

Ranch Landscape

CHARACTER

The Ranch Landscapes are found where the land forms begin to resemble the rolling hills and rocky terrain indicative of the Hill Country of Central Texas. These areas are not ideal for crop farming activities, but are well-suited for ranching and grazing and have been used for these activities throughout Kyle's history. Acknowledgement and protection of the Ranch Landscape will preserve this element of Kyle's heritage and also preserve the environmental integrity of these sensitive areas. The Ranch Landscape is an important recharge zone for underground aquifers that provide clean water to both the local and distant region. A mix of open spaces and historic oak trees are typical of the Ranch Landscape, and rolling topography in this region results in significant vistas. Agricultural uses consist primarily of grazing activities, with some selectively appropriate fields and crop cultivation. Growth in the Ranch Landscape should be carefully master planned, to not displace historic ranching land uses or their context, but instead to honor the history of the practice up to the modern day. Communities and their associated amenity features should provide adequate services and recreation to the population that locates there, without being incongruent to existing ranching activities immediately adjacent, themselves a large part of what makes the region attractive for settlement. In order to achieve this goal, development must be site-specific and carefully designed to fit within the rangeland context. Heightened consideration should be afforded to those areas near sensitive environmental features and landforms, with particular care placed in designing improvements that work with the landscape.

INTENT

Development within the Ranch Landscapes should strive to preserve low intensity development through low impact development practices, such as the clustering of development along the edges of wooded areas, and avoiding as much grading as possible by leaving areas of steep slopes undeveloped, allowing these areas to function as riparian buffers to the rivers and tributaries to which they are often adjacent. Development that disrupts historic agricultural uses or blocks views of rolling lands is not recommended, as those characteristics of the region are a significant draw for the end users. Ranchland preservation policies should be implemented in these areas. Growth should be directed toward uses that can co-exist with ranching activities, and similarly locating higher-intensity uses away from adjoining agricultural uses.

JURISDICTION

The Ranch Landscapes are located in the western portions of Kyle and its ETJ, bordered by the Sensitive/Sustainable Development and Riparian Districts. Figure 5 indicates the location of the Ranch Landscape.