

LAND USE BACKGROUND



What is land use?

Land use means how land and buildings are used in a community. Cities plan and organize different areas by grouping them into categories, such as homes, businesses, places where people live and work, employment areas and public spaces, like schools. Existing land use describes how a specific piece of land is being used right now, including sites that are currently empty or not being used.

General Plan Land Use

The General Plan shows how each piece of land can be used and how much development is allowed. It helps residents, property owners, and developers understand the city's long-term plans for meeting housing, employment, and amenity needs.

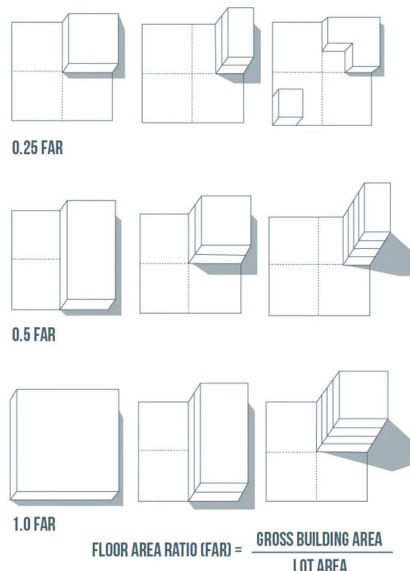


What are Density and Intensity?

Density describes how many homes can be built in a certain area. For housing, this is measured by the number of homes allowed per acre (dwelling units per acre). For places like offices, stores, or campuses, development is measured by how much building space is allowed compared to the size of the property (or floor area ratio). In mixed use areas, housing follows density rules, while non housing uses follow building size limits.

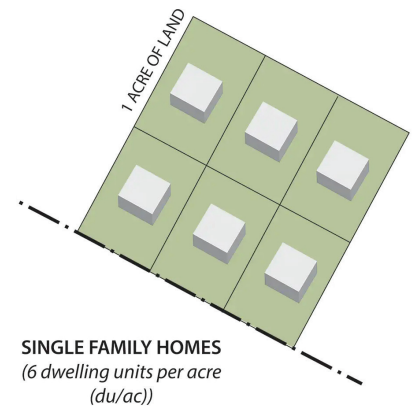
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Diagram

Applies to mixed use and non-residential buildings.



Dwelling Units per Acre (DU/AC) Diagram

Applies to residential buildings.



What are land use concepts?

The land use concepts are three early ideas that explore how Davis could meet future housing and job needs by updating how land is used. They show different options for where homes, businesses, and other uses could be located and how much development might occur. These concepts help the community compare choices, understand trade-offs, and shape a shared vision for the city's future. They are meant to be discussed, combined, and improved—not chosen exactly as shown.



Sphere of Influence and Annexation

The City of Davis has planning and zoning authority over land within its city limits, and limited “pre-zoning” authority over land within its **Sphere of Influence (SOI)**. The SOI includes nearby unincorporated land and shows where the city may reasonably grow and provide services in the future.

The SOI is officially established by the **Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)** and must include any land that could later become part of the city. To be added to the city, land must first be within the SOI and then go through a legal process called **annexation**, which brings unincorporated land into the city limits.

The City has no formal authority over any land outside the SOI. Yolo County LAFCO considers changes to the SOI about every five years.

Urban Limit Line

An urban limit line is a planning tool that restricts development within a defined area to limit urban sprawl. Urban limit lines are not required and can be adjusted in the future.

