

LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

Land use considerations are central to municipal planning. The types and intensity of uses are guides to the general character of a community. The spatial distribution of uses and relative amounts of land allocated for various uses are important factors in considering other planning elements.

The primary purpose of land use planning is to assist local officials in establishing policies regarding existing and future uses of public and private property, bringing about harmony between residential areas and business or industrial establishments. As growth occurs in the City, the plan identifies existing land uses by location and also encourages and establishes a design of land uses by type, location and acreage. In addition, the plan identifies a system of major streets which have a direct influence on the pattern of land uses.

A Land Use Plan has many functions other than assist City staff, planning and zoning officials and elected officials in making decisions concerning the administration of the City Zoning Ordinance.

- The *plan* should assure that an adequate amount of designated residential, commercial, industrial and public land uses are designed in such a pattern to encourage the City to adopt the plan and work toward implementing the plan through local ordinances, policies and private development. The plan should cover a period of ten or more years.
- The *plan* should assure that sites for public facilities be reserved or acquired at a reasonable cost in advance of development.
- The *plan* should assure that development patterns occur so that utilities and transportation needs can be met in an efficient manner.
- The *plan* should recognize the need for diversity of types of development.
- The *plan* should minimize conflicts among various types of activities such as excessive traffic in residential areas, industrial and residential conflicts, excessive commercial development clashing with traffic movement, etc.
- The *plan* improves the developmental qualities of the community by encouraging:
 - a. A land use design pattern.
 - b. Establishment of land use goals and policies.
 - c. Projection of future streets to serve the many land uses and local citizens in vehicular circulation in and through the community.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

Future land use challenges facing the City are:

- Encourage more commercial development.
- Encourage more industrial development.
- Encourage more and desirable residential development.
- Encourage retirement community development.
- Expand the corporate limits to insure that appropriate development codes are enforced.

LAND USES CATEGORIES

Guidelines Used In Determining Land Uses

Recording existing land uses for study and the arrangement of needed future land uses are essential in developing a logical land use plan for the City. A windshield survey of land parcels was conducted in March 2007. Each parcel of land within the corporate limits and adjacent areas that was developed or undeveloped was noted or recorded on a City map by one of the following land use categories:

<u>Single Family</u>	A one unit dwelling that is traditionally constructed, manufactured or industrialized housing.
<u>Mobile homes</u>	Mobile homes located in mobile home parks.
<u>Two-family</u>	A housing structure with two dwelling units.
<u>Multifamily</u>	A housing structure with more than two dwelling units.
<u>RV Areas</u>	Areas designated for overnight or longer stay of Recreational vehicles (RV).
<u>Commercial</u>	A structure for retail stores, shops, offices, personal service establishments and/or communication or TV towers.
<u>Industrial</u>	A building used for manufacturing operations, open storage areas, storage of junk cars, wholesale storage of farm products and railroad facilities and right-of-ways.
<u>Railroad R-O-W</u>	Includes all land within the railroad right-of-ways.
<u>Street R-O-W</u>	Includes all platted dedicated street right-of-ways.
<u>Alley R-O-W</u>	Includes acreage devoted to alleys.
<u>Public/Semipublic</u>	
<u>Parks</u>	Municipal Park or parks by other government entities.
<u>Schools</u>	Land uses included in this category represent facilities used for school playgrounds, buildings, parking and bus facilities.
<u>Water & Sewer</u>	Areas used by the City for water storage facilities and wastewater treatment areas.
<u>Irrigation Canals</u>	Acreage used for large irrigation canals.
<u>Other</u>	Churches, cemeteries, government buildings and operations, and civic buildings used for meetings.

<u>Used Developed</u>	Includes the total acreage used for the above categories.
<u>Vacant Developed</u>	Includes all unused platted property (with or without paved streets) and property that is adjacent to paved roads, which could be developed.
<u>Developed Orchards</u>	Land used for grapefruit or orange groves.
<u>Vacant Undev/Agri.</u>	Include large tracts of land that have not been developed for urban growth.

Statistical information obtained from conducting a survey of the City's developed land uses were used in projecting acreage needed for the future development of the City and served as the foundation to the "Future Land Use Plan". The City's Zoning Ordinance text and map is not a "Future Land Use Plan", but serves as an enforcement tool to implement the City's "Land Use Plan". The "2007 Land Use Map" illustrates how land was being used in 2007, while the "Land Use Plan Map" represents a display of desirable land uses for the City to achieve an efficient planned community. The Land Use Plan also serves as a basis for projecting future streets and utilities.

Data recorded by the City's 1989 Comprehensive Planning Study prepared by Governmental Services, Inc. is utilized to the maximum extent in developing this Land Use Study. The hereafter 2007 Land Use Survey data is recorded in graphic and tabular forms for study and analysis in determining future land use needs.

EXHIBIT 5-1 2007 LAND USE INVENTORY BY CATEGORIES

LAND USE CATEGORIES	ACRES IN USE IN 2007	2007 PERCENT OF DEV. LAND USE	2007 ACRES PER 100 PERSONS
Residential Uses	505.90	33.73 %	8.27
Single Family	351.24	23.42 %	5.74
Mobile Home Park Development	71.74	4.78 %	1.17
Two Family	5.74	0.38 %	.09
Multifamily	14.92	0.99 %	.24
RV Park	62.26	4.15 %	1.02
Commercial	83.33	5.56 %	1.36
Industry	113.81	7.59 %	1.86
Railroad	13.77	0.92 %	.23
Public/Semi-public	229.03	15.27 %	3.75
Parks	28.08	1.87 %	.46
Schools	91.23	6.08 %	1.49
Water & Wastewater Plants	63.57	4.24 %	1.04
Irrigation Canals	22.56	1.50 %	.37
Other	23.59	1.57 %	.39
Street R-O-W	352.81	23.52 %	5.76
Expressway 83 R-O-W	164.31	10.95 %	2.69
Other Streets R-O-W	188.50	12.57 %	3.08
Alley R-O-W	7.26	0.48 %	.12
Used Developed	1,305.91	87.06 %	21.36
Vacant Developed	194.09	12.94 %	3.17
TOTAL DEVELOPED	1,500.00	100.00 %	24.53
Developed Orchard	34.89		
Vacant Undev./Agri.	747.01		
TOTAL CITY AREA	2,281.90		

Source: 2007 land use survey findings by Design Services, Inc.

LOCAL LAND USE FINDINGS OF 2007

La Feria's initial development at the intersection of US Business Highway 83 and FM Road 506 created a business section on FM Road 506 from US Highway 83 to Primrose Avenue. This area is the City's Central Business District. The construction of US Expressway 83 in the 1960's caused a shift in the volume of vehicular traffic to the Expressway and prompted commercial development to start shifting to the Expressway where better sites for industrial and commercial activity were made available. Land between these two parallel highways also became more desirable for commercial and industrial development. As the population in the area increases, so do property values.

Where railroads abut streets or highways such as US Business Highway 83 and Missouri Pacific Railroad, the land abutting the railroad develops at a slower pace. Restricted road crossings of railroad tracks are a major reason why abutting property is difficult to develop.

Along US Expressway 83 between McAllen and Harlingen, a distance of 29.3 miles there are eight smaller cities, six of which are in Hidalgo County. The hereafter exhibit provides the 2000 population of these cities along the Expressway.

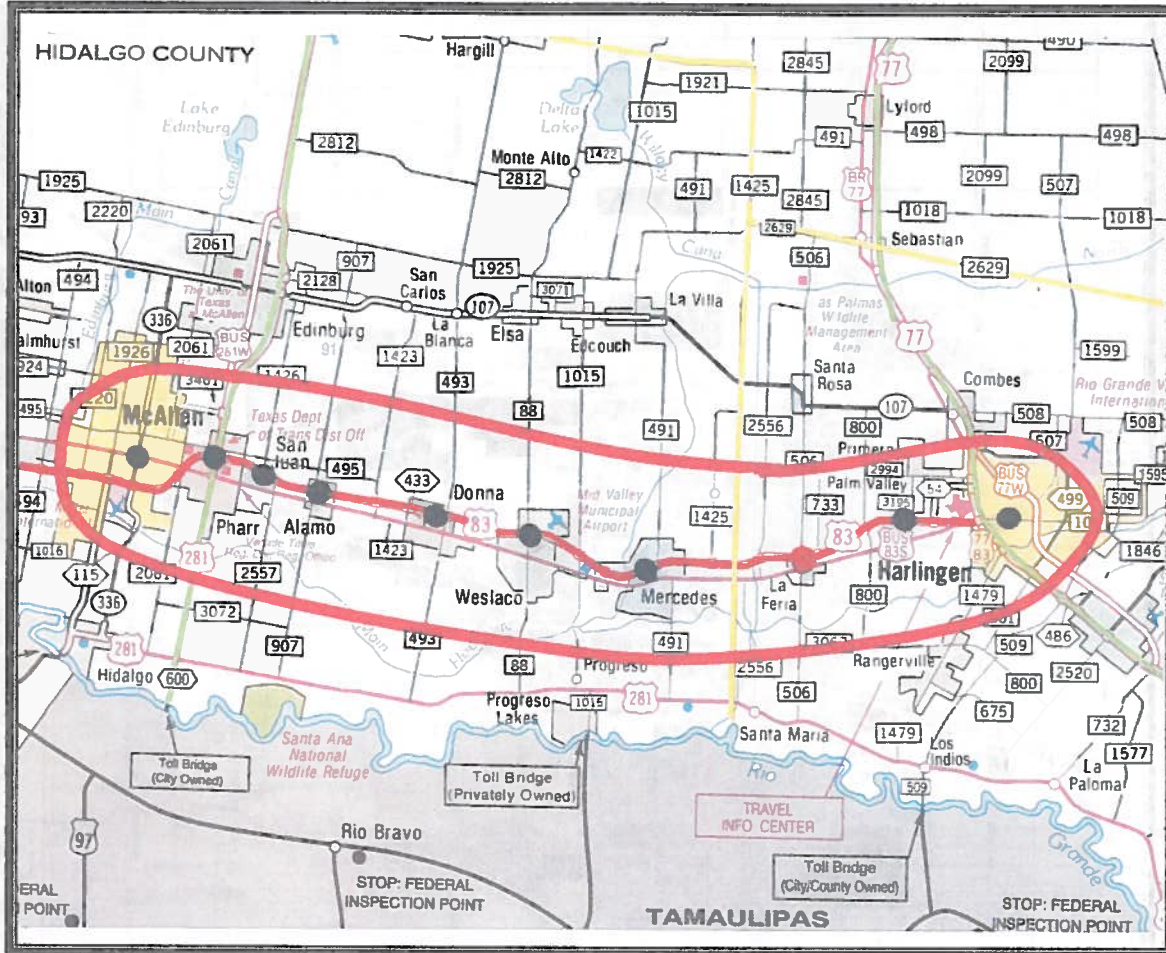
EXHIBIT 5-2
2000 COMMUNITY POPULATION ALONG US EXPRESSWAY 83

CITY	POPULATION
La Feria	6,115
Alamo	14,760
Donna	14,768
Mercedes	13,649
Palm Valley	1,298
Pharr	46,660
San Juan	26,229
Weslaco	26,935
SUBTOTAL	150,414
Harlingen	57,564
McAllen	106,414
TOTAL	314,392

La Feria has expanded its corporate limits during previous years to include sections of the Expressway. In 1992, a Scenic Corridor Ordinance was adopted, which attaches development control along the Expressway. A graphic showing the location of the ten cities is provided on the next page.

Also noted on the exhibit are many north-south FM Roads that intersect the Expressway, many of which extend to other communities or other highways. These FM Roads will become more important to urban development as the valley continues to increase in population. FM Roads serve as a facility to move goods and people and they provide a potential for commercial development to occur where they intersect other major roads.

EXHIBIT 5-3 CITIES ALONG US EXPRESSWAY 83 BETWEEN McALLEN AND HARLINGEN



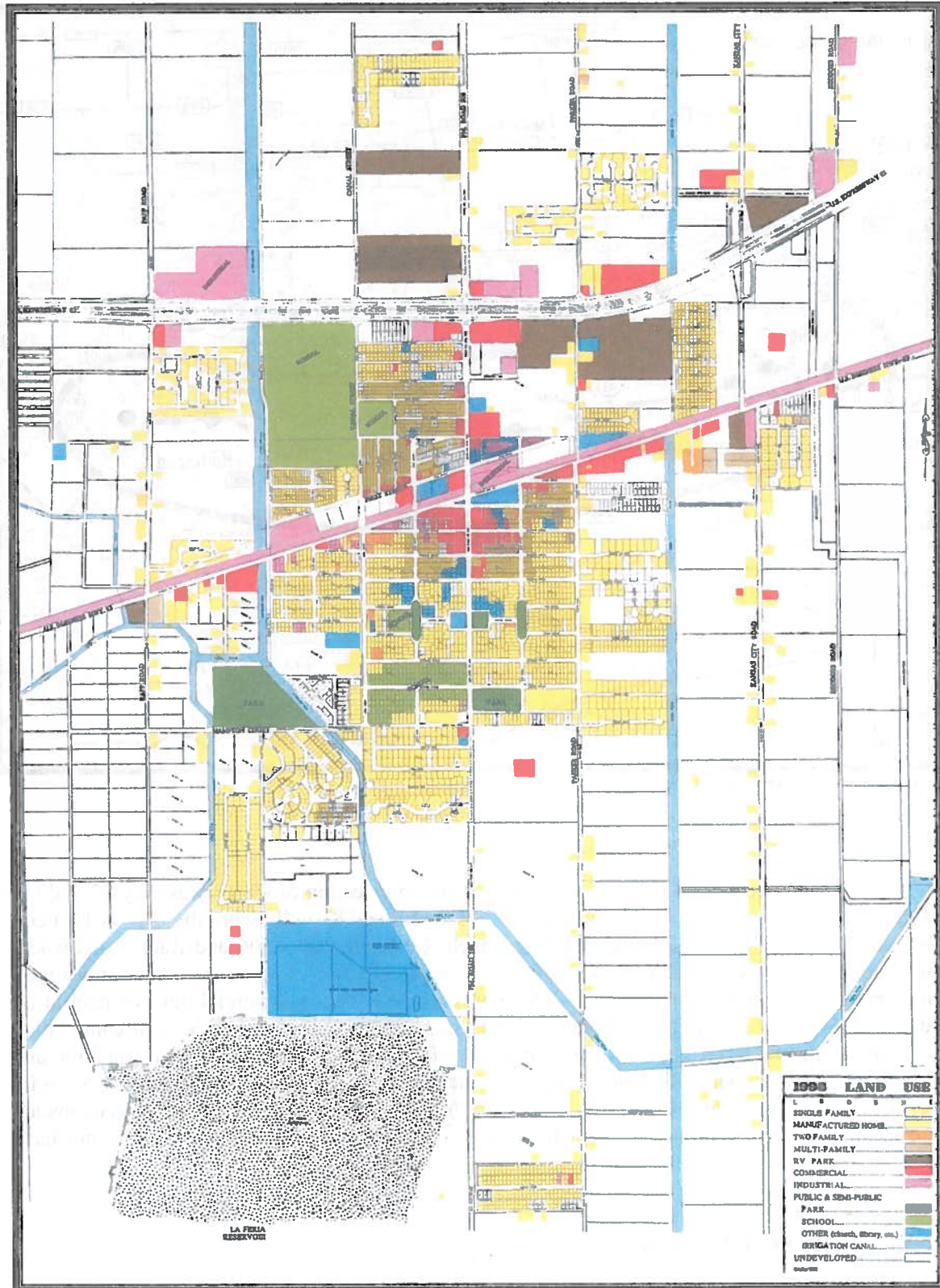
Source: Texas Transportation Department and Design Services, Inc.

A large shopping center is located in Harlingen at the intersection of US Expressway 83 and US Highway 77. The ongoing reconstruction of US Expressway 83 will assure the City of La Feria desirable commercial intersections at White Ranch Road, FM Road 506 and Rabb Road where excellent access is available at all four-corners of the intersection. Approximately 3.5 miles west of Harlingen, FM Road 800 intersects US Expressway 83 with commercial development at all four-corners of the intersection. Commercial development at this intersection is in competition with any commercial development that may occur where White Ranch Road, FM Road 506 and Rabb Road intersect with US Expressway 83. Other intersections along US Expressway 83 in La Feria include Kansas City Road, Solis Road and the 3-Mile Road. These three intersections are not ideal for commercial development because the four-corners at the intersection do not have appropriate access.

INVENTORY OF LAND USES

Exhibit 5-4 is a copy of the "1998 Land Use Map" and Exhibit 5-5 is a copy of the "2007 Land Use Map".

**EXHIBIT 5-4
1998 LAND USE MAP**



Source: Design Services, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL LAND

Most of the City's developed residential land use is located south of US Expressway 83. Seven types of residential development in the City include traditional single-family structures, townhouses, manufactured homes, industrial homes, recreational vehicles, duplexes and multifamily structures with three or more dwelling units. Scattered residential development is located throughout the extraterritorial jurisdiction with concentrated areas of manufactured homes. The "2007 Land Use Map" is a graphic illustration of development within the City and the extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Single-family Residential - Traditional Type House

Traditional type residential development utilized 351.24 acres or 8,300 square feet of land per unit.

Single-family Residential - Manufactured home

Most of the manufactured homes located in the City are in designed mobile home subdivisions. Approximate acreage utilized for this type of land use is 71.74 acres or 6,275 square feet per unit.

Single-family Residential - Industrial home

Industrial type homes are scattered throughout the City, with an estimate of 7,500 square foot per unit.

Single-family Residential - Townhouse

Five townhouses are located on Adobe Street. It is estimated that there is 3,750 square feet per unit.

Single-family Residential - RV unit.

The March 2007 land use survey identified 650 RV units in the City that were utilizing 62.26 acres of RV Park area or 4,170 square feet per RV unit. If the RV Parks were fully occupied, the number of square feet per unit would have been a lot less.

Two-family Residential - Duplex structures

In March 2007, there were 30 duplex structures located in the City that utilized 5.74 acres or 8,335 square feet per structure.

Multifamily Residential - Apartments

The city's multifamily use increased from 7.71 acres in 1998 to 14.92 acres in 2007. In 2007, thirty-one multifamily structures or 175 dwelling units were identified in the City. Land utilized by the 31 structures was 14.92 acres or 3,700 square feet per unit.

COMMERCIAL LAND

Commercial growth in the City is moving toward U.S. Expressway 83. The City's 37.83 acres of commercial land in 1998 represented 0.87 acres per 100 persons. The commercial acreage increased to 83.33 acres by 2007, an increase to 1.36 commercial acres per 100 persons. Two large inactive commercial tracks of 27.55 acres shown on the "2007 Land Use Map" are the two large communication towers located on the south side of the City along the east side of FM Road 506.

INDUSTRIAL LAND

In 1998, there were 0.86 acres of industrial land per 100 persons. By 2007, the acreage of industrial land had increased to 1.86 acres per 100 persons.

RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY LAND

Railroad right-of-way land could be included in the industrial land use category, but since the railroad land acreage is not likely to change the railroad category is used to record railroad land use. In 1998, the railroad right-of-way land represented 0.32 acres per 100 persons and in 2007, the railroad right-of-way land represented 0.23 acres per 100 persons.

PUBLIC AND SEMIPUBLIC

In 1998, there were 3.15 acres of public and semipublic land per 100 persons and in 2007, there is 3.75 acres of public and semipublic land per 100 persons. The large gain in acreage is due to the inclusion of the water and wastewater plant and additional school acreage. The five subcategories listed hereafter are used to identify acreage in the public and semipublic category.

Parks and open space

Land used for parks and open space is basically calculated from five areas, the City's largest park "Veterans Memorial Sports Complex" on Pancho Maples Drive, "Scott Sloan Park" at Verbena Avenue and Main Street, "Tiny Town Park" at Central Avenue and Main Street, and two open space areas on East Street and West Street. This subcategory utilized 28.08 acres or 0.46 acres per 100 persons.

Schools

La Feria Independent School District has a total of 91.23 acres or 1.49 acres per 100 persons in school sites.

Water & wastewater plants

Land utilized for utility plants is 63.57 acres or 1.04 acres per 100 persons.

Irrigation canals

Land in irrigation canal right-of-way is 22.56 acres or 0.37 per 100 persons.

Other Public and Semipublic Use

This category includes land used for churches, City hall, library etc. The category represents 23.59 acres or 0.39 acres per 100 persons.

STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY

Land used for local streets and highway right-of-ways was determined by calculating the right-of-way widths from City maps. Dedicated streets that were not cleared, graded or constructed for use were not included in the calculations. The 352.81 acres of land currently dedicated and/or used as street right-of-ways represents the City's second largest land use category. This acreage also, represented 5.76 acres per 100 persons.

Land used by US Expressway 83 represented 46.57 percent of the City's total street acreage. The remaining 188.5 acres in street right-of-way was 3.08 acres per 100 persons.

ALLEY RIGHT-OF-WAY

Land in local alley right-of-ways was determined by calculating the existing alleys at a 20 foot width. There are 7.26 acres of 0.12 acres per 100 persons.

USED DEVELOPED

Acreage classified as "Used Developed Land", which was identified by a survey conducted in March, 2007, represents the total acreage of all classified land uses in the City. Categories used in determining various land uses in the City are included in Exhibit 5-1.

VACANT DEVELOPED LAND

The 194.09 acres identified in the Vacant Developed Land Use Category represents land that is platted but still vacant and useable land adjacent to streets and highways. Even though this land use category is not shown by a land use pattern on the "2007 Land Use Map", the acreage was calculated. The Vacant Developed Land Use reveals the following: -

1. Vacant lots are depicted on the "2007 Land Use Map" as vacant areas.
3. La Feria has ample vacant land adjacent to streets and highways. Street access to vacant land is an influencing factor to developing such areas.

DEVELOPED ORCHARDS

The investment in developing orchards makes it more financially difficult to subdivide orchard land over normal agriculture land. Therefore, all orchard land in the City and extraterritorial jurisdiction is identified on the "2007 Land Use Map". In 2007, there was 34.89 acres of land identified as orchards.

VACANT UNDEVELOPED/AGRICULTURE

The City's vacant undeveloped or agriculture land represents 747.01 acres. Tracts of land considered in this land use category are generally five or more acres in size and basically located on all sides of the City.

2007 LAND USE ANALYSIS

NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS that may affect the development of land are:

- Drainageways,
- Soil characteristics to determine appropriate construction needs,
- Lakes,

MAN-MADE CHARACTERISTICS that may affect the development of land are:

- Availability of water and sewer services,
- Railroad tracks,
- Irrigation canal,
- Highways and expressways.

Occupied Dwelling Units and Population

- In 2000, the US Census reported 2,878 dwelling units in the City with 1,976 of the units occupied for a population of 6,115. This indicates that there were 902 vacant units in the City for a vacancy rate of 31 percent or nearly one of every 3 units vacant. This section of the 2000 Census has to be in error. The March 2007 Housing Survey found 2,626 dwelling units in the City, which is 252 units less than reported by the 2000 Census.
- The City's 2007 population estimate is 8,500,
- The City's 2025 population forecast is 10,770,
- The 2000 population of eight small cities between McAllen and Harlingen is 150,414.

LOCAL SOILS

La Feria is located in an area of three major soil groups, "Hidalgo Urban Land", "Raymondville Urban Land" and a small amount of "Hidalgo Sandy Clay Loam". The City contains about 90 percent Hidalgo Urban Land, 8 percent Raymondville Urban Land and 2 percent Hidalgo Sandy Clay Loam, while the ETJ has approximately 70 percent Hidalgo Sandy Clay Loam, 20 percent Hidalgo Urban Land and 10 percent Raymondville Urban Land. These soil groups are generally characterized as sandy clay loam soils with a zero percent to 1 percent slope. Limitations for development include corrosive failures of pipelines, shifting of structures due to shrink-swell potential, and failure of septic tank filter fields caused by a lack of permeability. These characteristics must be considered in reviewing development proposals.

ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

The availability of public water and wastewater services permits a higher density of development to occur in any given area. Without a public wastewater system, property owners have to rely on private sewerage systems, which require a considerable amount of land for absorption. La Feria receives its water supply from La Feria Irrigation District.

The City's water and wastewater treatment facilities are located on Dodd Lane, west of FM Road 506.

STORM DRAINAGE

With the outward growth of the City, there has been an agreement between La Feria Irrigation District and the City in maintaining a local drainage system. La Feria Irrigation District maintains a system of drainage channels in the rural area in connection with their irrigation canals.

The Gulf's air has a high moisture content, which tends to moderate temperatures. Most rainfall generally occurs in September, while March is the driest month. Even with a normal precipitation of about 25 inches, all of the rainfall received, the area has a semi-arid climate, which causes lake evaporation to exceed precipitation by an annual average of 32-36 inches, thus the need for the major irrigation canals to ensure consistent irrigation of crops.

The City of La Feria is located at the highest point in Cameron County and inland enough that the threat of flooding and damage from hurricanes is far less than the nearby coastal areas, but the City is always subject to flooding during heavy rainstorms. There is not adequate natural drainage courses to carry off the water during heavy rainstorms.

ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES

Community facilities are found to be adequate for the present needs of the City. The City Hall complex was expanded in 1998 to accommodate the city's anticipated growth. New park and recreation facilities are being developed and planned to meet the city's forecasted population growth. Citizens are provided with many government facilities such as:

- a City Hall, a library, parks and fire station, a post office, school campuses for elementary, junior high and senior high ~~students~~, church facilities, etc., low rent housing by Cameron County Housing Authority. ~~schools~~

THOROUGHFARES

Major streets and highways in the City include US Expressway 83, US Business Highway 83, FM Road 506, FM Road 733, FM Road 2556, Rabb Road, Beddoes Road and Dodd Lane. These major avenues direct development in the City, provide good circulation routes for commercial and industrial areas and are the best roads in the City. The "Future Land Use Map" shows needed major and collector streets to serve the projected land uses while specific classification of major and collector streets are designated on the "Thoroughfare Plan Map" in the Thoroughfare section of this document.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

There does not appear to be any natural features or constraints to local development, while economic constraints, irrigation canals, US Expressway 83 and the combination of US Business Highway 83 and the Missouri Pacific Railroad are considered man-made features that can become constraints to local development.

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

- **Low Density Residential Property** – The City's 2,392 traditional and manufactured housing structures recorded in March 2007 utilized 422.98 acres of land or about 7,700

square feet per unit, while the traditional single-family structures used 8,300 square feet per unit or lot. In 1998, the average single-family lot was 8,320 square feet, but the annexation of two large manufactured home parks after 1998 reduced the overall average lot size in 2007 to 7,700. A new subdivision such as the one south of US Business Highway 83 on White Ranch Road has an average residential lot size of about 20,000 square feet, which is very low density.

Low density development is located on the east side of the City. There are three single-family categories in the city's Zoning Ordinance, which have a range of 5,000 square feet to 9,000 square feet. All residential development in the City that has lot of 5,000 square feet or more is considered low density.

Lots in Magnolia Heights Subdivision east of Parker Road are 11,000 to 12,000 square feet and lots in KC Estates Subdivision between Parker Road and Kansas City Road range between 14,000 to 20,000 square feet.

- **Medium to High Density Residential Property** - Medium density residential development are those areas of the City that have less than 5,000 square feet per residential unit. This would include Potter Watson Subdivision, part of Bonita Subdivision, Citrus Village Park Subdivision, four RV Parks, scattered duplexes, Lion's Villa Condominiums and multifamily housing as shown on the "2007 Land Use Map".

Potter Watson Subdivision is a small subdivision north of First Street, between Canal Street and West Street. The area was subdivided with lots measurements of 25 feet by 90 feet. Most structures in this subdivision are built on one lot of approximately 2,250 square feet.

Bonita Subdivision is a small subdivision north of First Street between Willow Street and Canal Street. Lots in this subdivision are 37.5 feet by 75 feet with a total of 2,812 square feet per lot. Housing structures built on one of these lots would be considered a medium density residential area, while houses built on more than one lot would barely exceed the designated low-density lot of 5,000 square feet.

Citrus Village Park Subdivision, a manufactured home subdivision located east of Citrus Drive between US Expressway 83 and US Business Highway 83, is a medium density residential area. The 130 lots in this subdivision are 50 feet by 90 feet or 4,500 square feet. A few manufactured homes in the subdivision are located on two lots or 9,000 square feet.

Duplex structures in La Feria are considered medium density residential areas. The 5.74 acres of duplex land contained 30 duplex structures for an averaged of 8,330 square feet per structure or 4,165 square feet per unit. Duplexes are identified on the "2007 Land Use Map".

The unit density of La Feria's 2007 multifamily development is similar to the duplex density with 175 multifamily dwelling units located on 14.92 acres. This produced a medium density of 3,700 square feet per unit.

As the City expands and more job opportunities become available, higher density multifamily projects will develop with dwelling unit densities of 2,500 square feet or less per dwelling unit.

COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Commercial operations currently utilize 83.33 acres of land and represents 5.56 percent of the City's "Used Developed Land" and 1.36 acres per one hundred (100) persons. This is a very conservative development of commercial uses in the City. The City's 1998 Comprehensive Plan reported 37.83 commercial acres and .87 acres per hundred (100) persons. Only a small number of the commercial buildings were vacant during the 2007 survey. In other cities where the consultant made Land Use Studies, the percentages of commercial development in relation to the total developed land has been around 5 percent but these cities usually had many vacant commercial buildings.

Commercial Growth Based on Sales Tax Allocation

A City's commercial strength can usually be determined by the sales tax allocation received by the City from the State of Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The city's sales tax rate was increased from the regular rate of 0.01 to 0.015 by approving the collection of an additional ½ cent on October 1, 1990 for Economic/Industrial Dev. Sec. 4A. Then on July 1, 1995, another ½ cent collection was approved for Economic/Industrial Dev. Sec. 4B. The authority to enact this tax, better known as the "Economic Development Sales Tax," is published in the Vernon's Annotated Civil Statutes.

The 2000 and 2001 sales tax allocations per capita for regional cities are shown hereafter. La Feria sales tax allocation in 2000 was \$99.24 per capita. Usually, larger cities such as Harlingen San Benito and Weslaco as shown below receive a larger amount of sales tax than smaller cities due to a larger amount of commercial development.

EXHIBIT 5-6 SALES TAX ALLOCATION, POPULATION AND PER CAPITA SALES TAX

CITY	2000 POPULATION	TAX RATE		2000 SALES TAX ALLOCATION	2000 SALES TAX ALLOCATION AT \$0.02	PER CAPITA SALES TAX ALLOCATION AT A \$0.02 TAX RATE
		2000	2006			
La Feria	6,115	\$.02	\$.02	\$606,847	\$606,847	\$99.24
Alamo	14,760	.02	.02	979,102	979,102	66.33
Combes	2,553	.01	.01	30,545	61,090 *	23.93
Donna	14,768	.02	.02	885,983	885,983	59.99
Edcouch	3,342	.02	.02	86,563	86,563	25.90
Elsa	5,549	.02	.02	413,489	413,489	74.52
Harlingen	57,564	.02	.02	14,780,090	14,780,090	256.76
Mercedes	13,049	.02	.02	865,539	865,539	63.41
Primera	2,723	.01	.02	38,426	76,852	28.22
San Benito	23,444	.02	.02	2,510,488	2,510,488	107.08
Santa Rosa	2,833	.01	.01	24,677	49,354 *	17.42
Weslaco	26,935	.02	.02	5,555,131	5,555,131	206.24

Source: U.S. Census and Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

* Sales tax for cities collecting a one (1) cent tax was increased to \$0.02 to show the per capita sales tax for all cities by the same tax rate of two (2) cents.

It is expected that most of the cities listed in the above exhibit were affected about the same in population growth between 2000 and 2007 and the order of highest sales tax revenue about the

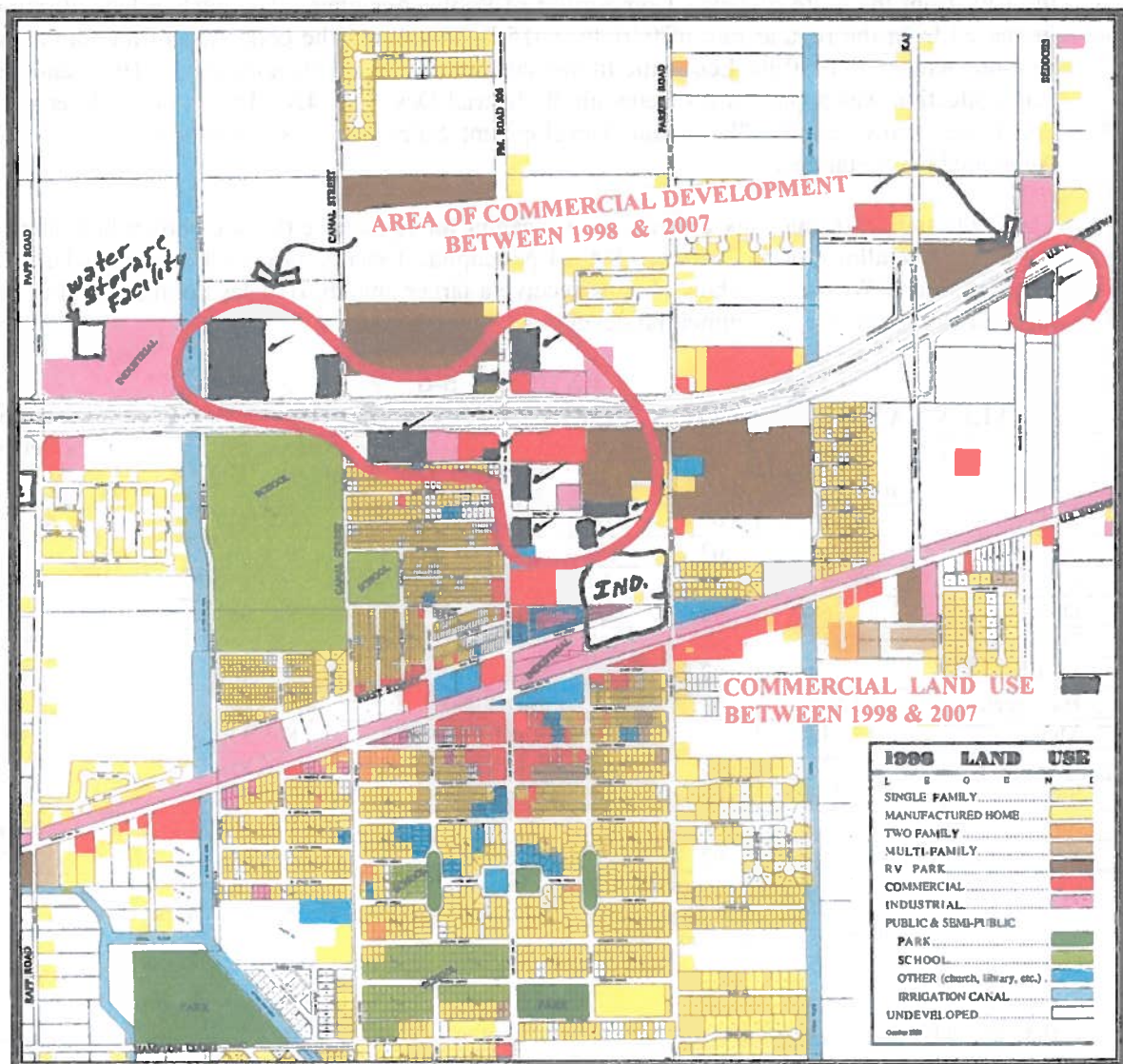
same as shown in the above exhibit. The three largest populated cities in the exhibit received more sales tax revenue than other cities.

The Growth Trend of Commercial Activities

The City of La Feria is at the heart of a large regional area from Brownsville to McAllen with an Outlet Mall development on the north side of US Expressway 83 in Hidalgo County about one mile west of La Feria. This Outlet Mall should cause additional commercial establishments to occur along the expressway with La Feria being in the path of commercial development.

Commercial growth in the City between 1998 and 2007 is illustrated on a section of the “1998 Land Use Map” as shown by the hereafter exhibit. Commercial areas that were developed between 1998 and 2007 are shown as black areas inside sections of the City outlined in red.

EXHIBIT 5-7
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT FROM NOVEMBER 1998 TO APRIL 2007



INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

Basically, the industrial development of 113.81 acres or 1.86 acres per 100 persons is located along US Expressway 83 and US Business Highway 83; this can be identified on La Feria's "2007 Land Use Map", Exhibit 5-4. The availability of large sites and good access to the US Expressway 83, Business Highway 83 or railroad is important to the community's future industrial growth.

RAILROAD LAND USE

There are 13.77 acres of railroad right-of-way in the City. Acreage in this land use category is not expected to increase until the City annexes additional land to the east and/or west to include additional right-of-ways.

PUBLIC AND SEMIPUBLIC LAND USE

The 2007 school land, consisting of 91.23 acres is the largest user of the public and semipublic land use subcategories. The next largest user is the water and wastewater subcategory of 63.57 acres followed by the park acreage of 28.08. The school and park acreage will increase during the planning period at about the same ratio of acres per 100 persons as identified on Exhibit 5-1, "2007 Land Use Inventory by Category".

The subcategory "Other" includes churches, city hall, post office, etc. This subcategory will increase in acreage at about the same ration of acres per 100 persons as identified on Exhibit 5-1. Acreage in subcategories "water and wastewater" and "irrigation canals" is not likely to increase during the planning period.

STREET AND ALLEY LAND USE

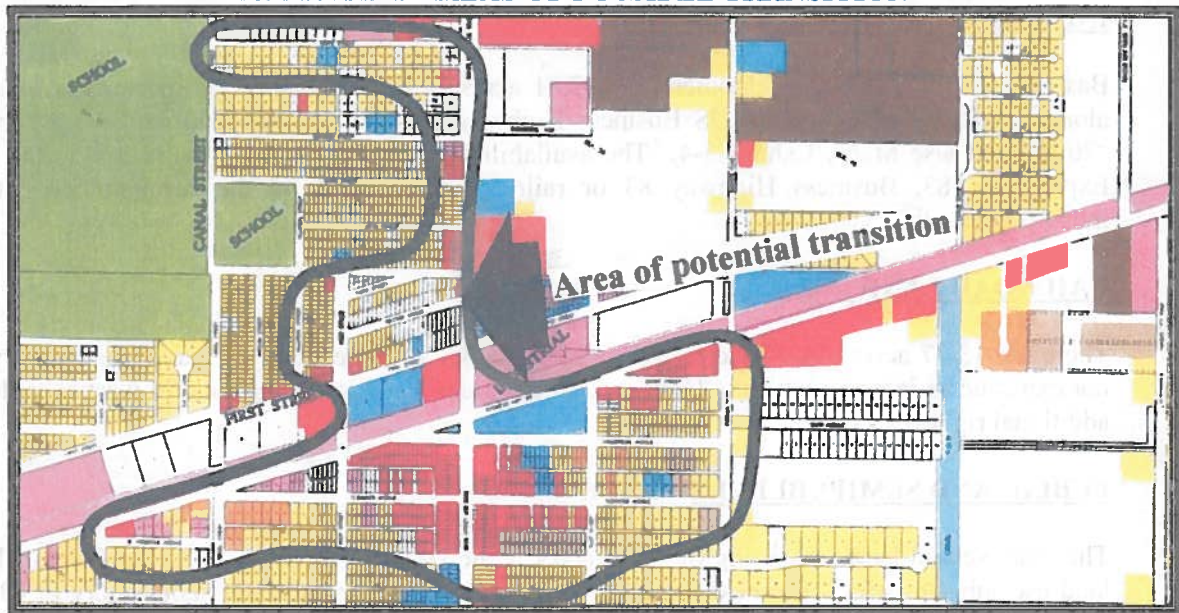
A desirable land use standard for the "street right-of-way" subcategory is 25 to 30 percent of the developed land. The City's current street right-of-way use at 352.81 acres or 23.52 percent of the developed area, indicates that the City's street design is very conservative considering that nearly one-half of the total street right-of-way is located in US Expressway 83.

Land dedicated for alley right-of-way represents 7.26 acres. This land use category is not expected to change significantly, during the planning period.

TRANSITIONAL LAND USE AREAS

Developed residential areas in the City that are experiencing or expected to experience transitional changes are shown on the next page, Exhibit 5-8. Pockets or small areas of single-family structures entering a state of transition are apparent when deterioration of housing units becomes visible. Causes of deterioration may be adjacent incompatible land uses, inadequate construction of structures, inadequate funds of property owner to make appropriate repairs and in older subdivisions where residential structures were constructed on very small lots.

EXHIBIT 5-8 RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF POSSIBLE TRANSITION



Source: Design Services, Inc.

STREET APPEARANCE

Encouraging a desirable street appearance is one method of fighting blight and discouraging incompatible development harmful to adjacent property. US Expressway 83 is considered the front door entrance to the City of La Feria, while US Business Highway 83 and FM Road 506 are considered side door entrances. The Expressway extends through the City from White Ranch Road to Kubiski Road, a distance of approximately 19,400 feet. The appearance of highway frontage can affect an individual's attitude about locating a business or industry in La Feria. In 1992, a Scenic Corridor Ordinance was adopted by the City to provide controls in properties located within 1,000 feet of Expressway 83, within 300 feet of Business Highway 83 and within 100 feet of Main Street. Areas within the Scenic Corridor are illustrated by Exhibit 5-9.

~ 3 1/2 miles

The Scenic Corridor Ordinance is divided into guidelines and development standards for residential and non-residential uses. Contents covering active controls for the residential uses are:

Landscaping

- 1.0 General.
- 2.0 Multifamily residential sites (Including Mobile Home Parks of 5 or more Mobile Homes).
- 3.0 Single- family detached and duplex sites.

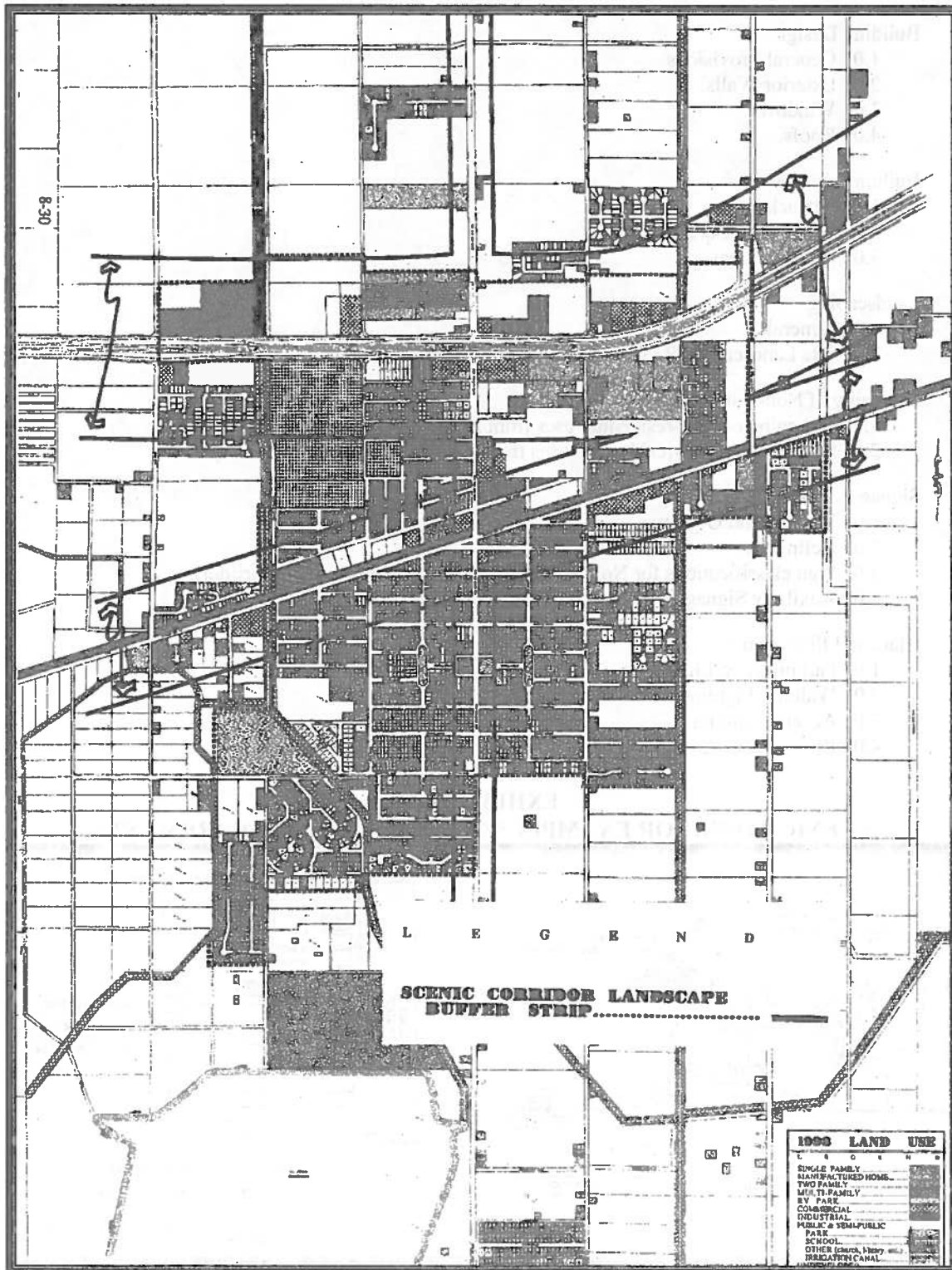
Screening of Multifamily residential uses from Single-family and Duplex uses.

- 1.0 Screening of Multifamily residential from Single-family and Duplex uses.
- 2.0 Screening of Multifamily residential uses in Scenic Corridor rights-of-way.
- 3.0 Screening of site features.

Signage

- 1.0 Purpose and objectives.
- 2.0 Sign definitions.
- 3.0 Sign classifications for residential districts within Scenic Corridors.

EXHIBIT 5-9
SCENIC CORRIDOR AREAS



Source: Design Services, Inc.

Design guidelines and development standards established for non-residential uses within the scenic corridor district include:

Building Design

- 1.0 General Provisions
- 2.0 Exterior Walls.
- 3.0 Windows.
- 4.0 Roofs.

Buildings Placement

- 1.0 Setbacks.
- 2.0 Loading Docks and Areas.
- 3.0 Parking Areas.

Landscaping

- 1.0 General.
- 2.0 Site Landscaping Requirements.

Screening of Non-residential Uses

- 1.0 Screening of Non-residential uses from Residential uses.
- 2.0 Screening of Non-residential uses from Scenic Corridor rights-of-way.

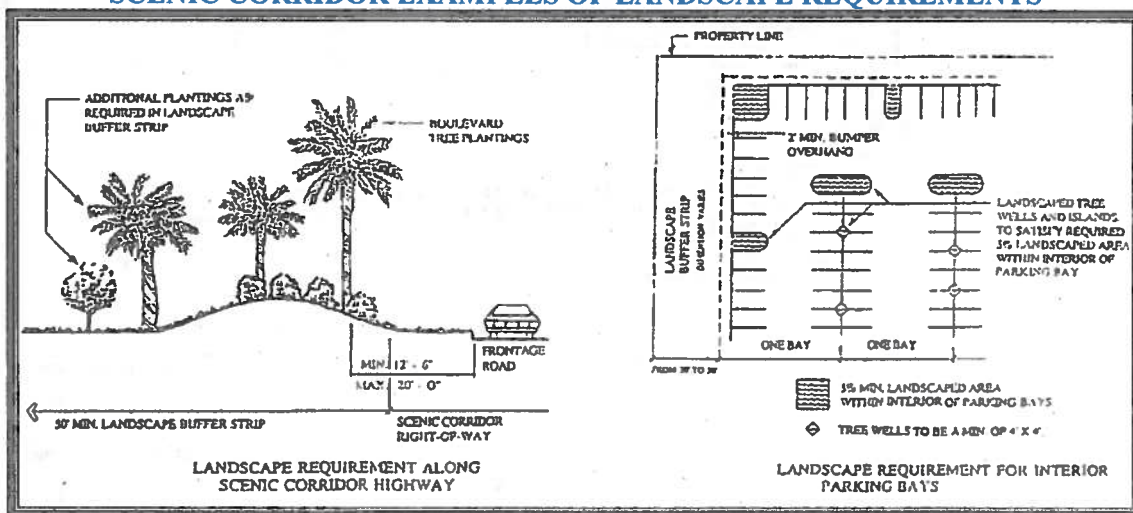
Signage

- 1.0 Purpose and Objectives.
- 2.0 Definitions.
- 3.0 Sign classifications for Non-residential Districts within Scenic Corridor.
- 4.0 Auxiliary Signage (All Non-residential Districts)

Glare and Illumination

- 1.0 Parking Area Lighting.
- 2.0 Walking Lighting.
- 3.0 Accent Lighting.
- 4.0 Recreational Area Lighting.

EXHIBIT 5-10 SCENIC CORRIDOR EXAMPLES OF LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS



Source: La FERIA's Scenic Corridor Ordinance

2025 LAND USE PROJECTIONS

METHODOLOGY IN PROJECTING THE 2020 LAND USES

Additional land acreage required to support future growth in the various land use categories are generally proportionate to the population increase. Land use projections for 2025 are based on the number of acres per 100 persons as determined in Exhibit 5-1 with the exception of categories such as railroad use, water and wastewater, irrigation canals and alley right-of-ways. The 2007 land use acres by category and the estimated population was determined from the 2007 field survey of land uses and occupied dwelling units. The 2025 population forecast of 10,770 was determined by reviewing the City's past growth, a study of the local economy and a study of the potential growth of commercial and industrial development.

LAND USE PROJECTIONS BY CATEGORY

It is not possible to isolate any single factor, which shapes land use arrangements. Both the public and private sectors have a part in the development of the City. It is anticipated that some changes will occur in the amount and proportion of land used for the various land use categories during the planning period. Exhibit 5-11 illustrates the anticipated future land use needs by acres and percent of total area.

EXHIBIT 5-11
2025 LAND USE FORECAST BY CATEGORIES

LAND USE CATEGORIES	2007 ACRES IN USE	PROJECTED ACRES	TOTAL ACRES	PERCENT OF TOTAL AREA
Residential Uses	505.90	384.89	890.79	41.27 %
Single Family	351.24	325.75	676.99	31.36 %
Mobile Home Park Development	71.74	24.26	96.00	4.45 %
Two Family	5.74	3.96	9.70	0.45 %
Multifamily	14.92	20.93	35.85	1.66 %
RV Park	62.26	9.99	72.25	3.35 %
Commercial	83.33	63.14	146.47	6.79 %
Industry	113.81	86.51	200.32	9.28 %
Railroad	13.77	0.00	13.77	0.64 %
Public/Semi-public	229.03	174.85	403.88	18.71 %
Parks	28.08	91.24	119.32	5.53 %
Schools	91.23	68.77	160.00	7.41 %
Water & Wastewater Plants	63.57	- 3.57	60.00	2.78 %
Irrigation Canals	22.56	0.00	22.56	1.05 %
Other	23.59	18.41	42.00	1.95 %
Street R-O-W	352.81	143.22	496.03	22.98 %
Expressway 83 R-O-W	164.31	0.00	164.31	7.61 %
Other Streets R-O-W	188.50	143.22	331.72	15.37 %
Alley R-O-W	7.26	0.00	7.26	0.34 %
TOTAL	1,305.91	852.61	2,158.52	100. %

Source: 2007 land use survey findings by Design Services, Inc.

Residential Development

A critical issue in land use is often the rate(s) at which raw land is converted to developed uses. The most typical example is the conversion of agricultural land into single-family development. Residential land is usually the largest land use category in the community. In 2025 the largest land use category is forecasted to be residential, followed by the category streets and then public/semi-public use.

The majority of the City's 2025 forecasted population of 10,770 will be housed in single-family structures. Multifamily housing development will account for a low percentage of the residential land and a low percentage of the housing stock.

The future residential lot sizes should average about 10,000 to 14,000 square feet. Many developers today prefer developing subdivisions with lot widths of 90 feet or greater to encourage houses to be constructed where the garage does not face the street. Generally, this type of development creates a more appealing neighborhood because unsightly storage items found in most garages are not visible from the street when the garage door is up.

It is anticipated that approximately 964 additional residential units will be needed to house the forecasted growth with a ten percent vacancy rate by the year 2025. Low to medium residential density (traditional single-family units and mobile homes) is expected to require approximately 325.75 additional acres of land. Page 2-13 in Chapter Two is a graphic showing a suggested area for the development of a retirement community.

High density residential (apartment units of about 20 units per acre), acreage will not increase much during the planning period. It is forecasted that about 6 acres of this high density land use category will be needed during the planning period.

Commercial Development

Commercial activity is expected to develop along US Expressway 83, Business Highway 83, FM Road 506, the section of Kansas City Road between US Expressway 83 and Business Highway 83 and Beddoes Road from US Expressway 83 south to FM Road 506. The section of the City that has been developing with new retail and fast food shops is at the southeast corner of US Expressway 83 and FM Road 506. The intersection of FM Road 506 with Expressway 83 is favorable to retail commercial development because the design of the intersection allows excellent vehicle accessibility. Two other similar intersections in the City are located on US Expressway 83. One is at White Ranch Road and the other is at Rabb Road.

Because of the population growth near White Ranch Road, the northwest and southwest corners of White Ranch Road and US Expressway 83 would appear to be more in demand for retail commercial development than the northwest corner of Rabb Road and US Expressway 83. The hereafter exhibit shows the potential commercial area on the west side of White Ranch Road and US Expressway 83.

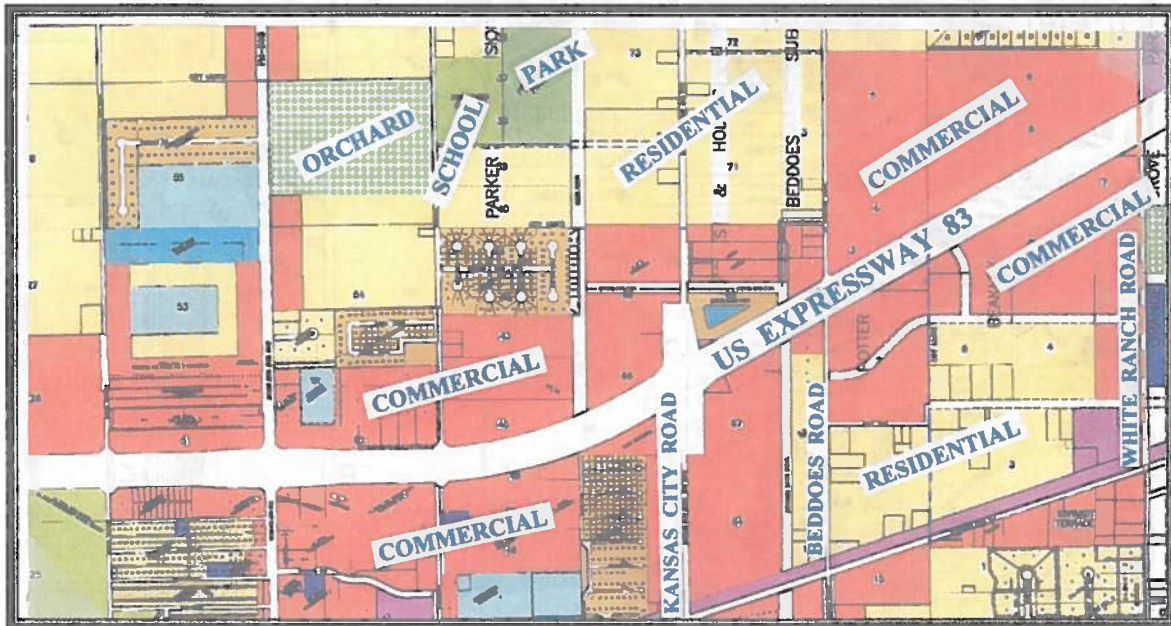
A commonly accepted rule of thumb for commercial acreage in a City is 5 percent of the total developed area, including vacant developed. In 2007 there was 5.56 percent of the used

that is
what is
desired or
expected?

future land
use plan
shows
1000+ acres.
expansion
initiates
30 units on 7.6 acres
10 units/acre

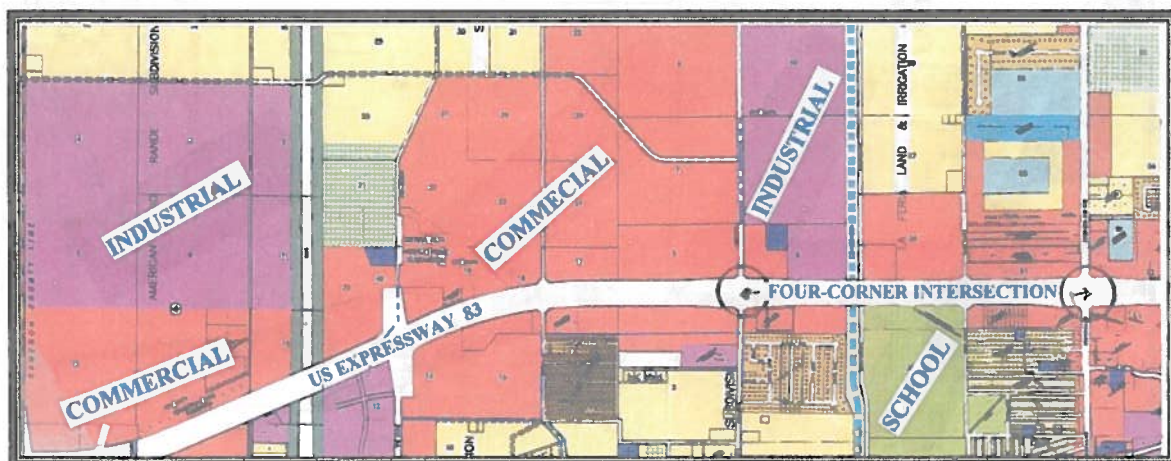
developed land in commercial use. The future commercial land is expected to increase by 63.14 acres during the planning period. Most of the anticipated commercial development is expected to occur along US Expressway 83 and Beddoes Road. Suggested concepts to illustrate these anticipated commercial growth along US Expressway 83 and Beddoes Road are provided as follows:

EXHIBIT 5-12
CONCEPT FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AT US EXPRESSWAY 83
AND THE WEST SIDE OF WHITE RANCH ROAD



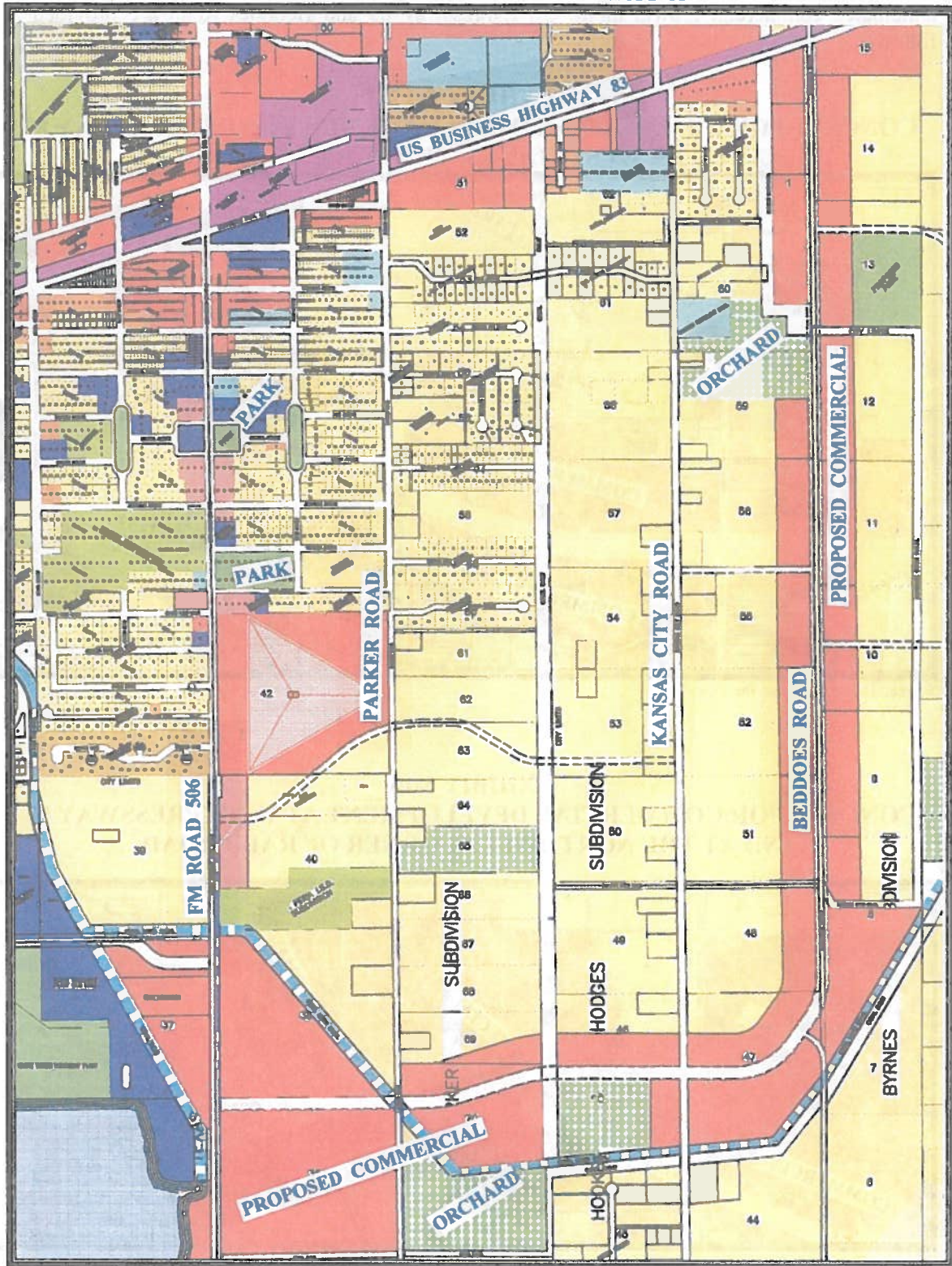
Source: Design Services, Inc.

EXHIBIT 5-13
CONCEPT FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AT US EXPRESSWAY 83
AND AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF RABB ROAD



Source: Design Services, Inc.

EXHIBIT 5-14
CONCEPT OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG BEDDOES ROAD FROM
FM ROAD 506 TO US EXPRESSWAY 83



Source: Design Services, Inc.

Commercial development generally occurs along appropriate designed “major” streets, approximately one mile apart. This is especially true where major streets are uninhibited by predeveloped residents or industrial activities. The distance between FM Road 506 and White Ranch Road is about one and one-half (1 ½) miles, which is an indication that a north south “major” street is needed between FM Road 506 and White Ranch Road. Existing north south roads between FM Road 506 and White Ranch Road are Parker Road, Kansas City Road and Beddoes Road.

Cameron County made a study of a north south thoroughfare for the east side of the City from US Business Highway 83 to FM Road 506. The south end of the proposed “major” street starts about 1,700 feet south of Dodd Lane on FM Road 506, which extends in an eastward direction to Beddoes Road and then along Beddoes Road northward to US Business Highway 83. This route is free of prior development, which makes it easier to obtain adequate right-of-way for the “major” street and provides an opportunity for commercial development as shown by Exhibit 5-14. The proposed route of Exhibit 5-14 is located a little south of the route proposed by Cameron County. The “major” street is aligned with street trees to illustrate a pattern of improving the City appearance.

Commercial Landscaping

Asphalt and concrete streets require a certain amount of landscaping within or adjacent to the outer right-of-way lines to create a soft appealing look, which can assist in maintaining property values. Enforcing the Scenic Corridor Ordinance will produce a desired appearance of these “major” streets and highways. Commercial property owners must be encouraged to become good neighborhoods by planting trees along “major” streets when developing their property. Street landscape achievements usually require involvement of both the private sector and the City.

Too much asphalt and concrete without adequate landscaping creates undesirable places to live, operate businesses and community service facilities. Even churchyards should be landscaped to blend in with surrounding residential property and not be guilty of paving their property from the church building to the street curb-line.

Central Business District

As the trend of commercial development, moving toward US Expressway 83, the City’s Central Business District appears to be undergoing a transition from retail establishments to medical services.

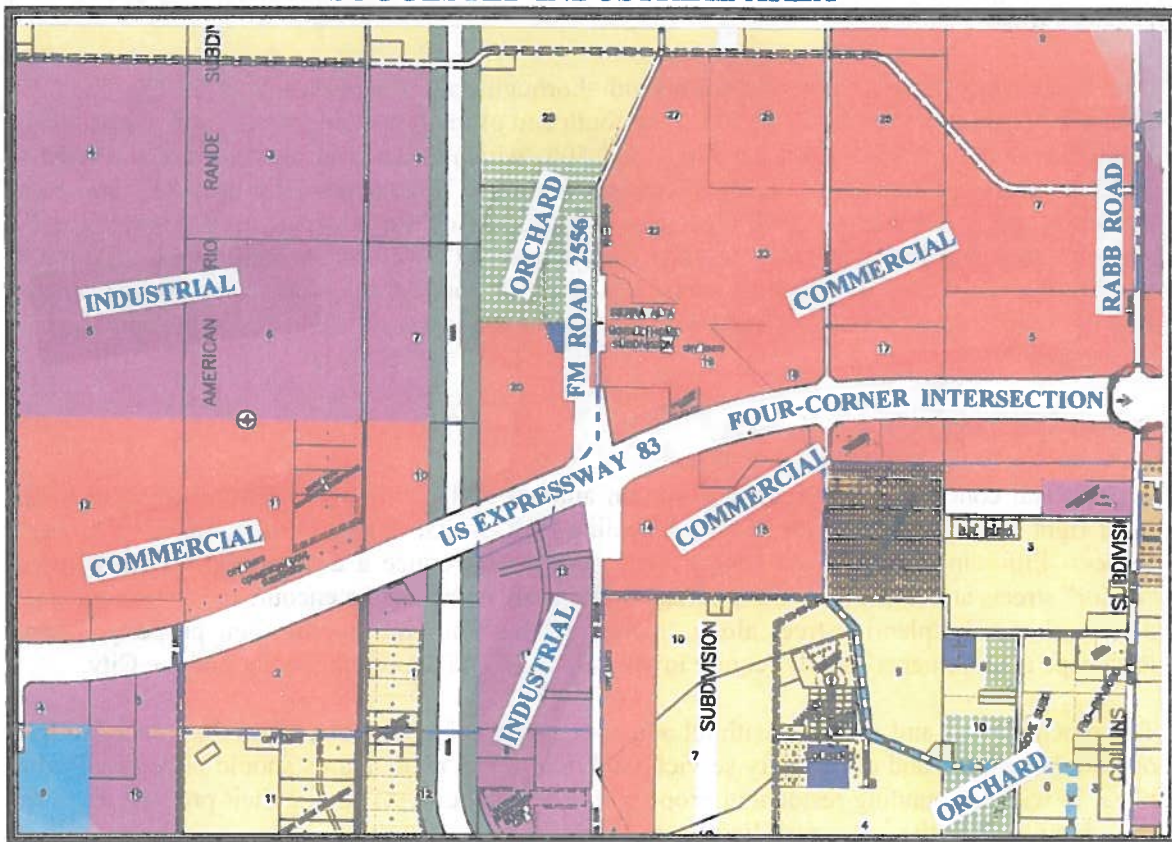
Industrial Development

Survey data gathered from a number of small Texas cities by Design Services, Inc. concluded that an average of 1.45 acres of industrial land per 100 persons is normal for most cities under 10,000 persons. La Feria’s industry land was proposed to occupy 200.32 acres or 214.09 acres with the railroad right-of-way included. This proposed industrial acreage exceeds the average of 1.45 acres per hundred persons as noted from past survey average of Texas cities industrial land.

The 2007 field survey data of 1.86 acres of industrial land per one hundred persons was used to project the future industrial acres per one hundred persons for the year 2025.

The industrial site shown on the “2025 Land Use Plan” is based on the most desirable area of the City where industry should be located and where a street system is designed to serve a large industrial area. Implementation of the industrial area appears to be achievable.

EXHIBIT 5-15 SUGGESTED INDUSTRIAL AREA



Source: Design Services, Inc.

Public/Semipublic

In 2007 the public and semipublic land use category accounted for a total of 229.03 acres. This includes the wastewater treatment plant and schools, which accounts for approximately 154.8 acres. The total public/semipublic land use needs for the planning period is expected to increase by 174.85 acres. Within the next eighteen years, if the City promotes the development of retirement communities to spur local growth, it is possible that golf facilities will be incorporated and public and semipublic land needs would exceed 350 acres within the next eighteen years. The “2025 Land Use Plan Map” shows an area for the development of a retirement community.

City parkland, another public and semipublic subcategory, is expected to increase considerably over the next eighteen years as shown by the hereafter exhibit.

EXHIBIT 5-16 LA FERIA WILDLIFE AND NATURE PARK



Source Design Services, Inc.

Street and Alley Rights-of-Way

Street and alley rights-of-way represent 360.07 acres or 5.88 acres per hundred persons. Considering that US Expressway 83 amounts to nearly one-half of the City's street acreage, indicates that the City's subdivision development has been very conservative in street widths and the number of streets.

Within the planning period, land use needs for streets are projected to increase by approximately 143 acres.

Physical Features

As stated in other sections of the report, local physical features include the lake, drainage canals, railroad and highways. These physical features have either a positive or a negative affect on the growth of the community.

Utilities

Local utility requirements are not anticipated to be a problem in serving the forecasted population.

Public Facilities

Citizens are adequately served by the public facilities that include a city hall, fire station, library and post office. These facilities are well located in the City.

RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY.

In 1998, the railroad right-of-way was calculated at 13.77 acres. The "2025 Land Use Map" shows the expansion of the City to the east and west, which will increase the railroad right-of-way by 8.13 acres.

LAND USE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Land use management recommendations are illustrated by the "2025 Land Use Plan Map", which includes the anticipated growth area by the year 2025. A list of stated goals and objectives provides specific steps or procedures to undertake in the accomplishment of the land use arrangements shown by the "2025 Land Use Plan".

Land Use Goal: #1 Encourage the designation of land for public and private development as illustrated on the "2025 Land Use Plan Map".

Objectives

Goal #1 Encourage the designation of land for public and private development as illustrated on the "Future Land Use Plan Map".

Objectives:

2008 Implement the "Future Land Use Plan" as a design for the future development of the city by adopting the plan.

Implement annexation policies.

Encourage improvements to the downtown area. ✓

Obtain all right-of-way needed to develop Beddoes Road proposal as a "major" street from FM Road 506 to US Expressway 83.

Encourage the development of single-family, condominiums, duplexes and apartments in the appropriate designated places on the "Future Land Use Map".

Encourage the development of future commercial establishments to locate in the appropriate designated places as shown on the "Future Land Use Plan".

Encourage the development of future industrial establishments to locate in the appropriate designated places as shown on the "Future Land Use Plan".

2009 Implement landscape and/or other design plans to improve the appearance of the city.

Implement annexation policies.

Develop a plan to obtain land for the development of an Industrial Park.

recommended from where?

Adopt the recommended revisions to the City's Zoning Ordinance and improve the appearance along US Expressway 83, US Business Highway 83 and major streets by landscaping with ground covers, shrubs and trees.

- 2010 Review the Scenic Corridor Ordinance. *begin; underway*
- Encourage property owners to use good design techniques when subdividing or re- subdividing property.
- 2011 Purchase acreage for the development of an Industrial Park.
- Prepare a plan for the design and development of the Industrial Park.
- 2012 Start construction of an Industrial Park.
- Implement annexation policies.
- 2013 Encourage the development of single-family, condominiums, duplexes and apartments in the appropriate designated places on the "Future Land Use Map".
- Encourage the development of future commercial establishments to locate in the appropriate designated places as shown on the "Future Land Use Plan".
- Encourage the development of future industrial establishments to locate in the appropriate designated places as shown on the "Future Land Use Plan".
- 2014 Encourage Cameron County to construct Beddoes Road into a "major" street.
- 2015 Encourage the development of commercial property on the east side of the City along Beddoes Road following the construction of the road as a "major" street.
- 2016 Plan for the development of a retirement community with a golf course.
- 2017 Update the "Future Land Use Map".

