

The Land Use Plan

In response to the desire of the community to maintain Manhattan Beach as a city with a small-town feel, the City has developed this Land Use Plan to guide the development, maintenance, and improvement of land and properties for the next twenty years.

Density and Intensity

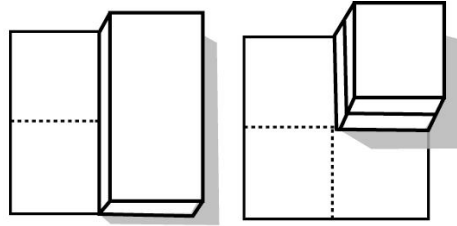
When we describe a community, we often differentiate one area from another by the principal use, whether it is homes (residential), shops and restaurants (commercial), manufacturing businesses (industrial), a park, or a school. To describe the intensity of use – how much development exists on a property (and presumably, what the associated activity level is) – land use planners have developed quantitative measures called *density* and *intensity*.

The term *density* typically applies to residential uses and refers to the population and development capacity of residential land. Density is described in terms of dwelling units per acre of land (du/ac).

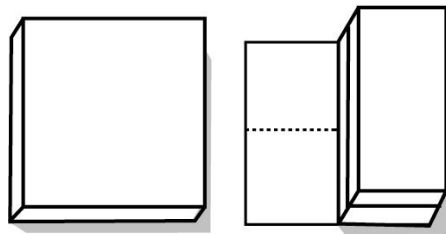
For commercial, industrial, and other nonresidential uses, *intensity* describes the degree to which a property is developed. The measure of intensity Manhattan Beach has adopted is the *floor-area factor*. The floor-area factor, or FAF, describes the relationship between the total square footage of development on a lot and the area of that lot. The FAF is determined by dividing the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the land area of that lot.

FAF and factors such as building square footage, building height, and the percent of lot coverage are all inter-related. **For example, a 20,000-square-foot building on a 40,000-square-foot lot yields an FAF of 0.50:1. This 0.50:1 FAF can accommodate a single-story building that covers half the lot, or a two-story building with reduced lot coverage.** Figure LU-2 illustrates different FAF calculations.

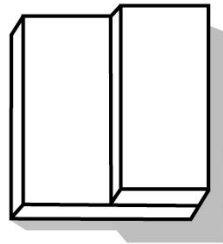
Figure LU-2: Examples of Floor-Area Factors (FAF)



0.5 FAF



1.0 FAF



1.5 FAF

Floor Area Factor (FAF): $\frac{\text{Gross Building Area}}{\text{Lot Area}}$

In a zone district with a maximum FAF of 0.50:1, the maximum allowable floor area of a building on a 40,000 sq. ft. lot would be 20,000 sq. ft. (20,000 sq. ft. divided by 40,000 sq. ft. equals 0.50).

Note: Variations may occur if upper floors are stepped back from ground-level lot coverage.

Land Use Designations

The Land Use Policy Map (Figure LU-3) graphically represents the planned distribution and intensity of land use citywide. The colors shown on the map correspond to twelve land use designations that describe the types of uses existing and planned in Manhattan Beach. Given the built-out character of the community, only minor land use changes from baseline year 2002 conditions will occur over the long term. Table LU-2 indicates planned land use distribution.

**Table LU-2
General Plan Land Use Distribution**

Land Use Designation	Acres	% of Total
Residential		
Low Density	1,122	55.6%
Medium Density	149	7.4%
High Density	151	7.5%
Commercial		
General Commercial	87	4.3%
Downtown Commercial	14	0.7%
Local Commercial	13	0.6%
Mixed-Use Commercial	4	0.2%
Manhattan Village Commercial	102	5.0%
North End Commercial	9	0.4%
Industrial	73	3.6%
Parks and Open Space	152	7.5%
Public Facilities	143	7.1%
Total	2,017	100.0%

Residential Land Use Categories

Three residential land use categories describe the general character of housing development in Manhattan Beach: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and High Density Residential.

Low Density Residential

The Low Density Residential category provides for the development of single-family residences within a density range of 1.0 to 16.1 units per acre. Development is characterized generally by detached homes on individual lots. Other permitted uses include parks and recreation facilities, public and private schools, public safety facilities, and facilities for religious assembly, consistent with zoning code requirements, which may require discretionary review.

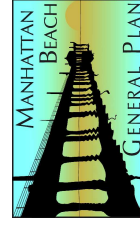


Figure LU-3

Land Use Policy Map

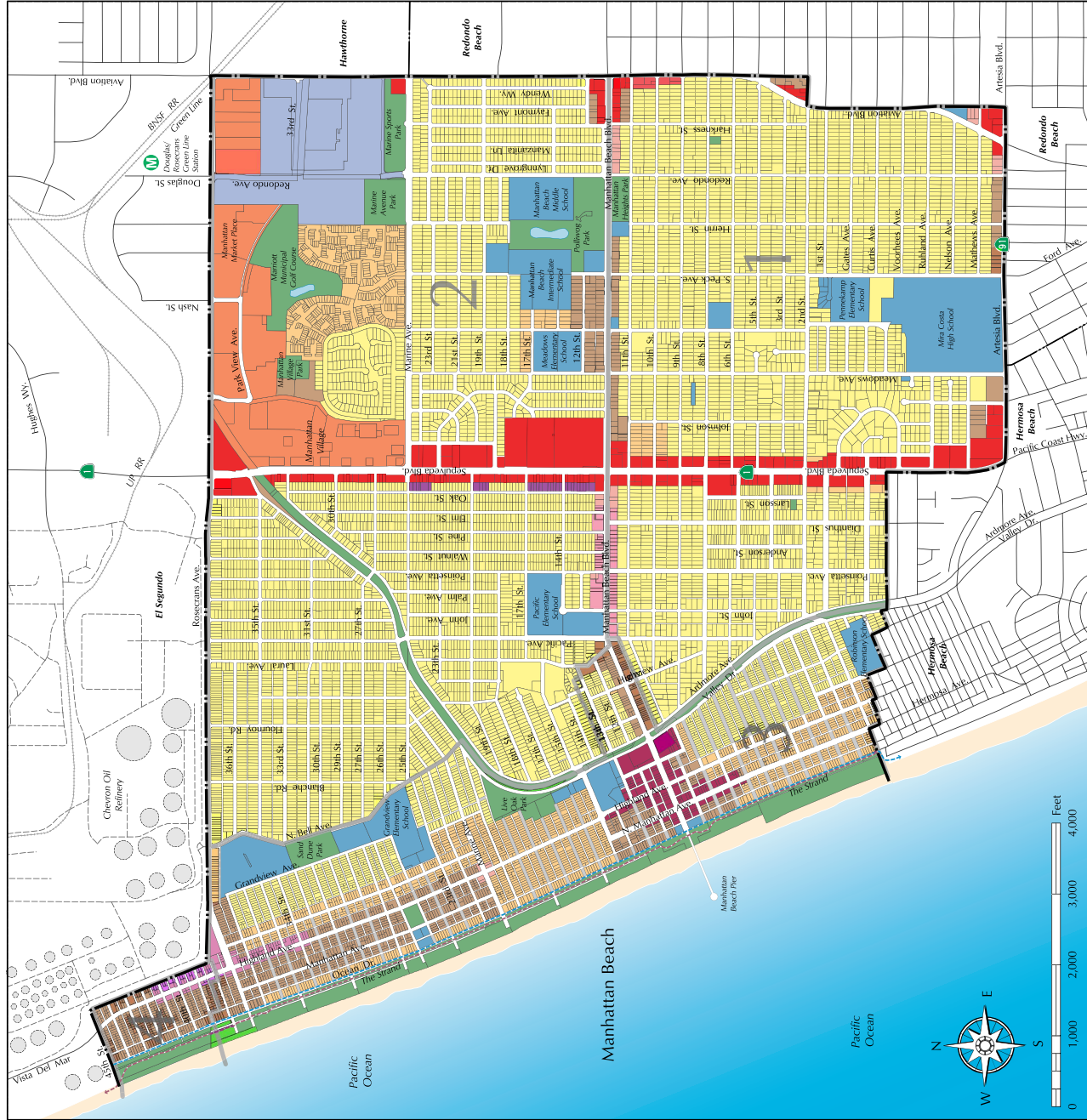
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Land Use Designations

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Downtown Commercial
- Local Commercial
- General Commercial
- North End Commercial
- Manhattan Village
- Mixed-Use Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks / Open Space
- Public Facilities

- City Boundary
- District Areas

- Walkstreets
- The "Strand" Pedestrian Path
- The "Strand" Bike Path



Source: City of Manhattan Beach GIS, ComptonBriggs/Associates, 2007

Medium Density Residential

The Medium Density Residential category allows single-family homes, duplexes, and triplexes, including condominiums. Multi-family housing with four or more units may be permitted subject to discretionary review and provided compatibility with surrounding development can be assured. Development densities may range from 11.6 to 32.3 units per acre. Other permitted uses include parks and recreation facilities, public and private schools, public safety facilities, and facilities for religious assembly, consistent with zoning code requirements, which may require discretionary review.

High Density Residential

The High Density Residential category accommodates all types of housing, and specifically housing development of a more intensive form, including apartments, condominiums, and senior housing. Residential projects may be constructed at a density of up to 51.3 units per acre. Other permitted uses include parks and recreation facilities, public and private schools, public safety facilities, and facilities for religious assembly, consistent with zoning code requirements, which may require discretionary review.

The maximum density permitted within each residential land use category varies citywide, based on historic development patterns and street configurations. To preserve neighborhood character and recognize past investments made, the City has established four districts, wherein the maximum permitted density for each of the three residential land use designations varies (Figure LU-3).

- **District 1** encompasses the Hill Section and the Eastside south of Manhattan Beach Boulevard.
- **District 2** includes the Tree Section, Manhattan Village, and the Eastside north of Manhattan Beach Boulevard.
- **District 3** covers the Beach Area, including Downtown Manhattan Beach, the Grandview area, a small area in the Tree and Hill Sections, and parts of the North End.
- **District 4** encompasses the El Porto Section of the North End.

Table LU-3 indicates the maximum permitted density for each land use category within each district. The table also identifies the maximum population density, in terms of persons per acre, associated with each category/district. These population densities numbers are required to be included per State Law. These maximum densities provide guidelines for planners, property owners, and decision-makers in the drafting and review of development plans. The maximums do not infer an entitlement, as many considerations weigh in the planning process, including, but not limited to, the ability of local infrastructure to support proposed development, the relationship between proposed and established uses, and provisions for parking, open space, and other development standards.

**Table LU-3
Residential Land Use Category Density Ranges by District**

District		Low Density	Medium Density	High Density
District 1	Maximum Density	5.8 du/ac	11.6 du/ac	43.6 du/ac
	Population Density	11 persons/ac	18 persons/ac	85 persons/ac
District 2	Maximum Density	9.5 du/ac	18.9 du/ac	43.6 du/ac
	Population Density	16 persons/ac	35 persons/ac	75 persons/ac
District 3	Maximum Density	16.1 du/ac	32.3 du/ac	51.3 du/ac
	Population Density	29 persons/ac	46 persons/ac	85 persons/ac
District 4	Maximum Density			51.0 du/ac
	Population Density			120 persons/ac

Commercial and Industrial Land Use Categories

Seven commercial and industrial land use categories are established to acknowledge and preserve the unique characteristics of Manhattan Beach’s varied commercial activity centers.

General Commercial

The General Commercial category provides opportunities for a broad range of retail and service commercial and professional office uses intended to meet the needs of local residents and businesses and to provide goods and services for the regional market. Multifamily residential uses and industrial uses are also permitted consistent with zoning regulations. The General Commercial category accommodates uses that typically generate heavy traffic. Therefore, this designation applies primarily along Sepulveda Boulevard and targeted areas along

Manhattan Beach Boulevard, Artesia Boulevard, and Aviation Boulevard. The maximum FAF is 1.5:1.

Downtown Commercial

The Downtown Commercial category applies only to the Downtown, an area of 40+ blocks that radiates from the intersection of Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Highland Avenue. Downtown provides locations for a mix of commercial businesses, residential uses with discretionary review, and public uses, with a focus on pedestrian-oriented commercial businesses that serve Manhattan Beach residents. Visitor-oriented uses are limited to low-intensity businesses providing goods and services primarily to beachgoers. The maximum FAF for commercial or mixed-used development is 1.5:1, and the maximum residential density is 51.3 units per acre.

Local Commercial

The Local Commercial category provides areas for neighborhood-oriented, small-scale professional offices, retail businesses, and service activities that serve the local community. Permitted uses are generally characterized by those which generate low traffic volumes, have limited parking needs, and generally do not operate late hours. The maximum FAF is 1.5:1. Multifamily residential uses, inclusive of mixed-use residential, are permitted in the ROD overlay zoning district.

Mixed-Use Commercial

The Mixed-Use Commercial category accommodates the parking needs of commercial businesses on small lots that front Sepulveda Boulevard and abut residential neighborhoods. In recognition of the need to ensure adequate parking for businesses and to protect residential uses from activities that intrude on their privacy and safety, this category limits commercial activity on commercial lots adjacent to residences and establishes a lower FAF limit of 1.0:1 for commercial uses. Uses permitted are similar to those allowed in the General Commercial category. Residential uses are permitted consistent with applicable zoning regulations.

Manhattan Village Commercial

The Manhattan Village Commercial category applies to properties that lie within the Manhattan Village Mall area and some uses are subject to discretionary approval requirements. Commercial uses in Manhattan Village are generally regional-serving, including shopping centers, large department and specialty stores, and entertainment and restaurant establishments. The maximum FAF is 1.5:1. Multifamily residential development is permitted subject to applicable zoning regulations.

North End Commercial

Properties designated North End Commercial lie at the north end of the City, along Highland Avenue and Rosecrans Avenue between 33rd and 42nd Streets. Commercial uses are limited to small-scale, low-intensity neighborhood-serving service businesses, retail stores, and offices. Restaurant and entertainment establishments are permitted only where zoning regulations can adequately ensure compatibility with residential uses. The maximum permitted FAF is 1.5:1. Residential uses are allowed with discretionary review and at densities consistent with the High Density Residential category. Additionally permitted uses include parks and recreation improvements and public/quasi-public facilities.

Industrial

The Industrial category applies to properties between Aviation Boulevard, Rosecrans Avenue, and Marine Avenue, and specifically the Raleigh Studios and Northrop uses. The category provides areas for establishment of low-intensity warehousing and distribution, research and development, and other specialized industrial uses. Commercial uses similar to those described for the General Commercial category may also be established. The maximum permitted FAF is 1.0:1.



See the Recreation and Parks section of the Community Resources Element for more information.

Parks and Open Space Category

The Parks and Open Space category applies to all public parks throughout the City, Veterans Parkway, the Beach, and Strand. While parks and other open space represent the primary permitted uses, limited recreational facilities and commercial uses in support of the principal park use are also permitted. Development intensity standards are established through discretionary review since these areas largely remain unimproved with buildings.

Public Facilities Category

The Public Facilities category refers to uses operated for public benefit, including public schools, government offices, and public facilities such as libraries, cultural centers, and neighborhood/community centers. Quasi-public facilities such as hospitals and medical institutions may be established on properties designated Public Facilities. Development standards are established through the discretionary review process.

Goals and Policies

Small-Town Character

Manhattan Beach values its small-town atmosphere and unique neighborhoods. Low-profile, human-scale development not only promotes a sense of neighborhood and community among residents and businesses, this development profile also encourages interaction and maximizes visual and physical access to one of the most important assets of our community – the beachfront. To preserve this character, the City recognizes that reasonable controls on development must be pursued, particularly to avoid overbuilding on small lots. New residential construction and home additions should reflect the scale and character of surrounding homes. Excessively large structures that are tall and bulky, with tight setbacks, and/or that exhibit limited architectural articulation along the façades or rooflines, can produce streetscapes that are aesthetically overbearing.

In the commercial districts of Downtown and the North End, and where commercial businesses interface directly with residential neighborhoods, low-scale development enhances compatibility, encourages walking, and creates a human scale. The following goal and corollary policies encourage well-proportioned structures and functional, attractive streetscapes that promote and maintain the low-profile development and small-town character of Manhattan Beach.

Goal LU-1: Maintain the low-profile development and small-town atmosphere of Manhattan Beach.

Policy LU-1.1: Limit the height of new development to three stories where the height limit is thirty feet, or to two stories where the height limit is twenty-six feet, to protect the privacy of adjacent properties, reduce shading, protect vistas of the ocean, and preserve the low-profile image of the community.

Policy LU-1.2: Require the design of all new construction to utilize notches, balconies, rooflines, open space, setbacks, landscaping, or other architectural details to reduce the bulk of buildings and to add visual interest to the streetscape.



After adoption of the 1988 General Plan, the Zoning Ordinance Revision Program (ZORP), major revisions to the Zoning Ordinance, was adopted to address these issues. In October of 2002, the City Council adopted the Bulk and Volume Ordinance (No. 2032) to ensure new residential construction is compatible with existing neighborhoods. The Bulk and Volume Ordinance applies to new construction of and additions to single-family homes in Districts 1 and 2 outside the Beach area.

Open Space

Manhattan Beach is a densely developed community. To maximize the use of land, commercial buildings and homes have been built with minimum setbacks, leaving little room for landscaped open space and creating large structures that can overwhelm their neighbors.

With regard to public open space, the City is able and will continue to meet its established parkland standard of 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents. However, the majority of public open space is concentrated in the Sand Section (Beach Area) and Manhattan Village Area. Neighborhoods in the Tree Section, Hill Section, and Eastside use school grounds for recreational activity. Thus, the provision and retention of private landscaped open space is an important means to increasing open space in the City.

Tree-lined streets enhance the scenic beauty and small-town atmosphere of Manhattan Beach. The Tree Section is especially known for the abundance of mature trees. Mature trees are particularly valuable assets in the community because they offer shade, accentuate the streetscape, reduce air pollutants, and increase property values and neighborhood charm; they should be protected and replaced when they are removed.

Goal LU-2: Encourage the provision and retention of private landscaped open space.

Policy LU-2.1: Develop landscaping standards for commercial areas that unify and humanize each district.

Specifically, the City has established development guidelines for the Downtown and Sepulveda Boulevard – two of the most important commercial areas in the City (see discussion under Goal LU-3 below).



Policy LU-2.2: Preserve and encourage private open space on residential lots citywide.

As part of the City’s Bulk and Volume Ordinance, large homes with minimum private open space are discouraged (see discussion under Goal LU-1 above).



Policy LU-2.3: Protect existing mature trees throughout the City, and encourage their replacement with specimen trees whenever they are lost or removed.

In May of 2003, the City expanded the Tree Ordinance, which protects front yard trees in the Tree Sections, to include tree protection in front yards in all of District 1 and District 2.



Policy LU-2.4: Support appropriate stormwater pollution mitigation measures.

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act prohibits the discharge of any pollutant to navigable waters from a point source unless the discharge is authorized by a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Manhattan Beach participates in the NPDES permit program via a partnership consisting of the County, all cities within the County, and the County Flood Control District.



Community Aesthetics

Manhattan Beach takes pride in the aesthetic quality of our community. The ocean vistas, tree-lined streets, well-kept neighborhoods, and Downtown village all contribute to the scenic quality of our community. Architectural features, design elements, street amenities, and landscaping should all work together to provide uniform themes.

Goal LU-3: Achieve a strong, positive community aesthetic.

Policy LU-3.1: Continue to encourage quality design in all new construction.

Policy LU-3.2: Promote the use of adopted design guidelines for new construction in Downtown, along Sepulveda Boulevard, and other areas to which guidelines apply.

Policy Discussion 

To ensure quality design for development in Downtown and along Sepulveda, the City has adopted design guidelines for Downtown and Sepulveda Boulevard.

A considerable part of the charm of the Downtown is the diversity of buildings and uses. New development should display uniqueness in design yet recognize the common elements that existing structures employ to create a uniform village theme for the Downtown. The Downtown Design Guidelines address such issues as site design, compatibility with neighboring development, architectural elements/features, pedestrian activity, landscaping, and signs.

Sepulveda Boulevard is the major commercial corridor in Manhattan Beach, with primarily regional-serving and large-scale businesses. Ensuring quality design is especially important along this corridor to avoid monotonous and overbearing buildings, safeguard pedestrian safety and access, and promote compatibility with residential neighborhoods. The Sepulveda Boulevard Design Guidelines address such issues as vehicular access, pedestrian access, sidewalk dedication, building orientation, visual aesthetics, residential nuisances, landscaping, signs, and utility undergrounding.

To address neighborhood aesthetic issues, the North End also has a Design Overlay District and Business Improvement District.

Policy LU-3.3: Encourage use of “stealth” design for telecommunications antenna and related facilities.

Policy LU-3.4: Establish and implement consistent standards and aesthetics for public signage, including City street signs.

Policy LU-3.5: Ensure that the sign ordinance provides for commercial signage that is attractive, non-intrusive, safe, and consistent with overall City aesthetic goals.

The Sign Ordinance regulates the location, height, size, and illumination of signs to: 1) maintain the attractiveness and orderliness of the City's appearance; 2) protect business sites from loss of prominence resulting from excessive signs, particularly pole signs, on nearby sites; and 3) protect the public safety and welfare.



Policy LU-3.6: Encourage the beautification of the walkstreets, particularly through the use of landscaping.

The City has established Encroachment Permit Standards to regulate private encroachments in the public right-of-way, with specific standards for the pedestrian walkstreets. Walkstreet encroachment standards regulate fences, retaining walls, landscaping, decks, and patios.



Neighborhood Character

Manhattan Beach is made up of various unique neighborhoods, each with distinct features and character that reflect the history and culture of our community. Future development and improvements must respect the unique qualities of individual neighborhoods and recognize the historic and cultural values of certain homes and buildings. For example, generally the absence of standard public improvements in the right-of-way and the individual landscaping in the right-of-way in the Tree Section add to the rural character of the neighborhood. While public improvements could enhance pedestrian mobility, they may not be in keeping with neighborhood charm.

Walkstreets offer an innovative solution to the often competing interests of needs for private open space for beach homes and public access to the beach. Private use of the public right-of-way along the walkstreets and the Strand gardens responds to needs for open space. The characteristics of the walkstreets and the Strand should be maintained and enhanced while facilitating physical and visual accesses to the beach.



Goal LU-4: Preserve the features of each community neighborhood, and develop solutions tailored to each neighborhood's unique characteristics.

Policy LU-4.1: Protect public access to and enjoyment of the beach while respecting the privacy of beach residents.

Policy LU-4.2: Develop and implement standards for the use of walkstreet encroachment areas and other public right-of-way areas.

The City has developed encroachment standards for walkstreets, providing regulations for the installation of fences, retaining walls, landings, landscaping, decks, and patios in the encroachment areas. Parking is strictly prohibited.



Policy LU-4.3: Continue to allow use of the public landscaped area of the Strand for limited private landscaping purposes.

Policy LU-4.4: Encourage the preservation and enhancement of unique residential homes and buildings throughout Manhattan Beach to preserve the culture and history of the City.

Policy LU-4.5: Encourage measures that recognize and work to protect buildings, landscaping, and other features important to the City's history.

Policy LU-4.6: When public improvements are made, they should preserve and maintain distinctive neighborhood characteristics.

Protecting Residential Neighborhoods

Manhattan Beach is primarily a residential community. Intrusion of incompatible uses and activities can threaten the quality and integrity of our neighborhoods. Commercial uses typically generate traffic and noise. Businesses such as service stations and restaurants also generate odors. Some businesses have extended hours of operation or require deliveries during late night and/or early morning hours. Schools and public gathering places, including parks, can create traffic and noise impacts during specific periods or special events. Such secondary effects can erode the quality of a residential neighborhood and thus must be avoided if possible, or mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.

Goal LU-5: Protect residential neighborhoods from the intrusion of inappropriate and incompatible uses.

Policy LU-5.1: Require the separation or buffering of residential areas from businesses which produce noise, odors, high traffic volumes, light or glare, and parking through the use of landscaping, setbacks, or other techniques.

In 1991, the City adopted Ordinance 1382, authorizing the Neighborhood Conservation (NC) Overlay District. The Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District allows property owners to initiate and implement programs for the revitalization or conservation of older areas or districts possessing distinctive features, identity, or character worthy of retention and enhancement. The NC district is implemented through adoption of a plan and a set of regulations that facilitate maintenance and upgrading of the neighborhood, while reducing or eliminating incompatible mixes of uses.



The Oak Avenue Overlay District encompasses the area designated Mixed-Use Commercial on the Land Use Policy Map and applies to commercial lots with access to a predominately single-family residential street but has some history of commercial use or intent. Property located within the Oak Avenue Overlay District may be commercially developed, redeveloped, or intensified in conjunction with abutting Sepulveda-frontage property, subject to strict rules intended to protect the adjacent residential neighborhood.

Similarly, the Design Overlay District provides a mechanism to ensure that the low-profile image of the community is preserved and neighborhoods are protected from adverse effects of noise and traffic. Six subdistricts are established:

- **D1:** Rosecrans Avenue, where higher fences in the front yard setback area are needed to reduce traffic noise
- **D2:** 11th Street, where limitations on building height and density are needed to minimize building bulk and buffer adjoining residences
- **D3:** Gaslamp Neighborhood, where special design standards and review procedures are needed to preserve existing neighborhood character
- **D4:** Traffic Noise Impact Areas, where higher fences are needed to reduce traffic noise

- **D5:** North End Commercial, where special design standards are needed for the North End Commercial Area to accommodate additional residential development
- **D6:** Oak Avenue, where special design standards, landscaping and buffering requirements are needed to allow commercial use of property in a residential area adjacent to Sepulveda Boulevard
- **D7:** Longfellow Drive area, including residential lots in Tract 14274 located on Longfellow Drive, Ronda Drive, Terraza Place, Duncan Drive and Kuhn Drive, where a special minimum lot area requirement and restriction on subdivision is needed to preserve the character of the neighborhood, including views and privacy, and prevent unwanted impacts from increased traffic, bulk and crowding that would result from increased density.
- **D8:** Sepulveda Boulevard Corridor Overlay, where more flexible development standards are needed in order to continue to promote desirable development, uses, and economic vitality within the General Commercial (CG) zone.

Policy LU-5.2: Work with all commercial property owners bordering residential areas to mitigate impacts and use appropriate landscaping and buffering of residential neighborhoods.

Policy LU-5.3: Consider using discretionary review for any public gathering place or institutional use proposed within or adjacent to a residential neighborhood.

Policy LU-5.4: Discourage the outdoor commercial and industrial use of property adjacent to residential use.

Policy LU-5.5: Discourage the commercial use of walkstreet encroachment areas.



In 2003, the City adopted an ordinance to prohibit any new commercial use of walkstreets.

Policy LU-5.6: Regulate the use of and special activities conducted within public parks to minimize any adverse impact on adjacent residential neighborhoods

Policy LU-5.7: Recognize the unique qualities of mixed-use areas, and balance the needs of both the residential and commercial uses.

Mixed-use areas promote lively neighborhoods and serve as a buffer between commercial uses and residential neighborhoods. Mixed-use developments can be accommodated, subject to discretionary reviews, in Downtown, North End/El Porto, and the Mixed-Use Commercial area along Oak Avenue; and Local Commercial areas along Manhattan Beach Boulevard, Artesia Boulevard, and Aviation Boulevard. Mixed-use developments in General Commercial, Local Commercial, and Manhattan Village Commercial areas are subject to ministerial reviews along Rosecrans Avenue, Aviation Boulevard, Manhattan Beach Boulevard, Artesia Boulevard, and Sepulveda Boulevard.



Vibrant and Diverse Commercial Areas

A local economy that is diversified tends to be more resilient to economic recession, allowing the community to respond quickly to fiscal and structural changes in the regional economy. Manhattan Beach has several core commercial areas: Downtown, North End/El Porto, Manhattan Village, Rosecrans Avenue, and Sepulveda Boulevard. Each area serves specific functions within the community and contributes to the diversity of services our residents and visitors enjoy. Economic development efforts must focus on maintaining and enhancing the diversity and vitality of our commercial areas.

Goal LU-6: Maintain the viability of the commercial areas of Manhattan Beach.

Policy LU-6.1: Support and encourage small businesses throughout the City.

Among the 1,600+ businesses in Manhattan Beach, close to 1,400 are small businesses employing fewer than 10 employees.



Policy LU-6.2: Encourage a diverse mix of businesses that support the local tax base, are beneficial to residents, and support the economic needs of the community.

While the City has a mix of businesses, the major sales tax generators in Manhattan Beach are a few large stores. The City must work to introduce additional sale tax generators to improve the diversity of our local economy.



Policy LU-6.3: Recognize the need for a variety of commercial development types and designate areas appropriate for each. Encourage development proposals that meet the intent of these designations.

Policy LU-6.4: Recognize the unique qualities of mixed-use areas and balance the needs of both the commercial and residential uses.

Policy Discussion 

In 2023, the City adopted an ordinance, establishing the Residential Overlay District (ROD) to recognize residential development opportunities identified in high-resource areas along major commercial corridors. The ROD allows property owners to potentially develop multifamily and/or mixed-use projects that can further bolster the local economy, as mixed-use areas also promote lively neighborhoods. Several commercial areas in Manhattan Beach accommodate residential uses: Downtown, North End/El Porto, the Mixed-Use Commercial area along Oak Avenue, and Local Commercial areas along Manhattan Beach Boulevard, Artesia Boulevard, and Aviation Boulevard. For example, the Aviation Triangle (a portion of a block east of Aviation Boulevard and north of Matthews Avenue) has been designated Local Commercial as part of this General Plan, with mixed residential/commercial development being a permitted use via the discretionary review process. Additionally, qualifying mixed-use developments in General Commercial, Local Commercial, and Manhattan Village Commercial areas are subject to ministerial reviews along Rosecrans Avenue, Aviation Boulevard, Manhattan Beach Boulevard, Artesia Boulevard, and Sepulveda Boulevard.

A Vibrant Downtown

Downtown Manhattan Beach is the focal point of our community, offering services and activities for our residents and visitors. Continued development and enhancement of this walkable village requires coordinated planning efforts to address issues relating to economic diversity, parking, traffic congestion and safety, and development character.

Goal LU-7: Continue to support and encourage the viability of the Downtown area of Manhattan Beach.

Policy LU-7.1: Encourage the upgrading and growth of businesses in the Downtown area to serve as a center for the community and to meet the needs of local residents and visitors.

The Civic Center/Metlox development will offer additional amenities to the Downtown, including a gateway to the Downtown, a new Public Safety Facility, public open space, public parking, and an appropriate mix of local-serving uses designed and integrated to reflect the existing unique small-scale development patterns, strengthening the vitality of the Downtown environment. As part of this General Plan, a portion of the Civic Center/Metlox site is designated Public Facilities, and a portion is designated Downtown Commercial to reflect the intended uses of these properties and to reflect the 13th Street extension.



Policy LU-7.2: Encourage the use of the Downtown Design Guidelines to improve the Downtown’s visual identification as a unique commercial area.

Policy LU-7.3: Support pedestrian-oriented improvements to increase accessibility in and around Downtown.

Policy LU-7.4: Encourage first-floor street front businesses with retail, restaurants, service/commercial, and similar uses to promote lively pedestrian activity on Downtown streets, and consider providing zoning regulations that support these uses.

A vibrant downtown must promote and encourage interactions among its users. Ground-floor street-front commercial spaces in the Downtown should be occupied by uses that create interesting storefronts, promote foot traffic, and generate customers. Office uses that do not offer storefront activities should be discouraged.



Policy LU-7.5: Support the efforts of business improvement districts (BIDs) to enhance and improve Downtown.

Policy LU-7.6: Recognize the unique qualities of mixed-use development, and balance the needs of both commercial and residential uses.

Policy Discussion

A theme raised during the development of the Downtown Strategic Action Plan and the General Plan is the importance of a "balanced" mix of uses in Downtown Manhattan Beach. The desired mix includes residential and commercial.

As part of this General Plan, a cluster of properties in the vicinity of 11th Street has been designated High Density Residential to reflect development trends and the community desire to provide for residential uses in the Downtown.

Furthermore, the Downtown Commercial designation allows residential development consistent with the High Density Residential category. One method of establishing a residential and commercial balance in Downtown is to encourage mixed-use development. This type of development allows retail commercial uses on the ground floor and residential usage above the commercial tenants. The City's Zoning Code recognizes and provides standards for the construction of such development. These standards may need to be revisited to ensure they address the community needs.

Policy LU-7.7: Encourage a future public use other than parking in the lower Pier Parking Lot.

Policy Discussion

Consistent with the Downtown Strategic Plan, the City envisions a future public use other than parking in the lower parking lot, provided that no negative impact on parking in the Downtown is expected. If parking is eliminated from the lower lot, additional parking may be accommodated as new levels in reconstructed beach parking lots.

Regional-Serving Commercial Districts

Regional-serving commercial uses are concentrated along two major transportation corridors: Sepulveda Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue east of Sepulveda Boulevard. Zoning and development standards must recognize the importance of these regional-serving commercial districts and support their vitality. Simultaneously, these corridors are identified as opportunity areas ideal for multifamily residential development due to the proximity and convenience of various services provided.

Goal LU-8: Maintain Sepulveda Boulevard, Rosecrans Avenue, and the commercial areas of Manhattan Village as regional-serving commercial districts.

Policy LU-8.1: Ensure that applicable zoning regulations allow for commercial uses that serve a broad market area, including visitor-serving uses.

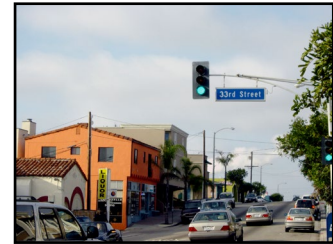
Policy LU-8.2: Support the remodeling and upgrading needs of businesses as appropriate within these regional-serving commercial districts.

Policy LU-8.3: Recognize that shallow-depth commercial lots along Sepulveda Boulevard may be difficult to develop and that in limited circumstances, allowing parking facilities to be established on adjacent residential properties may be appropriate, provided such use does not result in significant adverse impact on abutting residential neighborhoods and further provided that access to residential streets located at the rear of the commercial uses is discouraged.

Policy LU-8.4: Support qualifying mixed-use and multifamily residential development in the General Commercial and Manhattan Village Commercial areas that facilitate housing production and foster local economic development.

North End/El Porto

The North End/El Porto area contains eclectic neighborhood-oriented retail, service, and residential uses. The El Porto area was developed under County development standards prior to its annexation into the City. Efforts to improve the overall aesthetic quality, streetscape, parking conditions, and economic vitality need to be addressed.



Goal LU-9: Preserve the low-intensity, pedestrian-oriented character of commercial areas in the North End and El Porto.

Policy LU-9.1: Provide zoning regulations that encourage neighborhood-oriented businesses within these areas.

Policy LU-9.2: Encourage and support ground floor retail and service uses on properties designated for commercial use.

Some commercially designated properties are developed with residences. Future recycling of these properties to commercial uses or mixed-use developments with ground-floor retail and services should be encouraged.



Policy LU-9.3: Continue to improve the aesthetic quality of businesses within the North End and El Porto.

Policy Discussion 

The North End Business Improvement District (BID) was established to improve the appearance of the North End.

Policy LU-9.4: Provide traffic enhancements that accommodate safe pedestrian movement.

Policy LU-9.5: Work to improve parking conditions within the North End and El Porto.

Policy LU-9.6: Support the development of a comprehensive streetscape improvement plan.

Policy LU-9.7: Recognize the unique qualities of mixed-use development, and balance the needs of both commercial and residential uses.

Policy Discussion 

The neighborhood-oriented character of the North End/El Porto area is ideal for fostering mixed-use development, particularly along Highland Avenue.

Policy LU-9.8: Support the efforts of business improvement districts (BIDs) to enhance and improve the North End and El Porto.

Implications of the Land Use Policy

Table LU-4 identifies the planned distribution of land uses. Over time, as properties are redeveloped, land uses and intensities will gradually shift to align with the intent of this Land Use Element. Table LU-4 summarizes the land use distribution, average development, and the resultant residential and commercial developments that can be expected over the next 20 years. Given the built-out character of Manhattan Beach and the good conditions of most buildings, significant redevelopment activities are not anticipated over the life of this General Plan. Average development densities and potential presented in Table LU-4 reflect primarily the established densities with limited opportunities for recycling to more intensified development.

**Table LU-4
Land Use and Population Estimates at General Plan Buildout**

Land Use	Net Acres	Average Density/ Intensity	Projected Dwelling Units	Estimated Population (d)	Potential Square Footage
Residential					
Low Density	1,122	See (a)	7,353	16,569	
Medium Density	149	See (b)	2,617	5,897	
High Density	151	See (c)	5,571	12,554	
Commercial and Business					
General Commercial	87	0.5 FAF			1,886,000
Downtown Commercial	14	0.5 FAF	96	216	301,000
Local Commercial	13	0.5 FAF	30	68	290,000
Mixed-Use Commercial	4	0.2 FAF	15	34	30,000
Manhattan Village Commercial	102	0.8 FAF			3,568,000
North End Commercial	8	0.8 FAF	199	448	265,000
Industrial	73	0.4 FAF			1,265,000
Parks and Open Space	152	0.1 FAF			663,000
Public Facilities	143	0.5 FAF			3,112,000
Total	2,017		15,881	35,786	11,381,000

Notes:

- (a) Average densities for Low Density Residential are: Area District 1 = 5.0 du/ac; Area District 2 = 7.2 du/ac; Area District 3 = 12.8 du/ac; and Area District 4 = 12.5 du/ac.
- (b) Average densities for Medium Density Residential are: Area District 1 = 8.0 du/ac; Area District 2 = 15.5 du/ac; Area District 3 = 20.4 du/ac; and Area District 4 = 26.5 du/ac.
- (c) Average densities for High Density Residential are: Area District 1 = 37.9 du/ac; Area District 2 = 33.8 du/ac; Area District 3 = 37.4 du/ac; and Area District 4 = 53.3 du/ac.
- (d) Population is estimated based on an average household size of 2.34 persons per household and a vacancy rate of 3.7%, according to the 2000 Census.

FAF = Floor-Area Factor