## **Background**

Under California law (Government Code Section 65300 et seq.), every city and county is required to have a general plan. The general plan is to be comprehensive and long range in perspective. For cities, the general plan guides the physical development of the incorporated city, plus any land outside city boundaries that has a relationship to the city's planning activities.

The project analyzed in this Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is the adoption and long-term implementation of focused amendments to the City of Costa Mesa General Plan and any subsequent amendments to Title 13 (Planning, Zoning, and Development) of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code (Zoning Code) adopted to implement the updated General Plan. Where used in this EIR and even if not explicitly stated, the terms "General Plan amendments" and "project" include such subsequent Zoning Code amendments.

The City of Costa Mesa (City) proposes amendments to all elements of the 2000 General Plan except the 2013-2021 Housing Element, which was adopted in 2013. Those elements affected are Land Use, Circulation, Growth Management, Conservation Element, Open Space and Recreation, Noise, Safety, Community Design, and Historic and Cultural Resources. The goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations in each of the amended elements are contained in Appendix A of this Draft EIR. The General Plan, as amended, will continue to serve as the blueprint for the City by setting forth goals, policies, and programs that will guide the long-term physical development and quality of life in the community. The primary focus of the General Plan Amendments is to: 1) update the Land Use Policy Map to target revitalization efforts; 2) ensure that the Circulation Element comports with the amended land use plan, incorporates "complete streets" strategies, and addresses all current planning laws; 3) update elements to incorporate provisions that respond to State laws adopted since 2002 (the adoption date of the current General Plan, and 4) update other elements to reflect updated baseline conditions and to refine policies to reflect current City practices and programs. The City has established 2035 as the horizon year for the amended General Plan, meaning that 2035 represents the year by which the City would expect that the General Plan's policies and programs would be realized and a new comprehensive review of the plan may be warranted.

This EIR has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, § 15000 et seq.). This EIR is a Program EIR prepared in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. Section 15168 allows for the preparation of a Program EIR for a series of actions that can be characterized as a single project.

# Project Location

The City of Costa Mesa is located in the extensively developed west-central portion of Orange County. Costa Mesa is surrounded by the cities of Newport Beach, Huntington Beach, Santa Ana, Fountain Valley, and Irvine (Figure 3.0-1 Regional Map). Major transportation facilities serving the City include Interstate 405 (I-405), State Route 55 (SR-55), State Route 73 (SR-73), and John Wayne-Orange County (SNA) Airport.

The 15.7-square-mile area covered by the General Plan consists of the corporate limits of the City, as well as lands within the City's unincorporated sphere of influence (Figure 3.0-2 Planning Area). The term "sphere of influence" (SOI) applies to the area designated by the Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) as the probable, future physical boundary or service area of the City. Land use regulatory authority in the SOI area is held by Orange County. However, certain portions of the SOI receive one or more services administered by the City. Overall, planning decisions made for the City are assumed to have a bearing on growth and development in these unincorporated adjacent areas; hence the term "sphere of influence."

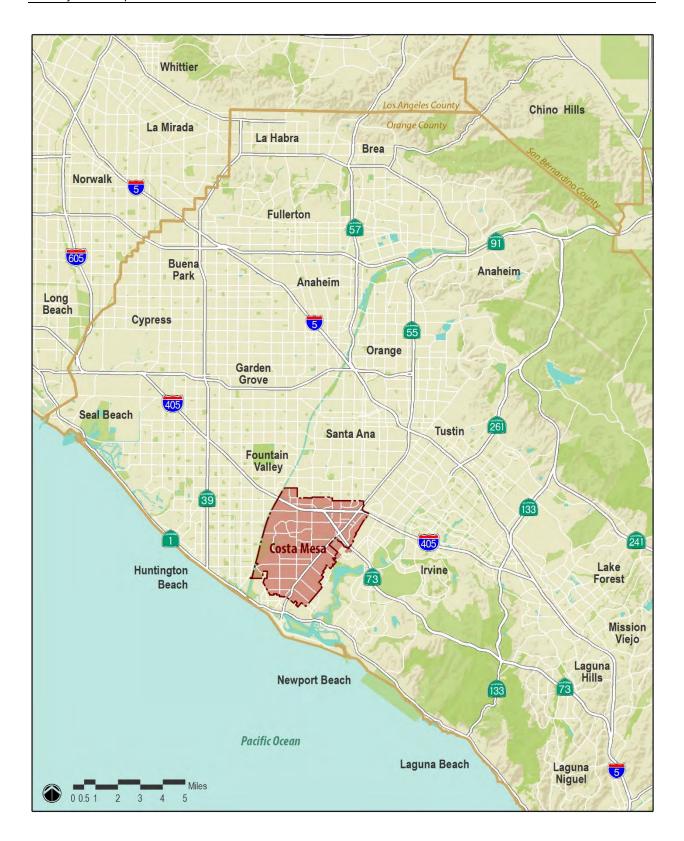


Figure 3.0-1 Regional Map

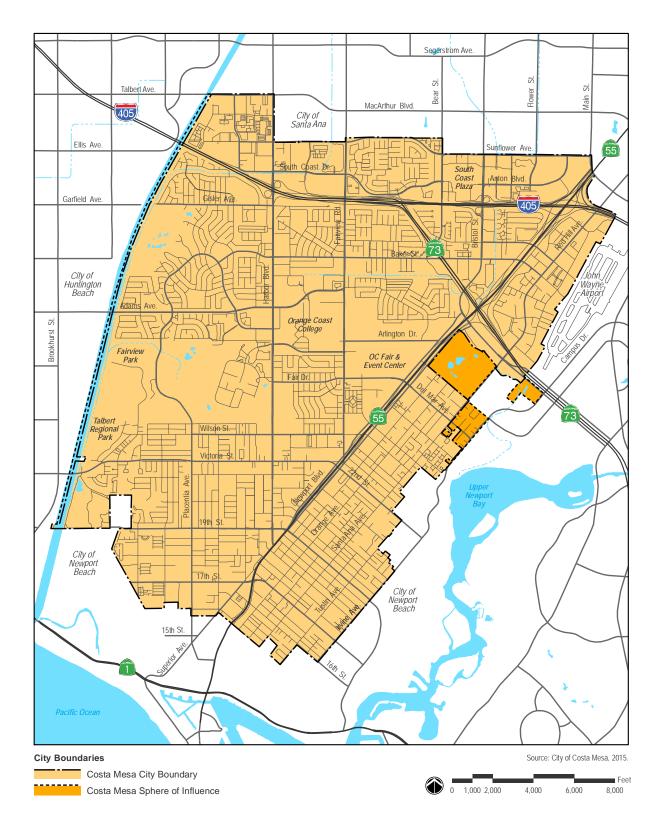


Figure 3.0-2 Planning Area

## Existing General Plan

The current City of Costa Mesa General Plan was adopted in 2002. The following eleven chapters comprise the General Plan:

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Land Use Element
- 3. Circulation Element
- 4. Growth Management Element
- 5. Housing Element
- 6. Conservation Element
- 7. Noise Element
- 8. Safety Element
- 9. Community Design Element
- 10. Open Space and Recreation Element
- 11. Historic and Cultural Resources Element

The Housing Element was updated in 2013 to meet a statutory deadline for cities within the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region; the Housing Element is not part of the current project.

## Costa Mesa General Plan Update

Every city and county in California must prepare a comprehensive, long-term general plan to guide future development in that jurisdiction. California state law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning" (California Government Code, §65300). A general plan expresses the community's development goals and embodies public policies relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private. The proposed Costa Mesa General Plan Amendments, as described above, have been targeted to address specific land use changes, to reflect current general plan laws, to update baseline conditions to 2015, and in part, to respond to community input received during the "Great Reach" events conducted during 2012-2015, including the work of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Committee.

The proposed amended Land Use Element establishes an overall development capacity for the City and serves as a policy guide for determining the appropriate physical development and character of the approximately 15.7 square miles that make up the City's jurisdiction proper and the additional area located within the City's sphere of influence. The development capacity of the proposed Land Use Plan is estimated at 51,894 dwelling units to house approximately 131,690 residents, and to support 11.0 million square feet of office space, 13.2 million square feet of commercial space, and 13.0 million square feet of industrial space (Table 3.0-1 Existing Developed and Proposed Build-Out Summary and Figure 3.0-3 Draft Land Use Plan).

As indicated in Table 3.0-1, most of the increase in dwelling units would be in the multi-family category. No additional square footage is anticipated in the industrial land use category.

All of the proposed goals, policies, and objectives included in the amended General Plan are compiled in Appendix A of this EIR.

Table 3.0-1
Existing Developed and Proposed 2035 Build-Out Summary

Nonresidential Development							
	<b>Dwelling Units</b>		(in 1,000 Square Feet)			Population	Employment
	Single-	Multi-	Office	Commercial	Industrial		
	Family	Family					
Existing Land Use	14,210	28,413	7,224	11,403	13,078	110,524	87,278
Proposed Land	14,791	37,103	11,004	13,267	13,078	131,690	104,425
Use							
Sub Total	+581	+8,690	+2,818	+1,864	0		
Change		+9,271			+5,635	+21,166	+17,147
Percent Change		+18%			+18%	+19%	+20%

The Zoning Code, Specific Plans, and Urban Plans serve as the primary tools to implement General Plan land use policies. Zoning districts that correspond to General Plan land use designations establish use regulations, development standards, and design criteria for all types of development in Costa Mesa. Following adoption of the amended General Plan, the City will undertake focused amendments to the Zoning Code, Specific Plans, and Urban Plans to achieve consistency between these documents and the General Plan and thereby allow for consistent implementation of the General Plan. Thus, subsequent and yet-undefined amendments to the Zoning Code, Specific Plans, and Urban Plans to implement the General Plan Amendments described below are considered as part of the project.

### General Plan Amendments

The proposed General Plan Amendments are focused on increasing development capacity at targeted sites, using a "complete streets" approach to ensure the circulation network functions to accommodate any new trips, and incorporating new laws into the General Plan. Also, the City has reorganized the elements (except the Housing Element) to streamline them but not to affect policy direction. The following paragraphs describe the proposed amendments.

#### Land Use Element

The Land Use Element includes an amended Land Use Plan. The Amendments will provide new development opportunities in targeted areas and along corridors that can accommodate such development. These land use changes will apply to four percent of the land area in the entire City. The strategy behind these targeted land use changes is to identify focus areas in the City that will benefit from allowing property owners to maximize development potential on vacant or underutilized properties north of I-405, within the SoBECA Urban Plan area, and along Harbor Boulevard and Newport Boulevard. The amended Land Use Plan (see Figure 3.0-3 Proposed Land Use Plan) includes:

- A new land use designation (Multi-Use Center) that applies to the Fairview Development Center
- Two new land use overlays (Residential Incentive Overlay Zone and Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay Zone)
- Site-specific FAR of 0.64 for the Segerstrom Home Ranch site
- Site-specific density of 80 dwelling units per acre for Sakioka Lot 2
- Amended General Plan designation of Commercial Center and site specific FAR of 0.54 to 0.64 for the Los Angeles Times site

The locations of the targeted Land Use Plan amendments are indicated on Figure 3.0-4 Focus Area Overview Map. For each focus area, a description of the intent of the land use district is provided below. Graphic depictions show the existing land uses, existing General Plan designations, and proposed new General Plan designations, along with likely build-out information and trip generation for each mapped condition.

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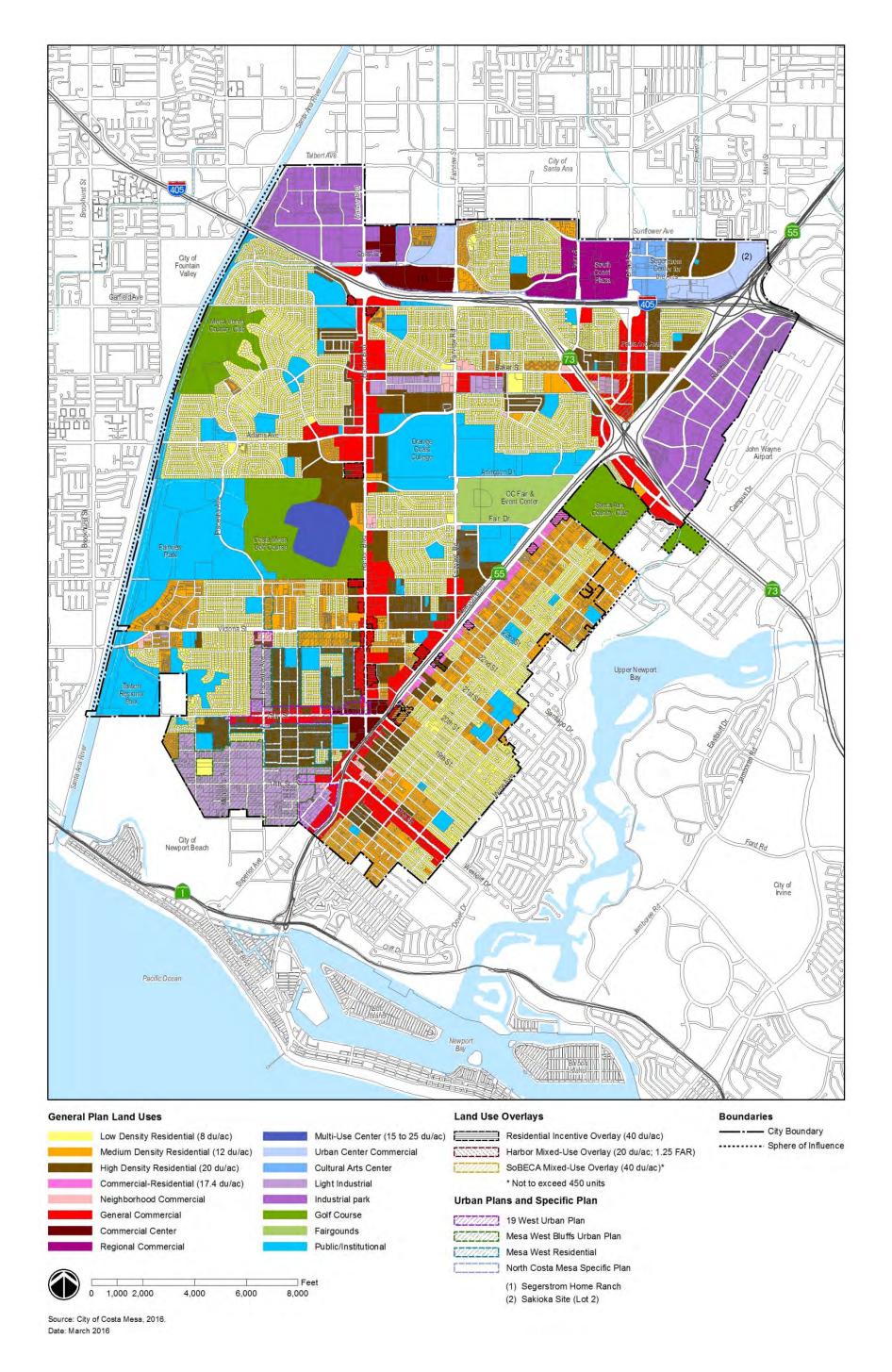


Figure 3.0-3 Draft Land Use Plan

Environmental Impact Report 3.0-7

Environmental Impact Report 3.0-8

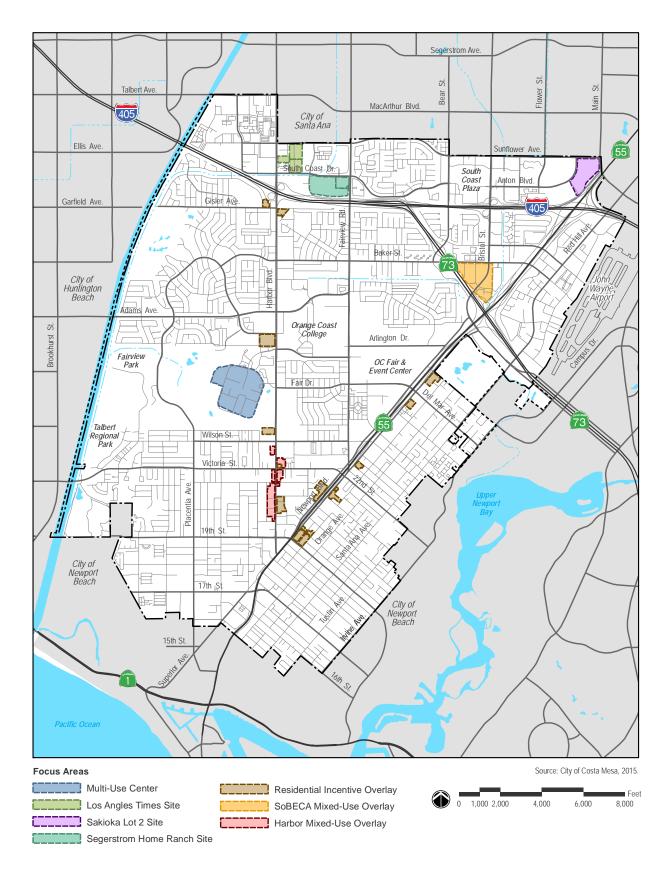


Figure 3.0-4 Focus Area Overview Map

#### Fairview

The Fairview Development Center is a State-operated facility for persons with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Currently, the approximately 102-acre site supports the Fairview Development Center. As of December, 2015, 252 individuals were housed at the Center. The State's longer-range plans to restructure or close the facility will provide an opportunity for redevelopment and reuse of the site. The City proposed to establish the unique Fairview land use designation to provide the framework for future site repurposing (Figure 3.0-5 Fairview Focus Area). The Fairview land use designation allows up to 500 residences (300 at 25 units/acre and 200 at 15 units/acre), parks and open spaces on 25% of the site, and institutional uses on 50%.

## Residential Incentive Overlay

The Residential Incentive Overlay is proposed to create opportunities for residential development at strategic locations along Harbor Boulevard and Newport Boulevard (Figure 3.0-6 Harbor Boulevard Residential Incentive Overlay and Exhibit 3.0-7 Newport Boulevard Residential Incentive Overlay Focus Area). This designation would allow for new high-density residential uses up to 40 units/acre on targeted sites. Buildings can be up to four stories in height, provided privacy concerns of established neighborhoods are adequately addressed through the setbacks of upper stories or other design approaches.

With regard to Newport Boulevard, the Newport Boulevard Specific Plan currently allows residential development but only up to 17.3 units/acre. The Residential Overlay would increase the allowable density up to 40 units/acre on targeted sites. As of 2015, approximately 237 residential units existed within the affected overlay area. The proposed amended General Plan policy would accommodate up to 1,210 units if all affected properties transitioned. Accordingly, commercial development would reduce from approximately 582,200 square feet to approximately 291,100 square feet.

Along Harbor Boulevard, application of the Residential Incentive Overlay would increase residential capacity to approximately 1,063 units on affected properties; today, these properties support approximately 84 units. Accordingly, commercial development would reduce from approximately 356,800 square feet to approximately 178,400 square feet.

## Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay

The Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay Zone is intended to promote lot consolidation within an aging commercial corridor and to provide a synergy between the lower reach of Harbor Boulevard and 19<sup>th</sup> Street, focusing on the Triangle as Costa Mesa's downtown (Figure 3.0-8 Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay Focus Area). Current land use policy designates the affected sites as General Commercial.

The overlay complements the 19<sup>th</sup> Street West Urban Plan in that it would provide housing and commercial development opportunities between Wilson Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street at a maximum density of 20 dwelling units per acre. New commercial development would have a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.00, and mixed-use project would have a maximum FAR of 1.25. Application of the overlay would increase residential capacity to approximately 491 units; the current unit count is approximately 13 units. Commercial development capacity would be approximately 321,000 square feet, or less than the approximately 337,300 square feet existing today.

#### Los Angeles Times Site

The Los Angeles Times Site is a north of I-405 and occupied by the former Los Angeles Times publishing plant and an adjacent property under the same ownership (Tribune Publishing) (Figure 3.0-9 Los Angeles Times site). The site is designated Business Park; the new designation of Commercial Center designation would expand the allowable use to allow retail at a maximum FAR of 0.54 and office development at 0.64 FAR maximum. Currently the site supports

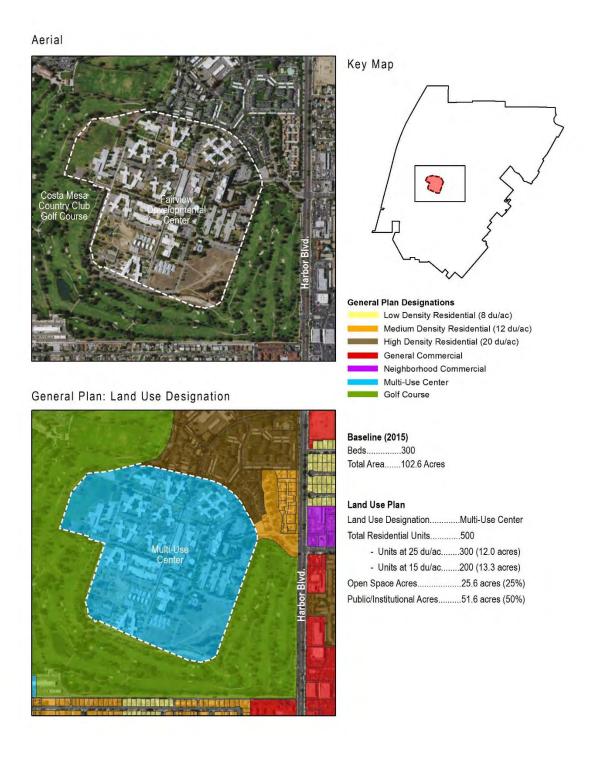


Figure 3.0-5 Multi-Use Center Focus Area

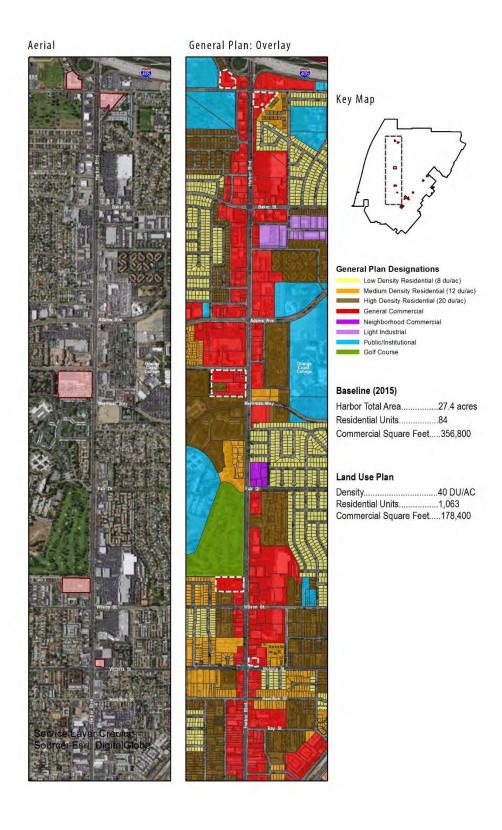


Figure 3.0-6 Residential Incentive Overlay: Harbor Boulevard

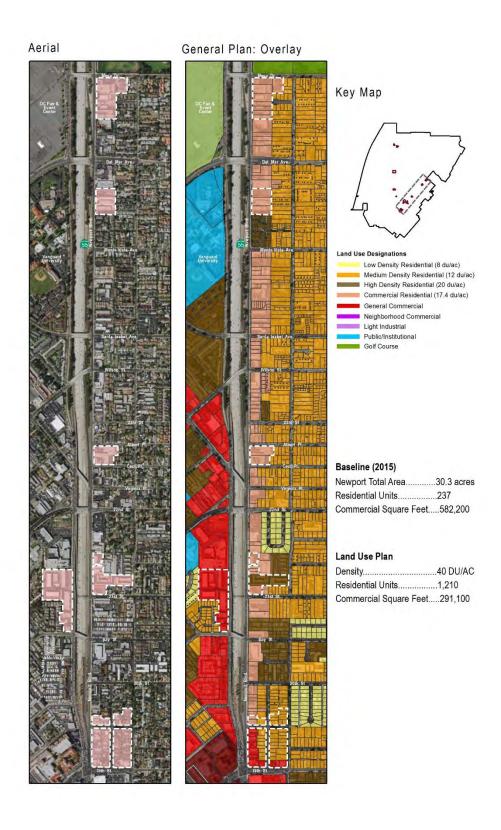
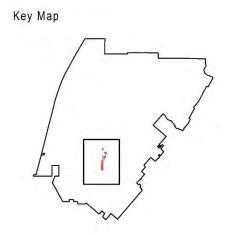


Figure 3.0-7 Residential Incentive Overlay: Newport Boulevard Focus Area





#### **General Plan Designations**

Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)

Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)

High Density Residential (20 du/ac)

General Commercial

## General Plan: Overlay



## Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay

General Plan land use overlay that allows a maximum residential density of 20 dwelling units per acre. Mixed-use projects that do not include residential components can be developed at a 1.00 FAR. Mixed-use projects with both residential and commerical components can be developed at 1.25 FAR.

#### Baseline (2015)

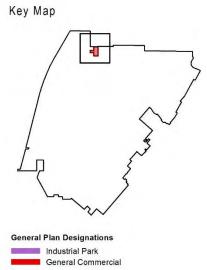
Residential Units	13
Commercial Square Feet	337,300
Total Area	24.6 acres

#### Land Use Plan

Residential Units	491
Commercial Square Feet	321,000
Density	20 DU/AC
FAR	1.00 to 1.25 FAR

Figure 3.0-8 Harbor Mixed-Use Overlay





## General Plan



#### Baseline (2015)

Land Use	Wanufacturing, Private Open Space
Square Feet	374,000 sq. ft.
Total Area	23.5 acres

#### Land Use Recommendation

Commercial Center

Land Use	Office or Retail
FAR	0.64 FAR for Office
FAR	0.54 FAR for Retail
Square Feet	553,000 to 655,000

Figure 3.0-9 Los Angeles Times Focus Area

approximately 374,000 square feet of industrial development. The proposed General Plan Amendments would allow instead for between 553,000 and 655,00 square feet of office and retail use. Maximum trip budget is 1,015 AM and 976 PM.

## SoBECA Overlay and Urban Plan

The proposed General Plan amendment for the SoBECA area would result in revisions to the established SoBECA Urban Plan, which covers an area bounded by Baker Street, Bristol Street, and State Route 73 (Corona Del Mar Freeway) (Figure 3.0-10 SoBECA Focus Area). The SoBECA Urban Plan would continue to allow a mix of live/work, retail/service commercial businesses, light industrial uses, creative studios, retail campuses, and entertainment and restaurant uses that attract local residents and visitors. The maximum residential yield within the SoBECA Urban Plan would be capped at 450 units, with a maximum project density of 40 units/acre. The new maximum FAR would be 1.25, with a maximum height of four stories or 60 feet.

Permitted development approaches would be mixed-use development that combines residential and commercial uses, as well as stand-alone uses. This designation would emphasize commercial uses and would aim to expand the established innovative, eclectic, and unique uses that demonstrate the importance of homegrown and incubator-type businesses to the local economy. The integration of innovative public spaces and "hangout" areas for special events would be highly encouraged.

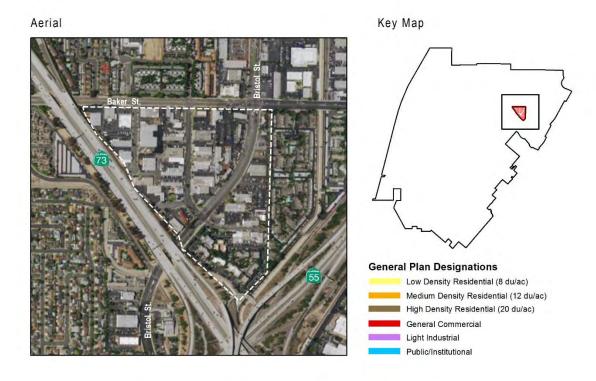
Existing development consists of approximately 491,000 square feet of industrial and commercial uses. With the proposed General Plan Amendments, buildout would consist of 450 residential units and 420,359 square feet of industrial and commercial uses.

## Segerstrom Home Ranch

The amended Land Use Plan would revise the *North Costa Mesa Specific Plan* development standards for the 43.57-acre Segerstrom Home Ranch site, which is located south of Coast Drive and north of I-405 (Figure 3.0-11 Segerstrom Home Ranch Focus Area). The *North Costa Mesa Specific Plan* allows office and office-related uses. With the amendment, the Home Ranch site would have its maximum FAR increase from 0.40 to 0.64. Also, the existing development cap of 1.2 million square feet would continue to apply. The site is currently in agricultural production and supports historical structures. Maximum trip budget for this subarea of Segerstrom Home Ranch is 1,860 AM and 1,788 PM.

#### Sakioka Lot 2

The Sakioka Lot 2 site also lies within the *North Costa Mesa Specific Plan*. The amended Land Use Plan would revise the standards in the *North Costa Mesa Specific Plan* for the 33-acre Sakioka site (Lot 2) sub-area, which is located south of Sunflower Avenue, west of Main Street, and north of I-405 (Figure 3.0-12 Sakioka Focus Area). The standards would allow residential projects to be constructed at a maximum density of 80 units/acre, but the established overall maximum residential yield of 660 units would remain the same. All development would be required to comply with the vehicle trip budgets set forth in the specific plan. The site is currently in agricultural production.



## General Plan: Overlay



## SoBECA Overlay

General Plan land use overlay that allows a maximum of 450 units. Individual residential projects cannot exceed 40 dwelling units per acre.

#### Baseline (2015)

Units......0 Square Feet....491,000 Acres......39.2 Acres

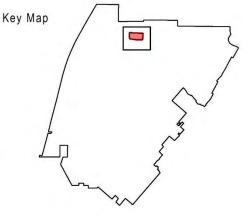
## Land Use Plan

Units	450 Maximum
Square Feet	420,359
FAR	1.00 to 1.25 FAF
Density	40 DU/AC*

<sup>\*</sup> Not to exceed 450 units for area

Figure 3.0-10 SoBECA Mixed-Use Overlay Focus Area





#### **General Plan Designations**

Low Density Residential (8 du/ac)

Medium Density Residential (12 du/ac)

■ High Density Residential (20 du/ac)■ General Commercial

Commercial Center
Urban Center Commercial

Industrial Park

Public/Institutional

#### General Plan



#### Baseline (2015)

Square Feet.....0
Total Area.....43.6 acres

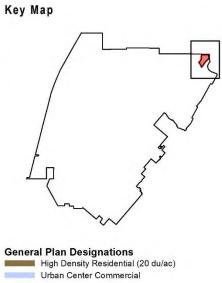
#### Land Use Plan

Office Square feet......1,200,000 FAR......0.64 FAR\*

\* Building intensity shall not exceed maximum allowable development set forth by the trip budget in the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan.

Figure 3.0-11 Segerstrom Home Ranch Focus Area





## General Plan



#### Baseline (2015)

Square Feet......0.0
Total Area.....33 acres

#### Land Use Plan

Residential Units	660
Density	80 DU/AC
FAR	1.00 FAR*
Maximum Building He	ight12 stories

\* Building intensity shall not exceed maximum allowable development set forth by the trip budget in the North Costa Mesa Specific Plan.

Figure 3.0-12 Sakioka Lot 2 Focus Area

#### Circulation Element

The Circulation Element has been updated to incorporate a complete streets approach to managing travel modes and to reflect comprehensive changes to the Bicycle Master Plan, both in terms of system design and goals and policies. Complete streets planning aims to provide for all transportation routes in Costa Mesa to accommodate all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities (Figure 3.0-13 Draft Circulation Plan). New goals, policies, and exhibits have been prepared to reflect the City's future direction related to walking, bicycling, and transit improvements. Figure 3.0-14 Bicycle Master Plan shows the proposed new Bicycle Master Plan.

## **Growth Management Element**

The Circulation and Land Use Elements provide most of the foundation for the Growth Management Element. The major goal of the Growth Management Element is to ensure that the planning, management, and implementation of traffic improvements and infrastructure meet the current and projected needs of the City.

#### **Conservation Element**

The Conservation Element has been amended to update policies regarding the preservation of coastal wildlife habitat areas and landforms, natural resource conservation and environmental sustainability, water conservation and water quality, and air quality and climate change.

## **Open Space and Recreation Element**

Because Costa Mesa recently initiated a program to prepare a new Master Plan of Parks and Recreation, the Open Space and Recreation Element has been amended to set the framework for the master plan, including identification of future park and open space improvements needed to accommodate the population growth identified in the Land Use Element. New goals and policies have been added to establish new revenue streams to fund the acquisition and maintenance of future and established parks. In addition, the scope of the element has been changed to include cultural arts goals and policies.

#### Historic and Cultural Resources Element

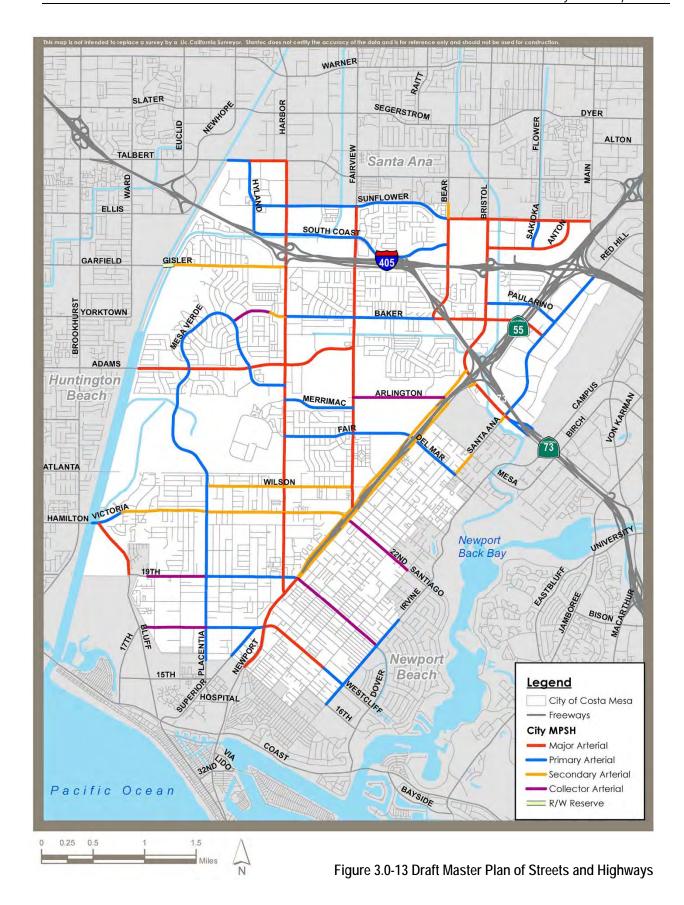
The Historic and Cultural Resources Element has been amended to include policies that encourage preservation of the existing resources and support compatibility between historical resource sites and new development.

## Safety Element

The Safety Element has been amended to reflect 2015 baseline data regarding the hazards present in the City, including flooding and dam inundation, seismic hazards, aviation safety, and emergency services. Also, maps and policies have been included to address potential flooding hazards associated with sea level rise.

#### Noise Element

The Noise Element includes updated exhibits and analysis that depict the future noise environment consistent with the amended Land Use and Circulation Elements. New goals and policies have been added to protect established and new residential and industrial uses within mixed-use districts.



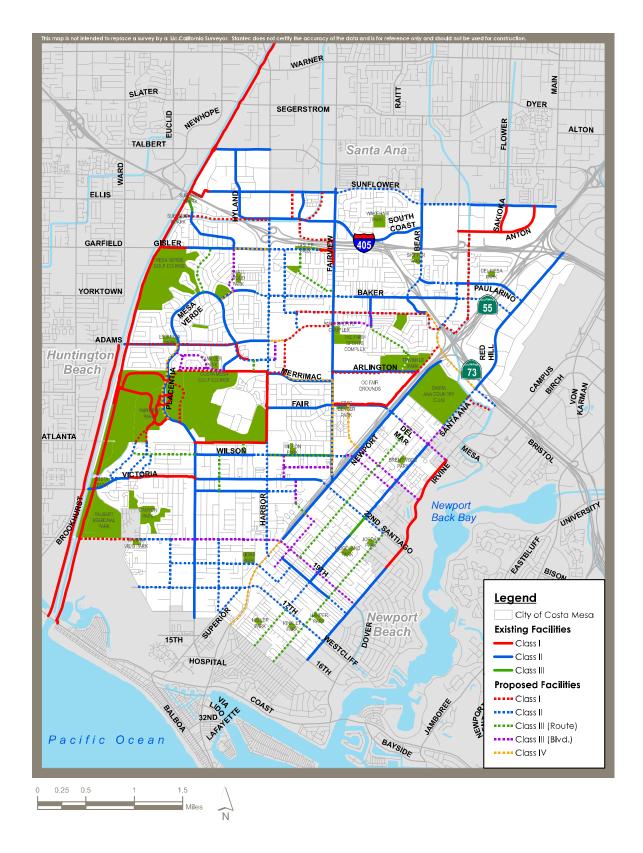


Figure 3.0-14 Conceptual Bicycle Master Plan

## **Community Design Element**

The goals and policies of the Design Element have been updated to ensure consistency with changes in the Land Use Element and to include additional illustrative graphics. No substantial amendments are proposed.

## Intended Use of this EIR

The policy framework set forth in the proposed General Plan Amendments would not result in the immediate construction of any new development. All new development within the City will continue to be subject to the City's development review and approval processes. Elected and appointed officials and City staff will review subsequent project applications for consistency with the General Plan and Zoning Code, and will prepare appropriate environmental documentation to comply with CEQA and other applicable environmental requirements.

Pursuant to Section 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this EIR is a Program EIR. The goals, policies, land use designations, implementation programs, and other substantive components of the General Plan and implementing sections of the Zoning Code comprise the "program" evaluated in this Program EIR. Subsequent activities undertaken by the City and project proponents to implement the General Plan will be examined in light of this Program EIR to determine the appropriate level of environmental review required under CEQA. Such subsequent implementation activities may include the following:

- Updating the Zoning Code
- Rezoning of properties to achieve consistency with the General Plan
- Updating and approval of Specific Plans, Urban Plans, and other development plans and planning documents
- Approval of tentative maps, variances, conditional use permits, and other land use permits and entitlements
- Approval of development agreements
- Approval of facility and service master plans and financing plans
- Approval and funding of public improvement projects
- Approval of resource management plans
- Issuance of municipal bonds
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for implementation of the General Plan
- Acquisition of property
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for public and private development projects
- Future amendments to the City's Housing Element and other General Plan Elements

Following certification of this Program EIR and adoption of the General Plan amendments by the lead agency (City of Costa Mesa), other agencies may use this Program EIR in the approval of subsequent implementation activities. These agencies may include but are not limited to those listed below. No other permits will be required for the General Plan Amendments to move forward. However, the Orange County Airport Land Use Commission will be required to review the proposed General Plan Amendments for consistency with the provisions of the Orange County-John Wayne Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

#### **Local Agencies**

- Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
- Orange County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC)
- County of Orange
- Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)

## State and Regional Agencies

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Department of Conservation
- California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (Santa Ana Region Region 8)
- Southern California Association of Governments
- South Coast Air Quality Management District

## **Federal Agencies**

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

## Proposed Goals and Objectives

All goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations included in the proposed amended General Plan Elements are listed in Appendix A.

The overarching objectives for the proposed General Plan Amendments are as follows:

- 1) Replace the current General Plan Elements with updated elements that reflect the goals and aspirations of the community through 2035.
- 2) Accommodate increased development capacity at targeted sites to expand housing development opportunities for all income ranges, including lower-income households; allow for compact, walkable mixed-use environments; and increase capacity for jobs growth in areas where infrastructure, and roadway infrastructure in particular, can sufficiently support such growth.
- 3) Ensure the General Plan, as amended, achieves compliance with all applicable State laws and regulations.
- 4) Ensure that the development, use, and maintenance of public and private lands will always:
  - a. respect Costa Mesa's heritage and historic resources,
  - b. protect Costa Mesa's traditional suburban development pattern and residential neighborhoods while accommodating new, more urban approaches to development,
  - c. provide opportunities for diverse businesses that generate revenue and employment, and
  - d. promote high-quality design.
- 5) Accommodate circulation and mobility options beyond the automobile. In all infrastructure and development planning decisions, the City looks to:
  - a. provide for the integration of automobiles, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians within the established street network using the Complete Street system,
  - b. provide greater connectivity and reduce congestion on the street network, and
  - c. promote efficient and high-quality transit use, including bus routes serving Costa Mesa.
  - d. Focus new development on major arterials, served by a variety of transportation modes.