

- C2. Foster well designed Highway Commercial Uses adjacent to State Route 99

Policies

- C2.1 Require the use of landscaping, berms, architectural feature and other amenities to present a well-designed and inviting frontage to State Route 99. Outdoor storage areas shall be screened.

Objectives

C3. Preserve the land use patterns and scale in the City's Downtown business district.

Policies

- C3.1 In order to enhance pedestrian activity, the City shall prohibit drive-through restaurants and businesses from locating in the central business district.
- C3.2 The City shall work to develop a parking lot in the downtown area.
- C3.3 Strip mall type development (parking area in front with the building recessed from the street) shall be prohibited in the downtown area.
- C3.4 Banks and other uses that generate pedestrian traffic are encouraged to remain downtown.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

Objectives

L1. Promote industrial sites which are functional, have adequate public services and have access to major streets and railroads.

Policies

L1.1 Establish the following industrial land use designations:

a. **Light Industrial**

This designation allows for fabricating and assembly, research and development, warehousing and other such uses where all work, materials and equipment is generally conducted indoors.

b. **Heavy Industrial**

This designation allows for a range of activities including manufacturing, wholesale distribution and large storage areas.

L1.2 The City shall seek out and actively recruit appropriate industries.

L1.3 Ensure that all industrial uses incorporate appropriate, uniform signage that identifies the park at each gateway.

L1.4 Loading areas are to be located at the rear of buildings and not along the primary facade.

L1.5 Encourage use of "green building" techniques and methods in both building and site design.

L1.6 Business and Industrial parks shall include meaningful greenspace.

L1.7 Landscape buffers shall be provided between industrial buildings, parking lots and adjacent land uses.

L1.8 Discourage buildings with blank walls that lack articulation.

L1.9 Large parking fields shall be discouraged.

PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL LAND USES

Objectives

- P1. Promote industrial sites which are functional, have adequate public services and have access to major streets and railroads.

Policies

P1.1 Establish the following public facility land uses:

a. **Public Buildings and Grounds**

This designation indicates areas owned and maintained by public or institutional agencies such as the city, schools, hospitals and other special districts.

b. **Parks and Open Space**

This designation determines areas of permanent open spaces, parks and/or areas precluded from major development.

Objectives

- P2. Provide adequate school sites and school site expansion to meet school facility needs in a timely manner provided by law.

Policies

- P2.1 Coordinate school location and site design with the school districts to ensure that adequate facilities are available.
- P2.2 McFarland will support school site identification, reservation and acquisition that is consistent with California Government Code Sections 66479-66482
- P2.3 Elementary schools should be located at collector/local street intersections that have good pedestrian and bike access. Schools should abut neighborhood parks with adjacent development backing or siding onto the school. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be provided.
- P2.4 Intermediate or Junior High schools should be located in residential areas with a central location for surrounding area elementary schools at collector/collector or collector/local street intersections. Additional local street frontage is desired for transition to residential areas. Maximize pedestrian and bicycle access and on/off site circulation. These schools should be located so that there are future expansion opportunities.
- P2.5 High Schools should be located at arterial/collector intersections with additional frontage on at least one other street. These schools should be located for future expansion.
- P2.6 New commercial development should be discouraged within a minimum of ¼ mile of school sites.
- P2.7 High density residential complexes abutting school sites should be discouraged.
- P2.8 The City, School District and Park District shall encourage joint use of school multi-purpose facilities and open space.
- P2.9 The Schools District shall be encouraged to coordinate their school location, facility construction and phasing with City's development guidelines contained in the Land

Use Element and the City's Capital Improvement Plan to ensure that school facilities are located in areas where there are planned and programmed streets, sewerage, storm drainage systems and other necessary infrastructure.

P2.10 It is the policy of the City of McFarland that adequate school facilities be available to serve new development. In implementing this policy both the City and School District recognize that State law provides that the provision of school facilities is the exclusive responsibility of the State and the School District. However, since the potential may still exist that sources of financing, including statutory developer fees, state and local school bond monies and other state funds will be inadequate, and the City shall work with the School District to identify opportunities for joint funding of recreation and community facilities at school sites.

Objectives

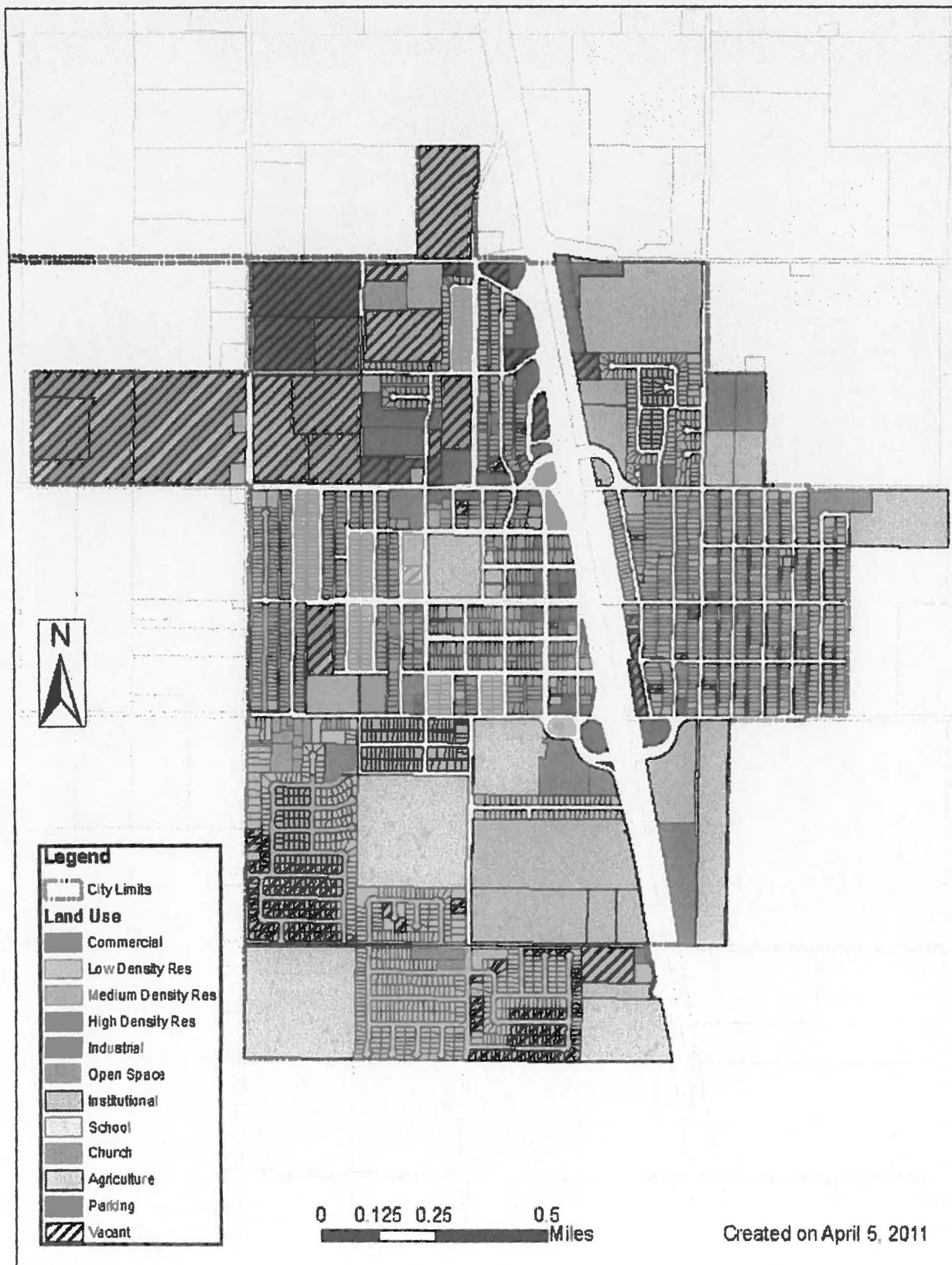
P3. Provide adequate park sites to ensure that all residents of McFarland have access to recreational opportunities.

Policies

P3.1 All projects shall conform with the requirements of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan.

P3.2 All new parks shall form or annex to a Lighting and Landscaping Maintenance District. Said District shall include maintenance of parks within the residential project

Figure 2-2: Existing Land Use Map



Implementation

Implementation Measure	Responsible Party	Priority	Estimated Time to Complete
Amend the Zoning Map to be consistent with the updated land use diagram	City of McFarland	High	1 year
Create the following new zones in the Zoning Ordinance: Highway Commercial, Mixed Use, and Urban Reserve.	City of McFarland	High	1 year
Reviewing proposed residential development to ensure passive solar orientation.	City of McFarland	Medium	Ongoing
Policy 2.1.1. Implement street improvements such as landscaping, lighting, and sidewalks in the Downtown District and nearby freeway interchanges to attract visitors.	City of McFarland	Medium	3 years
Policy 2.1.3 All buildings which are a safety hazard shall be demolished or renovated.	City of McFarland	High	7 years
Policy 2.2.3.2 Before approving new subdivisions, the City should consider requiring the developer to provide space for a trail system in addition to other provisions and impact fees.	City of McFarland	Medium	Ongoing
Policy 2.3.1.1 The City should acquire properties on the northern portion of Kern Ave. between 1st and 2nd street and demolish buildings and put out a Request For Proposals to commercial developers to redevelop the downtown district.	City of McFarland	Medium	10 years
The City should create and continually update a map of vacant parcels within City limits to provide to interested developers.	City of McFarland	Medium	Ongoing