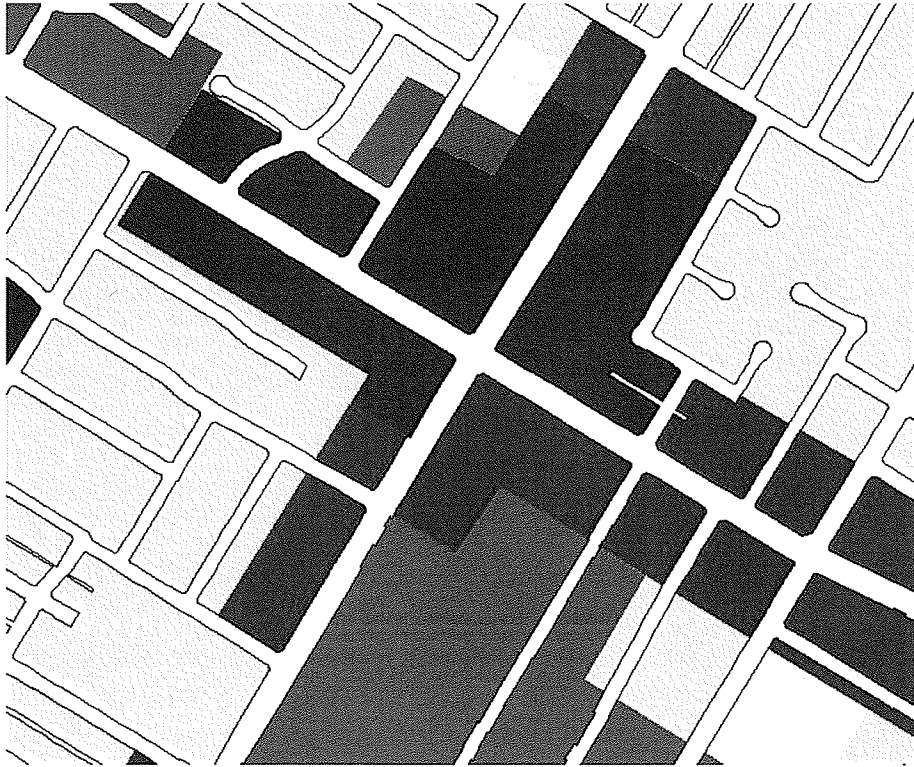


CHAPTER 1 LAND USE



VISION 2025 GENERAL PLAN DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA

ADOPTED 1-25-2005

Downey Vision 2025

Chapter 1. Land Use Chapter

ADOPTED 1-25-2005

INTRODUCTION

The land use chapter establishes the policies for determining where certain land uses, such as residential, commercial, industrial, are most desirable. The land use chapter defines the physical areas in the city serving the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

CONTENTS

1.	BALANCE OF LAND USES	PAGE 1-2
2.	LIVABLE COMMUNITIES	PAGE 1-18
3.	CHANGES IN LAND USE TRENDS	PAGE 1-28
4.	NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT	PAGE 1-30

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1-1.1	LAND USE DIAGRAM	PAGE 1-3
FIGURE 1-1.2	LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS INDEX	PAGE 1-5
FIGURE 1-1.3	LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS - NORTHWEST	PAGE 1-6
FIGURE 1-1.4	LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS - NORTHEAST	PAGE 1-7
FIGURE 1-1.5	LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS - SOUTHWEST	PAGE 1-8
FIGURE 1-1.6	LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS - SOUTHEAST	PAGE 1-9
FIGURE 1-1.7	GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DISTRIBUTION	PAGE 1-15
FIGURE 1-2.1	MAP OF MIXED USE AREAS	PAGE 1-19
FIGURE 1-4.1	EXAMPLES OF FLOOR AREA RATIOS	PAGE 1-32

BALANCE OF LAND USES

Issue 1.1. Persons who live, work, and visit Downey need areas for living, working, shopping, and playing.

To meet the needs of residents, a variety of land uses must be provided within the city. When land uses within the city cannot meet this demand, residents will travel outside the city to meet this need. This situation typically results in added vehicle trips and traffic congestion, plus the secondary effects of worsening air quality, using valuable energy resources, and impacting social interactions.

The under-concentration of certain uses creates impacts by not meeting resident demands and creating longer travel to meet this demand, while over-concentration of land uses has a potential negative effect by utilizing properties that would otherwise be used for other uses needed to serve the community. Therefore, it is important to provide for a balance of land uses to serve the public needs. Although it may be impossible for a suburban city in a large metropolitan region to be truly self-sufficient, Downey Vision 2025 proposes a diverse land use policy as shown on the Downey Vision 2025 Land Use Diagram.

The Downey Vision 2025 Land Use Diagram divides the city into various land use designations, such as residential, commercial, industrial, are most appropriate. Although the Land Use Diagram may appear to be similar to a zoning map, there are several important differences between the two. A zoning map is parcel specific with definitive boundaries between designations and is intended to implement development proposal, the Land Use Diagram is not parcel specific and its boundaries are not definitive since the intent of the Land Use Diagram is to provide a guide for the approximate locations for land uses.

**FIGURE 1-1.1
LAND USE DIAGRAM**

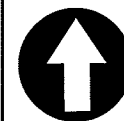
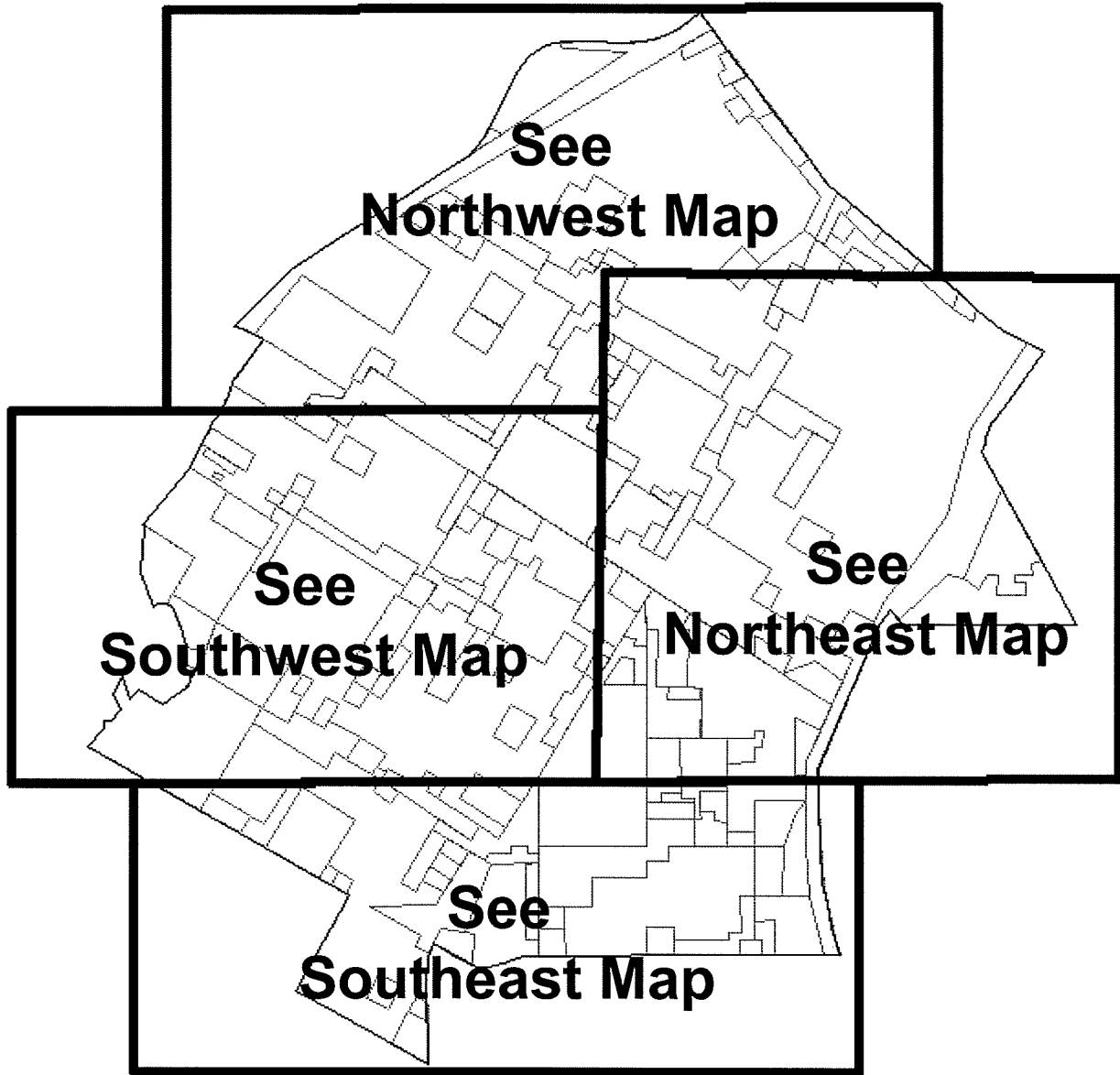


- LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (1.0 TO 8.7 DU/ACRE)
 - LOW MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (9.0 TO 17.0 DU/ACRE)
 - MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (18.0 TO 24.0 DU/ACRE)
 - NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL (FAR .25)
 - GENERAL COMMERCIAL FAR .25 TO 4/1
 - COMMERCIAL MANUFACTURING (FAR .5)
 - OFFICE (FAR .5 TO 5/1)
 - GENERAL MANUFACTURING (FAR .6)
 - PARK, RIVERBED, UTILITY EASEMENT, GOLF COURSE, CEMETERY
 - PUBLIC (OTHER THAN SCHOOLS AND PARKS)
 - PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 - PRIVATE SCHOOLS
 - MIXED USE

This page intentionally left blank.



FIGURE 1-1.2
LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS – INDEX



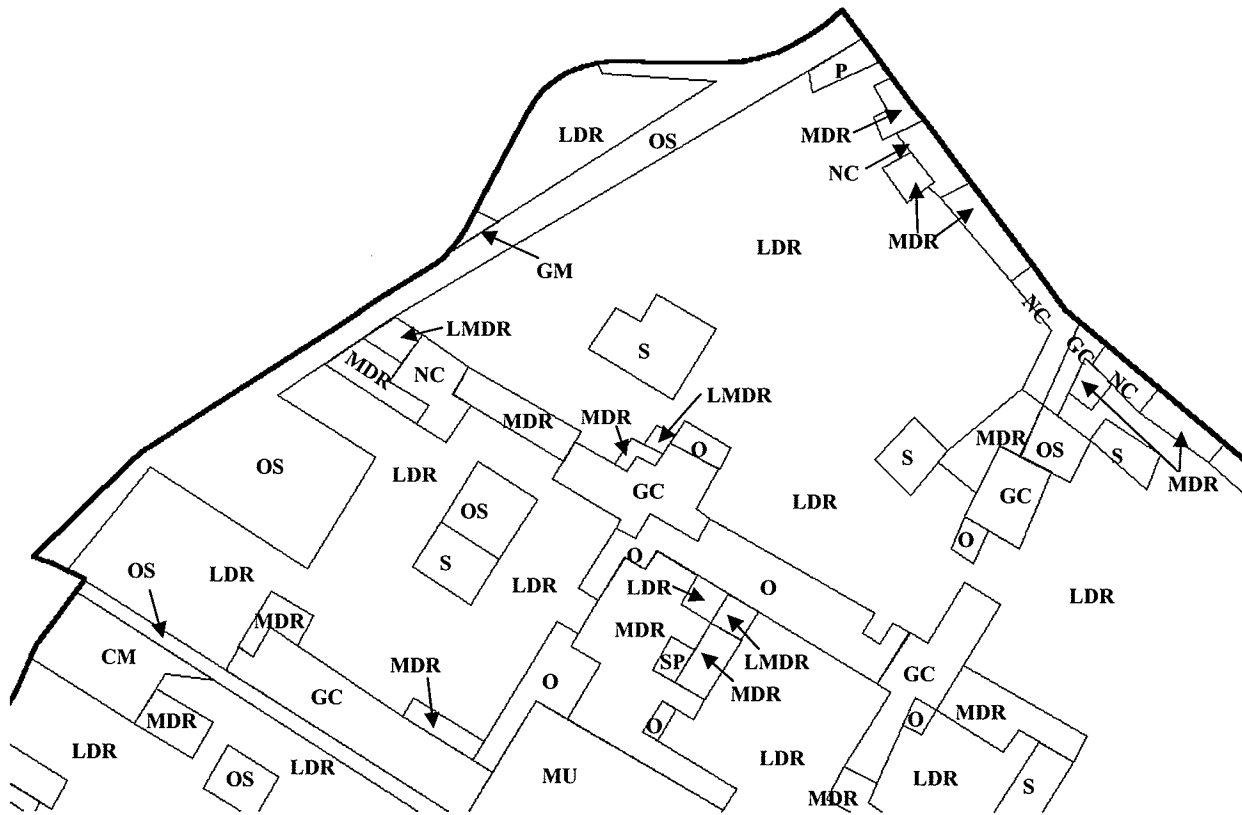
North



DOWNEY PLANNING DIVISION




FIGURE 1-1.3
LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS – NORTHWEST



LEGEND:

LDR	Low Density Residential	OS	Open Space
LMDR	Low Medium Density Residential	O	Office
MDR	Medium Density Residential	P	Public
NC	Neighborhood Commercial	MU	Mixed Use
GC	General Commercial	S	School
CM	Commercial Manufacturing	SP	School -Private
GM	General Manufacturing		

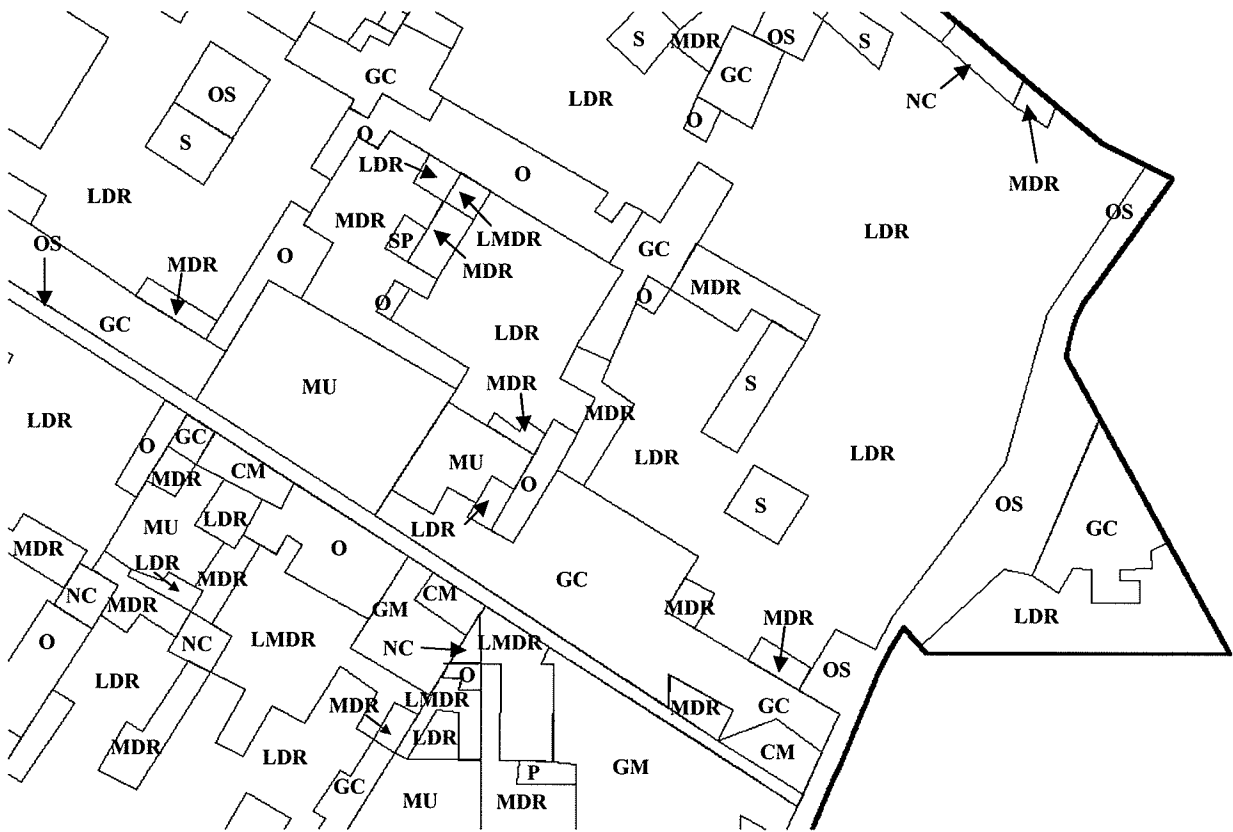


North

DOWNEY PLANNING DIVISION

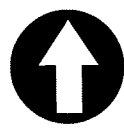


FIGURE 1-1.4
LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS – NORTHEAST




LEGEND:

LDR	Low Density Residential	OS	Open Space
LMDR	Low Medium Density Residential	O	Office
MDR	Medium Density Residential	P	Public
NC	Neighborhood Commercial	MU	Mixed Use
GC	General Commercial	S	School
CM	Commercial Manufacturing	SP	School -Private
GM	General Manufacturing		



North



DOWNEY PLANNING DIVISION

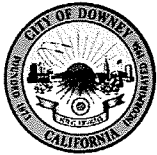
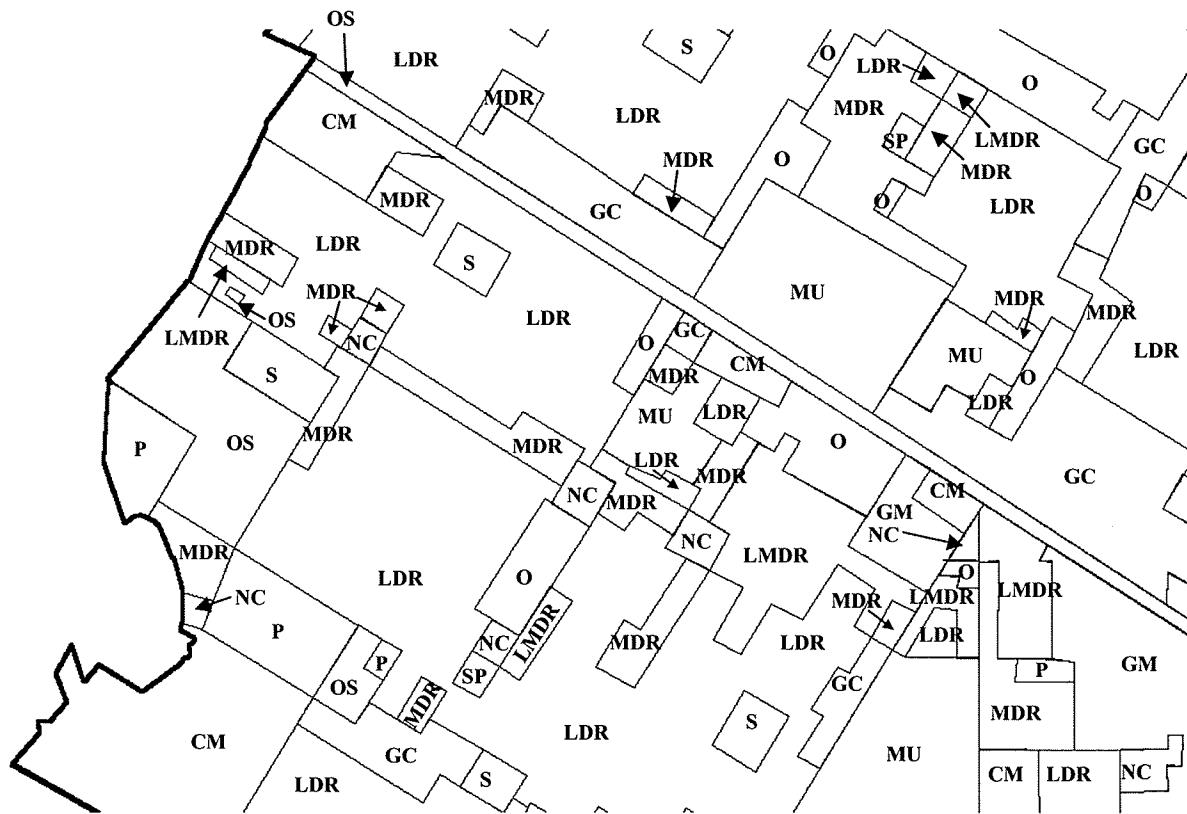



FIGURE 1-1.5
LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS – SOUTHWEST



LEGEND:

LDR	Low Density Residential	OS	Open Space
LMDR	Low Medium Density Residential	O	Office
MDR	Medium Density Residential	P	Public
NC	Neighborhood Commercial	MU	Mixed Use
GC	General Commercial	S	School
CM	Commercial Manufacturing	SP	School -Private
GM	General Manufacturing		

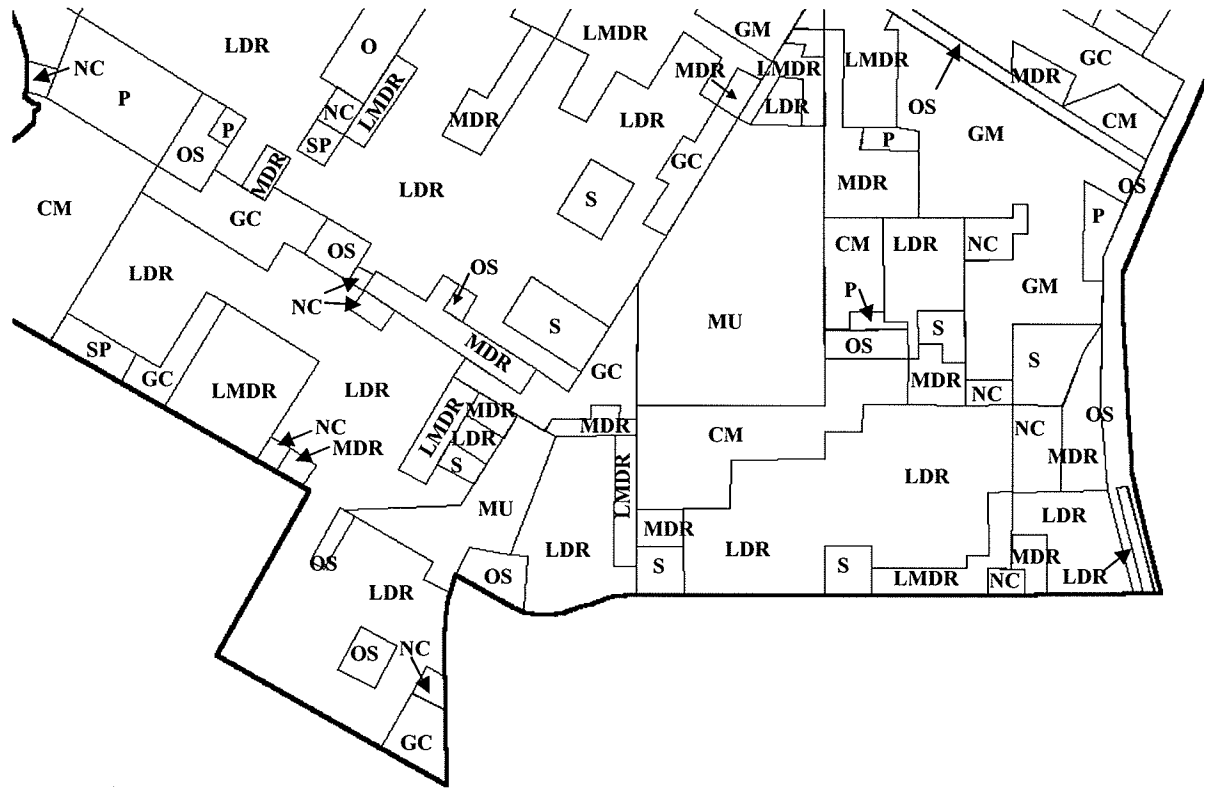


North

DOWNEY PLANNING DIVISION




FIGURE 1-1.6
LAND USE DIAGRAM ATLAS – SOUTHEAST




LEGEND:

LDR	Low Density Residential	OS	Open Space
LMDR	Low Medium Density Residential	O	Office
MDR	Medium Density Residential	P	Public
NC	Neighborhood Commercial	MU	Mixed Use
GC	General Commercial	S	School
CM	Commercial Manufacturing	SP	School -Private
GM	General Manufacturing		



North



DOWNEY PLANNING DIVISION

This page intentionally left blank

The Land Use Diagram for Downey Vision 2025 divides the city into the following 12 land use designations.

- **Low Density Residential**

The Low Density Residential designation allows typically for detached single-family residential units at densities of 1 to 8.9 housing units per acre, or roughly equivalent to a maximum of one housing unit for a standard 5,000 square foot lot. Based on an average household size of 3.17, the projected population will not exceed 28 persons for each acre in this designation. The corresponding zone for this designation is R-1, Single Family Residential, which includes several variations based on lot size, such as R-1 5000, R-1 6000, R-1 7500, R-1 8500, and R-1 10,000. The zoning also permits accessory living quarters on properties that are not considered separate dwelling units.

Typically, a maximum of one housing unit is allowed on each individual lot, regardless of size. In some areas designated as Second Unit Development (SUD) areas however, more than one housing unit may be permitted provided that the maximum allowable density is not exceeded. The SUD areas are important in order to focus population growth and additional housing onto these areas without impacting other residential neighborhoods. In other instances, planned unit developments and other projects whereby housing units share driveways and other facilities may be proposed instead of conventional subdivisions to provide added flexibility in providing a viable project. In both instances however, the project must include units that are detached and convey a single-family residential image.

- **Low/Medium Density Residential**

The Low/Medium Density Residential designation allows for a range of housing types that involve densities at 9 to 17 housing units per acre, or roughly equivalent to two housing units for each standard 5,000 square foot lot. Based on an average household size of 3.17, the projected population is 29

to 53 persons for each acre. The corresponding zone for this designation is R-2, Two Family Residential. The housing types consistent with the designation range from two detached units on the same property to attached units (duplex), either placed side by side (in a townhouse floor plan form) or stacked with one on top of another. In certain instances, other housing types such as planned unit developments and second unit developments may be permitted provided that the overall density is not exceeded.

- **Medium Density Residential**

The Medium Density Residential designation allows for a range of housing types that involve densities at 18 to 24 housing units per acre, or roughly equivalent to three housing units for each standard 6,000 square foot lot. Based on an average household size of 3.17, the projected population is 57 to 76 persons for each acre. The corresponding zone for this designation is R-3, Medium Density Multiple-Family Residential. The housing types consistent with the designation range from three or more attached (or detached) units on the same property (triplex) to larger apartments to townhouse design condominium to low-rise condominiums, provided that the overall density is not exceeded. Certain nonresidential land uses, such as churches, are considered consistent within this designation.

- **Office**

The Office designation allows for professional and medical office uses. The corresponding zone for this designation is C-P, Commercial – Professional Office zone. In the vicinity of the Downey Regional Medical Center where medical offices and other medical-related uses are promoted, the corresponding zone for this designation is H-M, Hospital-Medical Arts. The intensity of the Office designation should fall within a range of floor area ratio between 0.5:1 and 5:1.

- **Neighborhood Commercial**

The Neighborhood Commercial designation allows for commercial uses that draw from a customer base from the immediate surrounding neighborhood and not from areas outside the city or region. Consistent with this intent, uses are typically small in scale in terms of floor area size, building height, and operational activities. Examples include grocery stores, dry cleaners, barber shops, bakeries, and convenience markets. Uses are intended to serve adjacent neighborhoods and are intended to be located in “neighborhood nodes” such as properties adjacent to street intersections. The corresponding zone for this designation is C-1, Neighborhood Commercial zone. The intensity of the Neighborhood Commercial designation should not exceed a floor area ratio of 0.25:1.

- **General Commercial**

The General Commercial designation allows for a full range of commercial uses including shopping centers, automobile dealerships, hotels, offices, and automobile repair. In a contrast to the Neighborhood Commercial designation, uses are not necessarily small in scale or oriented solely towards the immediate neighborhood for its customer base. The corresponding zone for this designation is C-2, General Commercial. Since uses consistent with the General Commercial designation are typically more intense, the General Commercial designations are appropriate in areas with larger lot sizes which afford greater buffers to adjacent land uses. The intensity of the General Commercial designation should fall within a range of floor area ratio between 0.25:1 and 4:1.

- **Commercial Manufacturing**

The Commercial Manufacturing designation is intended to provide greater flexibility for providing land uses that generate employment such as shopping centers, major offices, and light industrial. The corresponding zone for this designation is C-M, Commercial Manufacturing. The intensity of the Commercial Manufacturing designation should fall

within a range of floor area ratio between 0.5:1 and 0.6:1.

- **Manufacturing**

The Manufacturing designation is intended for manufacturing, wholesaling, and other industrial land uses. The corresponding zone for this designation is M-1/ M-2, Light/ General Manufacturing. Since uses consistent with the Manufacturing designation have potential for creating traffic, noise, odor, vibration and other impacts, areas designated Manufacturing should be separated from other land uses by a major natural or physical barrier and screen. The intensity of the Manufacturing designation should not exceed a floor area ratio of 0.6:1.

- **Public**

The Public designation is intended for areas occupied by public agencies for facilities that support community services. This includes the Civic Center, the City Public Works Yard, SEACCA (SouthEast Animal Control), Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall, Rancho Los Amigos Medical Center and the MTA bus yard on Telegraph.

- **Open Space**

The Open Space designation is intended for areas that provide relief from the built environment. This includes the 106 acres of public parks in the city. Due to the limited supply of park areas, it is important that park areas are preserved. The open space designation also includes areas that utility easements, river, beds, parks, cemetery and golf courses.

- **School**

The School designation is intended for public schools offering K through 12 instruction. The corresponding zone for this designation is the Public School subzone of the O-S, Open Space.

○ **Private School**

The Private School designation is intended for locating private-operated schools offering education comparable to the K through 12 instruction offered by public schools. Three such areas have been designated by the Land Use Diagram: St. Matthias, St. Raymond, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The corresponding zone for this designation is the Private School subzone of the O-S, Open Space.

**FIGURE 1-1.7
GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DISTRIBUTION**

Land Use Designation	Vision 2025	
	Net Acres	Percent
Residential		
• Low Density	3188	51%
• Low/Medium Density	187	3%
• Medium Density	414	7%
Commercial		
• Office	163	3%
• Neighborhood Commercial	103	2%
• General Commercial	372	6%
Manufacturing		
• General Manufacturing	229	4%
• Commercial Manufacturing	304	5%
Open Space	516	8%
Schools (including Mixed Use – School)	348	6%
Public	104	2%
Mixed Use (not including Mixed Use – School)	301	5%
Total	6,229	100%

Goals, Policies, & Programs

Goal 1.1. Provide sufficient land areas for uses that serve the needs of residents, visitors, and businesses.

Policy 1.1.1. Maintain a balance of land uses.

- Program 1.1.1.1. Discourage the over-concentration of a particular land use that will preclude the establishment of other uses needed to serve the community.
- Program 1.1.1.2. Monitor land uses to retain the balance of land uses.
- Program 1.1.1.3. Adopt floor-area ratios (FAR) or comparable method to address building intensity for each zoning classification.
- Program 1.1.1.4. Discourage non-industrial uses into areas designated for industrial uses.

Policy 1.1.2. Provide an appropriate amount of land area to absorb the city's future population growth.

- Program 1.1.2.1. Identify areas to absorb population growth and support additional housing.
- Program 1.1.2.2. Designate parts of the City as second unit development areas to absorb the need for additional housing.
- Program 1.1.2.3. Promote housing projects and mixed use projects that include housing within areas designated for the downtown area, transit-oriented developments, and areas in the vicinity of the Downey Landing project.

Policy 1.1.3. Provide an appropriate amount of land area for business and employment.

- Program 1.1.3.1. Encourage land uses that generate jobs.

- Program 1.1.3.2. Discourage land uses that do not generate jobs within areas classified for job-generating land uses.
- Program 1.1.3.3. Promote a diversified employment base by discouraging the over-concentration of a particular land use that will preclude the establishment of other uses.

Policy 1.1.4. Provide an appropriate amount of land area for people to acquire goods and services.

- Program 1.1.4.1. Establish "General Commercial" areas for land uses that draw from a customer base not necessarily limited to those within the city.
- Program 1.1.4.2. Establish "Neighborhood Commercial" areas for land uses that draw from a customer base in the immediate surrounding neighborhood.
- Program 1.1.4.3. Promote the establishment of transit-oriented developments (TOD) within walking distance of the Green Line Station at Lakewood Boulevard & I-105 Freeway.
- Program 1.1.4.4. Phase out and re-designate the land use classifications for selected "strip" commercial areas.
- Program 1.1.4.5. Create a specific plan for a "restaurant row" along the Firestone Boulevard corridor.
- Program 1.1.4.6. Concentrate smaller commercial uses in neighborhood "nodes".

Policy 1.1.5. Provide an appropriate amount of land area for recreation and entertainment.

- Program 1.1.5.1. Adopt an ordinance that maintains the current minimum of 106 acres of public park areas.
- Program 1.1.5.2. Promote Downtown Downey as a destination draw for entertainment and dining uses.
- Program 1.1.5.3. Promote recreation and entertainment uses that serve needs of the public.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

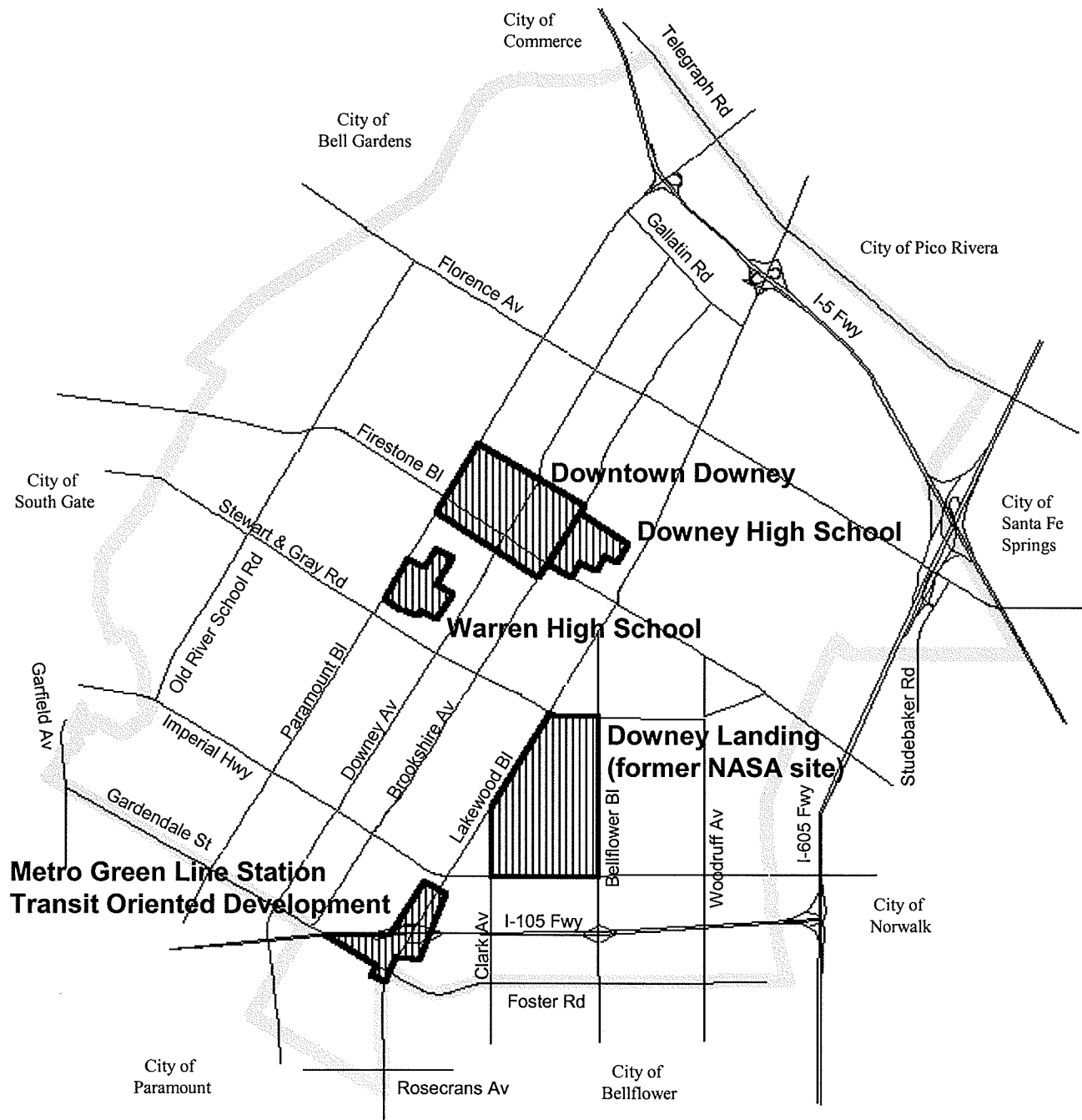
Issue 1.2. Downey has opportunities to create a more livable community.

Traditionally, planning has separated land uses into distinct designations for each land uses, such as residential, commercial, and industrial. Because this planning tradition encouraged consistency and uniformity, there was little flexibility to provide areas with distinct character or what is termed a “sense of place”. Additionally, the separation of land uses furthered the dependency on travel by car and did not address long-term problems such as traffic congestion and air quality.

The concept of livable communities provides alternatives to the traditional separation of land uses by advancing the creation of mixed use areas with special characteristics to create a “sense of place” to visitors. The “sense of place” is achievable by providing areas with characteristics not typically found in other areas.

The related concept of smart growth addresses the challenge that many mature cities with few vacant properties, such as Downey, have with absorbing population and economic growth without major disruption to its existing neighborhoods. The concept of smart growth is based on growth that does not necessarily create negative impacts on the community. Smart growth advances design that reduces the dependency and need for cars by providing convenient access to jobs, services, and homes. The reduced use of cars will, in turn, reduce the number of vehicles on the road, which reduces traffic congestion and reduce the secondary effects of worsening air quality, using valuable energy resources, and impacting social interactions.

**FIGURE 1-2.1
MAP OF MIXED USE AREAS**



SCALE
1 INCH = 0.78 MILE

North

To allow the advancement of these concepts, the city may have to deviate from the traditional separation of land use designations and adopt designations that allow for projects that allow a mix of land uses. Efforts to reduce the need for vehicle trips may include placing commercial services within walking distance of its customer base (for example, allowing restaurants near employment centers to capture lunch demand without requiring patrons to drive). Other efforts may involve the opposite approach of providing a new customer base for an existing commercial area (for example, allowing mixed use building projects with housing placed above retail units on the ground floor). Still, another approach is to reduce short vehicle trips by providing convenience commercial uses for pedestrians (for example, placing commercial uses at train stations.)



A mixed use project with commercial retail uses on the ground floor and residential uses above, located near Pine Avenue and 5th Street in Long Beach, California. .

Whichever approach requires deviation from the standard land use designation and Downey Vision 2025 had identified three areas as "Mixed Use" due to their location, development, or land use create opportunities for the city to demonstrate alternative designs to create a more livable community to meet its land use needs. These areas were identified as having the most potential to advance the concepts above. Nevertheless, the livable communities and smart growth concepts should be advanced throughout the city in other areas wherever feasible.

Downtown Downey.

The area around Downey Avenue between Firestone Boulevard and Fifth Street has historically been considered the Downtown district of Downey. The downtown area is at the heart of the community containing major landmarks such as Downey City Hall, City Library, Downey Depot Bus Transit Center, and the Rives Mansion. After the demolition of the County Courthouse and a decline of the commercial areas in the downtown area, the city took a pro-active approach to revitalizing the area.

The courthouse site was replaced by a 10-screen Kirkorian Theatre, which serves as a customer draw into the area. The city has focused its efforts on making the Downtown as a destination spot featuring entertainment and dining opportunities, capitalizing on the customers drawn to the area by the theatre and other uses, such as the Embassy Suites hotel, City Hall, and other uses. In contrast to other commercial areas that are designed as strip centers to draw in customers who pass through the area and may find the location for services convenient, the concept of a destination spot is different since it should provide services that cannot be provided elsewhere. This creates a “sense of place” for the visitor and clearly defines the city’s “downtown”.



Downey Avenue Streetscape Project

Part of the revitalization effort was the Downey Avenue Street Improvement Project which narrowed the street width of Downey Avenue from 4-lanes to 2-lanes and provided theme street furniture (light posts, benches) giving visitors the sense that the area is different than other parts of the city. The narrowing of the street also addresses the concept of “traffic calming”, which strives to slow down traffic and perhaps consider the shopping and service opportunities in the area. The narrowing of the street also provided larger sidewalks creating opportunities for sidewalk cafes and

helped alleviate parking demand, a major concern in the area, by providing diagonal parking. The city should continue to apply these features to other streets in the Downtown area.

Since parking is the major obstacle to development of the Downtown area, the city has adopted standards to address parking in the downtown. First, the city took a pro-active role in providing public parking, either on-street or city-owned parking lots, to meet parking demand in the area. Second, the city established a Downtown Overlay zone in 1999 that, among other things, by reducing the number of parking required for tenants based on the factoring that customers that visit the Downtown area may visit more than one tenant. For example, a visitor to a theatre may dine at a restaurant nearby prior to the show and have drinks at a café after the show so three businesses may require only one parking

space in this instance. The demand for parking by tenants is reduced since customers for dining and entertainment uses tend to travel in groups thereby reducing the number of parking spaces needed, on average, per customer. Third, the city established a parking credit program to facilitate the establishment of retail, dining, and entertainment uses based on the availability of public parking spaces. Since adoption of these measures, several new cafes and entertainment uses have opened in the area.

Although the Downtown's daytime population is relatively high, given that a large customer base is provided by the hotel, City Hall, and the various office uses in the area, the nighttime population in the area is significantly lower since most offices close after business hours and a smaller customer base to support the remaining open businesses. In order for the Downtown to ultimately reach its potential, it needs to increase its nighttime population. Additional housing in the Downtown is one of the solutions to address nighttime population concern. Added housing will not only increase the nighttime population of the area to increase the customer base but is ideal because it will reduce parking demand and traffic congestion by making pedestrian travel convenient. Although there is already some housing in the Downtown area, additional housing is needed to provide a diversity of the type of housing to fit different lifestyle needs.

The maximum density for the "Mixed Use" designation is equivalent to that of the "Medium Density Residential" designation of 24 housing units per acre. Based on an average household size of 3.17, the projected population is 76 persons for each acre. The intensity of the Mixed Use designation should not exceed a floor area ratio of 5:1.

Downey Landing.

The Rockwell plant was once the largest employer in the City. Its closure in 1999 had a huge impact on the city's economy due to not only the quantity of persons employed, but also the high quality of jobs. The city designated the area as mixed use to provide for the plant site's re-use as an employment center and address land use needs.

To promote land uses at a site and replacing the conventional zoning, the City Council adopted Downey Landing Specific Plan. The specific plan proposes a variety

of uses on the 168-acre site including a retail shopping center adjacent to Stewart & Gray Road), a public park and learning center/museum dedicated to the Space Shuttle (which was constructed at the site) along Clark Avenue, a hospital to be operated by Kaiser along Imperial Highway.

The most distinct aspect of the site will be the Downey Studio, which will be a movie production studio located within the main hangar formerly used for aircraft construction. Due to the high ceiling of the hangar building, the building is ideal for indoor movie production and has already been used for production for several major motion pictures. The movie production aspect of the project is important since this will be the first project in the southeast County area to capitalize on the entertainment economic sector which is an important part of the Countywide economy and the project may serve as a catalyst for future entertainment related projects in the City. The intensity of the Mixed Use designation should not exceed a floor area ratio of 5:1.

The city should promote development of the properties surrounding the Downey Landing site to complement the land uses on the Downey Landing site itself. This may include commercial uses needed by employees at the site (for example, restaurants within walking distance so customers do not need to drive) or industries needed to support the main businesses at the site (for example, designers needed for movie production). Because the

conventional zoning designation may be too broad, a specific plan for the surrounding properties should be developed to attract the types of uses which will best complement the Downey Landing site. One of these uses may be housing since providing housing within walking distances of employment centers is consistent with smart growth principles by promoting walking and reducing traffic congestion.



The former NASA site has an area of 168 acres

Green Line MTA Station.

In 1998, the portion of the I-105 Freeway that crosses the southern part of the City was completed. The I-105 project includes the MTA Green Line light rail line along the freeway median and a transit station within Downey at Lakewood Boulevard. With the gradual completion of the rail network, it is now possible to travel from Downey to Downtown Los Angeles, Hollywood, Long Beach, and Pasadena and near LAX entirely by train. Due to the accessibility of the rail network, many communities have advanced transit-oriented developments (TOD) to capitalize on the growing number of passengers.

Convenience commercial uses (dry cleaners, grocery, cafes) are the most obvious types of uses that would benefit from placement near the station and capitalize on transit passengers already in the area either en route to other transit (buses), picked up by other vehicles, or to their own vehicles at the nearby park-and-ride lots. These



convenience uses would benefit the city by lessening traffic congestion by reducing the number of trips that passengers must make to run errands, especially for those that would otherwise drive to their next destination and adding more vehicles trips on local streets. These uses would go even further to lessen the drawbacks of using transit by providing incentives in the form of added convenience for transit users.

Further convenience would be provided by housing within transit-oriented developments. Although there is already some housing in the area, additional housing could be considered to provide a diversity of the type of housing to fit different lifestyle needs and also provide a certain amount of concentration of housing to have the desired impact. The housing may take the form of housing atop retail uses, or may be located at ground level in proximity to commercial areas.

Presently, there are no commercial businesses in the vicinity of the Green Line station to take advantage of foot traffic.

The Downey Vision 2025 land use diagram designates the areas surrounding the Green Line Station as “Mixed Use” to encourage transit-oriented development. The “Mixed Use” area extends about a quarter-mile from the station in every direction since this distance is the standard maximum walking distance for the region. The maximum density for the “Mixed Use” designation is equivalent to that of the “Medium Density Residential” designation of 24 housing units per acre. Based on an average household size of 3.17, the projected population is 76 persons for each acre. The intensity of the Mixed Use designation should not exceed a floor area ratio of 5:1.

Goals, Policies, & Programs

Goal 1.2. Advance livable community concepts.

Policy 1.2.1. Promote livable communities concepts that allow added flexibility in addressing land use needs.

- Program 1.2.1.1. Promote project designs that reduce dependency on vehicles and promote pedestrian, transit, and alternate modes of travel.
- Program 1.2.1.2. Promote mixed-use developments with housing on the same site or in proximity to commercial services to reduce the need for trips by vehicles.
- Program 1.2.1.3. Promote commercial and residential uses in proximity to transit stops to reduce dependency on vehicles.
- Program 1.2.1.4. Provide dining opportunities within walking distances of employment centers.
- Program 1.2.1.5. Promote the establishment of child-care centers near transportation routes and employment centers.
- Program 1.2.1.6. Promote the placement of buildings at or near the public right-of-way with a primary or secondary entryway facing the sidewalk.

Policy 1.2.2. Focus on areas where livable communities concepts are most likely have the most impact to set a catalyst for similar projects elsewhere in the city.

- Program 1.2.2.1. Promote the downtown area as a destination point for entertainment, dining, civic, and other activities.
- Program 1.2.2.2. Capitalize on existing pedestrian traffic generated in the Downtown area by the movie theater, hotel, civic center and offices.
- Program 1.2.2.3. Promote housing, mixed use housing, and other land uses that will generate nighttime pedestrian traffic in the Downtown.
- Program 1.2.2.4. Use the development of the Downey Landing site as a catalyst for further economic development, including housing, on properties along the periphery of the site.
- Program 1.2.2.5. Adopt a specific plan for the areas surrounding the Downey Landing site with uses complimentary to the primary uses on the Downey Landing site.
- Program 1.2.2.6. Promote transit-oriented development at the MTA Green Line Station at Lakewood Boulevard that includes commercial services and mixed-use housing projects to capitalize on the passenger boardings.

CHANGES IN LAND USE TRENDS

Issue 1.3. Downey is a mature community experiencing significant change.

Downey is located within the Southern California region which is experiencing significant change. Addressing these changes is a challenge for any community, but more so for Downey since most of the city was primarily developed during the time period of the 1950s and 1960s. Buildings and infrastructure have also matured. The mature status of the city creates opportunities for reinvestment and revitalization. It may also be an opportunity to save and renovate structures that are important to the history of the city.

The current development standards contained in the Downey Municipal Code were adopted in 1977. Although some sections have been amended since then, most sections are in the need of updating to reflect changes in zoning and planning trends over the past 25 years.

Another challenge is the land use pattern upon which the city was developed which poses constraints on responding to changes in land use and zoning trends. Downey's circulation and land use patterns were established prior to its incorporation in 1956 when most land use decisions were made by county administrators.

In some areas, incompatible land uses (such as residential abutting industrial) were established next to one another. It is important to provide buffers between these uses. In other areas, a variety of land uses were established in areas where some of these land uses are no longer consistent with the land use designation (such as residential located in commercial corridors). Very often, the inconsistent land uses were established through the approvals of zone exceptions instead of changing the underlying zoning. As properties are developed, it is important to resolve inconsistencies among the zoning, general plan, and land use of properties, and to revoking zone exceptions and other zoning entitlements no longer used.

Goals, Policies, & Programs

Goal 1.3. Address changes in land use and zoning trends.

Policy 1.3.1 Minimize or eliminate conflicts where incompatible land uses are in proximity to each other.

- Program 1.3.1.1. Discourage the establishment of incompatible land uses in proximity.
- Program 1.3.1.2. Promote certain land use designations or land use as buffers between incompatible land uses.
- Program 1.3.1.3. Promote setback, wall, landscape, and other buffers to reduce conflicts where incompatible land uses are in proximity.
- Program 1.3.1.4. Consider the placement of buildings to serve as buffers between incompatible land uses.
- Program 1.3.1.5. Encourage land uses consistent with the area's designation as properties recycle.
- Program 1.3.1.6. Remove land uses at locations inconsistent with the area's designation as properties recycle.

Policy 1.3.2. Monitor and address changes in land use trends.

- Program 1.3.2.1. Adopt a comprehensive update of the zoning chapter of the municipal code.
- Program 1.3.2.2. Adjust the codes, policies, and regulations in response to changes in land use trends.
- Program 1.3.2.3. Change the zoning of properties where inconsistent with general plan land use designations.
- Program 1.3.2.4. Revoke unused zone exceptions and other zoning entitlements that are no longer used.
- Program 1.3.2.5. Monitor progress on the goals, policies and programs of the General Plan.

- Program 1.3.2.6. Coordinate with and monitor actions by federal, state, regional, and other local agencies regarding issues that impact Downey.
- Program 1.3.2.7. Encourage the grouping of adjoining small or odd shaped parcels in order to create more viable developments.

NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT

Issue 1.4. Downey has stable residential neighborhoods with high-quality character.

One of the primary assets of Downey is its stable residential neighborhoods. Therefore, it is important that the stable residential neighborhoods are maintained and enhanced because neighborhoods are the building blocks of the community.

One of the primary factors in the stability of neighborhoods has been the proportion of housing units occupied by owner-occupants. Typically, owners who live on their properties, including multiple-unit properties where some units are rented, tend to move less often and maintain their property at a better state than owners who do not live in their units.

Increasing opportunities for renters to become homeowners will enhance the high-quality character of the residential neighborhoods. To accomplish this, the city promotes expanding the amount of land available for construction of ownership-based housing and promotes the construction of ownership-based housing in existing residential zones. The ownership-based housing includes planned unit developments, townhouses, and condominiums, which typically provide greater opportunities due to increased affordability and greater number of units.

Another factor contributing to the stability of neighborhoods is the cohesion of certain neighborhoods, which were



provided with neighborhood names and identities by the original developer. Although many residents no longer utilize the original neighborhood names and identities, there are opportunities to foster cohesion of their neighborhoods by publicizing the history of these neighborhoods. Furthermore, certain neighborhoods built as tract housing established homeowners associations (HOA) at the time of original development and these may be re-

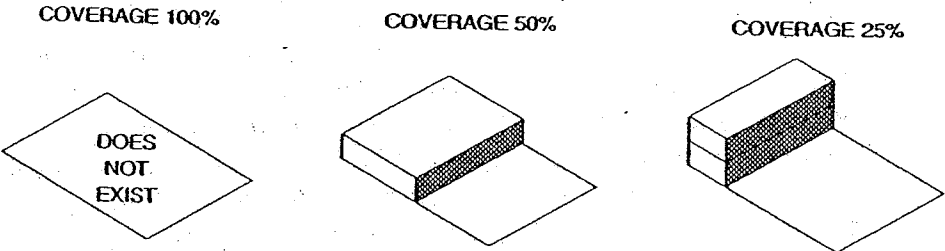
established to develop ways to enhance the neighborhood. Even areas that had no history of HOAs may establish neighborhood associations to establish a neighborhood identity.

The organization of neighborhood associations is important to help neighborhood residents decide on the appropriate character of the neighborhood. For instance, although some of Downey's oldest neighborhoods have homes with a variety of shapes, sizes, and architectural styles, many of Downey's residential neighborhoods were constructed in the 1950s and 1960s with tract homes that are typically single-story, 1200-square foot, low sloping roof, Ranch-style residences. Due to changes in the real estate market where 2400-square foot homes are the norm, many of these tract homes have since been replaced or modified by adding a second story and the Ranch architectural style replaced with a more contemporary architectural style. There has been a concern over the increasingly larger size of homes in what has been coined by planners as "mansionization".

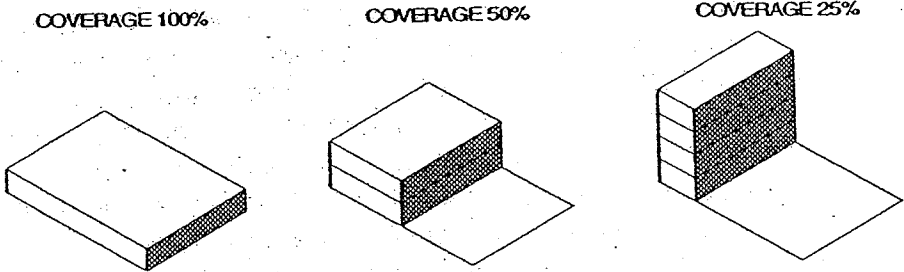
"Mansionization" issues are typically addressed by determining the appropriate relationship between a building's floor area and the property's lot area, which is termed floor area ratio (FAR). The Downey Municipal Code does not have a floor area ratio provision for single-family homes so home sizes are restricted by a lot coverage maximum restriction of 50-percent. Therefore under present regulations, a lot with an area of 5,000 square feet, the minimum size allowed in the R-1 5000 zone, may accommodate a 2-story home with a maximum floor area up to 5,000-square foot (or 2,500-square foot if 1-story.) Under a FAR provision, the maximum floor area would be a percentage of the lot area. For example, a FAR of .5 would place a maximum floor area of 2,500.

**FIGURE 1-4.1
EXAMPLES OF FLOOR AREA RATIOS**

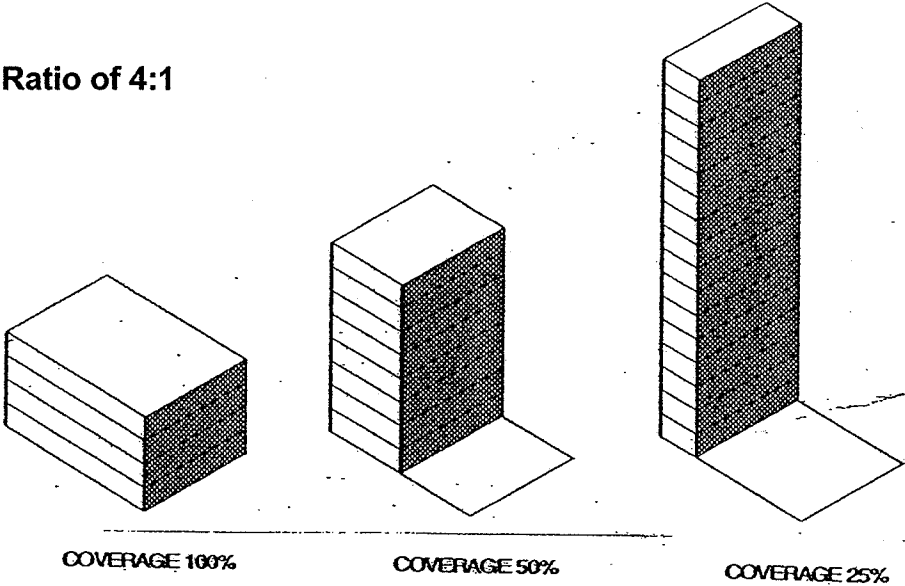
Floor Area Ratio of .5:1



Floor Area Ratio of 1:1



Floor Area Ratio of 4:1



Although a FAR provision would address overall size of the structure, there are other issues with larger homes including the bulk and massing of structures along the street façade, 2-story walls with no recessed footprint for the second floor casting shadows on adjacent properties, artificial increases in ground elevation creating a “tower” effect onto adjacent property, and removal of mature trees that would otherwise have soften wall surfaces. There are the addition impacts directly affecting smaller homes that immediately abutting these large homes including reduced privacy, obstruction of views, and blocked sunlight. Furthermore, there is the concern that larger homes are out of scale with the existing homes in the neighborhood and, therefore, affecting the visual appearance of certain neighborhoods.

However, the neighborhoods of Downey are distinct from one another. Therefore, not all neighborhoods necessarily experience negative impacts from the construction of large homes. In certain areas, the construction of large homes may have a positive effect on a neighborhood by allowing homeowners to optimize use of their properties while upgrading the property values of the adjacent neighborhood in what real estate economist term “positive externalities”. Furthermore, the expansion of a large home in a neighborhood may promote the construction of more expansions thereby upgrading certain neighborhoods. Therefore, the formation of neighborhood associations may lead to addressing the “mansionization” issue.

Goals, Policies, & Programs

Goal 1.4. Protect and enhance the residential neighborhoods.

Policy 1.4.1. Promote neighborhood identity.

- Program 1.4.1.1. Promote the use of neighborhood names to provide areas with identity.
- Program 1.4.1.2. Encourage the establishment of neighborhood associations or the re-establishment of home owner associations to develop ways to enhance residential neighborhoods.

- Program 1.4.1.3. Use the designation of neighborhood preservation areas to promote neighborhood identification.
- Program 1.4.1.4. Promote public participation in the planning process.
- Program 1.4.1.5. Provide public information on ways residents and property owners can improve their neighborhoods.

Policy 1.4.2. Promote residential construction that complements existing neighborhoods.

- Program 1.4.2.1. Discourage residential construction not in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Program 1.4.2.2. Adopt standards to address the appropriate relationship between building size and lot size, such as maximum floor area ratio.
- Program 1.4.2.3. Promote building designs with second story additions to address scale, bulk and massing.
- Program 1.4.2.4. Encourage developments to consider impacts to privacy, views, and sunlight on adjacent properties.
- Program 1.4.2.5. Discourage the removal of trees and other vegetation.
- Program 1.4.2.6. Discourage unnecessary artificial changes to natural topography and differences elevation levels at property boundaries.
- Program 1.4.2.7. Maintain the single-family character of the low density residential areas.

Policy 1.4.3. Promote home ownership.

- Program 1.4.3.1. Promote ownership-based housing, such as condominiums, townhouses, and planned unit developments.

- Program 1.4.3.2. Promote first-time homebuyer programs and other programs to help renters become homeowners.

