

The City of Madison updated the Generalized Future Land Use (GFLU) Map as a part of Imagine Madison, the Comprehensive Plan Update. The following are some frequently asked questions concerning the GFLU map:

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1. What has been the process for updating the Future Land Use Map and what is the process going forward?

The Planning Division solicited initial Future Land Use Map change requests from the public in February and March of 2017. This included email publicity to neighborhood association contacts, alders, and other groups and stakeholders. Planning Division staff reviewed requests, existing conditions, and recent development and published an initial draft Future Land Use Map in April 2017. In May and June of 2017, the public was invited to comment on the initial Draft Future Land Use Map and make additional recommendations and suggestions for changes. Comments are [shown on this map](#). Those comments were reviewed by the Plan Commission in June, July, and August of 2017. Additional comments received after August 2017 were reviewed by the Plan Commission in January of 2018, with comments received after January reviewed as part of the Plan's approval process in May-July 2018. The GFLU map is included with the Plan, which was adopted by the City Council on August 7, 2018.

2. What is the relationship between the Comprehensive Plan's Generalized Future Land Use Map and adopted Neighborhood Plans?

The Comprehensive Plan includes a Future Land Use Plan Map which makes *general* land use recommendations. The land use categories mapped in the Comprehensive Plan are broad and applied to relatively large geographic areas. Each land use category encompasses a range of potential land uses, development intensities, and building forms which establish the characteristics recommended within a given area. The land use and design recommendations within neighborhood or special area plans assign more *specific* uses, intensities, or forms recommended for particular locations. The land use and design recommendations in neighborhood and special area plans should be consistent with, and fit within, the broad Comprehensive Plan future land use categories. There is considerable variation in the level of detail in different neighborhood or special area plans, but it is intended that all neighborhood and special area plans include land use and design recommendations that are specific enough to provide meaningful guidance to developers, neighborhoods, City agencies, policy makers, and others involved in the initiation or review of development projects.

3. Future land use categories and zoning districts – are those the same thing?

No. While the Comprehensive Plan process does make changes to the GFLU Map and some of the definitions, it does not change the zoning map or any zoning districts. The Comprehensive Plan establishes broad future land use categories, such as "Neighborhood Mixed Use" (NMU), "Low Residential" (LR), "Employment" (E), etc.

The FLU categories require zoning to be implemented. For example, a zoning district such as TSS ("Traditional Shopping Street") is used to *implement* a NMU designation. The zoning code and zoning map are more *specific* tools to implement the *general* future land use recommendations within the Comprehensive Plan. Please see the [chart towards the end of this FAQ](#) for a summary of which zoning districts are used to implement general future land use categories.

Proposed development must be allowed by a property's zoning to proceed. A developer may request rezoning of a property if a proposed development does not conform to zoning. The Plan Commission refers to the future land use map when considering rezoning requests. Rezoning requests that the Commission finds to be consistent with the future land use map may be approved, and requests that are not found to be consistent cannot be approved. For example, the Knickerbocker Place development at 2701 Monroe Street is within a NMU area on the future land use map and is zoned TSS. If a developer wanted to redevelop the site as a warehouse they would need to request rezoning to the CC zoning district because a warehouse is not allowed under TSS zoning. However, the Plan Commission would refer to the future land use map, see that the area is mapped NMU, and find that a rezoning to CC is inconsistent with the NMU future land use designation and deny the request.

4. I'm not familiar with the Future Land Use Map or any of these land use categories. Can you tell me what changes have been made?

The most impactful changes are the addition of a fourth residential designation (Low-Medium Residential), adjustments to the residential and mixed use categories, and the addition of height and form to describe residential and mixed use category intensities rather than just using dwelling unit density. Planning Division Staff also updated the Future Land Use map to reflect recommended land uses in recently adopted plans for existing neighborhoods and future growth areas on the edge of the City.

5. Why change the land use categories?

After researching existing conditions in Madison and recent development, planning staff found that the 2006 Future Land Use Map residential categories needed more differentiation among lower intensity residential uses and a higher ceiling for more intense residential uses. The latest draft of the Future Land Use Map maintains a "low residential" use of less than 15 dwelling units (DU) per acre while adding a "low-medium residential" (LMR) use that allows for development that is generally more intense than single-family detached houses on large lots, but still less intense than most apartment buildings (for example, the LMR category accommodates townhomes, duplexes, and three- and four-unit buildings). The medium- and high-density residential categories were altered to better reflect project approvals since 2006, better fit the existing pattern of development, and to accommodate future growth. The mixed use categories have been similarly adjusted. Within the residential and mixed use designations, height and building form are emphasized over dwelling unit density. See [the charts included later in this document](#) for more information.

6. Why emphasize height and form?

Most people interact with the urban environment based on what buildings look like and how large they are. Dwelling unit density can be very misleading: two identically-sized buildings can have very different densities if one contains 10 three-bedroom units and the other has 30 one-bedroom units. Two buildings with the same number of units could also have very different densities if one has underground parking on a small lot and the other has a large lot with surface parking. A three-story building in a certain neighborhood could be appropriate because it fits within the context and fabric of the neighborhood regardless if it is 10 dwelling units per acre or 30 dwelling units per acre. The height and form of the development better dictates how it will interact with its surroundings.

To better understand the interplay of height, form, and density, and how residential and mixed use buildings fit into the future land use categories, we've created a [Story Map](#) using recent development examples in Madison.

7. What can be built in the residential and mixed-use categories under the 2018 Future Land Use Map?

Residential Land Use Categories

Residential Building Form	Low Residential (LR)	Low-Medium Residential (LMR)	Medium Residential (MR)	High Residential (HR)
Single-Family Detached Building				
Civic/Institutional Building				
Two-Family, Two-Unit				
Two-Family – Twin				
Three-Unit Building	*			
Single-Family Attached	*			
Small Multi-Family Building	*	**		
Large Multi-family Building		**		
Courtyard Multi-Family Building		**		
Podium Building				
Number of Stories	1-2	1-3	2-5	4-12
General Density Range (DU/acre)	≤15	7-30	20-90	70+

* Permitted in select conditions at up to 30 DU/ac and three stories, generally along arterial roads.

** Permitted in select conditions at up to 70 DU/ac and four stories, generally along arterial roads.

Mixed-Use Land Use Categories

Mixed-Use and Commercial Building Form	Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU)	Community Mixed Use (CMU)	Regional Mixed Use (RMU)
Commercial Block Building			
Civic or Institutional Building			
Residential - Commercial Conversion			
Live-Work Building			
Single-Family Attached Building			
Small Multi-Family Building			
Courtyard Multi-Family Building			
Large Multi-Family Building			
Parking / Liner Buildings			
Free-Standing Commercial Building			
Podium Building			
Flex Building			
Number of Stories	2-4	2-6	2-12*
General Residential Density Range	≤70	≤130	--

* Or taller, based on approved plan or PD/MXD zoning approval. One-story anchor retail is allowed as part of a larger, comprehensively planned project or as part of a project transitioning from a suburban car-oriented layout to a more urban, pedestrian-oriented layout.

Notes: Building forms were drawn from the zoning code. All development will be subject to having an appropriate transition to surrounding areas.

8. What does each of the land use categories mean?

- **Low Residential (LR)** - Predominantly single-family and two-unit housing types (1-2 stories; ≤15 dwelling units (DU) per acre)
- **Low-Medium Residential (LMR)** - Mix of single-family homes, two-, three- and four-unit buildings, row/townhouses, and small apartment buildings (1-3 stories; 7-30 du/acre)
- **Medium Residential (MR)** - Generally larger multifamily buildings or multifamily complexes, sometimes interspersed with other smaller housing types (2-5 stories; 20-90 du/acre)
- **High Residential (HR)** - Predominantly larger and taller multifamily buildings (4-12 stories; 70+ du/acre)
- **Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU)** - Node or corridor containing housing, shopping, and services that generally serves surrounding neighborhoods (2-4 stories; up to 70 du/acre)
- **Community Mixed-Use (CMU)** - Relatively high-intensity mix of residential, retail, office, institutional, and civic uses, generally located adjacent to a major transportation corridor (2-6 stories; up to 130 du/acre)
- **Regional Mixed-Use (RMU)** - Intensive mix of region-serving retail, office, service, entertainment, civic, institutional, and high density residential uses (2-12 stories)
- **Downtown Mixed-Use (DMU)** – see the [Downtown Plan](#)
- **Downtown Core (DC)** – see the [Downtown Plan](#)
- **General Commercial (GC)** - Predominantly retail and service businesses selling a wide range of goods and services
- **Employment (E)** - Predominantly office, research and development, medical, and specialized employment, with some low-impact manufacturing
- **Industrial (I)** - Industrial, manufacturing, storage, distribution, and warehousing uses
- **Park and Open Space (P)** - Parks, recreational facilities, conservation areas, stormwater management facilities, cemeteries, and other open space
- **Special Institutional (SI)** - College campuses, schools, and larger places of assembly and worship
- **Airport (A)** - Airport
- **Neighborhood Planning Areas (NPA)** – Potential, but currently unplanned, future neighborhood growth areas that are generally expected to develop after 2040

9. What zoning districts will be used to implement the future land use map categories?		LR	LMR	MR	HR	NMU	CMU	RMU	DMU	DC	GC	E	I	P	SI	A	NPAT
Zoning District		Low Residential	Low-Medium Residential	Medium Residential	High Residential	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Community Mixed Use	Regional Mixed Use	Downtown Mixed Use	Downtown Core	General Commercial	Employment	Industrial	Parks & Open Space	Special Institutional	Airport	N-hood Planning Area
SR-C1	Suburban Residential - Consistent District 1	●												○	○		
SR-C2	Suburban Residential - Consistent District 2	●												○	○		
SR-C3	Suburban Residential - Consistent District 3	●	●											○	○		
SR-V1	Suburban Residential - Varied District 1	●	●											○	○		
SR-V2	Suburban Residential - Varied District 2	●	●	●										○	○		
TR-C1	Traditional Residential - Consistent District 1	●												○	○		
TR-C2	Traditional Residential - Consistent District 2	●												○	○		
TR-C3	Traditional Residential - Consistent District 3	●	●											○	○		
TR-C4	Traditional Residential - Consistent District 4	●	●											○	○		
TR-V1	Traditional Residential - Varied District 1	●	●											○	○		
TR-V2	Traditional Residential - Varied District 2	●	●	●										○	○		
TR-U1	Traditional Residential - Urban District 1	●	●	●	●									○	○		
TR-U2	Traditional Residential - Urban District 2	●	●	●	●									○	○		
TR-R	Traditional Residential - Rustic District	●												○	○		
TR-P	Traditional Residential - Planned District	●	●	●	●									○	○		
LMX	Limited Mixed-Use.					●					●					○	
NMX	Neighborhood Mixed-Use District					●	●									○	
TSS	Traditional Shopping Street District					●	●	○								○	
MXC	Mixed-Use Center District					○	●	●			●					○	
CC-T	Commercial Corridor - Transitional District					○	●	●			●	○				○	
CC	Commercial Center District						○	○			●	○				○	
TE	Traditional Employment District			○	○	○	○	○				●				○	
SE	Suburban Employment District											●	○			○	
SEC	Suburban Employment Center District											●				○	
EC	Employment Campus District											●				○	
IL	Industrial - Limited District											○	●				
IG	Industrial - General District												●				
DC	Downtown Core								●	●						○	
UOR	Urban Office Residential								○	○						○	
UMX	Urban Mixed-Use								●	●						○	
DR1	Downtown Residential 1			○	○				○	○						○	
DR2	Downtown Residential 2			○	○				○	○						○	
A	Agricultural District													○	○		
UA	Urban Agricultural District													○	○		
CN	Conservancy District													●	○		
PR	Parks and Recreation													●	○		
AP	Airport District															●	
CI	Campus Institutional District														●		
PD ‡	Planned Development District																
PMHP	Planned Mobile Home Park District	●	●												○		
ME	Nonmetallic Mineral Extraction District											●					

● Primary zoning districts most appropriate within this future land use district.

○ Secondary zoning districts somewhat appropriate within this future land use district, zoning changes may require further review.

† NPAs are potential, but currently unplanned, long-term future growth areas. Appropriate zoning districts would be identified after these areas are planned.

‡ Planned Development Districts could allow most, if not all of the listed land uses.