

2.2 Land Use Framework

The land use framework is comprised of Figure 2-3: Land Use Diagram, which shows locations of permitted uses; the land use classification system, which describes permitted uses in more detail; and allowable building density/intensity limits. All of these represent adopted City policy. Building heights and stories listed are presented for illustrative purposes and do not represent adopted City policy; actual development standards are established in the Zoning Code.

LAND USE DIAGRAM

The Land Use Diagram (Figure 2-3) designates the proposed location, distribution, and extent of activities that may take place throughout the city. Land use classifications—shown as color/graphic patterns on the diagram—allow for a range of activities within each classification.

The diagram is a graphic representation of the land use classifications and furthers the policies contained in the General Plan; it is to be used and interpreted in conjunction with the text and other figures contained in the General Plan.

LAND USE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Land use classifications are presented below and represent adopted City policy. The classifications are meant to be broad enough to give the City flexibility in implementation, but clear enough to provide sufficient direction to carry out the General Plan. The Zoning Code contains more detailed provisions and standards. More than one zoning district may be consistent with a single General Plan land use classification. In addition to the listed allowable uses, public uses—including parks, government offices, police and fire stations, and public schools—are permitted in all classifications.

Development intensity is described in terms of floor area ratio (FAR) and housing density is described in housing units per acre. For greater description of density/intensity standards, see text following the land use classification's description.

For most classifications, development may also qualify for density, intensity, or height bonuses through provision of community benefits as outlined in the Carson Municipal

Code; granting of additional density/intensity for community benefits is discretionary and would be determined on a project-by-project basis. Additional guidance on these bonuses can be found in the Density/Intensity Standards section.

RESIDENTIAL

Three residential land use classifications are established to provide for development of a range of housing types. Residential density is expressed as housing units per net acre of developable parcel area (that is, excluding land that is constrained for development by public rights-of-way such as public streets, creeks, or other easements). Development is required to be within the density range (both maximum and minimum) where stipulated in the classification; modification to standards with a use permit is allowed where unique site conditions prevent attainment of minimum densities.



Accessory and “junior” accessory dwelling units permitted by local and State regulations, and State-mandated density bonuses for provision of affordable or senior housing are in addition to densities and FAR otherwise permitted.

New residential or other noise-sensitive uses are generally not encouraged within 500 feet of I-405 or I-110 in designations where other uses are feasible, and generally any proposed residential development within the 500-foot buffer would require additional analysis and potentially mitigation for indoor air quality and noise.

Land use classifications also specify the housing type allowed, which are as follows:

- **Single-Family Detached.** Single-family units that are detached from any other buildings (with the exception of accessory dwelling units) and have open space on all four sides.
- **Single-Family Attached.** Single-family units that are attached to other units with one or more adjoining walls extending from ground to roof that separate it from other adjoining structures and form a property line. Each unit has its own heating system.
- **Multifamily.** Units with two or more housing units in one structure sharing a common floor/ceiling.

Apartments and condominiums are forms of ownership, not housing type, and are not regulated by the General Plan. Duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, etc. refer to the number of housing units in a structure, not housing type – these could be in single-family attached or multifamily housing types.

Low Density Residential (LDR)

Single-family residential development with density up to 10.0 units per acre. This classification is mainly intended for detached single-family dwellings, but attached single-family units may be permitted, provided each unit has ground-floor living area and private outdoor open space. The maximum FAR is 0.55.



Medium Density Residential (MDR)

Housing at densities 10.0 to 18.0 units per acre. Housing types would typically encompass single-family detached and attached (that is, townhouses), along with lower-density multifamily. A maximum increase in residential density of 20 percent is permitted with community benefits .

High Density Residential (HDR)

Residential development, with densities ranging from 18.0 to 30.0 units per acre for sites smaller than two acres in size, and up to 40.0 units per acre for sites larger than two acres. This designation is applied primarily to existing neighborhoods, and limited new development is expected in this designation. The designation would permit the full range of housing types, including multifamily, and is intended for specific areas where higher density housing already exists or may be appropriate. Typically, taller building heights would be found in this designation. A maximum increase in residential density of 40 percent is permitted with community benefits.

Mobilehome Park Overlay District (MHD)

There is a growing housing crisis across the State, including within the City of Carson. A significant element of this crisis is the lack of affordable housing, including that provided by mobilehome parks. However, not only have the number of housing units provided by mobilehome parks within the City failed to keep up with population growth, but over time mobilehome parks have been closing and converting to other uses. This further exacerbates the housing crisis, especially for residents who need affordable housing options. To help maintain a sufficient supply of

land for mobilehome parks and in order to help alleviate this component of the housing crisis, the General Plan outlines a Mobilehome Park Overlay District (MHD), which applies to all existing mobilehome parks in the city, where a closure report has not already been approved by the City as of the General Plan adoption date. While mobilehome parks are privately owned thereby affording City limited control over whether a park owner may choose to close a park, a primary purpose of the MHD is to help preserve the housing stock of existing mobilehome parks of which many residents qualify as affordable income residents under State law, and to help ensure a sufficient supply of land for these types of uses and affordable income residents in the future, thus helping to mitigate both the State and local housing crisis.

Detailed provisions related to the MHD Overlay Zone are defined in the Zoning Ordinance. Mobile home parks will be the only permitted use in the MHD Overlay Zone. Provisions of the MHD Overlay Zone shall be applied in addition to the regulations of the underlying zoning district; however, mobilehomes park use shall be conforming with the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance; that is, existing mobilehome parks can continue, renovate, expand etc. as needed to ensure continued viability and vibrancy. The zoning regulations shall collectively ensure that existing mobilehome parks shall not be redeveloped with another permitted use unless, as part of the new development, a discretionary overlay zone change approval is granted (in addition to any other applicable land use entitlements) and comparable units at affordable housing rates are provided and made available to residents of the existing mobilehome park. Should the City approve the overlay zone removal, uses permitted under the underlying base zone would be allowed; any changes to the base zone designation would require another discretionary City approval.

COMMERCIAL

General Commercial District (GCD)

This category includes general and neighborhood commercial uses, including shopping centers and commercial uses adjacent to highways or some major corridors, where residential development may not be desirable. A range of commercial uses, including retail stores, eating and drinking establishments, commercial recreation, gas and service

stations, automobile sales and repair services, financial, business and personal services and offices, motels, educational and social services is permitted. The Zoning Code may further distinguish between neighborhood, regional, or general commercial uses. The maximum FAR is 0.5.

Commercial Automotive District (CAD) Overlay

The Commercial Automotive District (CAD) overlay is used to promote a distinctive area of automobile sales facilities and other complementary retail uses as specified in the Zoning Code, with appealing landscaping, lighting, signage and compatible architectural elements.

MIXED USE

This designation is intended to accommodate high-intensity, active uses that encourages a mixture of land uses, ranging from commercial, retail, and office to multifamily residential development. Retail and department stores, eating and drinking establishments, hotels, commercial recreation, financial, business, personal services, residential, educational and social services, and office uses are permitted. Three mixed-use designations are established:

Downtown Mixed Use (DMU)

This designation is intended to promote a vibrant “Main Street” like ambiance throughout the downtown Carson core, with mid-rise, mixed-use development. The ground floor frontage (with the exception of ingress and egress and other necessary building and site design considerations) of a site along Carson Street, Avalon Boulevard, and Del Amo Boulevard shall be devoted to active commercial uses; active commercial uses are those that are accessible to the general public, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity. Such uses include retail shops, restaurants, bars, theaters and the performing arts, commercial recreation and entertainment, personal and convenience services, leasing offices, private recreational areas, fitness studios, party rooms, building and hotel lobbies, banks, travel agencies, childcare services, libraries, museums, and galleries. Other parts of the site—at the ground level and at upper stories— may be devoted to commercial or residential uses.

The maximum base FAR is 1.75, and all active ground floor commercial use area is exempt from FAR calculation. The

minimum residential density for projects comprising primarily residential use is 40 units per acre, maximum base residential density is 65 units per acre, and a minimum 0.2 FAR active ground floor commercial use is required; the City may permit substitution of required minimum commercial space with other desired uses or community benefits. Base FAR and base residential density may be increased by up to 40 percent, and maximum permitted heights increased proportionately up to maximum, with inclusion of additional (beyond minimum) active ground floor commercial use or community benefits or combination of the two, on a graduated scale as specified in the Zoning Ordinance. These increases are in addition to those permitted under State density bonus laws for affordable housing.

Development projects with an overall size of larger than 20 acres for which applications have been filed requesting a General Plan Amendment change the existing land use designation to Urban Residential land use designation of the 2004 General Plan and a corresponding Specific Plan zoning designation prior to the City's adoption of the 2040 General Plan shall be deemed consistent with the Downtown Mixed Use land use designation, provided that the project, following approval by the City, (i) does not exceed a residential density of 65 du/acre and/or an FAR of 2.4, (ii) the City approves a development agreement that identifies community benefits and affordable housing offered by the development to justify the 65 du/ac density, and (iii) the project provides at least minimum of 10,000 square feet of commercial space.

For additional provisions related to active ground floor use requirements, replacement commercial uses, and incentives for new active ground floor commercial uses, policies (which are located in the last section of this element) should be consulted.

Corridor Mixed Use (CMU)

This designation is applied to corridors where a mix of commercial and residential uses are permitted—although purely commercial or purely residential uses are allowed—to support retail and services that cater to the daily needs of local residents. Permitted uses include housing, retail, restaurants, personal services, public uses, and professional business offices. Mixed use may be in either a vertical format (multiple uses in the same building) or horizontal

format (multiple single-use buildings on the same parcel). Other uses that are determined to be compatible with surrounding areas, including sensitive uses, would require a conditional use permit.

Typically, mid-rise building heights would be found in this designation. The maximum FAR is 1.0. Residential development up to 40 units per acre is permitted with provision of new or retention of existing 0.2 FAR minimum commercial space. Base FAR and base residential density may be increased by up to 15 percent with inclusion of additional (beyond minimum) active ground floor commercial use and/or community benefits, independent of increases permitted under State density bonus laws for affordable housing. Ground level active commercial uses are not included in FAR calculations, and the City may, in circumstances where ground floor commercial use is not desirable or practical, permit substitution of commercial uses with community benefits .

For provisions relating to existing (as of 2021) commercial development replacement, see Policy LUR-P-16.

Business Residential Mixed Use (BRMU)

This designation includes a range of non-nuisance light-industrial uses, eating and drinking establishments, offices, artist studios, live-work lofts, breweries, roasteries, and other uses compatible with residential areas, promoting development of an urban, walkable environment. Stand-alone retail uses and retail ancillary to industrial or residential uses are permitted, as well as free standing residential projects. If residential or other sensitive uses are proposed



as part of redevelopment, both short-term and long-term compatibility with adjacent uses and location in a mixed light-industrial and industrial environment should be considered. Similarly, new industrial uses would need to be compatible (from noise, odor, air quality perspective) in a mixed residential/industrial environment and will have to comply with performance standards to contain noise or air impacts within the site so that it does not adversely affect surrounding development.

Uses that rely on heavy trucking, such as warehouse and distribution facilities, including logistic uses, are not permitted, and service and gas stations, and drive-through establishments are limited. In addition, the following uses will not be permitted: salvage yards, vehicle storage lots, major recycling facilities, truck yards, container yards, lay down yards, container parking, storage yards, truck terminals, self-storage and similar uses.

This designation is applied to sites at the western edge of the city proximate to I-405, west of Main Street adjacent to I-405, and the former Shell site. The maximum allowed FAR for all uses is 0.75 with a maximum residential density of 30 units per acre; these may be increased by up to 60 percent with provision of community benefits and would likely require mid- to low high-rise buildings with structured parking.

FLEX DISTRICT (FLX)

The Flex District designation permits a wide range of uses including offices, research and development, light-industrial, hotels, local and regional retail commercial uses, commercial entertainment uses, and gas/charging stations in mid- and high-intensity settings, as well as residential uses in appropriate locations. The largest Flex District is along I-405, capitalizing on the visibility and regional access provided by the freeway. In the Flex District southeast of Main Street and Sepulveda Boulevard, residential uses are not permitted, except on the site included in the housing sites inventory in the Housing Element.

The following uses are not permitted in the Flex District: Warehousing/distribution/logistics (except as otherwise permitted below), salvage yards, vehicle storage lots, major recycling facilities, truck yards, container yards, lay down yards, container parking, storage yards, truck terminals,

self-storage and similar uses. If residential or other sensitive uses are proposed as part of redevelopment, both short-term and long-term compatibility with adjacent uses and location in a mixed light-industrial and industrial environment should be considered. Similarly, new industrial uses would need to be "non-nuisance" (that is, compatible from noise, odor, air quality perspectives) in a mixed residential/industrial environment and will have to comply with performance standards to contain noise or air impacts within the site so that it does not adversely affect surrounding development. Any new construction or expansion of existing light or heavy industrial uses adjacent to sensitive uses must include buffered setback areas and/or appropriate mitigation to ensure compatibility.

Small-scale warehouse and distribution facilities are permitted with the size limited to 30,000 square feet with larger facilities requiring a development agreement. Warehouse and distribution facilities including logistic uses are only permitted (i) in properties south of Del Amo Boulevard and East of Main Streets; or (ii) where a property is subject to (a) an adopted Specific Plan that permits logistic uses following findings by the City Council of demonstrated good faith efforts to secure tax-generating uses or other City Council-desired uses, based on demonstrated milestones, and (b) as such demonstrated good faith efforts and milestones are documented in a Development Agreement approved by the City Council.

Residential uses are only permitted through a specific or master plan, as part of a cohesive plan that considers the long-term development potential of adjacent properties and present a strategy for transition of industrial uses to residential uses. Residential uses are not permitted for the Flex District areas south of Sepulveda Boulevard, with the exception of one site that is part of the housing sites inventory in the Housing Element that is adjacent to residential uses, where a specific or master plan is not required.

A maximum base residential density of 40 units per acre is permitted in all areas of the Flex District, with the exception of the property located at the southeast corner of Main Street and Del Amo Boulevard (i.e., constituting approximately 15 acres within the 157-acre site), in which 60 units per acre shall be permitted. There is no FAR maximum for residential-only projects. The maximum allowed FAR

for non-residential uses is 0.4, or 0.5 with the provision of community benefits. Where residential and non-residential uses are combined, FAR shall not exceed 1.0. Base FAR and base residential density may be increased by up to 60 percent with inclusion of community benefits³.

INDUSTRIAL

Light Industrial (INL)

The Light Industrial designation is intended to provide for a wide variety of industrial uses and to limit those involving hazardous or nuisance effects as to be defined in the Zoning Code. Typical uses are manufacturing, research and development, and warehouse and distribution facilities including logistic uses. Commercial and retail uses are permitted subject to criteria in the Zoning Ordinance. For sites that are over one acre, predominantly commercial uses are permitted.

Performance and development standards are intended to allow a wide range of uses as long as those uses will not adversely impact adjacent uses. The following uses will not be permitted: salvage yards, used vehicle storage lots, major recycling facilities, truck yards, container yards, lay down yards, container parking, storage yards, truck terminals, and similar uses. Self-storage and car storage lots would require a conditional use permit. The maximum allowable FAR is 0.4, or up to 0.5 with inclusion of community benefits. Any new construction, or expansion of existing light or heavy industrial uses adjacent to sensitive uses must include buffered setback areas and/or appropriate mitigation to ensure compatibility.

Heavy Industrial (INH)

The Heavy Industrial designation is intended to provide for the full range of industrial uses that are acceptable within the community, but whose operations are more intensive and may have nuisance or hazardous characteristics, which for reasons of health, safety, environmental effects, or general welfare, are best segregated from other uses. Extractive, primary processing, rail operations, and food processing industries are typical of this designation. Uses handling acutely or highly hazardous materials would be

permitted only with proper safeguards and a conditional use permit. Outdoor storage operations may be permitted ancillary to primary use of site. The following uses are not permitted: truck yards, container yards, lay down yards, container parking, storage yards, used vehicle storage lots, major recycling facilities, or truck terminals would not be permitted. Self-storage and new car storage lots would require a conditional use permit.

The designation may contain a very limited amount of supportive retail and service uses, when those uses are of a scale and design providing support only to the needs of businesses and their employees in the immediate industrial area. The maximum allowable FAR is 0.6 or up to 0.75 with inclusion of community benefits. Any new construction, or expansion of existing light or heavy industrial uses adjacent to sensitive uses must include buffered setback areas and/or appropriate mitigation to ensure compatibility.

PUBLIC AND OPEN SPACE

Public and Institutional

The Public/Institutional land use category designates areas intended for public services, buildings, and related facilities, including schools and educational facilities, government facilities, and public utilities. This category also includes California State University, Dominguez Hills.

Parks/Open Space

This category includes public facilities developed for outdoor active or passive recreation, including parks, and linear trails/greenways such as along Dominguez Channel.



³ No additional density incentive for community benefits is available for residential uses in the District at South Bay.