

2.0 Land Use Element

2.1 GENERAL LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

Objectives

- A. Maintain and enhance the “small town” character and quality of life in the community by maintaining the Central Business District as the geographical center of the community, through special design guidelines and streetscape improvements.

Policies, Standards

1. Maintain and enhance Wasco’s physical diversity, visual qualities and small town characteristics.
2. Strive to keep Wasco separate and distinct from nearby communities.
3. Maintain the core area 7th Street corridor as the City’s geographic center.
4. Maintain the Central Business District (bounded by the BNSF Railroad to the east, 6th Street to the north, 8th Street to the south and Griffith Avenue to the west)) and the 7th Street corridor as Wasco’s traditional medical, professional, government and cultural center. New uses and services should be directed to the CBD and the 7th Street Corridor to the extent practicable. The CBD shall be expanded in proportion to the expansion of the community.
5. Schools and parks shall be used as central features of neighborhoods. Neighborhoods shall be connected to these central features, shopping and service areas, and to other neighborhoods by Minor Collectors.
6. Maintain the City’s high level of circulation level of service, increase connectivity of neighborhoods, and minimize division of the community caused by major transportation facilities (e.g., railroads, highways and arterials). The City shall use a hierarchy of streets including Local Roads, Minor Collectors, Collectors and Arterials to facilitate such circulation.
7. Infill shall be encouraged on unused or underutilized parcels. Street standards shall be used that are appropriate for neighborhood scale and planned traffic levels.
8. Improve the aesthetics along the BNSF Railroad gateway into downtown.
9. Encourage larger lot residential in peripheral areas as a density transition to agricultural land (Estate and Rural Residential designations).

- B. Ensure that the community grows in an orderly manner to minimize infrastructure costs, to ensure that growth occurs in a contiguous manner, public facilities are provided in a timely manner, and to ensure that agricultural lands are preserved.
1. Prominent physical natural or man-made features shall be used as growth phasing lines. Such features are to be used as the “hard edges” for urban development.
 2. Provide for orderly growth and development patterns through the designation of growth boundaries to be phased over time. Development shall only be permitted in the Urban Development Boundary. The Urban Development Boundary may be expanded upon the following findings:
 - a. That at least 80 percent of the residential area within the Urban Development Boundary has been developed, or that undeveloped land within the Urban Development Boundary provides less than a ten-year supply of residential, commercial, industrial or public land uses; and that at least 60 percent of an individual land use (e.g., low density residential, estate residential, community commercial, etc.) has been developed. This finding is not required for Highway Commercial uses intended to serve the commercial needs of travelers throughout the city.
 - b. That adequate infrastructure exists in the expansion area, or will exist upon development.
 - c. That the Urban Development Boundary expansion area is substantially contiguous to existing development in the community.
 - d. That the expansion area is not larger than the area necessary to provide an adequate ten-year supply of residential, commercial, public and industrial land uses, plus a 30 percent vacancy factor.
 - e. That the expansion area includes properties that are planned for the development of public facilities including, but not limited to, water facilities, school sites, or for the development of highway orientated commercial uses.
 3. Areas annexed to the City shall be within the Urban Development Boundary and shall be substantially contiguous to the existing City Limits. “Substantially contiguous” shall mean that at least 20 percent of the annexed parcel’s perimeter is contiguous to existing City limits. This finding shall not apply to public facilities owned by the City or other public agencies that require services to be provided by the City.
 4. Development to the south and west is preferred.
 5. Encourage the removal of lands under Williamson Act contract to accommodate growth in the appropriate development phase.

- C. Ensure that development is compatible with the operation of Kern County Airport. (Reference Table 2-1 and Table 2-2.)
1. All land uses and intensities shall be in accordance with airport compatibility criteria indicated on the Kern County Airport Land Use Compatibility Table.
 2. Zones may also apply elsewhere if an airport has atypical operational procedures or specialized aircraft activities.

**Table 2-1
Compatibility Criteria
Kern County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
Maximum Densities**

Zone	Location	Impact Elements	Maximum Densities		Required Open Land ³
			Residential ¹ (du/ gross acre)	Other Uses (people/gross acre) ²	
A	Runway Protection Zone or within Building Restriction Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High risk ▪ High noise levels 	0	10	All Remaining
B1	Approach/Departure Zone and Adjacent to Runway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Substantial risk — aircraft commonly below 400 ft. AGL or within 1,000 ft. of runway ▪ Substantial noise 	0.1	60	30%
B2	Extended Approach/Departure zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant risk — aircraft commonly below 800 ft. AGL ▪ Significant noise 	0.5	60	30%
C	Common Airport Environs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited risk — aircraft at or below 1,000 ft. AGL ▪ Frequent noise intrusion 	15	150	15%
D	Other Airport Environs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negligible risk ▪ Potential for annoyance from overflights 	No Limit	No Limit	No Requirements

1. Clustering of units is encouraged as a means of meeting the Required Open Land requirements.
2. People per acre at any one time, including employees, customers and visitors.
3. Open land requirements are intended to be applied with respect to the entire zone.

**Table 2-2
Compatibility Criteria
Kern County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
Land Use Compatibility**

Zone	Additional Criteria		Examples	
	Prohibited Uses ¹	Other Development Conditions	Normally Acceptable Uses ²	Uses Not Normally Acceptable ³
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All structures except ones with location set by aeronautical function ▪ Assemblages of people ▪ Objects exceeding FAR part 77 height limits ▪ Hazards to flight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedication of aviation easement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aircraft tiedown apron ▪ Pastures, field crops, vineyards ▪ Automobile parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heavy poles, signs, large trees, etc.
B1 and B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools, day care centers, libraries ▪ Hospitals, nursing homes ▪ Highly noise-sensitive uses (e.g. amphitheaters) ▪ Storage of highly flammable materials⁷ ▪ Hazards to flight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate structures maximum distance from extended runway centerline ▪ Dedication of aviation easement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses in Zone A ▪ Any agricultural use except ones attracting bird flocks ▪ Warehousing, truck terminals ▪ Two-story offices ▪ Single-family homes on an existing lot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residential subdivisions ▪ Intensive retail uses ▪ Intensive manufacturing or food processing uses ▪ Offices with more than two stories ▪ Hotels and motels
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools ▪ Hospitals, nursing homes ▪ Hazards to flight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedication of over-flight easement for residential uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses in Zone B ▪ Parks, playgrounds ▪ Most retail uses ▪ Duplexes and medium-density apartments ▪ Two-story motels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Large shopping malls ▪ Theaters, auditoriums ▪ Large sports stadiums ▪ Hi-rise office buildings with more than four stories
D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hazards to flight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deed notice required for residential development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All except ones hazardous to flight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

1. May be modified by airport-specific policies or decision of local governing body with appropriate findings.
2. Within the B1 and B2 zones, only aviation fuels other aviation-related materials, and up to 2,000 gallons of nonaviation materials.
3. These uses typically do not meet the density and other development conditions listed. They should be allowed only if a major community objective is served by their location in this zone and no feasible alternative location exists.

3. Residential parcels should not contain more than the indicated number of dwelling units per gross acre. Clustering of units is encouraged as a means of meeting the Required Open Land requirements.
4. A land use should not attract more than the indicated number of people per acre at any time. This figure should include all individuals who may be on the property (e.g., employees, customers/visitors, etc.). These densities are intended as general planning guidelines to aid in determining the acceptability of proposed land uses. Special short-term events related to aviation (e.g., air shows), as well as non-aviation special events, shall be exempt from the maximum density criteria.
5. Open land requirements are intended to be applied with respect to the entire zone.
6. The restrictions and standards contained in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Table may be superceded by Airport-specific policies or a decision of the City Council upon recommendation of the Planning Commission where a finding is made that the policy or decision will not result in an increase in risks to property or persons, or where other community needs or benefits to the community substantially outweigh the increased risks. Such findings shall be based upon substantial evidence in the record.

7. Uses that do not meet the density and other development conditions may be allowed only if a major community objective is served by their location in this zone and no feasible alternative location exists, and the findings in Policy C.6 are made.

2.2 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Objectives

- A. Designate and allow for the development of a wide range of residential housing types in the City including housing for middle and upper income families to meet the needs of all residents.

Policies, Standards

1. The following residential density designations shall be used:
 - a. **Rural Residential** (0 – 2 dwelling units/gross acre). The Rural Residential land use category provides for a land use pattern characterized by residential development with lot sizes ranging from a minimum of 20,000 square feet to a maximum of 2.5 acres. The usual development pattern found in such areas is standard subdivision development with lot sizes generally between 20,000 square feet to 2.5 acres. All residential developments above 1 unit per acre need not be served by City sewer and water services if adequate private services can be provided. This designation should be used on areas where there are permanent edges, or where higher densities may conflict with safety objectives. Farm animals may be permitted on lots which are at least one acre in size and which are not abutted by higher density residential land uses.
 - b. **Estate Residential** (2 - 4.5 dwelling units/gross acre). The Estate Residential land use is intended to promote larger lot homes.
 - c. **Low Density Residential** (3.5 - 7.5 dwelling units/gross acre). The low density residential category provides for a land use pattern and development of predominantly single-family homes as permitted in the R-1 zone district. This designation also provides for innovative designs, which utilize clustering, duplexes or half-plexes on corner lots, zero lot line, or planned development features. Lot sizes generally range from 6,000-10,000 square feet.
 - d. **Medium Density Residential** (7.6 - 15.0 dwelling units/gross acre). This land use category provides for a land use pattern characterized predominantly by small scale multiple family residential developments. The typical residential pattern includes duplexes and larger scale, low rise, high-amenity apartments. Areas designated medium-high density residential are to be integrated throughout the community adjacent to transportation, community services and commercial developments. To

avoid inappropriate concentration of these facilities, such developments shall be limited to 25 contiguous units when integrated into a single-family neighborhood and to 50 contiguous units 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. Such facilities should be located adjacent to park facilities where possible.
 3. They shall be limited in total size to 50 contiguous units.
- e. **High Density Residential** (15.1 - 24.0 dwelling units/gross acre). The High Density Residential land use category provides for the highest residential densities permitted in the City. It is intended that this category utilize innovative site planning, provide on-site recreational amenities, and be located near major community facilities, business centers, and streets of at least Collector capacity. Projects in excess of 25 units or with a density in excess of 24 units per gross acre shall require a Conditional Use Permit. Such developments shall use high-quality architectural design features, intensified landscaping, adequate open space, adequate parking, and adequate on-site recreational facilities. Additional policies related to High Density Residential developments include:
1. Such facilities should be dispersed throughout the community and not concentrated in any one neighborhood.
 2. Such facilities should not be located within ¼ mile of a school facility.
 3. They shall be limited in total size to 100 units.
2. Each residential category indicates a range of density deemed reasonable and desirable for areas within the Planning Area. The maximum density indicated defines the number of units per gross acre within a given area. Residential development must provide at least the minimum number of units per gross acre indicated in the General Plan, unless a Conditional Use Permit has been granted. This requirement is intended to encourage the location of certain residential product types and densities consistent with adjacent land uses, access, public services, and environmental concerns.

2.3 COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Objectives

- A. Ensure the provision of adequate commercial shopping opportunities and office space locations to meet anticipated needs.

Policies, Standards

1. Establish the following commercial land use designations:
 - a. **Neighborhood Commercial.** The Neighborhood Commercial land use designation provides for a 5-10 acre cluster of commercial establishments. Typical Neighborhood Commercial centers will have a grocery store, drug store, fast food pads, and smaller shops which serve the everyday convenience goods and personal service needs of a defined neighborhood. The service radius of a Neighborhood Commercial use is generally 1 mile. Neighborhood Commercial sites should be located at or near the intersection of Collector and/or arterial streets with a minimum of overlap with other existing or planned Neighborhood Commercial uses. Only one Neighborhood Commercial development may be permitted at any one intersection. Such developments should also be directly accessible from adjacent residential developments.
 - b. **Community Retail Commercial.** The Community Retail Commercial land use designation provides for a 10-acre or larger cluster of commercial establishments serving needs similar to the Neighborhood Commercial centers, but also includes larger-scale general merchandise, variety, and specialty stores. The Community Retail Commercial center generally serves a market area with a service radius of two miles, and may also provide central shopping for smaller surrounding communities. Due to its central location and accessibility, the Highway 46 commercial area would function as the Community Retail Commercial center. Such facilities should be to minimize cross-town traffic. Community Retail Commercial uses should be located along major traffic ways in consolidated centers that utilize common access and parking for commercial uses. Strip commercial uses are to be discouraged. Adequate pedestrian links to residential areas shall be required.
 - c. **Highway Commercial.** This designation provides for localized concentrations of uses catering to the traveling public including service stations, hotels, restaurants, or other visitor-serving uses. Highway Commercial nodes may be located on one corner of major intersections outside of the contiguous community, including the intersection of Kimberlina and State Highway 43. Such Highway Commercial nodes shall be limited in size to three total acres unless it can be demonstrated that a greater amount will not have an adverse impact on existing or planned commercial facilities in the community. Because of the growing importance of the intersection of Kimberlina Road and State Route 43, Highway Commercial development may occur on all four corners of the intersection and need not be limited to three acres in size.
 - d. **Service Commercial.** This designation provides for commercial areas for non-retail commercial uses that provide services to consumers. Such uses may have characteristics that require isolation or separation from residential or other commercial uses. Typical uses may be body shops, car repair garages, contractors

yards, etc. This commercial designation may be applied along arterial streets and highway corridors to provide commercial support for nearby Community and CBD Commercial uses as well as industrial areas.

- e. **Central Business District (CBD) Commercial**. This designation provides the City with a mixed-use activity area in the downtown area, including retail, office, service, public and institutional and special residential uses. It is intended to provide for a wide range of uses and to promote the reuse of downtown buildings. CBD Commercial designation should be used in the downtown area in order to attract and accommodate commercial, financial, office, governmental and limited residential uses. Rehabilitation of existing structures to accommodate residential and office facilities on upper floors in the CBD Commercial district is encouraged. Conversion of existing residential units is encouraged adjacent to the downtown to provide for smaller scale office space.

- f. **Professional Office**. This designation provides for office development, which includes medical, dental, law, or other professional offices. Applicable zones may include general office, office conversion, etc. Professional Office land uses should be designated which allow construction of new office unified centers, the redevelopment of existing areas to office use, and the conversion of older homes to offices along major streets. Where homes are converted to offices, the area should be a logical extension of existing or planned office/commercial uses, and the lot should be of adequate size to accommodate parking in the rear of the structure or outside of the front yard landscape setback. An office conversion zone should be developed to establish standards for conversion of existing residential structures. Office uses should be located in and adjacent to the downtown and near medical facilities. Small scale office uses are permitted in the Community, Neighborhood and Central Business districts. Access shall be improved to support proposed development. Development shall be compatible with adjoining residential neighborhoods.

Objectives

- B. Provide for the compatible integration of residential and commercial uses.

Policies, Standards

- 1. Development standards for the interface between commercial or office uses and residential uses shall be as follows:
 - a. A landscaped setback of at least ten feet wide containing deciduous and evergreen trees maybe required to be planted and maintained along the property line between commercial or office uses and residential zoned and developed properties that have a common property line.

- b. A masonry wall six feet in height may be required to be erected along the property line where commercial and office uses have a common property line with residentially zoned and developed properties.
 - c. A masonry wall three and one-half feet in height or a landscape berm may be required to be erected along the front setback line, parallel to, and ten feet from the local street abutting residentially zoned and developed properties.
 - d. All commercial loading and storage areas shall be screened from view of adjoining residential property by a combination of landscape planting and a masonry wall. Loading areas shall be enclosed and be located so that there are no noise impacts to adjacent residential properties. All storage shall be within an enclosed structure.
 - e. Roof-mounted and detached mechanical equipment shall be acoustically baffled to prevent noise from the equipment from exceeding 65 dB (A) measured at the nearest residential property line.
- 2. In order to encourage the integration of Neighborhood and Community Commercial uses into neighborhoods, designs should de-emphasize the usage of walls as buffers where they create barriers to pedestrian access. Continuous block walls shall be discouraged and offsets, landscaping pockets and openings shall be encouraged.
 - 3. In order to promote non-vehicular modes of transportation, and to limit the unnecessary usage of Collectors and Arterials for vehicular access, commercial development shall provide direct pedestrian and vehicular access to adjoining residential areas through Minor Collectors, Local Streets and/or through pedestrian access points.

2.4 INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Objectives

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

Policies, Standards

- 1. Establish the following industrial land use designations:
 - a. **Light Industrial.** This category establishes Light Industrial areas where uses such as fabricating, assembly, research and development, electronics, low intensity warehousing and other such similar industrial uses are appropriate. All work, materials, and equipment storage is generally conducted indoors. Light Industrial is appropriate as a buffer between Heavy Industrial and non-industrial uses and where the site is visible from residential areas or major streets. Special landscaping,

enclosures and other site development standards should be used. Industrial park development is intended on larger parcels to create distinct districts of industrial, office, and support uses. The industrial park area shall have high quality landscaping, architectural designs, and general site development requirements.

- b. **Heavy Industrial.** Heavy Industrial allows for a range of activities including manufacturing, wholesale distribution, large storage areas and other non-hazardous industrial uses. Areas developed under this designation should be located with direct access to major streets or railroads.
2. Promote a mix of industrial uses that provide the City with a sound, diverse industrial base, and which is consistent with the City's infrastructure constraints.
 3. Locate industry with access to major streets, truck routes, and rail service.
 4. Industrial development should not create significant off-site circulation, noise, dust, odor, visual, and hazardous materials impacts that cannot be adequately mitigated.
 5. Provide adequate land for a wide range of industrial uses. Larger scale uses (warehousing) and higher intensity uses not compatible with residential development should be located outside of the industrial park, either easterly of the community, or along SH 99. In order to increase the capture rate of industries in the community, such areas should be master planned to expedite processing of applications, and aggressively marketed (along with the industrial park) to targeted industries.
 6. Major streets which pass through industrial areas and serve as entrances to the City, shall receive special design treatment to reduce aesthetic impacts and traffic concerns. Design standards for industrially zoned parcels shall be as set forth in the City of Wasco Zoning Ordinance.
 7. Provide for the use and re-use of small light industrial properties in or near the downtown for service commercial uses to complement adjacent commercial, office and residential land uses.
 8. Expansion of existing non-conforming uses in the industrial areas shall be discouraged.

2.5 PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE

Objective

- A. Provide sites for adequate public facilities to serve projected growth.

Policies, Standards

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. **Schools-Elementary and Middle**. Coordinate school location and site design with the school districts to ensure that adequate facilities and sites are available. Elementary and Middle school sites should be located at Collector/Collector, Minor Collector/Collector, or Minor Collector/Minor Collector street intersections that have good pedestrian and bicycle connections to the surrounding neighborhood. Such sites may be identified, reserved and acquired consistent with California Government Code Sections 66479-66482, or other means. Schools should abut neighborhood parks with adjacent development backing or siding onto the school. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be provided. 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 adjacent residential areas. These schools should be located so that there are future expansion opportunities.
- c. **Schools-High School**. High Schools should be located at Arterial/Collector or Arterial/Arterial intersection with additional frontage on at least one other street. These sites should be located to provide for future expansion, and should be located as community growth anchors or centers. Additional high schools should be distributed around the community.
- d. **General School Siting Requirements:**
 1. New commercial development should be discouraged within a minimum of 1/4-mile of school sites. The shortest pedestrian access point between a commercial and school site shall be at least ¼ mile.
 2. The City, school districts and Parks District shall encourage joint use of school multi-purpose facilities and open space.
 3. The school districts shall be encouraged to coordinate their school location, facility construction and phasing with the City's Urban Development Boundary and policies, development guidelines 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.
 4. It is the policy of the City that adequate school facilities be available to serve new development. In implementing this policy both the City and school districts recognize that State law provides that the provision of school facilities is the

exclusive responsibility of the State and the respective school districts. 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, the City shall work with the school districts to identify opportunities for joint funding of recreation and community facilities at school sites.

- e. **Parks and Open Space**. This designation determines areas of permanent open spaces, parks and/or areas precluded from major development. Standards shall be established in the Recreation Element for Community Parks of 20-60 acres each (including integrated school facilities and usable storm drainage facilities) which have a service radius of 1 ½ miles and are provided at a rate of three acres per thousand persons; Neighborhood Parks of 5-10 acres each (including integrated school facilities and usable storm drainage facilities) which have a service radius of ¾ mile at a rate of 2.5 acres per thousand persons; and, mini parks up to 2 acres in size at a rate of 0.5 acres per thousand persons. Facilities for each park type shall be consistent with the Wasco Recreation and Parks District Development Standards.