

CHAPTER TWO: LAND USE

Analyzing and presenting how land in Brookfield should be used over the next 25 years is a key aspect of this Plan, crossing over several different principles in the City’s 2035 Vision Statement. This chapter describes the physical places in the community for that vision to be realized, based on the structure presented in Figure 6: Brookfield’s Future Growth & Preservation Concept. That graphic suggests that the City is generally divided into three broad areas of land use: Neighborhoods, Greenways, and Targeted Investment Areas (TIAs).

This chapter describes the desired future land use pattern in Brookfield through a Future Land Use map representing different future land use categories, and through policies for each of the categories. More detailed land use recommendations for the TIAs are included in Chapter Eight: Special Places, and through the adopted neighborhood/node plans covering areas.

While this Plan looks out 10 to 25 years, this chapter (and the Future Land Use Map in particular) represents the eventual “build out” of the City. This could occur before or after 2035 depending on market forces and factors. Also, after “build out” is complete, existing developments over time, need to be redeveloped “reborn” since buildings naturally become obsolete and existing “product” (building or sites) become less appealing as a result of market changes or lifestyle preferences.



The City’s land use pattern emphasizes quality in building, site, and landscape design—regardless of type of land use—as exemplified by this development on Moorland Road

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Land Use Goal

Brookfield encourages a land use pattern that reflects our vision as a full service, sustainable community; maintains neighborhoods; protects greenways; and provides a platform for economic growth and redevelopment in Targeted Investment Areas.

Land Use Objectives

1. Accommodate a mix of uses within a finite amount of land, including housing, quality commercial and mixed use development, and employment-generating office and light industrial development.
2. Continue to promote the City’s TIAs as centers for future redevelopment and change.
3. Maintain the City’s existing neighborhoods and housing stock, while focusing expanded market rate housing options with the TIAs.
4. Realize the completion of the public greenway/park network for the multiple community benefits that would be realized.

Land Use Polices

1. Follow the future land use pattern mapped and described in this Plan when considering development and land use decisions, such as rezoning requests.
2. Maintain adequate acreage for retail, office, light manufacturing, and hospitality land uses, buffered from nearby housing, to ensure that Brookfield remains a community of employment and non-residential tax base opportunities.
3. Collaborate with private property owners, developers, and neighbors to realize the greatest potential for each new development and redevelopment site envisioned under this Plan.
4. Actively promote infill development and redevelopment of aging or previously passed-over sites, mainly within TIAs, for productive uses, engaging in public/private partnerships as a way to encourage investment.
5. In general, preserve established neighborhoods and public open space while directing redevelopment and change to TIAs, often in mixed use formats.
6. Ensure smooth transitions and connections between pre-existing, potentially conflicting neighboring land uses, such as where industrial property abuts residential neighborhoods, through code enforcement, noise and odor controls, and vegetation and fencing for buffering.
7. Continue consistent City-wide enforcement of existing building and property maintenance codes to maintain property values and the overall appearance of the City.
8. Continue to require high quality (i.e., durable, classic design, safe, orderly) development and encourage designs that support the community identity goals of this Plan.
9. Consider appropriate zoning ordinance text and map amendments to achieve the land use and design recommendations of this Plan, while recognizing that it is not appropriate to immediately rezone all lands in the City to exactly reflect the Future Land Use map.
10. Generally promote the mixture of compatible land uses on the same site and in the same building as components of redevelopment projects within most TIAs (e.g., mixed use development), except where single-use buildings and sites will be more responsive to the requirements of the site, building, area, or market.
11. Encourage land use patterns and development intensities that facilitate and complement alternative forms of transportation, including walking, biking, bus service, and a potential future high speed rail stop in the Village Area.
12. Monitor real estate market conditions relative to the Brookfield market to determine the viability of current land use policies and recommend adjustments to land use policies only after both a thorough analysis and verification of findings and a complete vetting of the policy by the Plan Commission. Short term market trends will not necessarily create a need or justification for the consideration of policy adjustments.

Land Use Programs and Initiatives

The City intends to pursue the following initiatives in support of its vision for land use:

Implement the Future Land Use Map

Map 1: Future Land Use illustrates the City's desired future pattern of land development on a parcel-by-parcel basis. The map is based on an analysis of a number of sources, including:

- Existing land use patterns,
- Existing zoning,
- Compatibility with existing and planned transportation infrastructure,
- Environmental constraints/regulations,
- Detailed node/neighborhood plans for TIAs, and ideas for adjustments to existing TIA plans and new TIAs,
- The future land use map in the 2020 Master Plan (as amended since its adoption),
- Adopted City categorical plans such as for parks and greenways,
- Other community-wide, corridor or area plans, and
- Other ideas that have emerged during this planning process.

The Future Land Use map and the descriptions, policies, and initiatives in this chapter will guide future zoning map changes (rezonings); conditional use permits; and other development and redevelopment decisions in Brookfield over the next 10 to 25 years. Changes in land use and zoning to implement the recommendations of this Plan will generally be initiated by property owners and developers, except where the City observes a significant discrepancy between the desired future land use pattern shown on the Future Land Use map and current zoning or where an implementation strategy of a planning document recommends a rezoning. Neither the Future Land Use map nor this Comprehensive Plan as a whole automatically compels property owners to change the current use of their land unless otherwise required by law.

Similarly, this Plan does not compel the City to immediately update its zoning map to coincide with the future use vision expressed on the Future Land Use map. There are a number of good reasons why certain lands may not be "ripe" for their long-term future land use immediately following adoption of this Plan. These include accommodations for places where there are current land uses that are expected to remain viable in the short-term, City prioritization for the redevelopment or infill of certain sites over others in the short-term, and the availability of public infrastructure such as road capacity or pedestrian facilities to serve more intensive development. With respect to this infrastructure criterion, the City will support zoning changes to implement the recommendations of this Plan where existing infrastructure has adequate or excess capacity, or where planned improvements to infrastructure will be implemented to serve new development or a phase thereof enabled by such zoning approvals.

As a companion and integral to the Future Land Use map, Figure 7: Future Land Use Categories and Policies Matrix provides a description of the future land use categories used on that map, including a description of densities, zoning options, and development policies. This Matrix should be consulted as a part of land use decisions. Further, the detailed node/neighborhood plans for the TIAs often include more specific design standards for land use changes in those areas.

The following pages describe the future land use categories depicted in the Future Land Use map and the Future Land Use Categories and Policies Matrix. Each set of future land use categories includes several photo examples. Not all of these photos are of development in the City. Photos from other communities were used where a particular type of land use was not currently present in

Brookfield or where a photo from another community provided an excellent example of that type of future development.

Housing Focused Future Land Use Categories

This group of future land use categories is intended to accommodate a variety of housing choices in a range of types and densities, of a quality and mix that retains Brookfield’s prevailing neighborhood character. The City supports a diversity of housing types within areas that have least impact of Brookfield’s neighborhoods, principally within the TIAs.

The “lower density housing” category is primarily areas planned for single-family detached residences on spacious lots, and is mapped over parts of the City. Very little change from existing use patterns are envisioned for these areas, which largely built out.

The “medium density housing” category is intended to accommodate mostly single-family residences on smaller lots or small, multi-unit residential buildings in more compact development patterns. The “higher density housing” category accommodates multi-family developments with high quality building materials generous landscaping.

Medium and higher density housing areas are mapped near the Village Area, areas south of Interstate 94, and along other major thoroughfares, where public facilities, shopping services, and transportation options are or will be available.

Throughout all areas planned for housing-focused development, the City will encourage high-quality architectural design, lasting building materials, and amenity-filled neighborhood environments. Other intensity land uses consistent with a neighborhood setting—such as schools, places of worship, and home occupations—will also be considered within housing-focused future land categories, per zoning standards.



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*Examples of Housing Focused Development
(the 3rd and 4th photos are of development outside of Brookfield)*

Shopping/Services Focused Future Land Use Categories

This group of future land use categories is intended to accommodate a variety of shopping, commercial services, and hospitality uses. Examples of types of uses that will be allowed in such areas include restaurants, retail stores, personal and professional services, and hotels. Densities will be in accordance with the Future Land Use map and Matrix. The zoning districts that relate to and implement this group of future land use categories will provide more detailed guidance on the range of permitted uses and densities. In some cases existing districts within the current zoning ordinance will provide the applicable guidance. In other cases, new districts may need to be created.

New site and development design will be characterized by modest signage, high quality building materials and architectural design, and generous landscaping to build on Brookfield’s image as a “Garden City” (see Chapter Eight: Special Places for further explanation of this concept). Zoning districts used over these areas will provide more detailed design guidance. Also, Chapter Eight: Special Places and the detailed node/ neighborhood plans include design advice where an Shopping/Services Focused area is also within a TIA.

Shopping/Services Focused areas are mapped on Future Land Use map along the Bluemound Road Capitol Drive corridors, and around intersections of major streets in other parts of the City.



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*Examples of Shopping/ Services Focused Development
(the 3rd and 4th photos are of development outside of Brookfield)*

Employment Focused Future Land Use Categories

This group of future land use categories is intended to accommodate high-quality office, research and development, light indoor manufacturing, data processing, and other focused uses. This group of categories also encompasses support uses for office and business parks, such as banks and child care centers. Densities will be in accordance with Future Land Use map and Matrix. The zoning districts that relate to and implement this group of future land use categories will provide more detailed guidance on the range permitted uses and densities. In some cases existing districts within the current zoning ordinance will provide the applicable guidance. In other cases, new districts may to be created.

New site and development design will be characterized by modest signage, high quality building materials and architectural design, generous landscaping, and heavily screened loading and storage areas. Off-site impacts—odors, etc.—will be kept to a minimum. More modest landscaping treatments and building materials may be allowed for sites that do not major streets in the City’s older industrial such as in the North 124th Street corridor area. Zoning districts used over Employment Focused areas will provide more detailed design guidance. Also, Chapter Eight: Special Places and the detailed node/neighborhood include design advice where an Employment Focused Area is also within a TIA.

Employment Focused areas are mapped on Future Land Use map in the City’s existing future office and industrial parks, in the North 124th corridor, and in the Bluemound Road/Interstate corridor.



Examples of Employment-Focused Development (the 1st, 3rd, and 4th photos are of development outside of Brookfield)

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Mixed Use Future Land Use Categories

The Mixed Use future land use category is intended to accommodate vibrant mixed use developments that function as community activity centers and provide work-shop-play environments. As such, this set of future land use categories is intended for a carefully planned, deliberately designed, but flexible mix of housing, shopping, employment, and recreation uses within a range of formats and densities as described in the Matrix. Such mixed uses will frequently be integrated within the same development site and/or in the same building, such as ground floor shopping with upper housing or office. The City will entertain single use commercial only, residential only development projects in Mixed Use areas only where the City is convinced that mixed use development will not be feasible within the 25 year planning period. The City has the responsibility to be reasonable in the application of this standard by taking input seriously from developers and property owners regarding market viability and financing conditions of implementing this standard.

Zoning districts used over Mixed Use areas will provide more detailed use, density, and design guidance. In particular, planned unit development (possibly transit oriented development) zoning options will be particularly useful to apply to these areas. In some cases existing districts within the current Zoning ordinance will provide the applicable guidance. In other cases, new districts may need to be created. Also, Chapter Eight: Special Places and the detailed node/neighborhood plans include design advice where a Mixed Use Area is also within a TIA. Mixed Use areas are mapped on the Future Land Use map in various TIAs, particularly along and near Brookfield Square and the Capitol Drive corridor.



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*Examples of Mixed Use Development
(the 1st and 4th photos are of development outside of Brookfield)*

Nature, Recreation, & Community Facilities Land Use Categories

This group of future land use categories focuses in particular (but not exclusively) on publicly owned lands and buildings, including public open spaces, recreational facilities, and institutional uses. This group includes:

- **Lands that are currently zoned Conservancy, Upland Conservancy, Upland Preservation, and Wetland within the City of Brookfield.**

These lands are intended for protection based on their environmental significance, sensitivity, and/or flood protection. The reader should note that the Future Land Use Map does not attempt to depict primary or secondary environmental corridors, as defined and mapped by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Where these corridors coincide with field-delineated wetland or protected upland boundaries, the mapping of City districts will correspond with the corridor boundaries.



Conservancy areas provide permanent open space in Brookfield

- **Existing and planned public parks and recreation areas.** These are mapped per the City's adopted park and greenway plans—see also Chapter Five: Natural Resources and Recreation.



A modern shelter in Mitchell Park provides gathering space

- **Existing and planned public buildings, schools, religious institutions, electrical substations, and health care facilities.** It is inherently difficult to predict where many of these institutions will be located in the future so the Plan will not be specific as to locations for such uses. In the future, these types of uses may also be appropriate in other future land use categories, with larger-scale institutional uses generally acceptable in Shopping/Services Focused, Employment Focused, and Mixed Use areas, and smaller-scale institutional uses generally acceptable in Residential areas. However, City zoning districts and processes will ultimately define where future institutional uses are appropriate and under what conditions. Nothing in this Plan shall be deemed to create inconsistency between the zoning approvals granted for such institutional uses, as described in this section, and the remainder of the Plan.



The Wilson Center for the Arts

Use this Comprehensive Plan Document and TIA Plans in Concert

Wisconsin's planning law requires that land use decisions, such as zoning and land divisions, be consistent with its comprehensive plan. In Brookfield, this is somewhat challenging because the City is guided not only by this 2035 Comprehensive Plan document, but also by its detailed node/neighborhood plans for the TIAs, which have been re-adopted as detailed components of this 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

In the future, the City may consider establishment of new TIAs and preparation and adoption of plans for these areas. See Chapter Eight: Special Places for recommendations regarding preparing and integrating new TIA plans into this Comprehensive Plan.

The City will take the following approaches when considering development proposals for properties within TIAs:

- Use the Comprehensive Plan (including this document and the TIA plans) as a basic daily decision-making guide for all zoning and land division actions. Development and redevelopment projects will be considered for approval based on their consistency with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan (this document and TIA plans), as well as ordinance requirements.
- Recognize that the node/neighborhood plans for the TIAs often provide very specific land use, lot/road layout, and development design ideas. These should generally be perceived as design concepts or illustrations, not iron-clad recommendations which must be followed exactly when development proposals actually come forward. The key is whether the essential vision and concepts are carried forward within the basic outlines of the details in the TIA plans.
- Update existing TIA plans as may be necessary to achieve consistency with the advice contained in this "umbrella" Comprehensive Plan document. That advice is included in Chapter Eight: Special Places and Figure 15: Major Plan Implementation Activities. Once each recommended TIA plan is revised, it should be readopted as a detailed component of this main Comprehensive Plan document.

- Develop and implement a process for regularly reviewing, evaluating, and updating the Comprehensive Plan and the neighborhood/node plans to ensure that recommendations are current and relevant (see Chapter Twelve: Implementation).

Adopt Minor Amendments to Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances

The City's zoning and subdivision ordinances have been updated and amended over the years to serve as modern tools for growth, development, and preservation. These have, in particular, included adjustments over time to address the performance and design attributes of new development, such as through the Modified Suburban Overlay district. At the present time, only minor adjustments to these ordinances will be considered in order to maximize the implementation of the land use directions within this overall Comprehensive Plan. These include consideration of the following:

- Standards to advance more sustainable building and site design, such as for greater solar and wind access and stormwater infiltration. Some communities are instituting point based systems into their zoning ordinances. These are aimed at achieving greater sustainability in new development projects, while allowing developer flexibility in deciding how best to achieve sustainability goals.
- Provisions for implementing a voluntary historic preservation-based zoning district, as described more fully in Chapter Eight: Special Places.
- A requirement for a detailed site inventory and analysis as part of site plan and land division submittal processes, to uncover natural, historic, and other site features most worthy of preservation and/or careful integration into development plans.
- Provisions for dealing with future land splits on larger, traditionally residentially-used, parcels, to implement the recommended treatment of such parcels as identified in Chapter Three: Housing and Neighborhoods, which generally discourages such splits.
- A transit-oriented development (TOD) zoning district, or a TOD development pattern option within the Modified Suburban Overlay District, to accommodate this mixed use development form in very limited areas of the City where higher-density development may be appropriate, such as near the Moorland Road interchange or in the Village Area.
- Additional provisions to establish or encourage a unique architectural design and building form motif within each of the different TIAs. This would diversify the look and experience in each of the TIAs as future redevelopment occurs. The City's current Village Area Business zoning district and design guidelines for the Civic Center have been established, in part, for this purpose in two of the TIAs. Similar standards have been created for the Brookfield Square-Executive Drive Area and the 124th Street and Capitol Drive Area but had not been adopted at the time this Plan was written.



Architectural details on a business on Bluemound Road add character to building design

- Exploration of the potential and details for an expedited approval process or other assistance for smaller development projects, provided that the same design standards are met regardless of project size. This may reduce development costs for smaller, locally-owned businesses, which can help contribute to a unique character within individual TIAs and in Brookfield as a whole.
- A pre-General Plan process for proposed Planned Development District projects, and perhaps similar large-scale projects in other districts, to allow for general reaction by City officials before a more formal application is submitted.
- A formal requirement for traffic impact analyses and, in appropriate circumstances, travel demand management plans for development projects exceeding a certain size or intensity threshold, in order to more systematically control traffic increases and provide for appropriate on- and offsite transportation improvements.
- Other recommendations may evolve as the Plan moved forward and economic or environmental conditions change in TIAs.

Map 1: Future Land Use Map

Click to view: [Map 1: Future Land Use Map](#)

Figure 7: Future Land Use Categories and Policies Matrix

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