

# San Marcos Land Use Element

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The San Marcos District Land Use categories were developed through the San Marcos District Community Plan Update in accordance with the Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) Use Categories. Through this process, six land use categories were established with boundaries that were based on the 2015 San Marcos District Land Use Plan. These categories and boundaries were identified through the planning committee process of matching the current land uses with the categories outlined in the SGMP.

For example, the southern portion of the District, with mostly large lots, was identified as Rural because the predominant development pattern within this area was approximately one parcel per 40 acres, the same as the Rural land use category.

The San Marcos District is approximately 44 square miles spanning a stretch of the Turquoise Trail HWY 14 corridor. The estimated population of San Marcos in 2018 is 1,727, based on the number of houses multiplied by the persons per household in 2010 (2.19) and subtracting 10 percent for the average number of vacant houses in 2010.

<b>San Marcos Population 2018</b>
1,727
<b>San Marcos Housing 2018</b>
876

The Land Use Element proposes future changes to the descriptions of the existing Land Use Plan categories to better match the character of the community. Below are the six Land Use categories:

**Rural.** The purpose of the Rural land use category is to designate areas suitable for a combination of agricultural, equestrian, residential and other compatible uses. The intent of Rural is to protect agricultural uses from encroachment by development and to support agricultural, ranch, very large lot residential, ecotourism, equestrian uses and arts studios. Density transfers and clustered development shall be allowed in order to support continued farming and/or ranching activities, conserve open space or protect scenic features and environmentally sensitive areas. Parcels in this area are generally greater than 40 acres and are located in the southern portion of the district. Neighbors in this area respect each other's privacy and allow small-scale businesses to operate within reasonable circumstances.

**Rural Fringe.** The purpose of the Rural Fringe land use category is to designate areas suitable for a combination of estate-type residential development, agricultural uses and other compatible uses. This zone also serves to protect agricultural and environmental areas that are inappropriate for more intense development due to their sensitivity. The Rural Fringe accommodates primarily large lot residential, retreats, ecotourism, equestrian uses and renewable resource-based

activities, seeking a balance between conservation, environmental protection and reasonable opportunity for development.

**Rural Residential.** The purposes of the Rural Residential land use category is to provide for the development of single-family homes on large lots, either individually or as part of rural subdivisions; to preserve the scenic and rural character of the County; to provide consolidated open space and agricultural lands; and to recognize the desirability of carrying on compatible agricultural operations and home developments in areas near the fringes of urban development while avoiding unreasonable restrictions on farming or ranching operations. Uses that support rural character of the broader area shall be allowed including agricultural production, small-scale renewable energy production, home-based businesses, artist studios, bed and breakfasts, agrotourism, equestrian and boarding facilities, and farmers markets.

**Commercial Neighborhood.** The purpose of the Commercial Neighborhood land use category is to allow for low-rise low-intensity convenience retail and dining, galleries and personal services, as well as office uses, that are intended to serve and are in close proximity to individual residential neighborhoods. Generally, the desired location of these commercial areas is at the periphery, focal point, or a major entrance to one or more neighborhoods, along a minor or subdivision collector or higher roadway classification, or along a major access road at the entrance to or in a focal point of a neighborhood. In San Marcos these properties are in close proximity to NM 14.

**Public Institutional.** The purpose of the Public Institutional category is to accommodate governmental, educational and non-profit or institutional uses, including public or community parks, recreation facilities and public, non-profit, and institutional residential uses, but excluding any such uses of an extensive heavy industrial character. Development in this area should be multi-use and designed with community input in order to meet community goals and objectives.

**Federal and State public lands.** The SMD planning area includes areas which are under the ownership and jurisdiction of the State and Federal government. These areas are not subject to local government zoning.