



Introduction to Land Use and Design

The Land Use Element is a guide to land use planning in Lake Forest and provides a framework for the environmental and infrastructure issues examined in the other General Plan elements. The Land Use Element identifies how land will be used in the future—for housing, commercial, and business centers, public facilities, parks, open space, and transportation. The Land Use Plan is designed to:

- encourage economic development in strategic focus areas located adjacent to major roadways and transportation corridors,
- preserve and protect the City's existing residential neighborhoods,
- support expanded housing and employment opportunities,
- and promote a strong sense of place and identity in Lake Forest.

Organization of Element

The Land Use Element goals and policies will address each of the following topics as they relate to Lake Forest:

- Land Use Mix
- Compatible Development
- Placemaking
- Streetscapes
- Focus Areas for Economic Stability and Growth

Contents:

- + Land Use Mix
- + Compatible Development
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- + Focus Areas for Economic Stability and Growth

Overview

The Land Use Element provides for a development and resource conservation pattern that preserves and protects Lake Forest's unique character while promoting opportunities for economic development, high-quality local job growth, and robust natural resources protection. Ensuring that Lake Forest has sufficient capacity to support a diverse mix of land uses is essential to the community's ability to thrive and be economically sustainable over time. As residential and nonresidential development continues, this Land Use Element will guide where growth and development will occur in the City and how to accommodate land uses to respond to the community's changing needs, all while keeping in line with the Community Vision.

The Land Use Map (Figure LU-1) depicts the City's vision for how open space, commercial, industrial, residential, and other uses will occur in the city.

State law requires the Land Use Element to address:

- Proposed general distribution, general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, including agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other categories of public and private uses of land;
- Population density and building intensity;
- Issues related to environmental justice, which are addressed throughout the General Plan, especially the Health and Wellness Element; and
- Areas subject to flooding, which are addressed in the Public Safety Element.

The Land Use Element includes provisions aimed at providing a range of housing types that promote a safe and desirable living environment. Residential and commercial growth is focused within the city limits, with higher density uses focused near major roadways and transportation facilities.

Background information regarding land use is presented in Chapter 2 of the General Plan Update Existing Conditions Report.

Land Use Designations

The Land Use Designations in this General Plan specify the type of allowed uses associated with each designation and the allowed range of development intensity, expressed in density or floor area ratio. Zoning, specific plans, and individual development projects must be consistent with the intensities allowed under the General Plan.

Land Use Classification System

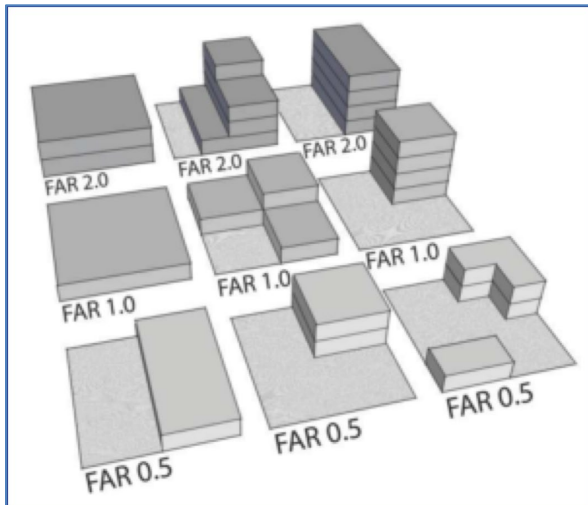
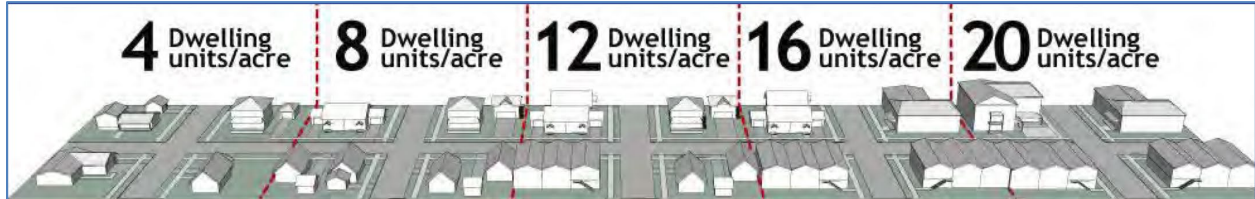
The Land Use Map (Figure LU-1) illustrates the various types and distribution of land uses planned for the community. The land use classification system includes 21 land use designations. These land use designations identify the types and nature of development allowed in particular locations depicted on the Land Use Map (Figure LU-1).

The residential category includes five designations that allow for a range of housing types and densities. The nonresidential grouping includes a variety of jobs-generating designations, such as commercial, professional office, business park, and light industrial to promote a wide range of revenue and employment opportunities. Public facilities are also non-residential uses which allow for the provision of public services and amenities. The City also has a mixed-use category which includes six distinct types of mixed-use designations which allow for a blend of residential and non-residential uses at varying densities and intensities in key locations throughout the community. The limited development category includes community park/open space, regional park/open space, open space, and lake to provide for open spaces within the community where future development is limited. The limited development grouping also includes a transportation corridor designation to provide land area for circulation needs within the planning area.

Land Use Density and Intensity

This Element uses certain terminology to describe the 21 land use designations. Land use concepts, including density and floor area ratio, are described below.

Density. Density refers to the intensity of residential uses in terms of a range, from a minimum to a maximum, of dwelling units per gross acre. Various building configurations representing different densities are shown below.



Floor Area Ratio. Floor area ratio, referred to as FAR, is used to express the building intensity for non-residential uses, such as commercial, industrial, community facilities, and the non-residential component of mixed-use projects. FAR refers to the ratio of the total floor area of a building or buildings on a site, excluding parking structures and outdoor storage areas, to the lot area of the site.

Buildout Potential

State General Plan law requires that the Land Use Element indicate the maximum densities and intensities permitted within the Land Use Plan. The land use designations shown on the Land Use Map

are described in detail in this Element. Table LU-1 lists each of the land use designations shown on the Land Use Map and provides a corresponding indication of maximum density or intensity of development. Maximum allowable development on individual parcels of land is governed by these measures of density or intensity. The table also includes the effective overall level of development within each land use designation within the City. These effective levels of development represent an anticipated overall density and intensity of development for Lake Forest and are, therefore, less than the absolute maximum allowed for an individual parcel of land. For various reasons, many parcels in the community have not been developed to their maximum density or intensity and, in the future, maximum development as described in this Element can be expected to occur only on a limited number of parcels.

The overall future development in Lake Forest is anticipated to occur at the expected level of density or intensity indicated in Table LU-1. Development at an intensity or density between the expected and maximum levels is desired when projects offer exceptional design quality, important public amenities or benefits, or other factors that promote important goals and policies of the General Plan. For the residential land use designations, projects are expected to build to a density at least as high as the lowest density allowed by their respective designations.

Residential Land Use Designations

Very Low Density Residential (VLDR); 0-2 du/ac – The Very Low-Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of single-family dwellings and accessory buildings at a maximum of two dwelling units per net acre of land.

Uses such as guest houses, religious facilities, public or private schools, family day care homes, public facilities, private recreation facilities, and others that are determined to be compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of very low-density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

Low Density Residential (LDR); 2-7 du/ac – The Low-Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of single-family dwellings and accessory buildings at a maximum of seven dwelling units per net acre of land.

Uses such as mobile homes, guest houses, religious facilities, public or private schools, family day care homes, public facilities, private recreation facilities, and others that are determined to be compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of low-density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

Low-Medium Density Residential; 7-15 du/ac – The Low Medium Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of a wide range of living accommodations, including single-family detached and attached dwelling units, mobile homes, duplexes, and multiple-family dwellings, such as townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and cooperatives. The designation allows a maximum of 15 dwelling units per net acre of land.

Uses such as religious facilities, public or private schools, community care facilities, family day care homes, public facilities, private recreation facilities, and others that are determined to be compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of low medium density neighborhoods may also be allowed.

Residential Medium Density (MDR); 15-25 du/ac – The Medium Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of a wide range of living accommodations, including single-family dwelling units, and multiple-family dwellings, such as townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and cooperatives. The designation allows a maximum of 25 dwelling units per net acre of land.

Uses such as religious facilities, public or private schools, community care facilities, family day care homes, public facilities, private recreation facilities, and others that are determined to be compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of medium density neighborhoods may also be allowed.

High Density Residential (HDR); 25-43 du/ac – The High-Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of a wide range of living accommodations, including single-family dwelling units and multiple-family dwellings, such as townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and cooperatives. The designation allows a maximum of 43 dwelling units per net acre of land.

Uses such as religious facilities, public and private schools, community care facilities, family day care homes, public facilities, private recreation facilities, and others that are determined to be compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of high-density neighborhoods may also be allowed.

Non-Residential Land Use Designations

Commercial (C); 1.0:1 Maximum FAR – The Commercial land use designation provides for a variety of retail, professional office, medical, service-oriented business activities, and hospitality facilities, many of which are roadway oriented and serve a community-wide area and population. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.0:1.

Other uses that are determined to be compatible with the primary uses may also be allowed.

Professional Office (PO); 1.2:1 Maximum FAR – The Professional Office designation provides for professional offices and other supporting uses. These uses include, but are not limited to, professional, legal, medical, general financial, administrative, corporate, and general business offices, as well as supportive commercial uses such as restaurants, medical services, community facilities, and similar uses, which together create concentrations of office employment or community activity. Also included are small convenience or service commercial activities intended to meet the needs of the on-site employee population. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.2:1.

Other uses that are determined to be compatible with the primary uses may also be allowed.

Business Park (BP); 1.0:1 Maximum FAR – The Business Park designation provides opportunities for a mixture of all those uses allowed under the Commercial, Professional Office, and Light Industrial land use designations. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.0:1.

Light Industrial (LI); 0.60:1 Maximum FAR – The Light Industrial designation provides for a variety of light industrial uses that are nonpolluting and which can co-exist with surrounding land uses and which do not in their maintenance, assembly, manufacturing or operations create smoke, gas, dust, noise, vibration, soot or glare which might be obnoxious or offensive to persons residing or conducting business in the City. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.6:1.

Allowable uses include wholesale businesses, light manufacturing and processing, research and development uses, warehousing and storage, distribution and sales, high technology production, ancillary retail sales and related uses. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with the primary uses may also be allowed.

Public Facility (PF); 1.2:1 Maximum FAR – The Public Facility designation includes a wide range of public uses distributed throughout the community, such as schools, government offices and facilities, public utilities, libraries, fire stations, sheriff sub stations, cemeteries, hospitals, and other public uses. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.2:1.

Mixed-Use Land Use Designations

Mixed-Use 32 (MU-32); 32 du/ac Maximum and 1.0:1 Maximum FAR – The Mixed-Use 32 designation provides opportunities for mixtures of commercial, office, and residential uses in the same building, on the same parcel of land, or within the same area.

Mixed-use areas offer opportunities for people to live, work, shop, and recreate without having to use their cars. This designation allows for vertical integration of compatible uses, whereby such uses share the same building or lot, or horizontal integration of uses, where compatible uses are located next to each other. Single-use projects are allowed; stand-alone residential projects should be located in proximity to nonresidential development.

The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.0:1. A maximum density of 32 dwelling units per net acre of land is allowed for residential projects. For projects which include residential and nonresidential components, the density requirements shall apply to the residential component and the FAR shall apply to the nonresidential component.

Mixed-Use 43 (MU-43); 43 du/ac Maximum and 1.2:1 Maximum FAR – The Mixed-Use 43 designation provides opportunities for mixtures of commercial, office, and residential uses in the same building, on the same parcel of land, or within the same area.

Mixed-use areas offer opportunities for people to live, work, shop, and recreate without having to use their cars. This designation allows for vertical integration of compatible uses, whereby such uses share the same building or lot, or horizontal integration of uses, where compatible uses are located next to each other. Single-use projects are allowed; stand-alone residential projects should be located in proximity to nonresidential development. Vertical integration of uses is encouraged.

The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.2:1. A maximum density of 43 dwelling units per net acre of land is allowed for residential projects. For projects which include residential and nonresidential components, the density requirements shall apply to the residential component and the FAR shall apply to the nonresidential component.

Mixed-Use Office (MU-O); 1.5:1 Maximum FAR – Mixed-Use Office accommodates high-intensity business parks, office buildings, light manufacturing parks, and light industrial areas that provide for a variety of businesses that support office-oriented employment opportunities and services for Lake Forest and the region at intensities higher than those allowed in the Business Park or Professional Office designations. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.5:1.

Additionally, uses that support businesses including, health and fitness centers, restaurants/cafés, convenience retail, and day care facilities would be conditionally allowed onsite as a minor use associated with a main employment generating use, hotel uses would also be allowed.

Urban Industrial 25 (UI-25); 25 du/ac Maximum and 1.0:1 Maximum FAR – The Urban Industrial designation provides for a mix of traditional light industrial and commercial uses, including uses such as warehousing, distribution, mini-warehouse, self-storage, auto uses and services, manufacturing and production of food, beverage, apparel, design, furniture, custom or small run manufacturing, and other similar uses which have historically been allowed in the City’s industrial areas. Live-work units and home-based businesses are envisioned to locate in this designation. The intent of this designation is to promote creation of a vibrant mixed-use environment with employment and living opportunities located in proximity. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.0:1. A maximum density of 25 dwelling units per net acre of land is allowed for residential projects. For projects which include residential and nonresidential components, the density requirements shall apply to the residential component and the FAR shall apply to the nonresidential component.

Industrial or flexible building types are appropriate and should match the scale of adjacent uses. Flexible buildings allow one or more uses in a single facility, such as office space, research and development, showroom retail sales, light manufacturing research and development (R&D), and limited small warehouse and distribution uses along with residential development.

Urban Industrial 43 (UI-43); 43 du/ac Maximum and 1.2:1 Maximum FAR – The Urban Industrial designation provides for a mix of traditional light industrial and commercial uses, including uses such as warehousing, distribution, mini-warehouse, self-storage, auto uses and services, manufacturing and production of food, beverage, apparel, design, furniture, custom or small run manufacturing, and other similar uses which have historically been allowed in the City’s industrial areas. Live-work units and home-based businesses are envisioned to locate in this designation. The intent of this designation is to promote creation of a vibrant mixed-use environment with employment and living opportunities located in proximity. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.2:1. A maximum density of 43 dwelling units per net acre of land is allowed for residential projects. For projects which include residential and nonresidential components, the density requirements shall apply to the residential component and the FAR shall apply to the nonresidential component.

Industrial or flexible building types are appropriate and should match the scale of adjacent uses. Flexible buildings allow one or more uses in a single facility, such as office space, research and development, showroom retail sales, light manufacturing research and development (R&D), and limited small warehouse and distribution uses along with residential development.

Limited Development Land Use Designations

Community Park/Open Space (CP/OS); 0.40:1 Maximum FAR - The Community Park/Open Space designation provides for public recreational uses designed to meet the active and passive recreational needs of the community. This designation allows public parkland, open space, and associated public recreational facilities, such as indoor and outdoor sports/athletic facilities, museums, theaters, and similar uses. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.4:1.

Regional Park/Open Space (RP/OS); 0.10:1 Maximum FAR - The Regional Park/Open Space designation provides for public recreational uses designed to meet the active and passive recreational needs of the community and other nearby areas in the region. This designation includes the Whiting Ranch Regional Wilderness Park and other County of Orange open space along portions of Serrano Creek and Aliso Creek. This designation applies to land that is generally maintained as natural open space with minimal improvements. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.1:1.

Open Space (OS); 0.40:1 Maximum FAR - The Open Space designation provides for private open space designed to meet the active and passive recreational needs of the community. This designation includes open space that is held under private ownership, and includes facilities for active and passive recreational activities. Open Space facilities include indoor and outdoor sports/athletic facilities, lakes, club houses, meeting rooms, outdoor gathering areas, and similar uses, as well as ornamentally landscaped and natural landscaped open areas. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.4:1.

Lake (L) - The Lake designation provides for lakes as well as ornamentally landscaped and natural landscaped open areas associated with lake facilities. No development is expected in this area.

Transportation Corridor (TC) - The Transportation Corridor designation applies to the land within the corridor of the Southern California Regional Rail Authority. Land within this corridor is reserved for rail transportation purposes as the primary use. Secondary uses, such as open space linkages and landscape areas, public and private parking areas, and other transportation related activities and facilities are also allowed. No development is expected in this area.

Table LU-1 Land Use Development Potential Summary

Land Use Designation	Acres (1)	Allowed Density and/or Intensity	Assumed Density and/or Intensity (2)	Units	Population (3)	Non-Residential Square Feet	Jobs (4)
RESIDENTIAL LAND USES							
Very Low Density	-	0-2 du/ac	1 du/ac	-	-	-	-
Low Density	2,510	2-7 du/ac	6.8 du/ac	17,080	50,728	-	-
Low-Medium Density	880	7-15 du/ac	10.9 du/ac	9,589	28,481	-	-
Medium Density	361	15-25 du/ac	22 du/ac	7,931	23,555	-	-
High Density	16	25-43 du/ac	38 du/ac	620	1,840	-	-
<i>Residential Subtotal</i>	<i>3,756</i>			<i>35,163</i>	<i>104,435</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND USES							
Commercial	341	1.0:1 FAR	0.25 FAR	-	-	3,718,616	8,263
Professional Office	12	1.2:1 FAR	0.30 FAR	-	-	156,816	522
Business Park	298	1.0:1 FAR	0.35 FAR	-	-	4,545,819	7,576
Light Industrial	627	0.60:1 FAR	0.35 FAR	-	-	9,565,602	15,943
Public Facility	362	1.2:1 FAR	0.05 FAR	-	-	811,508	812
<i>Non-Residential Subtotal</i>	<i>1,651</i>			<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>18,798,361</i>	<i>33,116</i>
MIXED-USE LAND USES							
Mixed-Use 32	49	32 du/ac 1.0:1 FAR	32 du/ac; 0.25 FAR	1,570	4,663	534,327	1,186
Mixed-Use 43	312	43 du/ac 1.2:1 FAR	36 du/ac (2); 0.40 FAR	8,179	24,290	5,429,287	12,067
Mixed-Use Office	24	1.5:1 FAR	0.50 FAR	-	-	513,715	1,284
Urban Industrial 25	95	25 du/ac 1.0:1 FAR	22 du/ac; 0.40 FAR	2,090	6,207	1,655,280	2,758
Urban Industrial 43	22	43 du/ac 1.2:1 FAR	36 du/ac; 0.40 FAR	792	2,352	323,328	539
<i>Mixed-Use Subtotal</i>	<i>502</i>			<i>12,631</i>	<i>37,512</i>	<i>8,455,937</i>	<i>17,834</i>
LIMITED DEVELOPMENT LAND USES							
Community Park/Open Space	249	0.40:1 FAR	0.0025 FAR	-	-	27,148	27
Regional Park/Open Space	1,939	0.10:1 FAR	0.0001 FAR	-	-	8,448	8
Open Space	877	0.40:1 FAR	-	-	-	-	-
Lake	58	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transportation Corridor	30	0.20:1 FAR	-	-	-	-	-
Right-of-Way	1,681	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Limited Development Subtotal</i>	<i>4,834</i>			<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>35,596</i>	<i>36</i>
Totals	10,742			47,794	141,947	27,289,894	50,986

1. Acres are given as adjusted gross acreages, which do not include the right-of-way for major roadways, flood control facilities, or railroads.
2. Density/intensity includes both residential density, expressed as dwelling units per acre, and nonresidential intensity, expressed as floor area ratio (FAR), which is the amount of building square feet in relation to the size of the lot. Historically, citywide buildout levels do not achieve the maximum allowable density/intensity on every parcel, and are, on average, lower than allowed by the General Plan. Accordingly, the projections in this General Plan do not assume buildout at the maximum density or intensity but are adjusted downward to account for variations in development.
3. Estimates of population are based on average household size of 2.97, as identified by the California Department of Finance, 2018.
4. Estimates of jobs by land use designation are based on employment generation rates derived from the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (2015) Report.

GOAL LU-1 LAND USE MIX

A community with a balanced land use pattern that meets the City's long-term housing, employment, and civic needs.

LU-1 Policies

- LU-1.1 **Land Use Pattern.** Promote an appropriate land use plan that fosters and enhances community livability and public health; supports economic development; promotes efficient development and multiple transportation options; reduces pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of energy and other resources; and ensures compatibility between uses.
- LU-1.2 **Exceptional Projects.** Consider development intensity up to the maximum identified in the Land Use Element for development projects that provide exceptional design quality, important public amenities or benefits, or other factors that promote the goals and policies of the General Plan.
- LU-1.3 **Future Development.** Accommodate future economic growth and development in strategic locations throughout the community near major roadways and transportation facilities.
- LU-1.4 **Density and Intensity.** Allow sufficient density and intensity to enable new development to support all required infrastructure, community facilities, and open space.
- LU-1.5 **Housing Choices.** Expand the range of housing types and density ranges to meet the diverse demographic, economic, and social needs of the community.
- LU-1.6 **Mixed-Use Activity Centers.** Ensure that new mixed-use activity centers are well-integrated with existing surrounding development.
- LU-1.7 **Fiscal Sustainability.** Maintain a fiscally sustainable land use plan with balanced residential and nonresidential developments.
- LU-1.8 **Consistent Standards.** Require projects to adhere to the City's Municipal Code.

LU-1 Actions

- LU-1a Update the City's Zoning Map to be consistent with the land use designations shown on Figure LU-1.
- LU-1b Review the standards provided in the Zoning Ordinance (Title 9 of the Lake Forest Municipal Code) and amend as necessary for consistency with General Plan policies and desired uses consistent with the City's General Plan land use designations.
- LU-1c Require preparation of a developer-initiated Specific Plan for redevelopment of the Foothill Ranch Towne Center to ensure the careful integration of residential and commercial uses combined with supporting small streets and infrastructure. Development under 10 acres should be discouraged.
- LU-1d Evaluate possible implementation strategies for mixed-use activity centers/focus areas, other than Foothill Ranch Towne Center, such as a Specific Plan, Master Plan, Development Agreement and/or conventional zoning.
- LU-1e Implement the policies and actions in the Housing Element in order to enhance opportunities to provide affordable housing within the community and to accommodate a range of household types, special need populations, and income levels.
- LU-1f Monitor land availability through the regular review of the General Plan Land Use Map and the Zoning Map.
- LU-1g Periodically review the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that the appropriate zoning districts have appropriate allowed uses and development standards to accommodate the building and site needs associated with new and emerging industries.

GOAL LU-2 COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT

A community where new development blends harmoniously into the existing neighborhood fabric.

LU-2 Policies

- LU-2.1 **Physical Characteristic Compatibility.** Ensure that new development fits within the existing community setting and is compatible with surrounding land uses and public infrastructure availability.
- LU-2.2 **Sensitive Uses.** Locate residences away from areas of excessive noise, smoke, or dust and ensure that adequate mitigation measures, including buffers or transitional uses, are made to ensure the health and well-being of existing and future residents.
- LU-2.3 **Existing Residential Neighborhoods.** Preserve, protect, and enhance the City's existing residential neighborhoods.
- LU-2.4 **Scale and Character.** Ensure that the scale and character of new development is appropriate to the setting and intended use.
- LU-2.5 **Visual Compatibility.** Require new development projects achieve visual compatibility with surrounding development through building, site, or design techniques, such as landscaping and architectural design, to achieve visual compatibility.
- LU-2.6 **Commercial Development.** Ensure that commercial uses are built and operated in such a way as to complement, but not conflict with, adjacent sensitive uses.
- LU-2.7 **Interface with Residential Areas.** Promote compatibility of adjacent land uses along the interface of different residential density and non-residential intensity categories by paying special attention to buffers and transitional areas.
- LU-2.8 **Public Agency Impacts.** Encourage affected public agencies to provide necessary facilities and services to support the impact and intensity of development in Lake Forest.
- LU-2.9 **Code Enforcement.** Require property owners to maintain homes, structures, and property in good condition; continue code enforcement activities that address nuisances that detract from the City's health, safety, and community image.
- LU-2.10 **Heliports.** Ensure that development proposals including the construction or operation of a heliport or helistop comply fully with permit procedures under State law and compliance with the *Airport Environs Land Use Plan for Heliports*, including referral of the project to the Orange County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) by the applicant, and with all conditions of approval imposed or recommended by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), ALUC, and Caltrans, including the filing of a Form 7480-1 (Notice of Landing Area Proposal) with the FAA. This requirement shall be in addition to all other City development requirements.
- LU-2.11 **Federal Aviation Administration Imposed Height Restrictions.** Require projects 200 feet above ground level to file with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Form 7460-1 Notice of Proposed Construction and Alteration and provide notification to the ALUC; note that the City of Lake Forest prohibits development at this height but should projects at this height be considered at some point in the future, this policy shall apply.

LU-2 Actions

- LU-2a As part of the City's development review process, ensure that commercial projects are designed to be compatible with residential uses, including appropriate building massing and scale and minimization of impacts related to the operation of the use. Review of employment-generating projects should ensure that the following design concepts are addressed in projects that abut residential areas:
- Appropriate building scale and/or siting;
 - Site design and noise-attenuating features to avoid exposure to excessive noise due to long hours of operation or inappropriate location of accessory structures;
 - Site and structure design to avoid excessive glare or excessive impacts from light sources onto adjacent properties; and
 - Site design to avoid unnecessary loss of community and environmental resources (archaeological, historical, ecological, recreational, etc.).
- LU-2b As part of the City's development review process, ensure that new developments are designed to minimize glare and light impacts onto adjacent properties.
- LU-2c Periodically review and amend (as needed) the Zoning Ordinance, City Subdivision Regulations, and Grading Regulations to provide consistency with new state legislation and court decisions. Review and amend Zoning Ordinance to clarify permitted and conditionally permitted uses in all districts.
- LU-2d Utilize a site development permit process and the California Environmental Quality Act in the review of proposed development projects to promote high quality in urban design and minimize environmental impacts.
- LU-2e Continue to enforce the Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances to achieve the desired level of regulation.
- LU-2f Coordinate with the Orange County Airport Land Use Commission review any operational or facility changes at John Wayne Airport that could impact the Lake Forest community.

GOAL LU-3 PLACEMAKING

A distinct community image and identity that promotes Lake Forest as a desirable place to live and do business.

LU-3 Policies

- LU-3.1 **Branding.** Enhance the city's identity through the use of distinct city graphics in the design of gateways, street signs, city signage, public facilities and public gathering spaces, and other areas where appropriate.
- LU-3.2 **Sense of Arrival.** Highlight major arrival and departure points along the community's edge by encouraging distinctive building design elements, streetscapes, decorative signage, landscaping, and/or other enhancements at strategic gateway locations.
- LU-3.3 **Physical Attributes.** Maintain the physical attributes of Lake Forest, such as its streetscapes, parks, trails, and scenic vistas, to preserve an identifiable and distinct community within Orange County.
- LU-3.4 **High-Quality Design.** Promote high-quality design for all public and private development projects, including building form, site design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and other components which impact the visual quality of a project.
- LU-3.5 **Nonresidential Area Revitalization.** Promote rehabilitation of older commercial and industrial properties and buildings to enhance their quality and competitive advantage.
- LU-3.6 **Architectural Styles.** Promote architectural styles that emphasize the established community identity while allowing for the introduction of other appealing architectural design strategies that are compatible with their surroundings.
- LU-3.7 **Public Gathering Spaces.** Encourage the provision of both formal and informal public gathering spaces through pedestrian-oriented street design; sidewalk furniture and pedestrian-oriented development; well-designed, multi-use public spaces of different sizes including pocket parks, plazas, and monuments; and community events.
- LU-3.8 **Public Art.** Consider including public art at key gateways, major projects, and public gathering places.
- LU-3.9 **Public Landscaping.** Ensure that all public landscaping in public rights-of-way is attractive, adequately maintained, and utilizes California native, drought-tolerant, and/or other sustainable plant material if appropriate.

LU-3 Actions

- LU-3a As part of the design review of development and capital projects, encourage the integration of civic, cultural, natural, art, and other themes that create a sense of place for each neighborhood, district, and center, and contribute to the overall character of the community.
- LU-3b Explore grant funding opportunities for public art to be included in projects at key gateways, major project, or public gathering places, as appropriate.

GOAL LU-4 STREETSAPES

A community with streetscapes that enhance the economic vitality and overall visual quality of the City, support the circulation network, and encourage pedestrian-scale streets and patterns of activity.

LU-4 Policies

- LU-4.1 **Major Corridors.** Enhance the streetscape along the City’s major corridors through coordinated public and private improvements to convey a positive image of the City, contribute to its economic vitality, and improve visual and physical transitions into adjacent neighborhoods and developments.
- LU-4.2 **Walkability.** Enhance walkability on a citywide scale by improving or adding sidewalks, landscaping, benches, wayfinding signage, and pedestrian-scaled lighting, where appropriate and feasible.
- LU-4.3 **Building Massing.** Reduce the bulk and perceived size of large buildings by dividing their mass into smaller parts, stepping down to adjacent structures, recessing openings for doors/windows, and using pedestrian-scale features; single-plane massing is discouraged.
- LU-4.4 **Building Footprint.** Require and enforce appropriate residential and nonresidential development standards, including adequate building setbacks, to ensure that a building’s footprint does not negatively affect adjacent uses or the visual quality of the area.
- LU-4.5 **Connectivity.** Provide convenient pedestrian and transit access throughout commercial and mixed-use corridors, including an interconnected network of high-amenity streetscapes and multiple walkways that connect activities and uses. Seek opportunities to provide bridges or other grade-separated pedestrian crossings across freeways and major roadways in order to further enhance pedestrian connectivity throughout Lake Forest.
- LU-4.6 **Street Trees.** Recognize the importance of planting and maintaining trees consistent with the image of Lake Forest. Provide for the consistent use of street trees to identify city streets, residential neighborhoods, commercial and employment districts, and gateways.
- LU-4.7 **Medians.** Encourage medians the use of California-native landscaping, where feasible. Require the provision of street medians, where appropriate, as a condition of approval of development projects.

LU-4 Actions

- LU-4a Consider developing a design and improvement plan based on the City Capital Improvement Plan to strengthen landscaping, identification graphics, a wayfinding signage program, and other physical improvements to enhance major public thoroughfares and activity areas.
- LU-4b Seek grant funding (“greening” grants) to help offset or fully cover the cost of landscape improvements along public roadways.
- LU-4c Meet with Caltrans and the Transportation Corridor Agency (TCA) to stay informed regarding ongoing freeway improvements and to review landscape plans at the City’s on and off ramps.

GOAL LU-5 FOCUS AREAS FOR ECONOMIC STABILITY AND GROWTH

A community featuring mixed-use activity centers located along the City’s major roadways and transportation facilities which allow for the co-location and harmonious development of housing, shopping, jobs, and public uses.

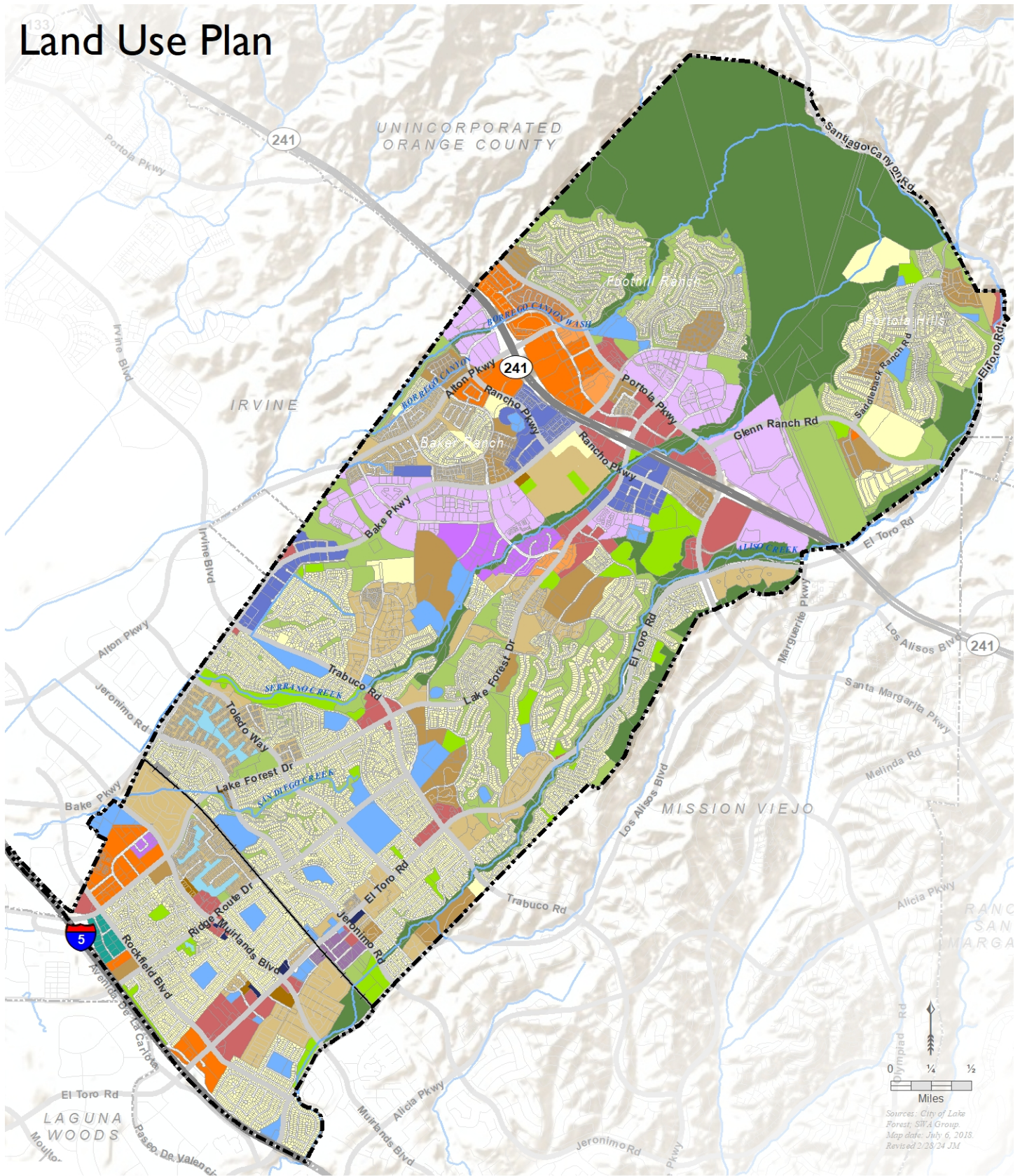
LU-5 Policies

- LU-5.1 **Focus Areas.** Promote El Toro Road, Lake Forest Drive, Civic Center, Foothill Ranch Towne Center, and the Light Industrial/Rail Corridor as focus areas for economic growth.
- LU-5.2 **Differentiation of Focus Areas.** Establish and maintain distinct identities for Lake Forest’s focus areas by customizing uses, scale, form of development, and amenities.
- LU-5.3 **Focus Area Revitalization.** Encourage revitalization of the focus areas by evaluating and pursuing, when possible, programs, policies, and financing mechanisms to spur local investment and foot traffic.
- LU-5.4 **Development Scale.** Establish development standards to ensure that a sufficient scale and footprint of any single use is achieved in mixed-use areas to establish a cohesive environment that minimizes impacts attributable to the adjacency of differing uses.
- LU-5.5 **Variety of Uses.** Allow for a variety of uses and activities in the City’s Focus Areas to encourage an economically strong, lively, and social environment.
- LU-5.6 **Design Integration.** Require that residential and nonresidential portions of mixed-use buildings and sites be integrated through site and building design to ensure compatibility among uses.
- LU-5.7 **On-Site Amenities.** Require that residential/commercial mixed-use projects provide on-site gathering spaces (plazas, courtyards, etc.) and other pedestrian-scale amenities, such as benches, fountains, and landscaping, that contribute to the living environment of residents.

LU-5 Actions

- LU-5a Continually monitor the mix of uses within mixed-use areas, and encourage new uses that will provide new services that complement existing uses.
- LU-5b Develop a distinct design theme with defined design standards and guidelines for each of the focus areas to foster an identifiable image for each activity center.

Land Use Plan



0 1/4 1/2
Miles
Sources: City of Lake Forest; SVA Group
Map date: July 6, 2018
Revised 2/28/24 JM

Legend

- City of Lake Forest
- Assessor Parcel Boundary
- Low Density Residential
- Low-Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use 32
- Mixed-Use 43
- Business Park
- Mixed Use Office
- Professional Office
- Light Industrial
- Urban Industrial 25
- Urban Industrial 43
- Public Facility
- Community Park/Open Space
- Regional Park/Open Space
- Open Space
- Lake
- Transportation Corridor



De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

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