
CHAPTER 2 Project Description

2.1 LEAD AGENCY

City of Lake Forest
25550 Commercentre Drive
Lake Forest, CA 92630

2.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Starting in the 1960s, the Orange County Board of Supervisors approved a series of residential communities, industrial areas, and commercial developments in what is now the City of Lake Forest. The land use patterns found in much of Lake Forest are similar to those found in many master-planned communities approved by the County during this era, with the exception of the area straddling SR-241. Due to the aircraft flight patterns from the former Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) El Toro and resultant noise from the aircraft, restrictions were placed on a large swath of land (Project Area) in the heart of present-day Lake Forest. The Project Area is the area formerly encumbered by the 65 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) contours and airport crash zones, which restricted development in the Project Area due to aircraft flight patterns at the former MCAS El Toro. As Lake Forest developed in the southern and northern sections of the city with residential and commercial development, as well as parks, trails, and other recreational uses, the Project Area was developed with industrial, office, and commercial uses devoid of the open space and trail linkages found in the rest of the city. Consequently, the land use restrictions effectively segregated the two portions of the city.

Much of the Project Area has been developed with industrial and office buildings similar to those found along Bake Parkway. The majority of remaining vacant land is privately owned and has been permitted for development of ~~more than~~ approximately 10 million square feet (sf) of industrial and commercial land uses by the County prior to Lake Forest becoming a city.

The 3,700-acre MCAS El Toro, closed since July 1999, was annexed by the City of Irvine in the spring of 2004. The property is planned for a variety of uses, including educational facilities, agriculture, active and passive parks, housing, and commercial uses (identified as cumulative project IR-A in Table 1-1 of Chapter 1, Introduction).

With the decision to utilize the former MCAS El Toro property for non-aviation uses, the restriction on development in the City of Lake Forest in the path of the former aircraft flight patterns is no longer necessary. Development pressures in Orange County and the need for additional housing sparked an interest by landowners to seek changes to the designated land uses to allow residential development.

The City's General Plan Land Use Element includes the following policy statement:

Should the future use of USMC El Toro reduce or eliminate significant aircraft noise experience by Lake Forest, the future use of land presently impacted by aircraft noise will be reconsidered.

The General Plan was amended in May of 2000, and a Business Development Overlay was established over the Project Area to ensure a balance of land uses required for the continued well-being of the community. A General Plan policy was added that states:

Preserve the fiscal well-being of the community by ensuring that the land use changes within the Business Development Overlay will not result in a loss of future new revenue for the City.

Measure W, the Orange County Central Park and Nature Preserve Initiative, was passed by voters on March 5, 2002. This initiative amended the County General Plan to create a park at the former MCAS El Toro Site. Recent events, including the passage Measure W, annexation of the base property into the City of Irvine, and subsequent sale of the property, led the City of Lake Forest to initiate a series of studies, collectively dubbed the “Opportunities Study.” The overall purpose of the Opportunities Study was to examine the impacts and benefits of changes to the allowed land uses in the Project Area. At the outset of the Opportunities Study, the City Council developed study objectives, as described in Section 2.8.

Utilizing the established study objectives as the basis for analysis of the potential land use changes, the City Council approved a phased approach to the Opportunities Study, which would allow the City to proceed in an incremental and cost-effective manner only after assessing the information generated in each phase, to decide if subsequent phases of work should be undertaken. The following key tasks were approved with the three phases of the Opportunities Study:

- Phase 1
 - › Define the issues important to the City and its residents
 - › Conduct meetings with community members and other stakeholders
 - › Identify community-wide benefits desired by the residents of the City and constraints and opportunities to provide such benefits
 - › Define a process for Phase 2 of the Opportunities Study, should the City Council desire to move forward after consideration of Phase 1 conclusions
- Phase 2
 - › Evaluate proposed land use changes and associated benefits and impacts within the Project Area and city as a whole
 - › Prepare a needs assessment for an active sports complex, Community Center and Civic Center and identification of potential sites for such facilities
 - › Consider the results of the technical studies and determine whether to proceed with Phase 3 of the Opportunities Study
 - › Define a planning and entitlement process for land use changes to occur after consideration of the Phase 2 conclusions
- Phase 3
 - › Prepare a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and zone change to re-designate land uses within the Project Area
 - › Prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to assess the impacts of re-designating land uses within the Project Area
 - › Develop a citywide traffic model and traffic mitigation plan

- › Select a site for an active sports complex, Community Center and Civic Center
- › Develop a conceptual plan for the public facilities on the selected site
- › Develop schematic designs for the public facilities on the selected site(s)

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was entered into by the landowners and the City prior to the commencement of Phases 2 and 3 of the Study.

During Phase 2 of the Opportunities Study, the City accepted conceptual plans from six landowners in the Project Area, cumulatively called the “Landowner Concept Plan,” which included residential and mixed uses. The land use changes proposed by the landowners were evaluated from planning, traffic, and fiscal perspectives and compared against the industrial and commercial land uses currently allowed under the General Plan.

The City Council held a well-attended public workshop on January 27, 2004, during which City staff and consultants presented the preliminary findings of the planning, traffic, and fiscal analyses conducted for the proposed land use changes in the Project Area. The purpose of the public workshop was to provide information to the City Council and public regarding:

- The Landowner Concept Plan
- Recommended changes to the plans by the City’s staff and consultants
- Comparisons with the currently allowed land uses
- Four conceptual designs of the sports park, Community Center, and Civic Center

Through this process, a “Recommended Plan” was developed for further study. The Proposed Project consists of the Recommended Plan for development on six parcels and approval of a public facilities overlay on a portion of a seventh parcel (the “Project Area”), as more fully described below (see Table 2-3).

2.3 PROJECT LOCATION

The City of Lake Forest, with a population of approximately 77,700 as of January 2004 is an area of 16.6 square miles located in the heart of South Orange County and Saddleback Valley, between the coastal floodplain and the Santa Ana Mountains (see Figure 2-1, Regional Location). The western portion of the City is near sea level, while the northeastern portion reaches elevations of up to 1,500 feet. The Santa Ana Mountains and foothills can be seen from various points within the City, including major roadways, while views of the Saddleback Valley floor and the Pacific Ocean can be seen from higher elevations. The Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park is a prominent visual feature in the northern portion of the City, located generally between the planned communities of Portola Hills and Foothill Ranch. Aliso Creek, Serrano Creek, and two smaller creeks traverse the city. Significant portions of Aliso Creek and Serrano Creek include trails and open space and have a natural/undeveloped character. The City also has two manmade lakes, which are located within residential developments.

The City has developed as a series of primarily residential planned communities. Development within each planned community is designed to be compatible and form a consistent visual image. In other areas of the City, particularly near Interstate 5, residential neighborhoods have not developed as part of planned communities.



FIGURE 2-1
Regional Location

Not to Scale

10953-00

Source: City of Lake Forest General Plan

City of Lake Forest



One- to three-story commercial development is concentrated near Interstate 5 and along the primary arterials of El Toro Road, Lake Forest Drive, Bake Parkway, and Portola Parkway. The southern portion of the City is the most developed.

The Opportunities Study Area is the area formerly encumbered by the 65 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) contour located north and south of SR-241 and adjacent to the former MCAS El Toro (see Figure 2-2, Project Area Location). In this EIR, the “Project Area” refers to seven vacant properties consisting of approximately 838 acres (please see Figure 2-4, Proposed Project Land Use Map).

2.4 EXISTING PROJECT SITE CHARACTERISTICS

2.4.1 Land Use Designation and Zoning

Under the current general plan designations, the Project Area properties could be developed with approximately 9.8 million sf of non-residential uses. Table 2-1 shows the existing entitlements or assumed development potential for the Project Area properties. The largest of these entitlements is currently secured with Development Agreements entered into by the landowners and the County of Orange prior to the City’s incorporation. Under the existing general plan designations, no residential uses would occur within the Project Area, and open space would be limited to a Class I bike path along the Borrego Wash and, potentially, an 18-acre park that the City has an option to purchase and construct on Site 1.

Site	Gross Site Area (acres)^a	Existing General Plan	Non-Residential Entitlement (sf)
Site 1 (Shea/Baker)	387	Business Park	4,865,000 ^c
Site 2 (Portola Center)	243	Business Park	2,271,654 ^d
		Commercial	544,500 ^d
Site 3 (IRWD)	82	Public Facility ^b	0
		Light Industrial	808,038
Site 4 (Baker)	50	Commercial	435,600 ^e
Site 5 (Whisler/Greystone)	13	Professional Office	198,198 ^d
Site 6 (Pacific Heritage)	18	Open Space	0
Site 7 (Nakase)	45	Business Park	686,070 ^d
Total	838		9,809,060

SOURCE: City of Lake Forest 2004

^a All acreages are rounded

^b Site currently contains IRWD storage and maintenance facilities

^c Square footage allowed under current development agreements

^d Assumes Business Park, Light Industrial, and Professional Office at .35 FAR and Commercial at .25 FAR

^e Assumes .20 FAR per BRPC Planning Area 5

2.4.2 Surrounding Land Uses

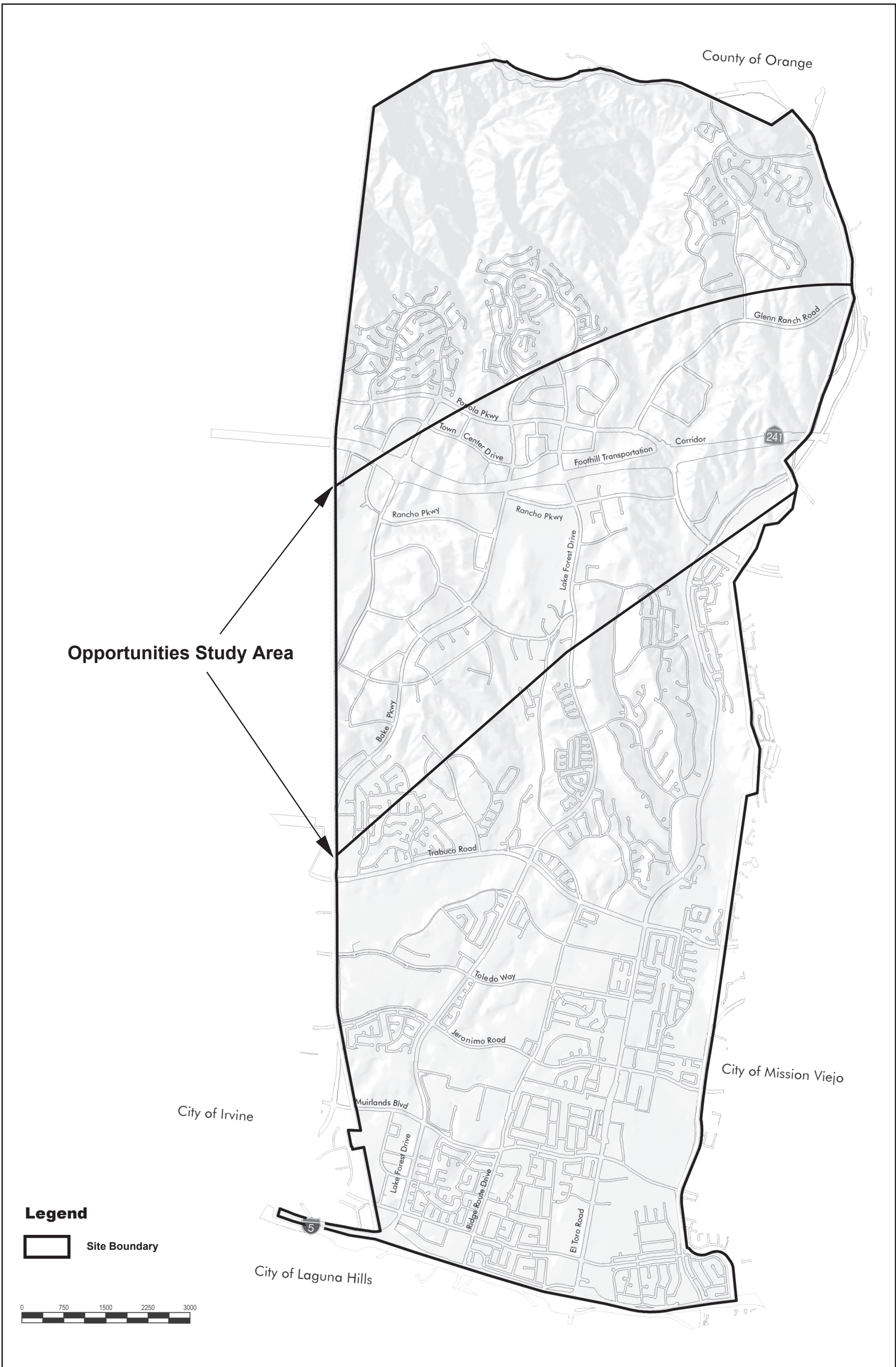
The Project Area is located within the City of Lake Forest, north and south of SR-241 and adjacent to the former MCAS El Toro. The City of Lake Forest is generally surrounded by the Cities of Laguna Hills and Laguna Woods to the southwest, Irvine to the northwest, and Mission Viejo to the southeast. The surrounding land uses consist of a mix of residential, commercial, and light industrial. SR-241 transects Lake Forest in an east-west direction near the City's northern limits. To the west is the confluence of Interstates 5 and 405. The former MCAS El Toro, consisting of approximately 3,700 acres, is located along the northwestern boundary of the City. As noted above, the MCAS El Toro property, which the City of Irvine annexed in the spring of 2004, was recently sold to a single owner via public online action and is entitled for a variety of uses, including educational facilities, agriculture, a great park, housing, and commercial uses.

2.5 PROPOSED PROJECT

The Proposed Project includes a GPA and Zone Change of 838 acres of vacant lands in the Project Area on seven parcels. The GPA would change the allowed land uses from industrial, agricultural, and commercial land uses to residential, commercial, public facilities, and mixed uses. The project parcels currently have approximately 9.8 million sf of approved industrial and commercial development rights. The GPA and Zone Change consider development of 5,415 residential units on Sites 1 through 6 and a public facilities overlay on Site 7, which is further explained below. Approximately 50 acres of neighborhood parks, up to 45 acres of public facilities (sports park and Community Center/Civic Center), and 648,720 sf of commercial development would also be permitted as a result of the project. A core component of the Proposed Project is the extension of Alton Parkway between Towne Centre Drive and Commercentre and construction of traffic improvements, including improvements to existing intersections that will be impacted by the Proposed Project. The City will adopt a traffic mitigation program to augment other roadway funding mechanisms. The traffic mitigation program will require payment of fees or completion of necessary improvements.

The technical characteristics of the Proposed Project, as required pursuant to Section 15124 of the CEQA Guidelines, are included in the tables and text below. Analysis of economic or social effects of the Proposed Project is not required, pursuant to Section 15131 of the CEQA Guidelines, unless there is a cause-and-effect relationship between anticipated economic or social changes resulting from the project and physical changes caused, in turn, by the economic or social changes; therefore, economic and social information is not included in this section. Any economic or social characteristics of the project that could result in a physical impact on the environment are discussed as appropriate in the technical sections of this EIR (Section 3.1 through Section 3.15). The focus of the environmental analysis is on physical changes, and the environmental characteristics of the project are also described in Section 3.1 through Section 3.15 of this document, which comprise the technical analyses.

Table 2-2 summarizes the main characteristics of the land uses encompassed in the Proposed Project.



Opportunities Study Area

Legend
 [Thick black line symbol] Site Boundary

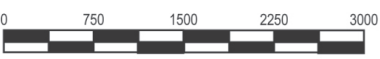


Table 2-2 Characteristics of the Proposed Project

Land Uses	5,415 residential units 648,720 sf of commercial <i>Densities vary by location but average 9 units per acre</i>
Parks & Public Facilities	Over 50 acres of neighborhood parks Up to a 45-acre sports park, community, and civic center; school site reserved on Site 1
Transportation	Improvements pursuant to LFTM, completion of Alton Parkway through Site 1
Open space and trails	Master planned to include more citywide and regional trail connections
SOURCE: City of Lake Forest 2004	

2.5.1 General Plan Amendment

Table 2-3 shows existing and proposed general plan land use designations by property. The City desires a diversity of land uses in the Project Area. Table 2-4 contains a summary of the proposed General Plan land use categories, and Table 2-5 summarizes the features of the Proposed Project. Figure 2-3 and Figure 2-4 represent the existing General Plan Land Use Map and Proposed Project Land Use Map, respectively. In addition to amending the various land use designations, the General Plan Amendment will provide an appropriate designation that will allow for residential uses to be developed in conjunction with commercial and office which will include High Density Residential at a maximum density of 43 du/ac.

Table 2-3 Existing and Proposed General Plan Designations

Site	Gross Site Area (acres)	Existing General Plan	Existing GP (Acres)	Proposed General Plan	Proposed GP ^a (Acres)
Site 1 (Shea/Baker Ranch)	387	BP	387	OS	16
				LDR	56
				L-MDR	180
				MDR	84
				MU	51
				<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>387</i>
Site 2 (Portola Center)	243	BP	149	LDR	107
		C	50	MDR	18
		OS	44	PF ^b	15
				MU	13
				CP/OS	10
				OS	82
			<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>243</i>	
Site 3 (IRWD/Lewis)	82	PF	29	MDR	82
		LI	53		
				<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>82</i>

Table 2-3 Existing and Proposed General Plan Designations

Site	Gross Site Area (acres)	Existing General Plan	Existing GP (Acres)	Proposed General Plan	Proposed GP ^a (Acres)
Site 4 (Baker Ranch)	50	C	50	MU	50
Site 5 (Whisler/Greystone)	13	PO	13	LDR	13
Site 6 (Pacific Heritage)	18	OS	18	LDR	18
Site 7 (Nakase Nursery)	45	BP	45	BP with land use overlay	45
Total	838		838		838

SOURCE: City of Lake Forest 2004

All acreages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

BP = Business Park

C = Commercial

CP/OS = Community Park/Open Space

L-MDR = Low-Medium Density Residential

^a Major circulation included in all categories

^b Major circulation included in PF category

LI = Light Industrial

LDR = Low Density Residential

MDR = Medium Density Residential

MU = Mixed Use

OS = Open Space

PF = Public Facility

PO = Professional Office

Table 2-4 Proposed General Plan Land Use Categories

Land Use Category	Acres ¹
Low-Density Residential	194
Low-Medium Density Residential	180
Medium-Density Residential	184
Mixed Use	114
Business Park ^a	45
Public Facility	15
Open Space	98
Community Park/Open Space	8
Total	838

SOURCE: City of Lake Forest 2004

All acreages are rounded.

^a With proposed OS/P:F overlay

Table 2-5 Project Summary

Site	Gross Site Area	Total Net Site Area ^a	Max. No. of Units	Total Comm'l. (sf)	Neighborhood Park (acres)	Public Facilities (acres)	Total Buffer/ Open Space acres)	Density
Site 1	387	329	2,815	320,000	26		25	7-9 ^b
Site 2	243	164	1,132	178,720	10		82	4-25
Site 3	82	49	833	0	11		1	10-23
Site 4	50	45	475	150,000	4		2	10-15
Site 5	13	12	75	0	In-lieu fees		0	6-7
Site 6	18	18	85	0	In-lieu fees		5	5
Site 7	45	45	0	0	n/a	45		
Total	838	724.2	5,415	648,720	51	45	154	8-11

SOURCE: City of Lake Forest NOP 2004

All acreages are rounded

^a Net site area represents actual developable area

^b Up to 43 dwelling units per acre would be allowed in the MU portion of Site 1

Legend

Residential Designations

- Very Low Density Residential (0 to 2 DUs/Net AC)
- Low Density Residential (2 to 7 DUs/NetAC)
- Low-Medium Density Residential (7 to 15 DUs/Net AC)
- Medium Density Residential (15 to 25 DUs/Net AC)
- High Density Residential (25 to 43 DUs/Net AC)

Non-Residential Designations

- Commercial
- Professional Office
- Mixed-Use
- Business Park
- Light Industrial
- Public Facility
- Community Park/Open Space
- Regional Park/Open Space
- Open Space
- Lake
- Transportation Corridor
- Mineral Resource Overlay

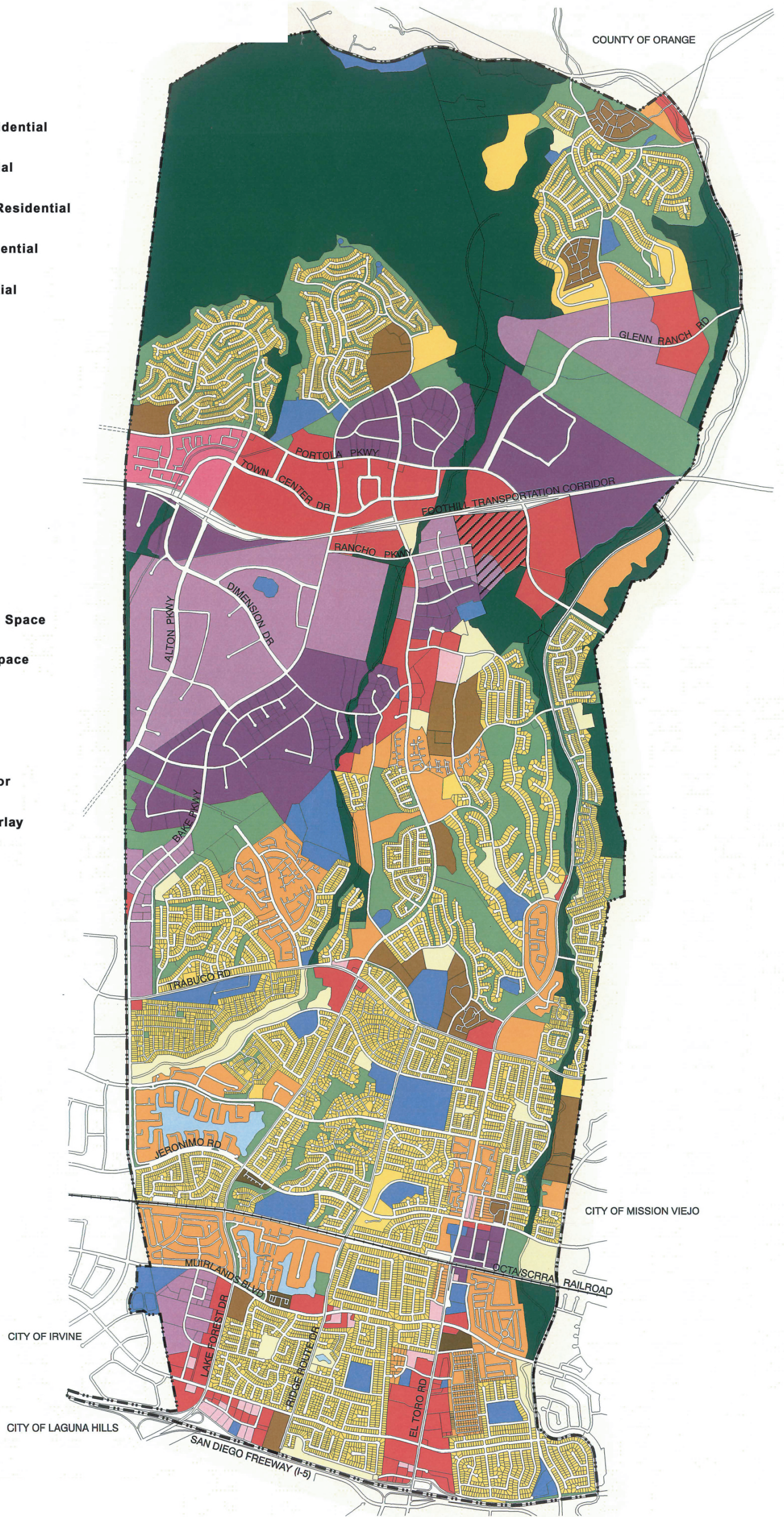


FIGURE 2-3
Existing General Plan Land Use Map



Legend

Residential Designations

- Very Low Density Residential (0 to 2 DUs/Net AC)
- Low Density Residential (2 to 7 DUs/NetAC)
- Low-Medium Density Residential (7 to 15 DUs/Net AC)
- Medium Density Residential (15 to 25 DUs/Net AC)
- High Density Residential (25 to 43 DUs/Net AC)

Non-Residential Designations

- Commercial
- Professional Office
- Mixed-Use
- Business Park
- Light Industrial
- Public Facility
- Community Park/Open Space
- Regional Park/Open Space
- Open Space
- Lake
- Transportation Corridor
- Mineral Resource Overlay
- CP Potential Community Park Site
- S Possible School Site
- NP Conceptual Park Location
- Project Site Boundary
- 1 Shea/Baker Ranch
- 2 Portola Center/Baldwin
- 3 IRWD/Lewis
- 4 Baker Ranch
- 5 Whisler/Greystone Homes
- 6 Pacific Heritage
- 7 Nakase Nursery

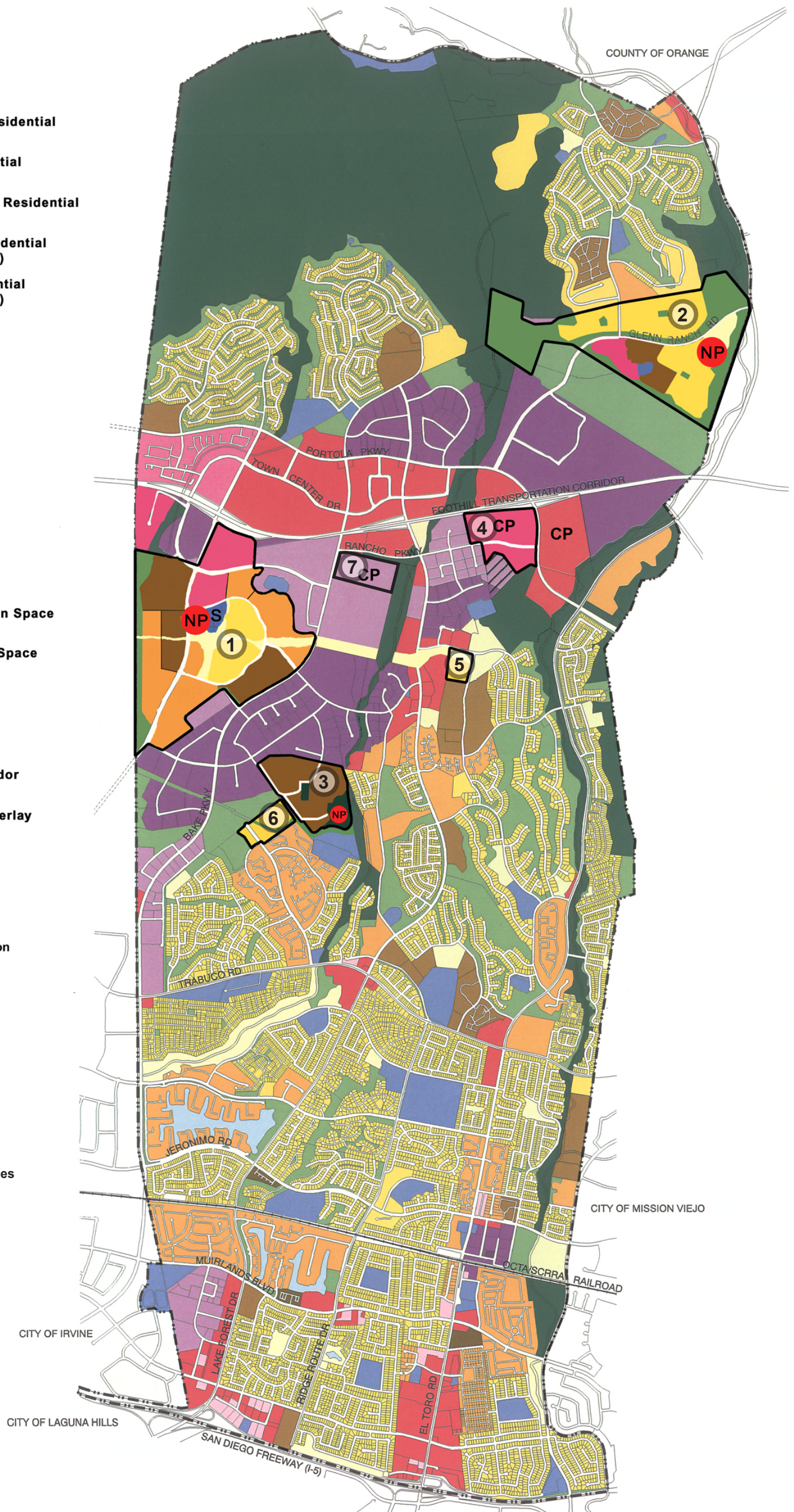


FIGURE 2-4
Proposed Project Land Use Map

2.5.2 Zone Change

State law requires that the City’s General Plan and Zoning Code be consistent with each other. The proposed Zone Change would apply appropriate zoning designations to implement the proposed GPA. The zoning designations proposed are defined in Section 9, Zoning, of the Lake Forest Municipal Code and the Planned Community text of Portola Hills and Baker Ranch.

As part of the proposed zoning, a unit cap and maximum square footage of commercial development would be assigned to each of the properties. Table 2-6 shows the proposed zoning, with the cap in parentheses. The residential unit caps are denoted with an “r” and the commercial square footage caps are denoted with a “c.” The unit caps were derived from an analysis of the densities proposed for each of the properties in the context of the densities found in the existing adjacent neighborhoods.

Table 2-6 Existing and Proposed Zoning		
Site^a	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning
Site 1	Urban Activity—Baker Ranch Planned Community	Amend Baker Ranch Planned Community (r 2,815 units, c 320,000 sf)
Site 2	Business Park, Commercial—Portola Hills Planned Community	Amend Portola Hills Planned Community and create Portola Center Planned Community (r 1,132 units, c 178,720 sf)
Site 3	Agriculture (A1)	Multifamily Dwelling District—R2-PD Planned Development (r 833 units)
Site 4	Urban Activity (Sand & Gravel Overlay)—Baker Ranch Planned Community	Amend Baker Ranch Planned Community (r 475 units, c 150,000 sf)
Site 5	Agriculture (A1)	RS-PD, Residential Single-Family Planned Development (r 75 units)
Site 6	Open Space/High Density Residential—Serrano Highlands Planned Community	Amend the Serrano Highlands Planned Community to include 85 additional residential units and zone property Medium-Density Residential II (r 85 units).
Site 7	Agriculture (A1)	A1 with Public Facilities Overlay

SOURCE: City of Lake Forest NOP 2004

For information on sites 7 and 8, see Land Use Overlay section.

r = residential unit cap

c = commercial square footage cap

^a Refer to map and legal description for location of each site.

2.5.3 Development Agreements

Development Agreements will be considered with each of the participating landowners concurrent with adoption of the GPA. The Development Agreements would be considered in order to vest the land uses and number of units approved with the GPA and Zone Change. Development Agreements entered into by the City will require compliance with the mitigation measures identified by this EIR, and will describe the means for construction of affordable housing, mitigation of school impacts, mitigation of traffic impacts, provision of both neighborhood parks and one or more community parks, construction of community facilities, density caps within the Proposed Project area, and phasing of construction of the Proposed Project.

Concurrent with the preparation of this EIR, the City is negotiating Development Agreements with the participating landowners. The Development Agreements have not been executed as of the date that this EIR has been made available for public review. Thus, none of the Development Agreements is finalized and none has been appended to or incorporated into this EIR other than by reference. Although the Development Agreements are not finalized, Chapter 3 of this EIR analyzes the potential environmental impacts that could be caused by the Proposed Project, including those secondary environmental impacts potentially attributable to public facilities funded or constructed through one or more of the Development Agreements.

2.5.4 LFTM Program

The Proposed Project includes the adoption of the Lake Forest Traffic Mitigation Program (LFTM). The LFTM Program is a set of citywide transportation improvements designed to maintain adequate levels of service on the City's arterial street system. The LFTM Program will allocate the costs of the traffic and transportation improvements through a fee program to be paid by the participating landowners.

The LFTM Program builds on those citywide improvements that are currently committed and funded. It establishes the additional improvements needed to achieve acceptable level of service (LOS) standards. In doing so, it does not rely on new or improved roadway components that are part of the Orange County Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) but which are not currently funded. Additional information about the assumptions of the LFTM Program is included in Section 3.14 (Transportation/Traffic).

2.5.5 Parkland Dedication/Public Facilities

The Proposed Project includes up to a 45-acre sports park and Community/Civic Center complex and over 50 acres of neighborhood parks. The City's Subdivision Ordinance requires the dedication and improvement of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Based on the proposed number of units, the required parkland dedication for the project would total 47 acres of neighborhood parks (based on 3 acres per 1,000 population) and 32 acres of community parks (based on 2 acres per 1,000 population). As shown in Table 2-5, each of the proposed sites would provide parkland or pay in-lieu fees to satisfy the neighborhood park requirement. In addition, in-lieu fees for community parks from all project sites will be used for development of the 45-acre sports park and Community/Civic Center. Should any of the landowners decide not to proceed with the General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and Development Agreement, the size of the public facilities would be recalculated on a proportional basis according to the number of housing units being eliminated from the Project Area.

The public facility components are assumed as a 44,000 sf Community Center, a 44,000 sf Civic Center, and a 39-acre sports park. Approximately 6 acres are needed to accommodate the Community Center and Civic Center. Subject to the final terms of the Development Agreements, acquisition of property and the development of the Community Center, Civic Center, and sports park would be funded by the participating landowners during project implementation and is considered part of the shared benefit that the City Council included as an objective of the Opportunities Study and as consideration for entering into Development Agreements. The GPA is conditioned upon a secured right to purchase 45 acres of

either Site 7 or one of the alternative public facilities sites analyzed in Chapter 4 (Alternatives) of this EIR.

2.5.6 Product Types

■ Residential

The Proposed Project includes a mix of housing types, and, based on current market conditions, two-thirds of the total number of units will be comprised of single-family attached and detached for-sale homes and the other one-third will consist of multi-family rental units (this mix of units is an estimate only and not a requirement of the Proposed Project). A percentage of the units will be “affordable housing” as defined by State law. The proposed unit types are shown in Table 2-7. The density of the Proposed Project ranges from 4 to 25 dwelling units per acre (with up to 43 dwelling units per acre allowed in the mixed-use zone on Site 1), and will be limited by provisions in any Development Agreements for the Proposed Project area that acknowledge that the densities specified in the Development Agreements include all available statutory density bonuses.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Total Residential Units</i>	<i>For-Sale Attached</i>	<i>For-Sale Detached</i>	<i>Rental</i>
Site 1	2,815	1,426	889	500
Site 2	1,132	141	525	466
Site 3	833	0	0	833
Site 4	475	475	0	0
Site 5	75	0	75	0
Site 6	85	0	85	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>5,415</i>	<i>2,042</i>	<i>1,574</i>	<i>1,799</i>
Percent of Unit Types	100%	38%	29%	33%

SOURCE: City of Lake Forest 2004

■ Commercial

The Proposed Project includes 648,720 sf of commercial development. Site 1 would include up to 120,000 sf of commercial development, which could consist of neighborhood-serving commercial uses such as medium-sized shopping centers with grocery stores and up to 200,000 sf of business park uses. Site 2 would include up to 178,720 sf of commercial development that would include both neighborhood commercial and mixed-use components. The mixed-use component is envisioned to include office or commercial uses at street level with residences above. Site 4 includes up to 150,000 sf of commercial development that would likely consist of a regional commercial use.

■ Schools

One potential school site has been proposed on Site 1, depicted in Figure 2-4. The project developers may enter into an agreement with the Saddleback Valley Unified School District (“SVUSD”) to mitigate the impacts of the Proposed Project on SVUSD, based on estimated student generation rates within the Proposed Project calculated according to a student generation study prepared or approved by SVUSD.

■ Parks

Neighborhood park sites have been identified and conceptual locations are illustrated in Figure 2-4.

2.6 COMPARISON OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND BUILDOUT OF THE EXISTING GENERAL PLAN

The provisions of CEQA require that the impacts of a proposed project be compared to baseline on-the-ground conditions that exist at the time the NOP is published, or at the time the analysis is commenced (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15125(a)). As required, the technical sections in Chapter 3 of this EIR analyze impacts of the Proposed Project relative to existing, on-ground conditions, which are for the most part undeveloped, vacant land. Table 2-8 illustrates the differences between existing conditions and the Proposed Project, and Table 2-9 compares existing and proposed General Plan designations.

2.7 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The City Council developed objectives that guided the phased Opportunities Study. The following project objectives were adopted at the beginning of Phase 2 of the Opportunities Study and now constitute the objectives of the Proposed Project:

- **Balanced Community.** Future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area should serve to create a balanced and integrated community by providing linkages between existing segments of the City through master planned trail systems, strategically located public amenities, and carefully planned residential neighborhoods
- **Fiscal Stability.** Future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area should ensure a fiscally sound and stable economic base for the community and provide the community with a mechanism to share equitably in the financial benefit derived from such development within the Project Area
- **Recreational Facilities.** Future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area should benefit the entire community by providing adequate recreational facilities, including an active sports/park complex
- **Public Space.** Future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area should benefit the entire community by providing adequate public open space and other public amenities, including a civic/community center

- **Natural Resources.** Future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area should serve to protect natural resources within the Project Area
- **Diversity of Housing.** Future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area should provide a diversity of housing types, including housing that is sold or rented at less than market rates to meet the needs of residents and potential residents who cannot afford market-rate housing, and accessible commercial amenities in order to ensure the establishment of a well balanced community
- **Circulation System.** Future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area should facilitate and achieve completion of the City's Circulation System including the extension of Alton Parkway and improvements to intersections impacted by the project
- **Level of Service.** Future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area should not create any greater impacts on the City's infrastructure or fiscal stability than the existing entitlement or uses allowed by the General Plan or adversely impact the City's ability to provide an acceptable level of service to the community
- **Development Commitments.** As a precondition to future residential and/or commercial development within the Project Area, each landowner and developer will be required to make binding development commitments determined to be appropriate by the City Council

Table 2-8 Comparison of Existing Conditions and Proposed Project

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Existing Conditions</i>	<i>Proposed Project</i>
Land Uses	Primarily vacant	Mixed-use Plan 5,415 residential units
Average Density	0	9 units/acre
Commercial Square Footage	0	648,720*
Industrial Square Footage	0	0
Students Generated	0	1,988
Parks & Public Facilities	None	96 acres of neighborhood and community parks, including sports park and Community/Civic Center
Open space and trails	Disconnected north and south portions of City	Includes more citywide and regional trail connections
Traffic	Two study area intersections operate below the adopted level of service performance standards	Approximately 52-percent reduction in ADT compared to the General Plan—72,816 ADT
Connection of Alton Parkway	None	Constructed during initial phases of residential development
Fiscal Impact	None	\$630,000 surplus

SOURCE: City of Lake Forest 2004

* Includes 200,000 sf of Business Park

- › Approval of Development Agreements
- › Approval of or amendment of Planned Community Texts, Development Plans, Area Plans, and Site Plans
- › Approval of Lake Forest Transportation Mitigation Program
- › Adoption of Lake Forest Traffic Mitigation Program (LFTM) Ordinance

The following specific approvals or permits may be required as part of subsequent development projects:

- Santa Ana and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Boards
 - › National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Construction Permit (for individual construction projects of a particular size or projects that result in point source discharges)
 - › Waste Discharge Requirements (if it is determined that individual projects would discharge waste into waters regulated under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act)
- South Coast Air Quality Management District
 - › Permits to Construct and/or Permits to Operate (for any new or relocated stationary sources of equipment that emit or control air contaminants, unless exempted under AQMD Rule 219)
- Caltrans
 - › Encroachment Permits (for individual projects requiring work within State or City rights-of-way)
- California Department of Fish & Game
 - › Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - › Section 404 approval for all jurisdictional waterways and wetlands that are not isolated (e.g., all Section 404 of the CWA areas)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
 - › Section 7 or Section 10 incidental take permit for any actions that result in a “take” of a listed species under the Endangered Species Act, and which is not already addressed in an applicable Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan
- U.S. EPA
 - › Review under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act of Section 404 permits
- County of Orange
 - › Compliance with NCCP
- Department of Toxic Substances Control
 - › Approval of any remediation plan, if required, for sites of contamination as listed in State and federal databases
- Saddleback Valley Unified School District
 - › Approval of proposed school site and approval of mitigation plan

In addition, City of Lake Forest entities involved in the entitlement and/or EIR process include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Planning Commission
- City Council
- Parks & Recreation Commission

2.9 INTENDED USES OF THIS EIR

This EIR is submitted as a Program EIR. According to Section 15168(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, a program EIR is an EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related in any of the following ways:

- (1) Geographically
- (2) As logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions
- (3) In connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program
- (4) As individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects, which can be mitigated in similar ways

In this instance, the EIR focuses on lead agency actions that concern a large geographic area identified as the Project Area, and also form logical parts in a chain of contemplated actions for a large area within the City that conforms to the previously designated 65 dB CNEL contour for the El Toro Marine Base. The program EIR will be utilized to simplify preparing environmental documentation on later parts of the program, i.e., specific development proposals for the six discrete parcels that are the subject of Development Agreements as well as one or more of the three additional parcels that could host the proposed public facilities. The EIR will also be used by responsible and trustee agencies to make decisions and provide necessary approvals for the project.

The City of Lake Forest, as lead agency, has prepared this EIR for the following purposes:

- To satisfy the requirements of CEQA
- To inform the general public, the local community, and responsible and interested public agencies of the scope of the GPA, Zone Change and Development Agreement, the potential environmental effects, possible measures to mitigate those effects, and alternative development scenarios
- To enable the City of Lake Forest to consider environmental consequences when deciding whether to adopt the GPA and Zone Change
- To provide a basis for the preparation of subsequent environmental documentation for future development proposals in the Project Area
- To serve as a source document for responsible agencies to issue permits and approvals, as required, for specific development that occurs during the GPA planning horizon

This EIR has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and City of Lake Forest procedures for implementing CEQA. The determination that the City of Lake Forest is the “lead agency” is made in accordance with Sections 15051 and 15367 of the CEQA Guidelines, which define the lead agency as the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.