



## Preferred Plan

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The Preferred Plan concept combines key elements from each of the Core, Centers, and Corridors alternatives. The Preferred Plan concentrates new development in the Core and in centers outside the Core, expanding on the energy and success of recent development along Carson Street. These centers will contain a mix of uses around major streets, including housing, employment, and neighborhood commercial uses. Connections between centers will be redeveloped as greenways to improve mobility throughout the city and create a more vibrant, connected core area with a diverse mix of uses. The Preferred Plan map provides additional detail and description.

### Density/Intensity Standards

The General Plan establishes density/intensity standards for each use classification. Residential density is expressed as housing units per acre (more detailed description later, where residential densities are discussed). For all non-residential uses, several residential classifications, and mixed-use developments, maximum permitted ratio of gross floor area<sup>1</sup> to site area (FAR) is specified. Medium Density and High Density Residential classifications are regulated by density only.

FAR is a broad measure of building bulk that controls both visual prominence and traffic generation. It can be clearly translated to a limit on building bulk in the Carson Municipal Code (Municipal Code) and is independent of the type of use occupying the building. The table on the following page shows proposed density/intensity standards for each classification.

Where a parcel has multiple uses, development allowed would be calculated based on site area allocated to that specific use. For example, if a 10-acre parcel has residential uses on four acres and commercial uses on six acres, allowable residential development would be calculated based on four acres of residential land.

The Municipal Code could provide specific exceptions to the FAR limitations for uses with low employment densities (lower number of employees per square foot of space), such as research facilities that have few employees, or low peak-hour traffic generation, such as doctors' offices or public uses. In addition to density/intensity standards, the Municipal Code will stipulate the full range of allowable building types (such as single-family residential) as well.

The Municipal Code may provide intensity and density increases up to 20 percent beyond the maximums outlined in the General Plan, with the exception of Business Mixed Use for

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<sup>1</sup> *Gross Floor Area* is the total horizontal area in square feet of all floors within the exterior walls of a building, but not including the area of unroofed inner courts or shaft enclosures, and also not including any area devoted to structured or covered parking.



which the allowable maximum FAR may be increased from 1.0 to 3.0, for projects that provide specified community benefits as outlined in the Municipal Code.

#### Standards for Density and Development Intensity

| <i>Land Use Designation</i>       | <i>Residential Density<br/>(housing units per<br/>gross acre)</i>     | <i>Floor Area Ratio (FAR)</i>  | <i>Typical Building Heights<br/>(feet and stories)</i> |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Residential</b>                |   |  |  |
| Low Density                       | up to 10.0  | 0.55   | 30 feet, 2 stories                                     |
| Medium Density                    | 10.0-18.0   | None specified   | 45 feet, 4 stories                                     |
| High Density                      | 18.0-40.0 (50.0 for<br>sites larger than<br>two acres)                | None specified   | 70 feet, 6 stories                                     |
| <b>Mixed Use</b>                  |   |  |  |
| Downtown<br>Mixed Use             | 35.0 (up to 65.0<br>with incentives for<br>active/commercial<br>uses) | up to 0.75 for non-residential uses (no<br>residential FAR min. or max.) | 85 feet, 6-7 stories                                   |
| Corridor Mixed<br>Use             | up to 40.0  | up to 1.0  | 70 feet, 6 stories                                     |
| <b>Flex Districts</b>             |   |  |  |
| Flex District 1                   | up to 40.0  | up to 1.0  | 65 feet, 4-5 stories                                   |
| Flex District 2                   | up to 65.0  | up to 2.0  | 70 feet, 6 stories                                     |
| Commercial<br>Automotive District | No housing<br>permitted   | up to 0.5  | 40 feet, 1-3 stories                                   |
| <b>Business</b>                   |   |  |  |
| Business Mixed<br>Use             | No housing<br>permitted   | up to 1.0 (max. 3.0 for development<br>providing community benefits)     | 70 to 150 feet, 6-14<br>stories                        |
| <b>Industrial</b>                 |   |  |  |
| Light Industrial                  | No housing<br>permitted   | up to 0.5  | 45 feet, 1-2 stories                                   |
| Heavy Industrial                  | No housing<br>permitted   | up to 1.0  | Requires conditional use<br>permit                     |

Note: State-mandated density bonuses for housing are in addition to densities otherwise permitted. The Municipal Code may provide up to a 20 percent density/intensity bonus for projects that provide specified community benefits, except for Business Mixed Use, where FAR may be increased to 3.0 for developments that provide community benefits.

Where for a residential or mixed-use classification both density and FAR are specified, development would need to comply with both. However, if a designation has only one of the two standards, then only that applies. For example, Low Density Residential has both an



FAR and density standard, so new development will need to comply with both of these standards. Medium Density and High Density Residential only have a density standard, which means that there is not an FAR requirement that need to be complied with.

The density/intensity standards do not imply that development projects will be approved at the maximum density or intensity specified for each use. Municipal Code regulations (for example height, setback, density, and lot size requirements) consistent with General Plan policies and/or site conditions may reduce range of development potential.

### **Land Use Classification System**

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 Municipal Code will contain more detailed provisions and standards, and will be updated to ensure consistency with the General Plan land use classification system. More than one zoning district may be consistent with a single General Plan land use classification.

### **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 acre of developable parcel area (that is, excluding land that is constrained for development by public rights-of-way such as public streets or creeks, or has environmental constraints. Development would be required to be within the density range (both maximum and minimum) where stipulated in the classification unless due to existing site constraints the development cannot be developed at minimum density. Development standards established in the Municipal Code may limit attainment of maximum densities.

Accessory and “junior” accessory 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.

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 building and has open space on all four sides.
- **Single-Family Attached.** Single-family units that are attached to other units with 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. Building heights will be regulated by zoning, but would typically be less than 30 feet or 2 stories tall.

#### *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). Multifamily housing type may be permitted where maximum permitted density is otherwise not attainable due to lot configuration or development constraints, such as the result of oddly-shaped lots or topographic constraints. Building heights would typically be less than 45 feet or 4 stories tall.

#### *High Density Residential (HDR)*

Residential development, with densities ranging from 18.0 to 40.0 units per acre for sites smaller than two acres in size, and up to 50 units per acre for sites larger than two acres. This designation would permit the full range of housing types, including multifamily but also single-family attached development subject to standards in the Municipal Code, and is intended for specific areas where higher density may be appropriate. Typically, taller building heights would be found in this designation with a max height of 70 feet or 6 stories.

### **MIXED USE**

This designation is intended to accommodate high-intensity active uses and mixed-use development. Retail and department stores; eating and drinking establishments; hotels; commercial recreation; financial, business, and personal services; residential; educational and social services; and office uses are permitted. Any new construction, or expansion of existing light or heavy industrial uses adjacent to residential must include buffered setback areas to ensure compatibility. Two 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 (typically 85 feet or lower; 6-7 stories), mixed-use development. The ground floor frontage of a site along West Carson Street is encouraged to be devoted to active uses; active 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, 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 other permitted uses (commercial or residential). Ground floor active uses may be required along some portions of West Carson Street.



The maximum residential density is 35 units per acre. Residential density may be increased 10 units per acre for every 0.1 FAR of active use provided (calculated based on entire parcel area), up to a maximum of 65 units per acre. Thus, for example, a 100,000 s.f. site that provides 25,000 s.f. floor space (0.25 FAR) of active uses shall be entitled to density increase of 25 units per acre, for a maximum density of 60 units per acre (35 base + 25 bonus) for land devoted to residential or vertical mixed uses where residential is a component. No residential FAR is specified, and maximum non-residential FAR shall be 0.75.

#### *Corridor Mixed Use (CMU)*

This designation is applied to corridors where a mix of commercial and residential uses is permitted. The maximum FAR for all uses, inclusive of housing, shall be 1.0. Residential density is limited to 40 units per acre. No minimum commercial or active uses are required, except for the site southeast of West Sepulveda Street and South Main Street with existing neighborhood commercial uses, where a minimum 0.3 FAR of neighborhood commercial uses are required. Typically, mid-rise building heights would be found in this designation with a max height of 70 feet or 6 stories depending on use.

### **FLEX DISTRICT**

Flex districts are similar to mixed-use districts except a wider range of uses are permitted. In addition to the residential and non-residential uses established in the mixed-use designation, flex districts permit a range of light-industrial uses, provided that these uses do not significantly impact noise or air quality for non-industrial land uses. Any expansion of existing heavy industrial uses adjacent to residential must include buffered setback areas to ensure compatibility. Two flex districts are established:

#### *Flex District 1 (FD1)*

A range of light-industrial uses without off-site noise and air quality impacts, eating and drinking establishment, live-work lofts, breweries, roasteries, and other uses compatible with residential areas, promoting development of an urban, walkable environment. Buildings are generally limited to 65 feet in height (4-5 stories). Stand-alone retail uses and retail ancillary to industrial or residential uses are permitted, as well as free standing residential projects. The maximum allowed FAR for all uses is 1.0 with a maximum residential density of 40 units per acre. Two areas of Flex District 1 will have different characteristics and listed below.

**North Area.** This is the area generally along Figueroa Street, Broadway, and Main Street, just south of Highway 91. Due to the large parcel sizes within this area, additional east-west streets or pedestrian paseos and smaller blocks will be necessary in order to make it an urban, walkable environment. New development should provide east-west connections so that blocks do not exceed 600 feet in length. If residential uses are proposed, parcels within the North Area should be part of a cohesive plan that looks at the long-term development potential of adjacent properties and present a strategy for transition from light/heavy industrial to a mixture of uses with residential.



**Other Areas.** This refer to parcels that are designated as Flex District 1 which are not in the North Area. 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, if industrial uses are proposed as part of a development, then impacts to existing sensitive uses (such as schools and residential) should be thoroughly considered.

#### *Flex District 2 (FD2)*

This designation would permit the range of uses allowed in Flex District 1, but permit a greater array of light industrial uses, including small-scale manufacturing, provided air quality and noise impacts are contained within the site, as well as larger-scale stand-alone regional retail and commercial entertainment facilities. This designation would not permit large, trucking warehouse facilities. Residential uses are permitted, with a residential density up to 65 units per acre. The overall maximum FAR is 2.0, inclusive of residential uses. Buildings would generally be limited to 85 feet in height, or about 6 to 8 stories, depending on use.

### **COMMERCIAL AUTOMOTIVE DISTRICT**

#### *Commercial Automotive District (CAD)*

The Commercial Automotive District (CAD) is intended to promote a distinctive area of automobile and light truck sales facilities with consistent and appealing landscaping, lighting, signage and compatible architectural elements. Individual uses and site requirements are as established in the Carson Municipal Code Section 9138.15.

***Note to City staff. This language in italics will be moved to the General Plan policies section when that is drafted, but is provided here for reference for now.***

*This district is intended to fulfill the following objectives:*

- 1. Encourage the consolidation of automobile sales franchises within a designated Commercial Automotive District.*
- 2. Provide signage standards designed to meet the needs of automobile retailing, while remaining aesthetically pleasing to the public.*
- 3. Provide flexible design standards to encourage compatible site design, while encouraging a range of architectural aesthetic styles to create a sense of excitement and vitality.*
- 4. Provide consistent design standards to which all development within the CAD must adhere.*
- 5. Establish the cooperation and coordination of the participants in the development and operation of the CAD.*
- 6. Establish a long-range and ongoing source of economic strength to the community in terms of employment and tax revenue for community services.*
- 7. Encourage the rehabilitation of existing structures and overall site upgrades so that existing land uses become unified with new developments, enhancing the overall CAD image.*



8. *Establish innovative and quality site planning and architectural design maintaining a prosperous and marketable specialized automobile commercial complex, unique and individual in itself.*

*Certain development considerations associated with the planning and implementation of this development district are unique to the City of Carson and this district in particular. The implementation of a marketable complex for automobile sales and services requires a district which provides: (1) opportunities for high visibility and accessibility to the dealerships from the 405 Freeway and 223rd Street; (2) available parcels of land under the ownership of several individuals and the redevelopment agency; (3) incentives for development such as public improvements (i.e., streets, gutters, lighting, off-site signage, etc.), redevelopment agency opportunities, and community goals and standards; and (4) the previous establishment of existing uses and compatibility with proposed new automobile and other related retail commercial uses. The maximum FAR is 0.5 with building heights typically around 40 feet or up to three stories tall.*

## **BUSINESS**

### *Business Mixed Use (BMU)*

This designation is designed to foster high-intensity mix of business uses, resulting in districts with strong urban design, including buildings and landscapes that relate to the surroundings, with high-level of public-realm amenities, such as tree-lined streets; sidewalks, pedestrian paths, and crossings; and plazas and other gathering spaces for workers and visitors. Site planning for new construction should ensure that streets are lined with occupied buildings or landscapes, with parking and service facilities tucked behind or away from public streets. Large parcels would be broken up into smaller blocks by pedestrian paths to create more walkable settings.

This designation is applied to the former Shell site, and to sites proximate to I-405 to capitalize on regional access. A range of business uses are permitted, including offices, research and development facilities with office-like appearance, hotels, and retail and regional-commercial uses. Warehouse and distribution facilities, and industrial uses are not to be permitted, and service and gas stations, and drive-through establishments are limited. Maximum FAR is 1.0 and increases up to 3.0 may be permitted with community benefits. Mid- to low high-rise buildings (70 to 150 feet tall; 6-14 stories) with structured parking may be needed to accommodate the higher end of the intensity range.

## **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 Municipal Code. Typical uses are manufacturing, research and development, wholesaling, and warehousing. Very limited amount of supportive retail and services uses are permitted, 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. Any expansion of existing industrial uses adjacent to residential must include buffered setback areas to ensure compatibility.



When Light Industrial zones are located adjacent to existing sensitive land uses, such as schools or residential, future uses in the same building should transition to uses that have less impacts to sensitive land uses as it relates to noise, hazardous material, air quality, and traffic.

Performance and development standards are intended to allow a wide range of uses as long as those uses will not adversely impact adjacent uses. Certain uses, such as truck yards, container yards, lay down yards, container parking, storage yards, or truck terminals would not be permitted. Self-storage would require a conditional use permit. Any exterior storage and limited operations associated with use/building/business must be fully screened from any public view, including from adjacent residential and commercial uses. The maximum allowable FAR is 0.5. Buildings within this commercial category would generally be 45 feet or 1 to 2 stories tall (with mezzanine). Outdoor storage is prohibited.

#### *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. Performance standards still must be met, but the development standards are the minimum necessary to assure safe, functional, and environmentally sound activities. Any expansion of existing heavy industrial uses adjacent to existing sensitive land uses, such as schools or residential, future uses in the same building should transition to uses that have less impacts to sensitive land uses as it relates to noise, hazardous material, air quality, and traffic. Certain uses, such as truck yards, container yards, lay down yards, container parking, storage yards, or truck terminals would not be permitted.

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 1.0. Building heights would depend on use and require a conditional use permit.