

## EXISTING LAND USE<sup>1</sup>

Because of factors such as topography, climate, soils, and vegetation, the more intense land uses in Jackson County occur primarily in the Bear Creek Valley, the middle Rogue Valley, and to a lesser extent in the Applegate Valley.

Development has followed from the land use patterns of the original settlers; farmers who located on the rich bottom lands, and miners and woodsmen claiming the foothill areas.

The existing land use map displays, in a general way, eight different land uses:

- Forest Lands
- Agricultural Lands
- Open Space Development (20 plus-acre lots)
- Rural Development (5- to 20-acre lots)
- Suburban Development (1- to 5-acre lots)
- Urban Development (incorporated cities, urban residential, and commercial)
- Industrial Development
- Rural Service Centers

The map illustrates existing land uses—those lands which are actually being used, and the level of intensity of those uses relative to the above classifications.

Forest Lands: Mountainous forest lands, about three-quarters of which are held in common public ownership for all citizens, surround the valley and provide commercial timber and recreation areas.

These lands, due to their topography, climate and remoteness are not generally suitable for any type of intensive development, although there are houses on very large acreages and other intensive activities compatible with forest environment. These uses include: timber production, livestock grazing, scenic, historical, or botanical areas, and passive recreation activities such as hiking, fishing, and hunting, etc.

The land that remains to provide space to meet the needs for housing, business and industry, schools, farms, roads, waste disposal and treatment sites, and so on is a relatively limited area.

Agricultural Lands: Those lands shown as "agricultural" are in a variety of different uses, including orchards and row crops, field crops, and the raising of small livestock. Many of the parcels, outside of the large commercial orchards and some field crop areas, are small. Also included in this description are areas where poultry is raised.

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<sup>1</sup>Adopted by Ordinance 80-17, effective 10-28-80 (File 80-1-ZOA); amended by Ordinance 2000-5, effective 6-5-00, File 96-26-OA-PR)

Grazing lands, which occur throughout the county and which often coincide with open space development, are not included.

Open Space, Sparsely Developed: These lands have housing and other development on tracts that are generally 20 or more acres, including some very large parcels. The uses associated with this type of development are basically the same as under "forest land," but include more housing and very small-scale "hobby farms."

Many of the wooded areas, including timber lands of marginal quality, are located within this category.

Rural Development: This category includes lands where development has taken place on parcels which generally range from 5-20 acres. The uses which occur under this definition are: lands for "farm residential" use, where the activities are agriculture, single-family dwellings, produce stands, grange halls or community centers, home occupations, and other agriculture-related buildings.

Other uses are included in a mixed fashion which varies widely from area to area. Some of these are riding stables, kennels, day nurseries, and mobile home parks.

Suburban Development: This general designation identifies areas where development has occurred on parcels ranging from 1-5 acres. While the atmosphere may be semi-rural in areas of five-acre parcels, the land is much less open in feeling and visual appearance than in the preceding categories. This category includes many areas where subdivisions have been built, and is a more intense use of the land than that which occurs under rural development.

These areas are most often found in close proximity to urban areas, with the land between generally developed in a "strip" of service and retail facilities.

Urban: Residential and Commercial: These areas cover the residential and commercial development in the eleven incorporated cities and towns, plus urban residential and commercial uses that occur in unincorporated areas. Industrial land use is identified separately to provide a clearer picture of actual use.

Industrial Development: Most industrial activity occurs in the northern portion of the valley, centering on the Medford Industrial Park at White City. Other industrial activity takes place at Tolo Mills, between Central Point and Gold Hill on Interstate 5, and in areas immediately to the north, south, and west of Medford. Smaller and less intensive uses, mostly light manufacturing, are scattered along Highway 99 near Phoenix, Talent, and Rogue River. There is minimal industrial activity in Ashland and Eagle Point, and none in Jacksonville.

Rural Service Centers: People living in the rural areas of the county, especially the more remote areas, need basic commodities and services located near them. Due to this public need, uses such as small retail facilities and services have evolved over the years in areas where they serve the outlying population. These are known as "rural service centers." There are currently 20 such centers in the county.

In areas such as Ruch, Wimer, Prospect, Applegate, Trail, and Pinehurst, they also function as community centers, where people share information and socialize.

Typical uses business or professional offices, churches, feed and seed stores, garden shops, groceries and general stores, laundromats, second-hand stores, and similar services. Rural service centers are designated on the existing land use map by a star.