



City of Melissa 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update

Chapter 3: Future Land Use Plan





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Introduction

The right of a municipality to coordinate growth is rooted in its need to protect the health, safety and welfare of local citizens. An important part of establishing the guidelines for such responsibility is the Future Land Use Plan, which establishes an overall framework for the *preferred* pattern of development within Melissa. Specifically, the Future Land Use Plan designates various areas within the City for particular land uses, based principally on the specific land use policies outlined herein. The Future Land Use Plan is graphically depicted for use during the development plan review process with the Future Land Use Plan Map (**Figure 3-1**), and the map should ultimately depict the City's policy and development decisions. The Future Land Use Plan Map is not a zoning map that deals with specific development requirements on individual parcels. The zoning map and changes in zoning should, however, be based in part on the Future Land Use Plan Map and related text of this chapter. In general, the Future Land Use Plan is intended to be a comprehensive blueprint of Melissa's vision for its future land use pattern.

From an agriculturally rich farming community to one of the fastest growth communities in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, Melissa is primed for growth. The City's land use pattern has experienced marked changes in the last five years, with much residential growth. The opportunity to make Melissa a unique and sustainable community is now—enough population growth has occurred so that people are engaged in the process, and a significant amount of land is yet to be developed. This Future Land Use Plan chapter has been developed to achieve the following:

- Address the needs of the City as a whole
- Address the concerns and issues raised by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and the general public as part of this planning process
- Provide policy guidance in keeping with community ideals
- Ensure that Melissa is a unique and sustainable community that ages well and gracefully

This Future Land Use Plan is divided into several sections. First is an explanation of the Future Land Use Plan Map. This map, shown in **Figure 3-1**, will help guide land use decisions within the City. The explanation of the Future Land Use Plan Map includes a description of each category used to establish the recommended pattern of land uses. Second is a discussion of the City's projected population growth, and its anticipated population at its build-out configuration, based on the Future Land Use Plan Map. Finally, the third section outlines land use policies, which should be used in conjunction with the Future Land Use Plan Map to guide land use decisions as the growth, development, and perhaps redevelopment, occur.



Recommended Pattern of Land Uses

The Future Land Use Plan Map (**Figure 3-1**) has been created as the result of numerous meetings with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) and City staff. It is important to note that the Future Land Use Plan Map does not directly affect the regulation of land within Melissa or the ETJ because it is not a zoning map. The Future Land Use Plan Map is intended to provide a graphic depiction of Melissa's ideal land use pattern. It should be used by the City to guide decisions on proposed zoning/development and development standards in the future. It should be noted that while the Future Land Use Plan Map itself is an integral part of this Future Land Use Plan chapter, the land use policies that support the map and that relate to how land use development should occur are also important. These policies are contained in the following section of this Future Land Use Plan. The subsequent paragraphs, related map colors, and pictures are provided to clarify the various land use types shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map.



Land Use Types

Residential Estate

This use is representative of traditional, single-family detached dwelling units at a density of approximately one house per acre. There are some developed areas of Melissa that are of this land use type, such as the subdivision of County Ridge and Berry Farms. Much of the ETJ is projected to develop at this level of density.



Low Density Residential

This use is also representative of traditional, single-family detached dwelling units, but at a higher density than the Residential Estate land use type. Many of the City's developed subdivisions fall within this Low Density Residential category. Future recommended areas designated for Low Density Residential development are generally not adjacent to major thoroughfares or incompatible land uses and are in proximity to existing single-family subdivisions. It should be noted that although this land use type is partly entitled "low density", a range of lot sizes are envisioned, with an average density of 3.5 units per acre.



Medium Density Residential

This use is representative of two-family, attached dwelling units, such as townhomes. Medium density land uses often provide areas for “empty nesters” (people with grown children) who may not want the maintenance of a larger-lot single-family home, and for young families who may find a townhome more affordable than a single-family home. This land use type should have an average density of 8 units per acre. It should also be noted that medium density residential development should be acceptable in Mixed Use areas (as discussed below within that sub-section).



High Density Residential

Traditional apartment-type units in attached living complexes characterize high density residential land use. Currently, there are no high density residential areas developed within Melissa. However, for residential diversity purposes, two areas for high density development are shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map – one is consistent with the current zoning map and the other is in a high-traffic area, near the intersection of State Highway (SH) 5 and State Highway (SH) 121. It should also be noted that medium density uses should also be permitted in any area designated for high density use. The density of this land use type is recommended at 15 units per acre, which is the density permitted in the City’s Multiple-Family Zoning District. Ensuring a high quality of development is critical to ensuring that High Density Residential areas remain viable and sustainable over a long period of time. This is discussed in detail in Land Use Policy 1 later within this chapter.





Public/Semi-Public

This land use designation is representative of uses that are educational, governmental or institutional in nature. Public/semi-public uses are generally permitted within any area; therefore, the areas shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map (**Figure 3-1**) include the related uses that are currently in existence. There will be considerable public space in the area designated as Town Center, as discussed in the description of that land use type. Although only existing public areas are shown on the Future Land Use Plan map, it is anticipated that there will be a need for additional public uses with future population growth. Based on such population growth, the Utilities Plan, Chapter 4, addresses public facilities such as water, wastewater, and drainage infrastructure, and the Public Facilities Plan, Chapter 7, addresses public service needs for services like police and fire.



Land Fill

The 121 Regional Disposal Facility is a land fill owned and operated by the North Texas Municipal Water District.



Parks & Open Space

This land use designation is provided to identify all public parks and open spaces within Melissa. A community's park system is key to a high quality of life. The City has recognized this not only through its current allocation of significant park/open space areas, but also by the fact that a Parks and Trails Plan (Chapter 6) for Melissa has been incorporated into this *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*. The Parks and Trails Plan addresses specific future park locations, local park and open space needs, a trail system, and other recreation-related issues, as well as funding mechanisms. It is intended to help Melissa meet the park and recreation needs of its citizens as it continues to grow in population.



Town Center

The Town Center area designated on the Future Land Use Plan Map represents the area of the City that is partially developed but is fully envisioned by City leaders. With the initial phase of construction complete, this area is the center of the City's governmental services, administrative services, and library services. The area is planned to be reminiscent of a downtown square in an old Texas town, with a large City Hall in the center, public plazas, and two-story office, retail and residential uses in surrounding blocks. Other areas of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex that may resemble the new Town Center include the areas of Southlake, Plano, and Frisco that are shown in the illustrations on this page. The Town Center, Old Town, and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) areas are all intended to blend into a cohesive City Center, so that in the future these areas together will have sufficient mass to represent a major, sustainable center of economic activity and community life. This concept is discussed in detail within the City Center Concept Plan, Chapter 8.





Old Town

The Old Town area designated on the Future Land Use Plan Map represents the oldest area of Melissa, the City's "downtown" core. Like many Texas towns, the City was originally settled in proximity to the railroad in the early 1900s when rail lines were vital to local and regional economies, as well as to population growth. According to the community survey, citizens of Melissa want to preserve this historical area of the City, and want it to be a place where people go to shop and work, as well as to live. Generally, land uses within Old Town should be residential, public/semi-public, retail, and office. Refer to Land Use Policy 4 for specific policy recommendations. Also, more detail about these and other concepts for Old Town, including effective ways to connect it to the new Town Center and the TOD area, are contained within the City Center Concept Plan, Chapter 8.

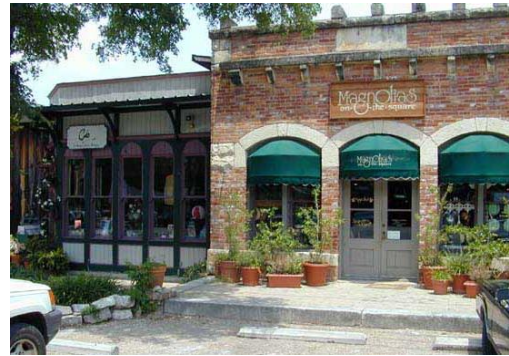
Office

This land use type is intended for businesses such as banks and places of work for doctors, lawyers, engineers, real estate professionals, architects, etc. Office uses in Melissa currently are very limited, but more have been anticipated for future development, as the Future Land Use Plan Map shows. Office land uses are generally compatible with residential areas, with the exception of high-rise office buildings. These would be more appropriate along U.S. Highway 75 and along the Collin County Outer Loop (refer to the Transportation Plan for more detail on the loop) in the Mixed Use areas. Office uses of two to three stories are also appropriate within the Town Center and Old Town areas.



Retail

This land use type is intended to provide for a variety of restaurants, shops, grocery stores, and personal service establishments. Retail businesses generally require greater visibility than do other types of nonresidential land use (e.g., office, commercial). In response to this need, retail land uses have been designated in the high-traffic areas of Melissa, with concentrated retail uses recommended along SH 5 and SH 121, and at the intersection of Melissa Road and U.S. Highway 75. Retail uses are also appropriate within Mixed Use areas, in the Town Center, and in Old Town.



Commercial

Areas designated for commercial land use are intended for a variety of commercial uses and establishments with outside storage, display and sales. Examples of such uses include business establishments that primarily provide a service such as automobile service stations, automobile sales lots, self-storage businesses, and repair shops. Such uses are not significant contributors to a municipality's tax revenue, and, by their nature, commercial businesses can detract from positive aesthetics. Primarily for these reasons, commercial uses have generally only been recommended in locations consistent with where such uses currently exist.



It should be noted that within recommended commercial areas, office and retail uses should be permitted as well; however, commercial uses should not be permitted within office or retail areas. Commercial uses should be permitted within industrial areas, provided that they are buffered from less-intense uses properly and they follow the guidelines previously recommended.



Industrial

The industrial land use designation is applied to areas intended for a range of heavy commercial, assembly, warehousing, and manufacturing uses. Large tracts of land with easy access to roadway and air transportation are becoming increasingly hard to find for the industrial business community. However, these businesses can be advantageous for a municipality in terms of providing employment and an increased tax base. Therefore, several large areas have been identified as Industrial, as shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map. Examples of desirable uses within these areas include company headquarters, computer technology businesses, and medical service companies.

Mixed Use

Areas with this land use designation are intended for a mixture of primarily nonresidential, but also some residential, land uses. They are referred to as Mixed Use because it is envisioned that these areas would be integrated developments of office and retail uses of approximately 80 percent (of the land area), with the residential component equaling approximately 20 percent. Mixed use areas are intended to provide flexibility for the City and the development community in order for innovative, unique, and sustainable development to occur. Mixed Use developments should be pedestrian-oriented and integrated with one another. Additionally, much of the Mixed Use designated is located along a creek; therefore development in this area should utilize a design that both preserves the floodplain area and takes advantage of the natural viewsheds. The specific concepts of the Mixed Use land use designation and the way in which it should be applied in recommended areas of Melissa are discussed in detail in Land Use Policy 3 later within this chapter. For the purposes of calculating the anticipated residential density in these areas, 20 units per acre has been assumed – this would be comprised of various types of residential housing, including townhomes and multiple-family (above retail or office).



Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

The TOD area shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map correlates to the anticipated location of a rail transit station (which could be on either side of the nearby railroad tracks). This location has been determined by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) as part of their regional rail planning effort. Like the Mixed Use designation, the TOD area is intended for a mixture of nonresidential and residential uses, but this mixture should be a higher density such that it helps support a nearby transit station. The TOD area should have a minimum density of 25 units per acre in order to support transit as well as the anticipated non-residential uses within the Transit-Oriented Development. Land Use Policy 8 discusses this development type further, and the Transportation Plan, Chapter 5, provides additional discussion of Melissa's rail transit opportunities.

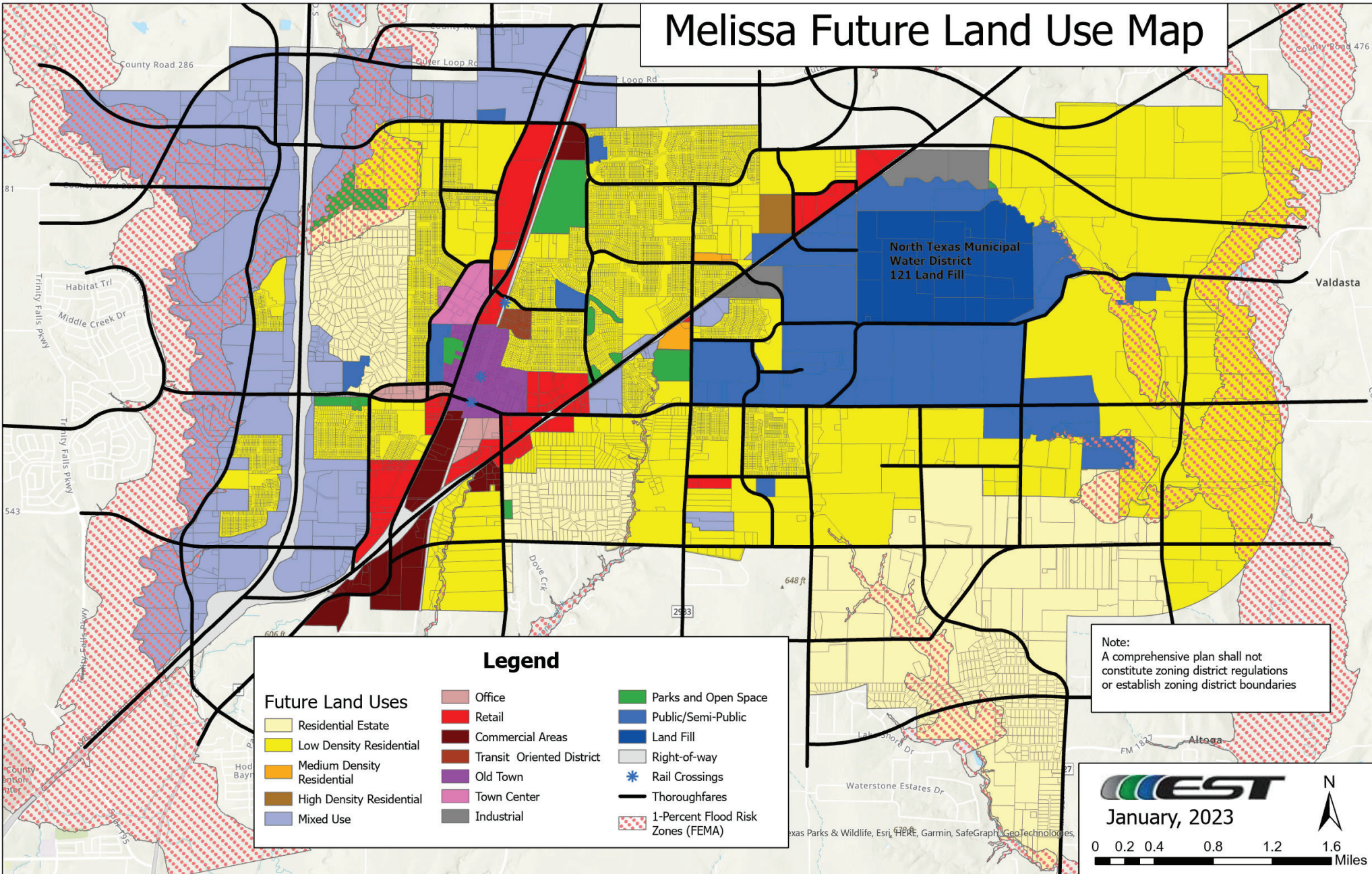


Floodplain

This land use designation reflects the 100-year flood areas in Melissa and the ETJ, as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These areas generally cannot be developed. However, they provide opportunities for recreational uses, such as parks and trails. Melissa has a prime opportunity for trail development in that the local floodplains essentially "frame" the City to the east and west. The use of floodplain areas is discussed further in the Parks and Trails Plan, Chapter 6.



Melissa Future Land Use Map





Future Land Use Calculations

Table 3-1 lists the categories of land use by acreage for the City limits of Melissa and its ETJ. This information represents the calculations from the recommended, graphic pattern of land use shown in **Figure 3-1. Future Land Use Plan Map**. **Figure 3-3** reflects the total percentages of land use within the City limits.

Although municipalities in Texas do not have much land use control in the ETJ, land uses have been recommended therein for two principal purposes. One, if and when the City annexes an area, the recommended use of the land is known and it can be zoned accordingly. Second, it is important to know the intended land use when various types of studies are conducted by the City or other public entities. Examples of such studies include population projections, engineering studies, site location studies, and school enrollment projections.

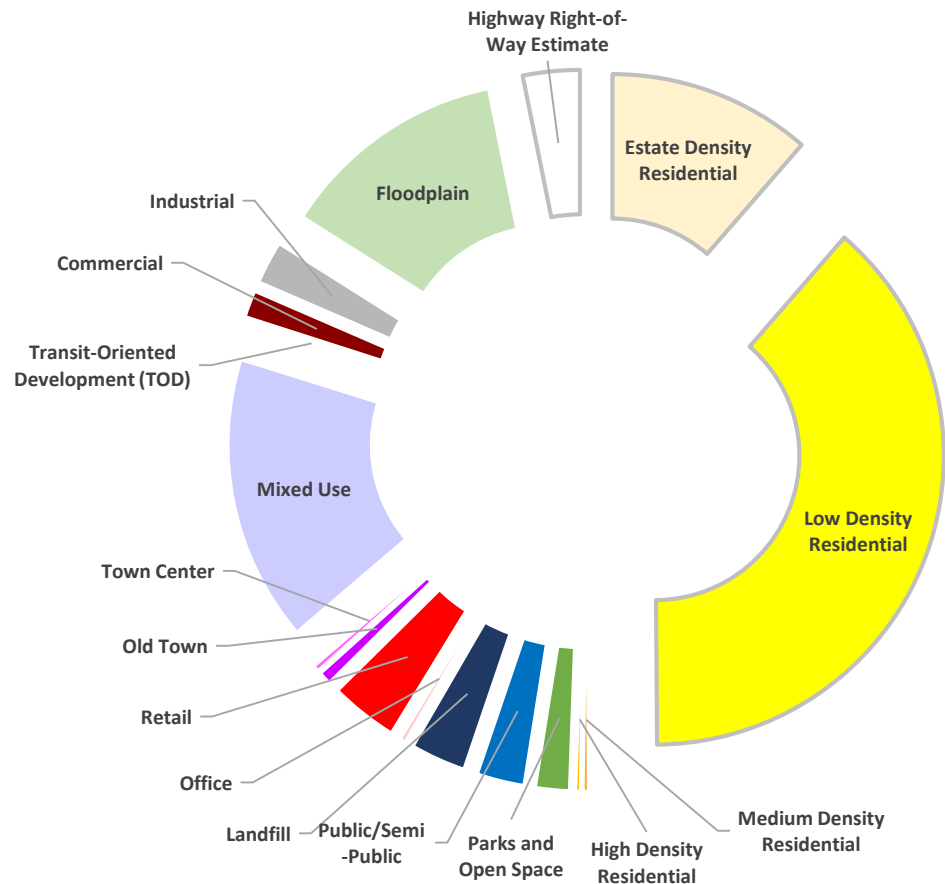
Table 3-1. Future Land Use Acreages

Future Land Use	City		ETJ		Planning Area		
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres per 100 Persons
Residential							
Estate Density Residential	702	10%	1,261	14%	1,963	11%	1.6
Low Density Residential	2,223	32%	3,929	44%	6,152	38%	5.2
Medium Density Residential	72	1%	4	0%	76	0%	0.1
High Density Residential	69	1%	-	0%	69	0%	0.1
Nonresidential							
Parks and Open Space	360	5%	4	0%	364	2%	0.3
Public/Semi-Public	443	6%	59	1%	502	3%	0.4
Landfill	581	8%	-	0%	581	3%	0.5
Office	70	1%	-	0%	70	0%	0.1
Retail	513	7%	146	2%	659	4%	0.6
Old Town	148	2%	-	0%	148	1%	0.1
Town Center	80	1%	-	0%	80	0%	0.1
Mixed Use	722	10%	1,700	19%	2,422	16%	2.0
Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)	32	0%	-	0%	32	0%	0.0
Commercial	171	2%	105	1%	276	2%	0.2
Industrial	116	2%	200	2%	316	2%	0.3
Floodplain	190	3%	1,358	15%	1,548	13%	1.3
Highway Right-of-Way Estimate	482	7%	100	1%	582	3%	0.5
Total Acreage	6,974	100%	8,866	100%	15,840	100%	13.3

**Based on a build-out population of 119,072, see Table 3-5. Projected Ultimate Capacity within the Current City Limits, ETJ, and Total Planning Area*



Figure 3-3. Future Land Use Distribution in the Planning Area





Projected Population and Ultimate Capacity

Melissa's rapid population growth is documented in detail in the Existing Conditions Analysis (Chapter 1). It is important to consider this rapid growth in the context of planning for future land uses for numerous reasons. The principal reason is that this Future Land Use Plan chapter provides a basis for decision-making regarding the optimal pattern of land uses—this pattern inherently affects where population growth is likely to occur. Another reason is that the City will at some point reach its ultimate capacity for population growth given the fact that minimal (if any) geographic expansion beyond the existing ETJ area is possible. This section of the Future Land Use Plan explores the City's projected population growth in the next 30 to 50 years, as well as its ultimate population capacity and when that capacity might be reached.

Population Projections

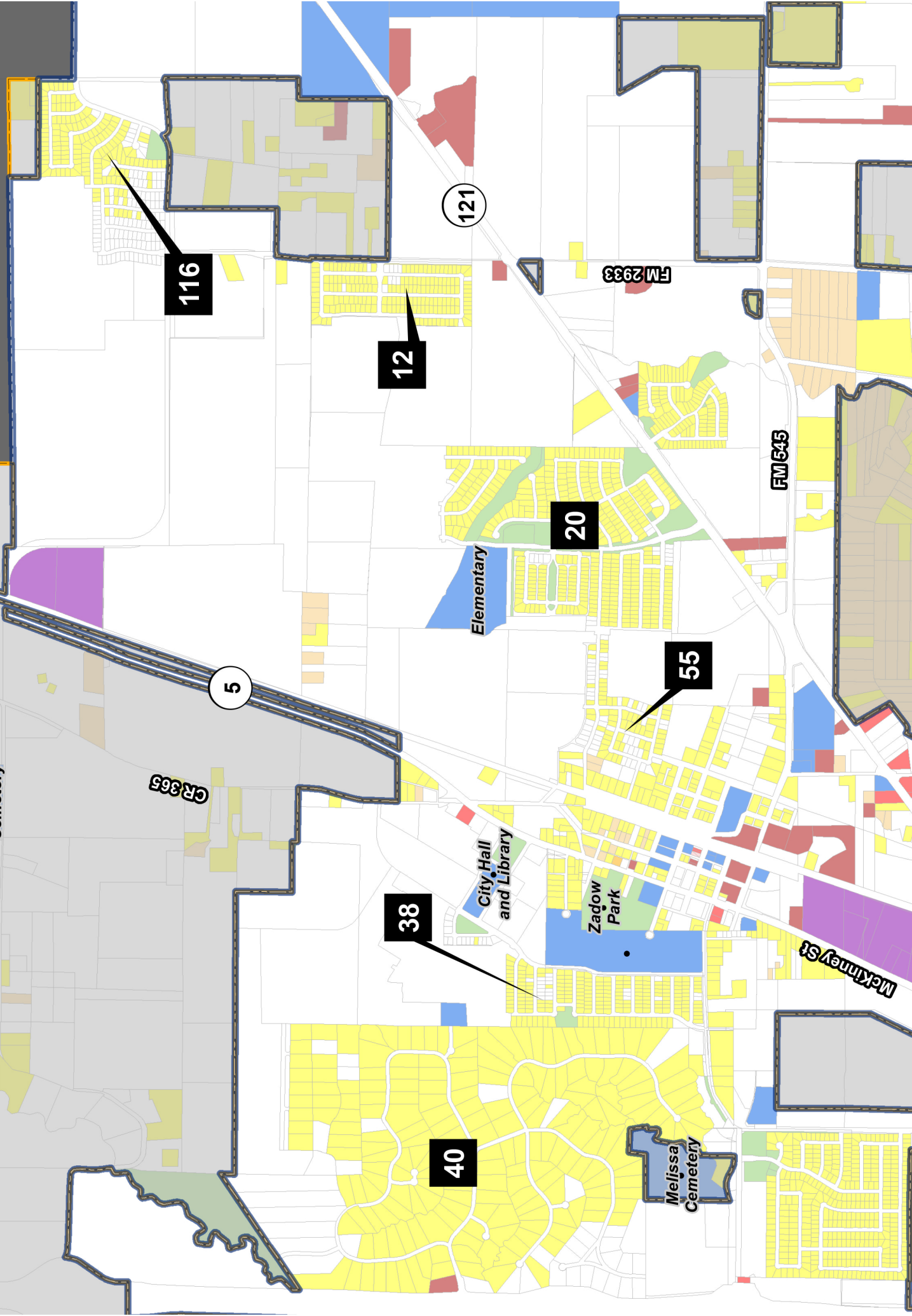
Projecting what Melissa's population will be in the next 10 to 15 years is challenging, due to the fact that there are so many variables that may affect the rate of population growth. However, it is important to provide an analysis of what is most likely to occur. What has been determined to be "most likely" is based on two things – the population growth of other cities in Melissa's region, and the number of lots that the City has already approved through a subdivision plat, concept plan, or site plan. **Table 3-2** shows information about population growth in surrounding cities. **Figure 3-4** shows the location and related lot count of the various approved subdivisions.

Table 3-2. Population Growth in Melissa and Surrounding Communities (1980-2013)

Year	City						
	Melissa	Anna	Celina	Fairview	McKinney	Princeton	Prosper
1980	604	855	1,520	893	16,256	3,408	675
1990	557	904	1,737	1,554	21,283	2,440	1,018
2000	1,350	1,225	1,861	2,644	54,369	3,477	2,097
2010	4,695	8,249	6,028	7,248	131,117	6,807	9,423
2013	5,200	8,580	6,260	7,390	136,180	7,010	12,190
% Growth 1980-2013	760.9%	903.5%	311.8%	727.5%	737.7%	105.7%	1,705.9%
CAGR	6.96%	7.47%	4.52%	6.83%	6.87%	2.28%	9.46%

Source: U.S. Census 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010. NCTCOG 2013 estimates

Figure 3-4. Planned and Platted Subdivisions in Melissa





The most recent projected population number for Melissa was calculated by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), as of October 2014. This estimate of 7,755 people has been used here as a basis from which to project what the population is likely to be in future years. **Table 3-3** shows the City's average annual compounded growth rates during various time periods since 1980.

Table 3-3. Population Growth Rates for City of Melissa since 1980

Year	Average Annual Compounded Growth Rates (AACGR)				
1980	(-0.8%)	4.1%			7.8%
1990			9.3%		
2000				11.6%	
2014				13.3%	

Table 3-4. Population Growth Projection Scenarios

Year	6%	10%	15%
2014	7,755	7,755	7,755
2015	8,221	8,531	8,919
2016	8,714	9,384	10,256
2017	9,237	10,322	11,795
2018	9,791	11,354	13,564
2019	10,378	12,490	15,599
2020	11,001	13,739	17,938
2021	11,661	15,113	20,629
2022	12,361	16,624	23,723
2023	13,102	18,286	27,282
2024	13,888	20,115	31,374
2025	14,722	22,127	36,080
2026	15,605	24,339	41,493
2027	16,541	26,773	47,716
2028	17,534	29,451	54,874
2029	18,586	32,396	63,105
2030	19,701	35,635	72,571
2031	20,883	39,199	83,456
2032	22,136	43,119	95,975
2033	23,464	47,430	110,371

Much consideration has been given to establishing a realistic population projection for Melissa that reflects its anticipated rapid growth, but also recognizes realities that may occur to curb growth, such as economical fluctuations, infrastructure challenges, etc. To help the City plan for various scenarios of population growth, three different scenarios have been provided: 6 percent, 10 percent, and 15 percent.



Ultimate Population Capacity

Melissa has a large amount of vacant land area (approximately 70 percent of the total planning area), much of which is designated for residential land use, or for a mix of land use that includes residential (refer to the Future Land Use Plan Map, **Figure 3-1**). The City also has some ETJ area within which the City can grow geographically. Therefore, both the vacant area within the City limits and the ETJ provide developable land for population growth. In order to guide the City in planning for how many people will ultimately have to be supported, an assessment of Melissa's ultimate population is provided. There are several factors considered in the calculation of ultimate population capacity, as well as several assumptions. Considerations include vacant/agricultural areas (shown on the Existing Land Use map in Chapter 1), and areas planned for residential, transit-oriented, and mixed use development (shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map). Assumptions include the following:

- Various densities for each type of lot – these are listed under the Average Number of Dwelling Units per Acre column.
- Occupancy rates and average household size information – this is from the latest U.S. Census (2010).
- Completion of platted and planned developments that have already been approved by the City.

These assumptions have been used to calculate the projected population capacity for within the City limits and ETJ.

Table 3-5 shows the calculation of ultimate population capacity within the City limits and the ETJ as they exist today. With additional population accommodated within vacant areas, and with the City's 2014 estimated population of about 7,755 people, Melissa's ultimate population capacity within the existing City limits is approximately 34,410 people. Including the ETJ population and land, the ultimate capacity, or build-out population, for **Melissa's planning area is approximately 119,072 residents.**



Table 3-5. Projected Ultimate Capacity within the Current City Limits, ETJ, and Total Planning Area

Type of Lot	Vacant Acres or Number of Lots	Average DUA	Occupancy Rate	Persons Per Household	Estimated Future Population in
City Limits					
Estate Density	119	1	93.7%	3.35	374
Low Density	1,601	3.5	93.7%	3.35	17,589
Medium Density	59	8	93.7%	3.35	1,482
High Density	39	15	93.7%	3.35	1,836
Mixed Use*	150	20	93.7%	3.35	9,417
Vacant Platted Lots	281	-	93.7%	3.35	882
Future Population that can be Accommodated in the Existing City Limits					31,579
Current Population in the Existing City Limits					7,755
Capacity Population in the Existing City Limits					39,335
ETJ					
Estate Density	1,916	1	93.7%	3.35	6,014
Low Density	4,146	3.5	93.7%	3.35	45,549
Medium Density	2	8	93.7%	3.35	43
High Density	-	15	93.7%	3.35	-
Mixed Use*	431	20	93.7%	3.35	27,058
Vacant Platted Lots	-	-	93.7%	3.35	-
Future Population that can be Accommodated in the Existing ETJ					78,664
Current Population in the Existing ETJ					1,074
Capacity Population in the Existing ETJ					79,737
Total Planning Area					
Capacity in the Existing Planning Area					119,072

**Mixed Use assumes 20% of the acreage will be residential development.*



Recommended Land Use Policies

Following are the land use policies. The Future Land Use Plan is intended to be used in conjunction with these policies. The Implementation Plan, Chapter 9, will outline specific ways in which the City can implement the land use policies, along with other recommended policies from within this *2015 Comprehensive Plan*.

Policy 1: Provide for Varied Residential Development

The residential development within Melissa generally consists of traditional single-family subdivisions. This is consistent with the composition of most cities in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. The single-family product is being constructed by the development community, and this product is selling rapidly. However, as a community ages, one way of ensuring its sustainability (i.e., its consistent or increased value) is to provide a variety of housing types to meet the various needs of the market place. This will enable the families with children who are currently moving into Melissa to grow with the community – the children will be able to find housing locally when they graduate from college, and the parents will be able to move into a home that is easier to maintain, such as a townhome or patio home. Also, contrary to popular perception, other housing types can be quite expensive and exclusive, and they are often highly sought-after because there are usually not enough such units to meet the housing market needs.

LU1.1 | The City should encourage the development of housing types other than single-family.

- A variety of lot sizes, from multiple-acre lots to zero-lot-line lots, should be provided in new developments.
- The integration of townhomes in subdivisions should be considered as new developments are approved.
- The areas on the Future Land Use Plan Map (**Figure 3-1**) that are designated for Medium Density land use should be developed with townhomes or multi-unit homes designed to resemble large homes.
- Multiple-family housing is appropriate in Melissa where it is identified on the Future Land Use Plan Map.



LU1.2 | The City should encourage the development of unique neighborhoods for maximum sustainability



Two townhomes (left image) integrate well with a large home (right image)

- The homogenous housing and subdivisions that are provided in numerous cities does not contribute to the sustainability of a community. If it can be easily recreated or replicated, it is likely that it can easily be found elsewhere. The location and mix of housing in Melissa should be provided such that properties generally have different characteristics such as view, proximity to open space, access to retail services, and house size and type. The uniqueness of each property will appeal to different needs and desires of the market, thereby creating neighborhoods that attract reinvestment.

LU1.3 | The City should provide for limited, traditional multiple-family development.

- Traditional multiple-family development should be permitted only in the areas shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map. Making these developments high quality is one of the ways to ensure their sustainability. Traditional multiple-family development should therefore have the following characteristics:
 - All structures should be composed of high quality building materials. High quality is defined as materials that promote a generally pleasing aesthetic look and feel. High quality building materials enhance the value of the area and retain a desirable appearance over a long period of time.
 - A minimum percentage of the site should be comprised of usable open space. This could include increased landscaping, a jogging trail, a water feature, or central green space.



- A minimum number of amenities should be provided from a City-established list. Examples of amenities include:
 - Swimming pools;
 - Clubhouses;
 - Exercise rooms; and,
 - All units provided with garages.
- If Retail land uses are adjacent, pedestrian access via a trail to such uses should be provided. Preferably, such access would not be provided adjacent to a street (i.e., would be an off-street trail).





LU1.4 | The City should provide for multiple-family uses in vertical mixed use development.

The market for multiple-family housing in a mixed use concept has been increasing in market share³⁻¹. Not only does the research support this fact, but the various mixed use developments throughout the Metroplex support this as well (refer to Land Use Policy 3 for more detail). Further, the density provided by multiple-family development is needed to support transit-oriented development, and can support the sustainability of retail uses. Vertical multiple-family development in a variety of types, such as condominiums and large lofts, is also ideal in providing housing choices for young professionals, young married couples, and seniors. Therefore:

- Development proposals that include multiple-family units in a vertical, mixed use development should be encouraged.
 - Such development is appropriate within areas designated for Mixed Use, Transit-Oriented Development, Town Center, Old Town, and the Commercial Overlay District.
 - Such development may also be appropriate within areas designated for Medium Density and High Density on the Future Land Use Plan Map.

³⁻¹ J. Thomas Black. *Opportunity & Challenge: Multifamily Housing in Mixed Use Activity Centers*. National Multi Housing Council (NMHC). ADDRESS: www.nmhc.org.1998.



Policy 2: Encourage Retail Uses in Appropriate Locations

Various types of retail require various types of locations for success. The following provide guidance for how Melissa can best provide sustainable retail development. In short, uniqueness, quality and location are key aspects of retail sustainability.

LU2.1 | The City should encourage unique retail development with sustainable characteristics.

Strip retail development, for the purposes of the Future Land Use Plan, is defined as single-use (as opposed to mixed use), autonomous, and automobile-oriented retail centers. This type of retail development, which is illustrated on the following page (right-hand side), has proved to be unsustainable. This fact is evident from the challenges that “first-ring” suburban cities, such as Plano, Richardson, and Carrollton, have faced.

- Sustainable retail developments have certain characteristics, such as the following, which should be incorporated into retail developments in Melissa:
 - Pedestrian and roadway connections to adjacent neighborhood areas (also see Land Use Policy 7);
 - Less visible parking – this could be achieved with internalized parking with buildings out front (as opposed to large parking lots located adjacent to the street), or with wide setbacks;
 - Separation of parking areas to minimize wide expanses of concrete;
 - Minimized spacing between buildings to encourage walking instead of driving; and,
 - Adjacent accessible land uses, such as residential and/or office, that provide a built-in market.
- The creation of strip retail – autonomous and automobile-oriented retail – along major corridors should be discouraged. Retail uses are more sustainable in the long-term if they are integrated with and connected to other types of development, such as office and residential.
- Retail development is appropriate within all areas designated for some type of mixed use development, including in the Mixed Use, Transit-Oriented Development, Town Center, and Old

“We need to build a better mousetrap for shopping — with real places, the authentic places where people want to shop and dine, with housing and offices, with schools and libraries, etc., and most importantly just being together. Places that people [care] about...”

Source: [Retail shifts toward livability, says mixed-use expert](#). *New Urban News*, June 2005 Issue.
www.newurbannews.com

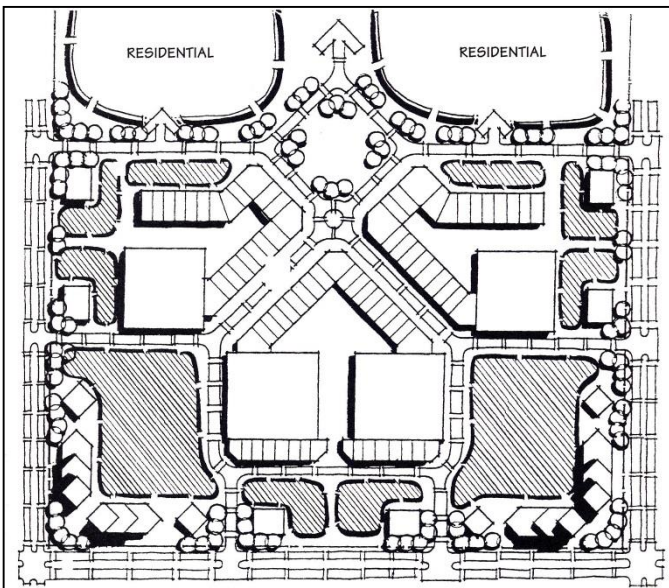




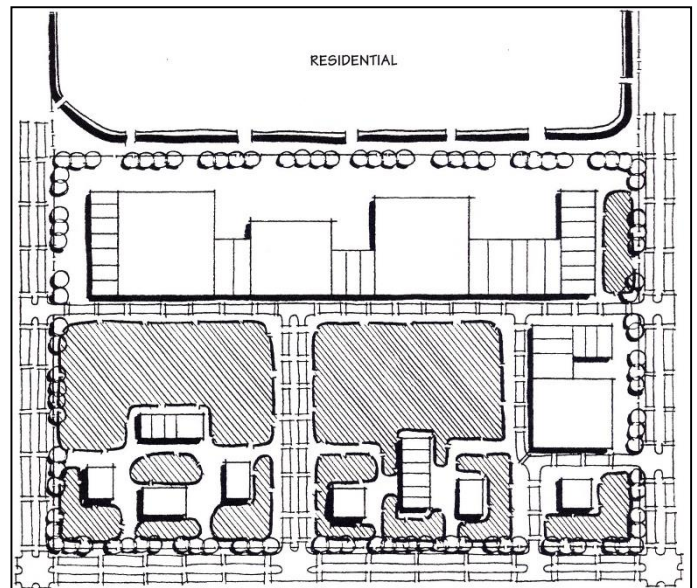
Town areas shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map. However, different types of retail will be appropriate in these different types of land use categories.

- As shown in **Table 3-1**, the Future Land Use Plan Map results in a retail ratio of 0.6 acres per 100 persons based on the ultimate capacity population of 119,072. This is a moderate ratio that indicates the City would be able to support its own residents as well as attract a small amount of consumers from outside of the City.

Figure 5. Alternative Site Layouts



Layout of retail site places buildings next to roadways, with parking internalized. Shared parking opportunities are increased due to placement. Residential areas are connected, not separated from the retail development. Central open space serves as a focal point and makes access from residential area more inviting than simply providing sidewalks and provides pedestrian interest.



Layout of retail site places parking next to roadways, with buildings being secondary. Shared parking opportunities are reduced due to placement. Residential areas are separated with screening wall, not integrated with the retail development. Access from residential area is difficult and uninviting because of lack of pedestrian orientation.

Source: Hall, Kenneth B. and Gerald A. Porterfield. *Community By Design: New Urbanism for Suburbs and Small Cities*. MacGraw-Hill, 2001, page 190.



LU2.2 | The City should carefully consider its retail development standards and related proposals, with the quality of the development being of primary importance.

There are probably few, if any, communities that would desire local development to be of a lesser quality. Melissa has much to offer retail uses from a locational standpoint – U.S. Highway 75, State Highway 121, and State Highway 5.

- Current retail development regulations should be reviewed, and amended (if needed) to ensure the highest quality of development. The previously outlined retail characteristics should be considered in any amendments.
- For Melissa to be a unique and sustainable community, the quality of any proposed retail development should be a primary consideration for whether the City approves the proposal.
- Quality of development can include:
 - Appropriate land uses that create desirable employment types for the community
 - Building materials that will maintain a desirable appearance over time
 - Aesthetically-pleasing look and feel
 - Building materials and design that allows Melissa to maintain a rural environment
 - Uniqueness of services and products offered to Melissa's community





Policy 3: Encourage Mixed Use Development

Autonomously developed land uses have become the norm since the 1950s, along with the increase in suburban development and focus on the automobile. However, studies have shown that great neighborhoods—places where uses are mixed together such that people can easily access all types of uses to meet all of their needs—are more sustainable over time, and more long-term value is created. This is the reason that various mixed use land use designations have been recommended within this *Future Land Use Plan* – sustainable neighborhoods with a mixture of uses are what is desired for Melissa. The creation of such neighborhoods will make the City a unique place.

National examples of such neighborhoods include the Dupont Circle area in Washington, D.C., Queen Anne in Seattle, and the Hyde Park area in Austin³⁻². In the DFW Metroplex, there are many new areas that show the promise of becoming great neighborhoods, including Addison Circle and West Village (in Dallas around Cole Avenue and McKinney Avenue). Older areas in the Metroplex that have managed to become great neighborhoods include the communities of Highland Park and University Park. All of these examples provide a diversity of land uses, housing types, open spaces, etc. in a concentrated area such that a cohesive neighborhood is created.

LU3.1 | The City should ensure that any mixed use development that occurs has special characteristics.

Successful mixed use areas, old and new alike, have key elements that make them feel like special places. These elements, while they are not easy to define or outline, can be generally identified, and include the following.

- A Defined Character – Consideration should be given to the type of atmosphere that is intended to be created, such as a village-like character.
- An Effective Mixture of Uses – A mixture of both horizontal and vertical uses should be established, and should include uses such as retail, residential, and/or office uses. Buildings in mixed use areas should be at least two stories in height, and the ground floor should primarily meet retail standards (i.e., a minimum 16 feet in ceiling height, good visibility).
- Maximum Setbacks – Maximum setbacks (build-to-lines) bring building facades closer to the street and to the pedestrian. Maximum setbacks in mixed use areas help to achieve internalized parking. (Most cities have minimum setback requirements for other types of development.)
- A Central Gathering Space or Focal Point – This type of element not only creates an identity for the development, but often establishes an obvious pedestrian focus. A gathering space or focal point can be in many forms, including a private open space area, plaza, fountain, or civic building. A recognizable example is the central green space and gazebo in Southlake Town Center.

³⁻² Richards, James, ASLA. *Places to Flourish: Placemaking that Nourishes Ideas, Creativity and Commerce*. Thesis for a Master of Landscape Architecture degree - University of Texas at Arlington.



- **A Pedestrian Orientation** – The first consideration of circulation within the development should be toward the pedestrian experience in getting from one place to another, including access to the development from adjacent neighborhoods and areas. Elements such as wide, lighted sidewalks, benches, shade trees, canopies, and attractive views add to the pedestrian feel.
- **Interesting Architecture** – Buildings in mixed use developments should appeal to the pedestrian; they should be varied and different enough to be inviting to make people want to stop and experience more. Such buildings should have elements such as moldings, canopies, and balconies, and should be tall enough to create a feeling of being in an outside “room.”
- **Strategic Parking Solutions** – While the focus of mixed use areas should be on the pedestrian, the reality is that parking is still an important part of developed areas, and needs to be adequately provided. To address this need, but maintain the desired feel of a mixed use area, the following parking solutions should be considered:
 - Shared parking between uses, to lessen the overall amount needed.
 - On-street parking.
 - Where on-street parking is not possible, such as for retail directly facing an arterial roadway, one row of parking (approximately 60 feet) should be located in front of the retail. This is sometimes referred to as teaser parking, and then the remaining parking can be provided internally on the site.
 - If parking structures are needed, they should be lined with buildings to hide the parking, as well as to make the parking convenient for users/pedestrians.
 - Any parking lots that are created should be internal to the development, and should be broken up into small areas (as opposed to large expanses that are often part of shopping centers and malls).





LU3.2 | The City should consider horizontal as well as vertical mixed use development.

- A horizontal mix of uses on a single site should also be acceptable. (The previous discussion within LU3.1 above focused primarily on vertical mixed use.) Craig Ranch in McKinney is an example of a horizontal mixed use development.
- These developments should also have many of the characteristics discussed in LU3.1.

Policy 4: Preserve the Historic Properties

The Old Town area is a special part of Melissa – it is representative of the City’s history. Citizens have endorsed the preservation of this. The development of an Old Town Master Plan would help to coordinate these efforts and would aid in future planning efforts, which is described further in the City Center Plan, Chapter 8.



LU4.1 | The City should promote residential, public/semi-public, retail, and office land uses within the Old Town Melissa.

- Office uses should be permitted by right in renovated homes or homes that would fit the historic character of the area.
- Residential apartment-type units should also be permitted either in renovated homes, in new buildings constructed to resemble large homes, or on the upper floors of retail and office buildings.
- Restaurants and entertainment-based uses would also help create activity in the Old Town.
- More detail about these and other concepts for Old Town, including effective ways to connect it to the new Town Center, is contained within the City Center Concept Plan, Chapter 8.



Policy 5: Continue to Pursue the Development of the Town Center

People want to identify with their community. Through the creation of a Town Center, Melissa will provide a mechanism for its citizenry to interact with local government in a unique setting.

LU5.1 | The City should establish the planned public uses within the Town Center as soon as possible, to the highest level of quality possible.

- As population growth continues to occur, it will be increasingly important for the City to create a recognizable identity.
- The City Hall should continue to be the picture of Melissa that citizens and visitors carry with them – it is the image of the City. Therefore, all other structures in the City Hall area should be completed to the highest quality and best design possible.
- The Town Center should contain a central outdoor space near the City Hall that citizens could use as a gathering space. Examples of this include the gazebo and central green space within Southlake Town Center and the large water feature in Legacy Town Center in Plano. These areas allow citizens to feel a sense of ownership in the development, which will be especially important to provide as part of Melissa's Town Center.
- More detail about these and other concepts for the Town Center, including effective ways to connect it to the Old Town area and the TOD, is contained within the City Center Concept Plan, Chapter 8.
- A Community Center would be a valuable asset to the Town Center area. By connecting the Old Town area to the Town Center, the Community Center would be more accessible and would be a centrally located public facility for the residents.





Policy 6: Provide a Balance of Residential and Nonresidential Land Uses

When communities begin to develop, it is usually residential uses that develop first. Nonresidential development needs residential development to serve in order to make a profit. Nonresidential development also needs people for employment. The concern with a community like Melissa that is experiencing such rapid growth is that much of the land will be consumed with residential uses before the market is mature enough for nonresidential development. This can create a fiscally unhealthy imbalance of residential-to-nonresidential uses. This Future Land Use Plan endorses a balance of residential and nonresidential uses, as do the citizens that attended the public workshop at the beginning of this planning process (refer to Chapter 2).



LU6.1 | The City should generally only approve nonresidential proposals or mixed use proposals in areas designated for such uses on the Future Land Use Plan Map.

- Prime nonresidential property should not be developed with residential uses, unless residential uses are provided in a mixed use concept. A large amount of prime nonresidential property exists within Melissa along U.S. Highway 75, State Highway 5, State Highway 121, and the Collin County Outer Loop (refer to the Transportation Plan).

LU6.2 | The City should pursue the development of quality retail uses.

- These retail uses should attract quality employers that supply jobs within Melissa. Not only is it important to attract business that use quality building materials and other physical aspects, but they should also provide a quality working environment and contribute to the community.
- Retail sales tax revenue can not only supplement ad valorem taxes, but it can be a major contributor to a community's overall budget. As previously stated, the City's location along several major highways provides prime locations for a variety of retail uses. For these reasons, retail uses should be the primary nonresidential type of land use that is pursued in the designated nonresidential and mixed use areas on the Future Land Use Plan Map.



- Retail uses, regardless of their desirability in terms of tax revenue, should be developed to a high quality, as described in Land Use Policy 1. The City should not settle for a lesser quality of development to obtain an immediate source of revenue, to the detriment of the long-term sustainability and attractiveness of Melissa.

LU6.3 | The City should carefully consider any requested “upzoning” of property due to State law constraints on future rezoning.

Several bills introduced during recent legislative sessions proposed that Texas cities be required to compensate landowners if the city initiates a “downzoning” of their property. Downzoning refers to a decrease of the intensity of a zoning district; for instance, a downzoning occurs if a City initiated a zoning change from a multiple-family zoning district to a single-family zoning district. Although there are relatively few instances of City-initiated rezonings, as opposed to landowner-initiated rezonings, this could be a concern for Melissa if this type of law is eventually adopted by the State legislature. It will be easy to increase the rights related to a property at a property owner’s request, but difficult for the City to affect any future changes related to the zoning of that property without the permission of the property owner.

- The Future Land Use Plan text and Map should be used as a guide to determine whether the requested rezoning is appropriate and consistent with the City’s concepts of quality and sustainability.
- If immediate development of the property is intended to occur upon the rezoning, the City should be sure that the proposed development is of a type and quality that will be acceptable for the long-term.
- If the rezoning is requested on a speculative basis (i.e., immediate development of the property is not intended), the City should require a Planned Development or a Developers Agreement. This would allow Melissa to stipulate that future site plans or plats must conform to regulations in existence at the time the site plan or plat is submitted.



Policy 7: Encourage Connectivity between Developments

Development tends to occur autonomously, primarily due to the fact that areas develop at different times. The challenge is to connect these different developments to not only allow for access in between, but to actually encourage people to walk or bike in between (instead of driving). Such connections would not only further a positive neighborhood and community feel, but would also help to address future roadway transportation challenges that Melissa may face as its population continues to increase. (Also see the Parks and Trails Plan for more detail about these and other concepts for trail connectivity.)

LU7.1 | The City should require connectivity between all types of development.

- Connecting areas with roadways has become the norm. However, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity should also be required as development occurs – within the development itself and to adjacent developed areas.
- Especially significant is the pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to schools, the Town Center, Old Town, retail areas, and parks.
- If adjacent areas are not yet developed, provisions for pedestrian, bicycle and automobile access should be established with consideration for future connections/access (similar to the way in which street stub-outs are often required).

LU7.2 | The City should encourage off-street pedestrian and bicycle connections.

- One of the simplest ways to provide pedestrian and bicycle connection is to establish them adjacent to roadways. Oftentimes, these simply become seldom-used sidewalks, and do not create real connectivity. Off-street trails should be the primary means of providing connections between developments, with on-street sidewalks as a secondary choice. Transportation needs will most likely change in the future, and the bike lanes could be utilized by golf carts or other small motorized modes of transportation not intended for highway travel.



Policy 8: Plan Land Uses and Density to Support Mass Transit

Although it may be decades in the future for transit serving Melissa to become a reality, this Future Land Use Plan supports the concept. To be cost-effective, a light-rail transit system such as the Dallas Area Rapid Transit must have significant residential and employment density. Therefore, the Future Land Use Plan Map shows Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in the area surrounding the anticipated location of the transit station.

LU8.1 | The City should ensure that the future transit station and TOD area are effectively connected to Old Town Melissa.

- As described in Land Use Policy 4, Old Town Melissa is an important historical area of the City. It should not be left behind as future development occurs, but should become integrated with new development through pedestrian connections.
- Density in Old Town could also help support the future transit station. Proposals that allow for higher density in Old Town should be strongly considered (with the exception of traditional multiple-family).
- It is important to note that the exact site location for the transit station and TOD is flexible.



LU8.2 | The City should allow high-density residential development and a mix of uses in the TOD area.

- The TOD area is recommended to be the area of the City with the highest residential density in order to support a future transit station.
- Currently approved development proposals in this area should be considered for higher density and for more diversity of land uses, such as the addition of retail and or office.





Policy 9: Integrate Sustainability Concepts into Land Use Decisions

When a development proposal is submitted, and the tract of land is zoned for a type of land use that is consistent with the proposed development, the City only has the ability to ensure that the development is consistent with its subdivision standards. That is, the development must make provisions for water and wastewater supply, for adequate rights-of-way, for proper ingress and egress, etc. However, when a development proposal is submitted and involves a rezoning, Melissa has more discretion in whether to approve the rezoning. Therefore, the City has more of an ability to apply Future Land Use Plan concepts to the development proposal prior to approving the proposal.

LU9.1 | The City should consider the following questions related to Future Land Use Plan concepts prior to approving rezoning requests.

- Does the proposed use or development provide something unique for Melissa – a diversity of housing types, lot sizes, land uses, amenities, etc.?
- Is the development within walking distance to retail areas, public uses, parks and open space, etc.?
- Does the development provide off-street pedestrian and bicycle connections to existing and future development?
- How does the development proposal impact the City fiscally—tax revenue, employment, and public considerations?
- Does the development allow for the future integration of transit, when applicable?
- Does the proposed zoning reflect the Future Land Use Plan map's designation?
- If it does not reflect the FLUP map's designation, how does this proposal support the Comprehensive Plan's vision?
- Are all uses in the proposed zoning district appropriate for the existing development or natural features in the area?
- Does the proposed use or development offer something unique to Melissa?
- How would the proposed use or development impact the City's services and planning efforts?

LU9.2 | The City should implement water conservation policies to ensure an adequate water supply in the future.

- Practical water conservation policies should be explored by the City. Some type of policy should be implemented even in times of adequate water supply to ensure that there is enough water to serve the residents of Melissa in times of drought.



- The landscaping ordinance should require (rather than recommend) some amount of drought-tolerant plants. Incentives should also be established for residents who go beyond the mandated amount (e.g., incorporating bioswales, graywater reuse, innovative landscaping design).

Policy 10: Develop a Marketing and Branding Plan to Promote the City of Melissa

The City should work with the 4A Board, and other organizations to develop marketing and branding strategies that establish a defined image for Melissa. At the time of this *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*, a website is already being developed. It is recommended to continue that effort and plan to expand it in the future. The following are ideas that will contribute to a successful branding and marketing effort:

- Create a website that is actively monitored and maintained.
- Create social media accounts that are actively monitored and maintained. Twitter and Facebook are effective ways for the City to push information out to the residents.
- Proactively work with the Economic Development Department and Chamber of Commerce to ensure that all efforts are coordinated.
- Develop ideas for annual events that will bring tourists into the City, and ultimately brand Melissa. (Example: Plano's Balloon Festival, Grapevine's Grape Fest)

