COMMERCIAL/ EMPLOYMENT LOW

To facilitate lower density, auto-oriented retail, office, and industrial type uses.

Commercial/Employment Low places comprise much of the non-residential areas of San Marcos today. They tend to include a variety of industrial uses, distribution, auto-oriented retail, and dining options, as well as lower intensity, single use and standalone office uses, including civic, medical, and educational. It is expected that many of these existing areas will not transition to another place during the life of the plan, but there may still be opportunities to make these place types better connected and more desirable. New Commercial/Employment Low Areas should be focused on designated areas along or near highways.

Land Use: Primarily characterized by light to heavy industrial, warehouse and distribution, lower density office, and general commercial; additional uses may include civic, institutional, and hospitality.

Built Form: Typically 1-2 stories with buildings situated further from each other and further from the street than in most place types. Larger format retailers are often paired with strip commercial centers and/or pad development (smaller standalone buildings) located closer to the street, but still auto-oriented and frequently including a drive-through; industrial and distribution uses often include large outdoor storage areas; the typical employment density of these areas is 8-15 jobs per acre.

Mobility: Lower density road network with heavy reliance on frontage roads and internal site circulation, multi-use pathways and sidewalks. Major roadways should include dedicated bike facilities and transit connections.

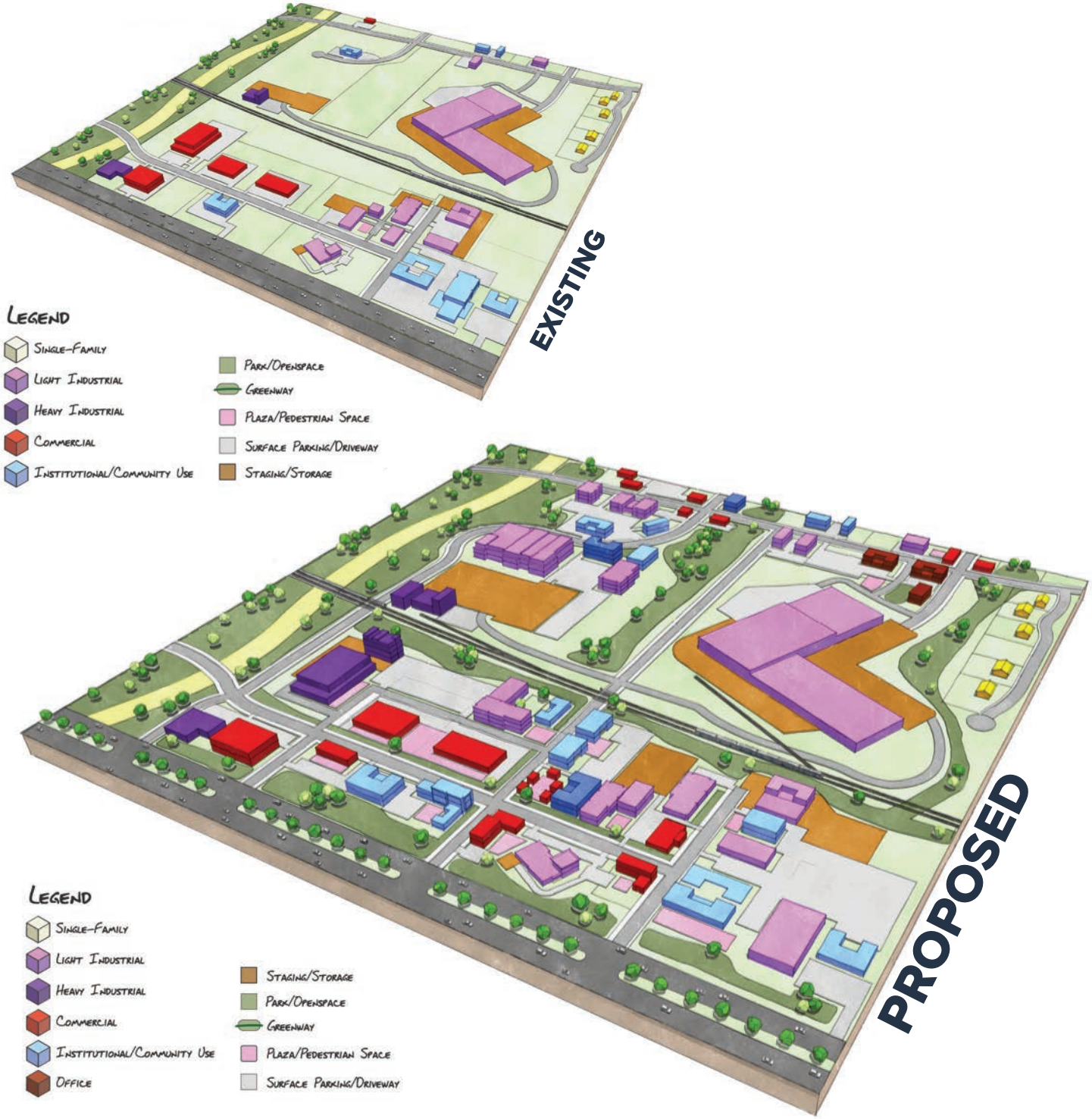
Amenities: A range of parks, open spaces and trails can make Commercial/Employment Low areas more attractive, but are not essential to make them a highly functioning place.

COMMERCIAL/ EMPLOYMENT LOW

Primary Land Uses	• Light to Heavy Industrial • Warehouse and Distribution • Lower Density Office • Lower Density Retail
Secondary Land Uses	• Supportive Service Commercial (e.g., gas stations) • Civic Uses and Parks and Open Space
Mobility Characteristics	• Lower density road network with accommodations for large vehicles • Multi-use pathways and sidewalks • Dedicated bike facilities throughout • Transit connections at key nodes
Parking	• Primarily off-street parking lots (shared parking highly encouraged) • On-street in certain situations
Parks and Open Space	• Community Parks to provide active and passive recreational opportunities for employees and residents nearby, as well as integrated stormwater features • Regional Parks to provide recreational opportunities and to potentially buffer these places from neighborhoods • Pocket Parks and Plazas to create places for outdoor seating and dining • Trails and Greenways to provide transportation and recreational opportunities connecting to and through the area • Common Open Space with integrated stormwater features and passive recreation amenities
Desirable Transitions	• Neighborhood Medium • Neighborhood High • Mixed Use Low • Mixed Use Medium • Commercial/Employment Medium • Conservation/Cluster
Fiscal Considerations	• Place Type with greatest potential to capture employment growth • Lower density uses generate less efficient infrastructure investment, but value of non-residential development will vary fiscal impact • Impact on calls for service varies by use (e.g., retail more, industrial less)

Overlay Characteristics/Considerations	
Historic Resource	N/A
Environmental	Consider Low Impact Development (LID) applying Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other best practices with overall development limited to approximately 50% of land area
Cultural Resource	No Development

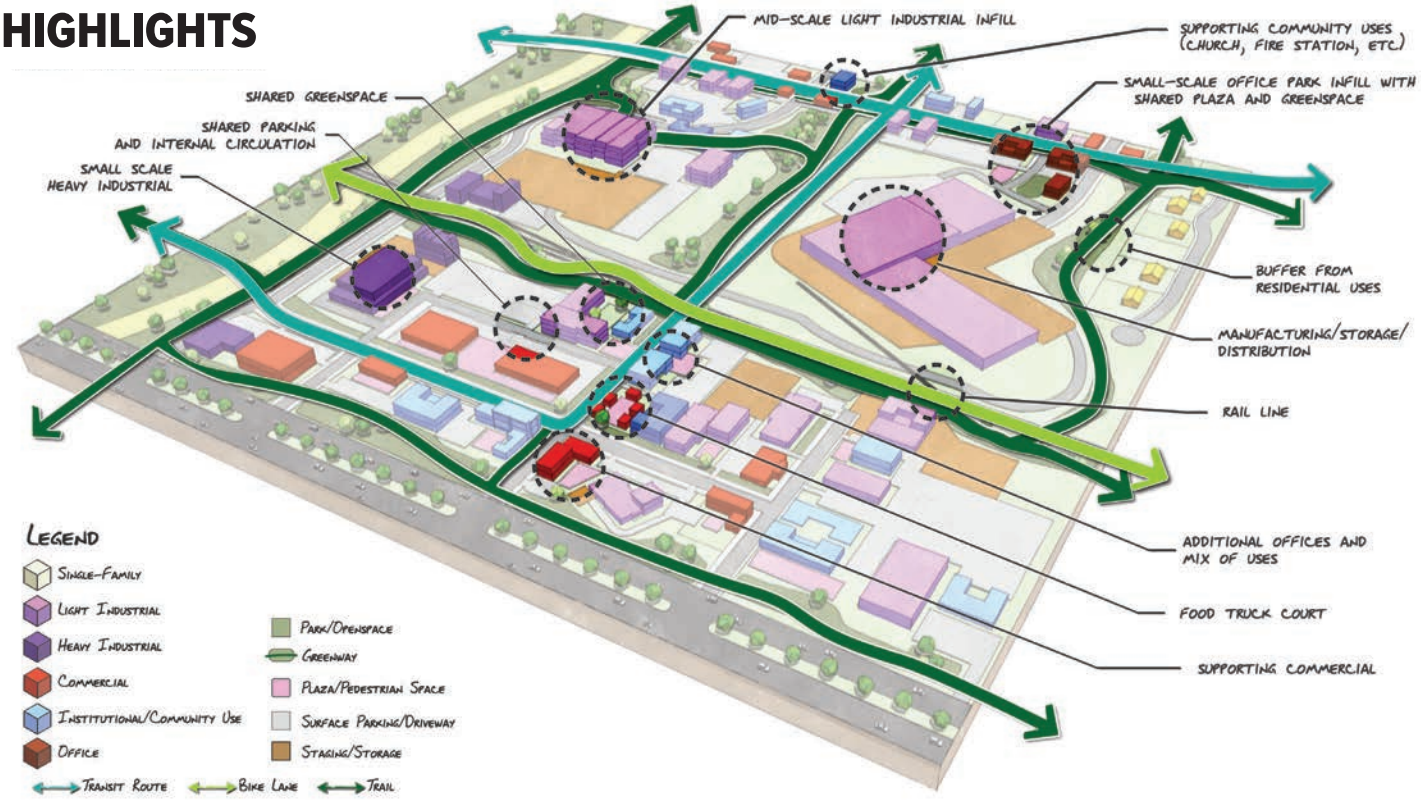
COMMERCIAL/EMPLOYMENT LOW



Note: these graphics are for illustrative purposes only.

COMMERCIAL/EMPLOYMENT LOW

HIGHLIGHTS



Variety of industrial uses

Supporting office spaces

Small-scale parks with shared green space

CONSERVATION/ CLUSTER

To identify areas to conserve and reserve for future development as a means of focusing more intensive development in other areas of the community. Development that does occur within conservation and reserve areas should be low impact to the natural environment by using a variety of development techniques and strategies.

The Conservation/Cluster Place Type identifies areas where development would be discouraged over the life of the Comprehensive Plan. As community and stakeholder input and feedback were gathered, the conception of the place type evolved to also include guidance for when development may still occur within areas that are currently open space, farmland, or otherwise undeveloped. Development techniques and strategies to ensure San Marcos retains many of these assets and maintains a high environmental quality include Low Impact Development, clustered development, ranchettes, and small clusters of diverse housing in strategically located areas.

Land Use: These areas are primarily characterized by parks, improved open space, agricultural, ranch, and undeveloped land and may have public/institutional uses.

Built Form: While little to no development is often desired, typical development includes a diverse range of residential and some small amounts of 1-2 story mixed-use, commercial and civic development; the maximum density of these areas should be approximately 6-10 units per acre in developed areas and a typical net density of 1-5 units per acre.

Mobility: Emphasis on pedestrian facilities, connected trails, and shared use paths. In Reserve areas, utilities should generally be provided locally (e.g., well, septic, etc.) or via city utilities if more compact development is proposed.

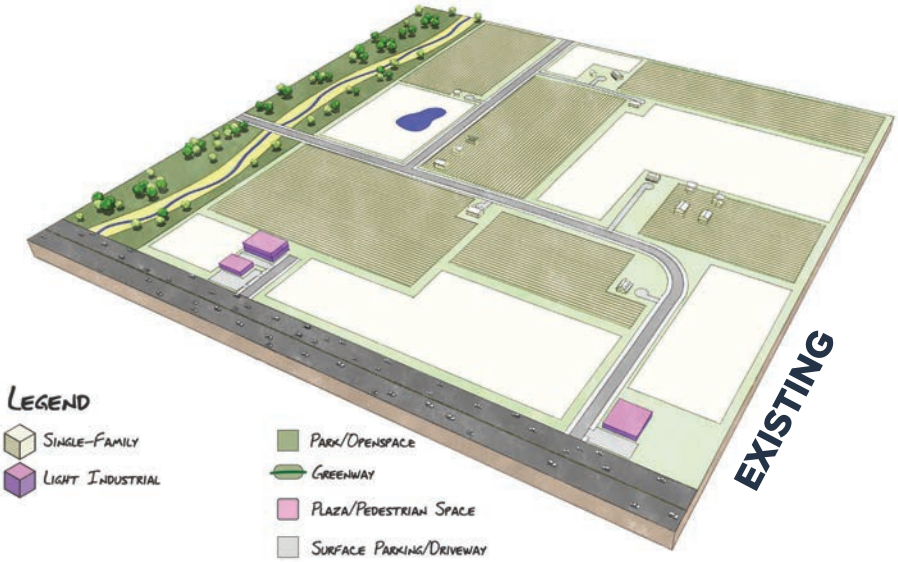
Amenities: Large open spaces and trails are the most common amenities; in most instances, the lack of or limited development is an amenity in and of itself and water naturally flows through vegetation before reaching creeks.

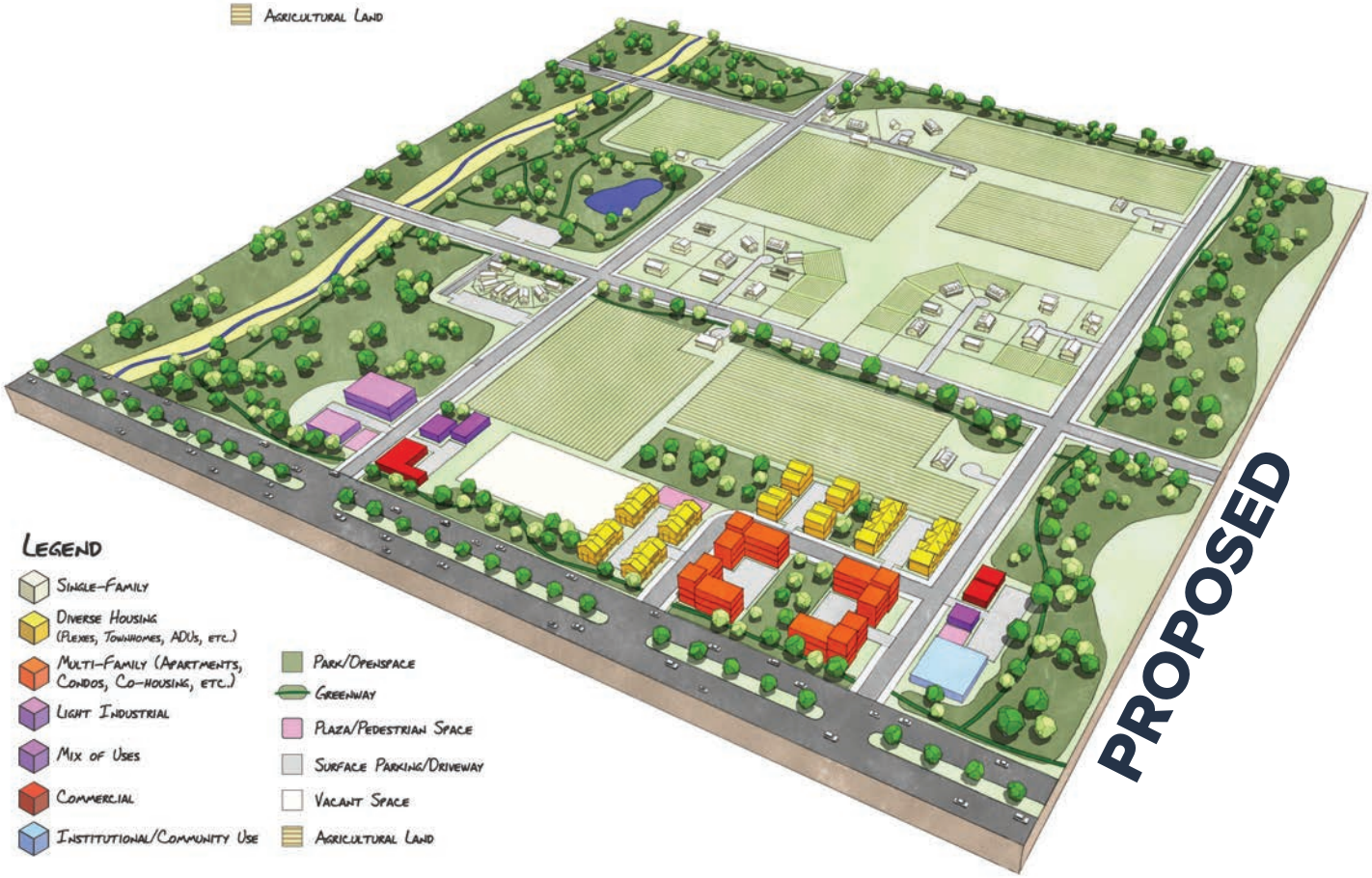
CONSERVATION/ CLUSTER

Primary Land Uses	• Parks • Improved Open Space • Agricultural, Ranch, and Undeveloped Land
Secondary Land Uses	• Public/Institutional • Potential Clustered Housing and/or Mixed-Use Development with large buffer zones around creeks
Mobility Characteristics	• Limited and should typically limit higher order streets • Heavy emphasis on pedestrian facilities, typically in the form of trails and pathways • May accommodate bikes on bike lanes or shared use paths • Transit connections typically on periphery • In developed areas, lower density road network, primarily local streets • Sidewalks and/or multi-use pathways and shared streets
Parking	• Primarily self parked in garages, carports, and driveways • Supplemental on-street parking
Parks and Open Space	• Primarily Trails and Greenways to preserve the integrity of natural drainage corridors and provide transportation and recreational opportunities connecting to and through the area • Common Open Space with integrated stormwater features and passive recreation amenities • Neighborhood Parks to provide active and passive recreation opportunities for nearby residents, as well as integrated stormwater features
Desirable Transitions	• Neighborhood Low • Commercial/Employment Low
Fiscal Considerations	• None or has potential to perform like a Neighborhood Low or Medium Place Type if a cluster-style development is pursued

Overlay Characteristics/Considerations	
Historic Resource	No Difference
Environmental	See above; primarily clustered development and very low density ranch and ranchette style housing
Cultural Resource	No Development

CONSERVATION/CLUSTER





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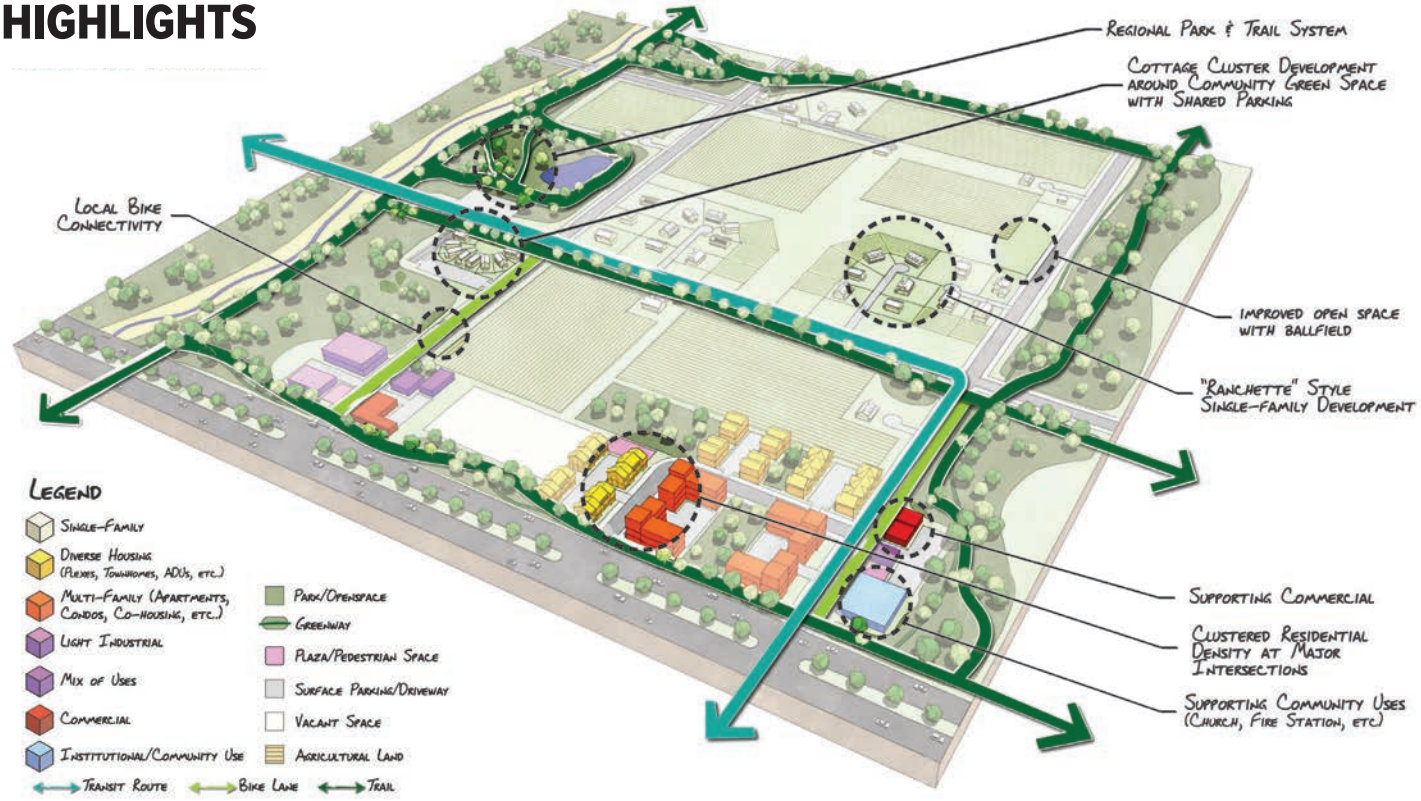
CONSERVATION/CLUSTER

HIGHLIGHTS



Focus on clustered cottage style housing

Supporting commercial

Regional park and open space

Trail and multi-use path connectivity

Higher residential density at key locations

Supporting community uses

Equivalency Table

Commercial/Employment Low vs Conservation/ Cluster

Development Code Zoning Classifications :: Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan Place Types

Zoning District		Place Types									
		Neighborhood Low-Existing	Neighborhood Low-New	Neighborhood Medium	Neighborhood High	Neighborhood Transition	Mixed Use Low	Mixed Use Medium	Employment/ Commercial Low	Employment/ Commercial Medium	Conservation/ Cluster
Conventional Residential	FD	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	C
	SF-R	C	NP	NP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	SF-6	C	C	NP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	SF-4.5	C	C	C	NP	-	-	-	-	-	-
Neighborhood Density Districts	ND-3	See Section 4.1.2.4 and 4.1.2.5 of the Development Code	C	C	NP	NP	NP	NP	-	-	-
	ND-3.2		C	C	NP	NP	NP	NP	-	-	-
	ND-3.5		C	C	C	C	NP	NP	-	-	-
	ND-4		C	C	C	C	C	NP	-	-	-
	N-CM		C	C	C	C	C	C	-	C	-
Character Districts	CD-1	C	C	NP	NP	C	-	-	NP	NP	See Section 4.1.2.6 of the Development Code
	CD-2	-	NP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	CD-2.5	-	C	NP	NP	C	-	-	-	-	
	CD-3	-	C	NP	NP	C	NP	-	-	-	
	CD-4	-	NP	-	NP	NP	C	C	NP	C	
	CD-5	-	-	-	-	NP	NP	C	NP	C	
	CD-5D	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	
	PA	-	C*	-	-	-	C*	C*	C*	C*	C*
Special Districts	CM	-	-	-	-	-	NP	NP	C	C	NP
	HC	-	-	-	-	-	NP	NP	C	C	-
	LI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	NP	-
	HI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	NP	-
	MH	-	C	NP	NP	NP	NP	-	-	-	NP

C= Consider NP= Not Preferred (-) = Preferred Scenario Amendment (PSA) Required

**For Table 4.18, Employment Center = Employment/Commercial Medium and Low; High Intensity Zone = Mixed Use Medium; Medium Intensity Zone = Mixed Use Low; Low Intensity Area = Conservation/Cluster and Neighborhood Low-New*