

Future Land Use Classifications

The following section describes the land use classifications shown on the Future Land Use. These land use classifications are intended to guide future development decisions, provide direction for re-zonings, and provide a foundation for the future update to the county's Zoning Ordinance.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Agricultural Residential

Agricultural Residential lands are located in the rural areas that lie outside of defined Urban Services Areas in Iredell County and are located in northern Iredell. This classification also includes lands in southern Iredell County that lie within water supply watershed protection areas where dense development is discouraged. Agricultural Residential areas will not be serviced by public or private water or sanitary sewer services during the planning period. Private uses will be served by well water and septic systems. The intent of these lands is that they will remain rural in character and have a maximum density of one (1) dwelling unit per two (2) acres. Clustering of residential uses is permitted if health code septic standards can be met and open space is set aside as part of the subdivision. Uses within this area generally should include some farming operations, accessory farming uses, single-family residences, accessory dwelling units, churches, parks, and institutional uses.

Low-Density Residential

Low-Density Residential areas include traditional low-density subdivision developments and future low-density neighborhoods. Lands may be serviced by public or private water and sanitary sewer or private well and septic systems. These areas are both within and outside the Iredell County Urban Services Areas. Low-Density Residential lands within the Urban Services Area may be serviced by and incorporated into one of the municipalities at some point in the future. The intent of these lands is that they provide a transition in intensity from rural to more urban uses and that they maintain a low-density residential character over time. Uses within this area generally should include single-family residences, accessory dwelling units, churches, parks, and institutional uses such as schools. Maximum densities within low-density residential areas should generally be two (2) dwelling units per one (1) acre.

Medium-Density Residential

Medium-Density Residential areas include land that is either currently developed or slated for future development at medium densities. These areas are within the Iredell County Urban Services Areas and may be serviced by and incorporated into one of the municipalities at some point in the future. These lands are either currently served or will be served in the future by public or private water or sanitary sewer systems. The intent of these lands is that they provide more dense development opportunities and a broader range of housing choices than low-density residential. Uses within this area generally should include single-family residences, townhomes, multi-family residential developments, accessory dwelling units, churches, parks, institutional uses such as schools, and neighborhood-scale commercial development. Maximum densities within medium-density residential areas should generally be six (6) dwelling units per one (1) acre.

High-Density Residential/Mixed-Use

High-Density Residential / Mixed-Use areas are either currently developed or slated for future development at higher densities. These areas lie within the Iredell County urban services areas and may be serviced by and incorporated into one of the municipalities at some point in the future. These lands are either currently served or will be served in the future by public or private water or sanitary sewer systems. The intent of these lands is that they provide urban-scale development opportunities and a broader range of housing choices than medium-density residential. Uses within this area generally should include single-family residences, townhomes, condominiums, apartments, accessory dwelling units, age-restricted residential developments, churches, parks, institutional uses, and mixed-use neighborhood-scale commercial development. Secondary uses might include more intense commercial and office uses that fit with the existing character of the neighborhood. Minimum densities within high-density residential/mixed-use areas should generally be more than six (6) dwelling units per one (1) acre. Maximum densities should be comparable to the densities found in neighboring developments and generally fit the character of the area.

NON-RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Rural Commercial

Rural Commercial areas include existing commercial uses or areas intended for future commercial use that are located along major roadways in rural areas. The intent of these areas is that they will remain rural in character for the planning period and will not be serviced by public or private water and sanitary sewer systems. Land uses appropriate within Rural Commercial areas include supporting farm services, small-scale commercial uses such as small markets, convenience stores, small neighborhood service businesses, restaurants, churches, and institutional uses.

Transitional Commercial

Transitional Commercial areas include existing neighborhood commercial uses or areas intended for future commercial use that are adjacent to neighborhoods. These areas provide transitions or buffers between lower intensity residential uses and higher intensity commercial development. The intent of these areas is that they will continue to serve as a buffer to residential areas and provide local opportunities for low intensity shopping and office uses. Land uses appropriate within Transitional Commercial areas include small-scale commercial uses such as small markets, convenience stores, small neighborhood service businesses, small offices, churches, and institutional uses. Secondary uses can include residential uses.

Corridor Commercial

Corridor Commercial areas include existing commercial, office, and/or retail uses that exist along major thoroughfares and highways or areas that will include commercial development in the future and can include both large and small mixed-use commercial centers. These areas are both within and outside the Iredell County Urban Services Areas. They may be serviced by and incorporated into one of the municipalities at some point in the future. The intent of these lands is to provide a mix of commercial/retail and office uses at critical nodes or activity centers along major roadways. Traditional strip commercial development is discouraged within these areas. Instead, developments should be designed to provide greater connectivity within and to adjacent developments, pedestrian access should be a priority, and landscaping, signage, and building design and orientation should be consistent within individual developments. Design

standards for Corridor Commercial uses should be developed in collaboration with the municipalities that will service them in the future to reflect the character of the community. Uses within this area generally should include retail, restaurants, entertainment centers, automobile services, personal services, other commercial uses, and office developments. Secondary uses may include higher-density residential uses such as townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and institutional uses.

Highway Interchange Commercial

Highway Interchange Commercial areas include existing or future commercial, retail, and service uses located proximate to interstate interchanges on major arterial roadways. The intent of these lands is to provide for high intensity uses related to travel. Traditional strip commercial development is discouraged within these areas. Instead, developments should be designed to provide greater connectivity within and to adjacent developments, pedestrian access should be a priority, and landscaping, signage, and building design and orientation should be consistent within individual developments. The use of service roads and access management best practices are encouraged within these areas. Natural buffers should be provided between developments and interstates to maintain to improve the visual experience from the roadway and reduce the impacts of roadway noise. Uses within this area generally should include gas stations, hotel/motels, restaurants, and other highway travel related businesses. Secondary uses may include retail, office developments, and higher-density residential uses.

Rural Industrial

Rural Industrial areas include existing industrial uses or lands intended for future industrial use. These areas lay outside of defined Urban Services Areas in Iredell County. The intent of these areas is that they will remain rural in character for the planning period and will not be serviced by public or private water and sanitary sewer systems. Land uses appropriate within Rural Industrial areas include smaller scale light industrial uses.

Employment Center - Office/Institutional

Employment Center – Office/Institutional areas are intended to provide concentrated areas of high quality employment facilities, integrated with or adjacent to complementary retail and commercial uses and/or medium- or high-density residential uses. These areas are both within and outside the Iredell County Urban Services Areas and may be serviced by and incorporated into one of the municipalities at some point in the future. These lands are either currently served or are planned to be served in the future by public or private water or sanitary sewer systems. These areas will provide a mix of commercial/retail and office uses at critical nodes or activity centers along major roadways and should have direct access to existing or planned arterial and collector streets and should not rely on local streets for primary access. Employment Center – Office/Institutional developments should be integrated into the context of the surrounding area, and should not be walled off as an isolated pod of development. Developments should be organized using a “campus” style design that is consistent and integrated. Primary uses include corporate office headquarters, hospital/medical facilities, business parks, educational facilities, and civic uses. Secondary uses may include parks, and convenience retail and restaurants intended to serve the office/institutional developments.

Employment Center - Industrial/Flex Space/Office

Employment Center – Industrial/Flex Space/Office areas are intended for development of industrial, flex space, and office uses including light manufacturing and assembly, research and development, warehousing, and building trade showrooms and offices. These lands are either

currently served or are planned to be served in the future by public or private water or sanitary sewer systems. These areas should have access to planned arterial or collector streets to provide adequate infrastructure for transportation of goods to and from distribution centers. Developments should provide adequate transitions to adjacent lower intensity uses, such as residential and commercial uses, in the form of vegetated buffers, landscaping, setbacks, and building heights. Some commercial/retail uses that serve the industrial/flex/office developments are appropriate within these areas. To ensure the integrity of this land use category over time, an overlay district should be adopted and applied to all lands that are designated as Employment Center – Industrial/Flex Space/Office but that are zoned for a completely different land use. The intent of the overlay district is to ensure that new developments occurring within these areas are consistent with the intent of the 2030 Horizon Plan and will promote future development of industrial/flex/office developments.

PRESERVATION AREAS

Open Space & Parkland

Open Space and Parkland areas contain public or quasi-public uses such as publicly owned open space land, research forests, parklands and recreational areas, or known archeological or historical sites. The intent of this land is that it will be maintained in its natural state in perpetuity.

Rural Conservation

Rural Conservation areas are either (1) actively being used for farming, forestry, or horticultural purposes (i.e., working lands) and are possibly designated as a Voluntary or Enhanced Farmland Preservation District or (2) areas that are rural in character and located proximate to working lands. Incentives and initiatives to protect rural areas and to enhance farming, forestry, and horticultural operations will be focused within these areas. The intent of this classification is to employ additional standards to ensure that the development of higher intensity land uses within these areas do not create a negative impact on neighboring working lands. Examples of additional standards that could be included are clustered subdivisions, open space/buffer requirements, property setbacks, maximum building height, driveway locations, orientation of buildings, and recommendations for locations of well taps. Minimum densities should generally not exceed two units per acre. However, if a conservation subdivision is being developed, net density may increase.