







# WESTMINSTER

## General Plan Update

OPPORTUNITY. COMMUNITY. PROGRESS.

*Updating our General Plan was truly a citywide effort. The City would like to thank everyone involved including those who served in an official capacity as acknowledged below.*

### **City Council**

Mayor Tri Ta  
Mayor Pro Tem Sergio Contreras  
Council Member Diana Carey  
Council Member Tyler Diep  
Council Member Margie Rice

### **Planning Commission**

Don Anderson  
Carlos Manzo  
Andrew Nguyen  
Anita Rice  
Alex Vo  
Lee Lieberg, Former Commissioner  
Khanh Nguyen, Former Commissioner

### **General Plan Advisory Committee**

Tri Ta, Chair  
Sergio Contreras, Vice Chair  
Vincent Agor  
Don Anderson  
Gloria Constas  
Gilbert Cruz  
Owen Eames  
April Erazo  
Lupe Fisher  
Richard Jolly  
Mimi Lozano  
Gia Ly  
Lisa Manzo  
Sandra McClure  
Tyler Nichols  
Khanh Nguyen  
Helen Ortega  
Jamison Power  
Patricia Robbins  
Laura Sottile Rose  
Syed Shah  
Diana Williams

### **City Staff**

Eddie Manfro, City Manager  
Chester C. Simmons, Assistant City Manager  
Dan Schoonmaker, Deputy Chief  
Soroosh Rahbari, AIA, CBO, Community Development Director  
Diana Dobbert, Community Services Director  
Marwan Yousseff, Ph.D, P.E., Public Works Director  
Brian Fisk, Interim Planning Manager  
Alexis Oropeza, Associate Planner  
Steve Ratkay, AICP, Associate Planner  
Pete Quinn, Public Works Manager  
Adolfo Ozaeta, P.E., T.E., City Traffic Engineer  
Daniel Hsieh, P.E., Associate Civil Engineer  
Michael Chapman, Commander  
Scott Miller, Water Superintendent  
Sandie Oh, Planning Technician  
Art Bashmakian, AICP, Former Planning Manager  
Chris Wong, Former Assistant Planner  
Jessica Bui, Former Planning Technician  
Alice Tieu, Former Planning Technician

### **Other Agencies**

Ken Robbins, General Manager, Midway City Sanitary District  
Eric Elmer, Fire Prevention Analyst, Orange County Fire Authority  
Lea Choum, Land Use Manager, Facilities John Wayne Airport





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## General Plan Update

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**Prepared for:**

City of Westminster  
Contact: Brian Fisk, Interim Planning Manager  
8200 Westminster Boulevard  
Westminster, CA 92683  
714.548.3247  
planning@westminster-ca.gov  
<http://www.ci.westminster.ca.us/>

**Prepared by:**

PlaceWorks  
Contact: Wendy Nowak, AICP, Associate Principal  
3 MacArthur Place, Suite 1100  
Santa Ana, California 92707  
714.966.9220  
info@placeworks.com  
www.placeworks.com

Fehr & Peers Transportation Consultants

Contact: Jason Pack, P.E., Principal  
8141 E. Kaiser Boulevard, Suite 110  
Anaheim, CA 92808  
714.941.8800  
www.fehrandpeers.com



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## Introduction to the General Plan

Westminster, like many of the suburban communities that resulted from growth of the Los Angeles metropolitan area in the late 1950s, and unlike many newer master planned communities, has evolved into a unique city that transitioned from an historic agricultural settlement to a vibrant, diverse, independently-minded, entrepreneurial hub with its own eclectic mix. Established residential neighborhoods, iconic Old English architecture in the Civic Center district, thriving small businesses and restaurants of the renowned Little Saigon district, Westminster Mall, and its location in Orange County are all important identities of Westminster. More importantly, for the people of Westminster, the community is defined by its rich history rooted in multiculturalism, the opportunity for economic prosperity, and its reputation as a family-friendly place to live and work. With major freeways and highway transportation corridors traversing the city, Westminster is easily accessible to the region's entertainment, recreation, shopping, education, cultural and employment centers, as well as harbors, airports and rail, while enjoying the pleasant Mediterranean climate of Southern California's coastal region.

The City's first General Plan was adopted in 1965 and has been updated two times prior (1985 and 1996) to the current effort. The City's 2016 General Plan Update takes a fresh look at where Westminster is today and where it's going. Through a robust dialogue with the Westminster community, including its residents, business and property owners, and visitors, the City Council adopted the City's first long-term Vision Statement (described in detail later in this chapter). This Vision Statement is not only the foundation for the City's Updated General Plan, but for all long-term decision-making in the City. The Vision Statement memorializes the community's aspirations and describes the "Westminster of the future" as having:

- » A special sense and quality of place;
- » A strong community culture;
- » A diversity of residential neighborhoods and housing choices;
- » A thriving economy;
- » A desirable location where people can get around easily;
- » Ample park facilities and recreation opportunities.

### In This Chapter...

- » Introduction to the General Plan
- » Our History
- » Community Vision
- » Purpose of the General Plan
- » How to Read the General Plan
- » Related Plans, Programs, and Legislation





*The City's modern-day logo, pictured above, is a variation on the City's seal and is more commonly used today.*

*In the center of the City's seal, pictured below, there is a drawing of the outline of the county of Orange, within which is an outline of the original incorporated shape of the city of Westminster. Encircling the outline of the city is a band broken into quadrants. The four quadrants of this band contain the words "homes," "industry," "schools" and "churches."*



This introductory chapter provides a broad overview of the Westminster General Plan—how it was created, how it should be used, and what it sets out to achieve. It also includes background information relevant to the plan, such as an overview of the General Plan content, its relationship to relevant local, state, and federal programs and legislation, a brief historical discussion, and Westminster's Vision Statement. The purpose of this General Plan Update is to comprehensively modernize the 1996 plan to reflect current conditions, establish a common vision of what the community aspires to become, and create policy direction to guide Westminster's long-range planning and growth over the next 20-30 years.

Westminster's General Plan recognizes the community's past successes and proposes new goals and policies (supported by implementation actions identified in a separate document) to chart a prosperous future. Its policy framework will guide decisions about future economic development projects and service priorities, capital improvements, and budgeting. Through adherence to the implementation plan, Westminster will ensure that goals and policies of the general plan are supported by definite action, leading to measurable improvements in community quality of life.

## Our History

A review of Westminster's history can help recognize trends and events that shaped the way the City has evolved over the last 200 years. Westminster's roots run deep, with history dating back to the 1800s, as early as any other community in Orange County. In fact, Westminster was the second colony in Orange County to be deliberately founded, but in contrast to the first (Anaheim), Westminster was not founded by any one ethnic group nor did it center on one product economy; this diversity in culture and trade is still evident in modern-day Westminster. Over the years, Westminster grew from an agrarian community to one with a diversity of land use, including a range of residential neighborhoods, job choices, and recreational amenities. A brief overview of the community's history is outlined in this section to provide the framework for moving forward over the next 20-30 years.

### Agrarian Roots: 1800s – 1920s

Westminster's roots date back to the 1800s, when it was founded by Reverend Lemuel P. Webber as the second Presbyterian temperance colony in Orange County (after Anaheim). The colony was named after the Westminster Assembly of 1643, which prescribed the basic principles of the Presbyterian faith. The economy was established throughout the 19th century, when the completion of the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific Railroads brought settlers from the east coast, along with immigrants from China, Japan, and Mexico. Many people were attracted to the region's rich productive soils, and the area was eventually transformed from a "small quiet village" into an agricultural hub with some of the most productive dairying centers, celery fields, and sugar factories in the country. However, even with growing interest in the region, the population of Westminster was only 225 people by 1874.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the town's business economy started to take shape. The town's first general store and schoolhouse were established to serve the growing community; the general store kicked-off

Westminster’s first business district on Almond Avenue, which today is known as Westminster Boulevard. By the end of the 19th century, the town had a range of commercial services while maintaining its reputation as a premiere agricultural center. The first library was built in 1900 and in 1902 the first telephone line reached what would become the City of Westminster. To support the community’s growing economic interests, the town’s Chamber of Commerce was established and the “Plaza Association” was organized to develop Sigler Park, which still serves as a signature landmark and local destination in Westminster.

### **A Growing Community: 1920s – 1950s**

The suburban residential tracts developed in Westminster in the 1920s-1950s are still a prominent fixture of the community’s urban fabric as the majority of the City’s acres support residential uses. In 1924 the Midway City subdivision began construction, followed shortly by Barber City in 1927. During the 1920s, the world’s largest goldfish farm moved into the area where the Westminster Mall stands today. Despite the growth of the community in the 1920s, the Great Depression stifled growth for much of the 1930s. In addition to the economic strains of the Depression, natural disasters including a major earthquake in 1933 and a severe flood in 1938 held Westminster back from embracing the development the city experienced in its early years.

Despite its stagnant growth in the early 1900s, by the 1940s and 1950s, the nationwide war and post-war boom brought exponential population growth to most areas throughout Southern California, especially those communities with access to jobs near the ports and aeronautic facilities. Following the war, servicemen who were located in Southern California decided to stay for the warm climate, and many large housing tracts grew around the agricultural lands of Westminster. The City’s population nearly quadrupled during this time from 2,500 in 1942 to nearly 10,800 in 1956.

In 1957, proceedings began to form a municipality called Tri City, in a proposal to combine three communities into one: Westminster, Barber City, and Midway City. Before the vote, Midway City withdrew from the venture and remains unincorporated today. The proposal to incorporate Westminster and Barber City was approved by a vote of 1,096 to 1,008, and Westminster became California’s 337th city in 1957.



*Midway City’s residential tracts were largely built during the first half of the 1900s; while the majority of Westminster incorporated in 1957, Midway City continues to remain an unincorporated area of Orange County. These neighborhoods have some of the most mature landscaping in the community, as exemplified by the iconic tree pictured above.*

## A Landmark Case: Mendez v. Westminster, 1947

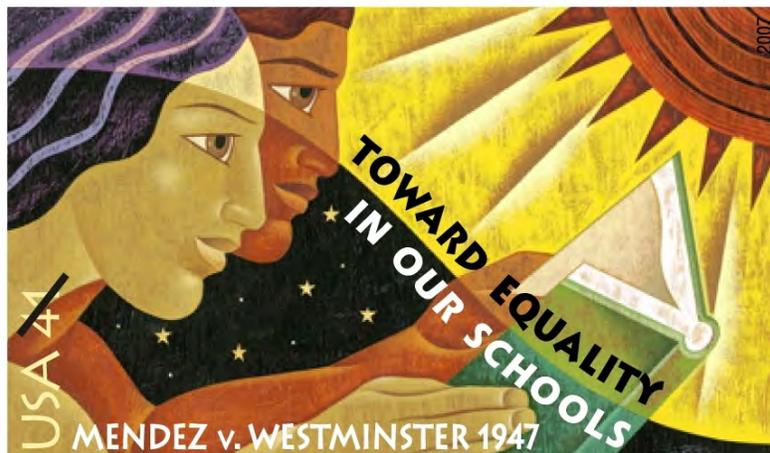
Even as Westminster (and the rest of Orange County) was growing rapidly in the post-WWII era, most recreational activities and public places remained segregated—including public parks, movie theaters, and schools. In Orange County, Mexican and Mexican-American school enrollment was restricted to separate schoolhouses, a policy which affected approximately 5,000 children of “Mexican” ancestry. In 1945, five Mexican-American fathers, led by Mr. Gonzalo Mendez, brought suit in the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles against the Westminster School District of Orange County with the claim that children of “Mexican” ancestry were victims of unconstitutional discrimination by being forced to attend separate schools in the Westminster, Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and El Modena school districts of Orange County.

In 1946, the Los Angeles court ruled in favor of Mr. Mendez. The ruling was upheld on appeal to the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, and was upheld again in 1947 by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Two months later, California's Governor Earl Warren signed a bill ending school segregation in California, making it the first state to officially desegregate its public schools, thanks—in large part—to the activism and social consciousness demonstrated by Mr. Mendez.

*Mendez* was the first ruling in the United States in favor of desegregation. In *Mendez*, Thurgood Marshall represented Sylvia Mendez and Linda Brown. Marshall used some of the same arguments from *Mendez* to win *Brown v. Board of Education* eight years later. The Supreme Court adopted many of Marshall's arguments and, in 1954, issued an opinion ending school segregation throughout the United States.

The historic importance of *Mendez* has been celebrated and commemorated in a variety of ways at the local and national level. In particular, in 2007, on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the case, the United States Postal Service honored the ruling with a commemorative stamp, which was presented to the Mendez family at a press conference at the Rose Center Theater in Westminster. In 2011, President Barack Obama awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Sylvia Mendez, the daughter of Gonzalo Mendez (lead plaintiff in the lawsuit). Sylvia was one of the Mexican-American students denied admission to their local school, and since that time has worked tirelessly to encourage students to stay in school.

*Mendez v. Westminster* © 2007 United States Postal Service. All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.



## Becoming a City: 1960s – 1970s

By 1963, the Orange County population had surpassed one million, as tourism, manufacturing and the service industries took over local economies once Disneyland opened its gates in 1955. During the 1960s, Westminster’s population exploded, more than doubling in a single decade from 25,000 at the beginning of the 1960s to 60,000 by 1970. As a result, the majority of the City’s residential neighborhoods were built during this time. Westminster continued to thrive throughout the 1960s and 1970s, especially after the Southland Freeway (I-405) system was completed and the Westminster Mall was constructed, the latter of which became a regional attraction that continues to be the City’s primary sales tax generator. As commerce and tourism continued to develop throughout the city and county, municipal construction projects in Westminster—including a new administration building, senior citizens facility, fire department buildings, and a renovation of the civic auditorium—demonstrated the prosperity of the time. By the end of the 1970s, very little vacant land remained in Westminster, and some of the community’s older buildings had already reached the end of their useful life and were redeveloped.

## Creation of a Cultural Destination: 1970s – 1980s

In the 1970s and 1980s a large number of Vietnamese refugees fleeing from conflict in their homeland settled in an area of Westminster and Garden Grove referred to as “Little Saigon.” This influx of new immigrants spurred the construction and development of a variety of Southeast Asian businesses, restaurants, and professional services, which establish a new commercial activity center in the city and supported the largest Vietnamese cultural enclave outside of Vietnam (some 500 businesses opened in the Bolsa Avenue area in the 1980s alone). Although several other Vietnamese enclaves have emerged throughout the United States (including in San Jose, Houston, and Chicago) Little Saigon here in the Westminster/Garden Grove area is unofficially considered the Vietnamese “capital” of the United States, with a 2010 population of 36,000 Vietnamese Americans (the highest municipal concentration of Vietnamese Americans in the nation). On weekends, the number of people in Westminster triples, as Little Saigon regularly draws visitors from Los Angeles, San Diego, and even northern California.



*Little Saigon in Westminster is a major Vietnamese cultural destination for local, regional and international visitors. With a population of over 36,000 Vietnamese Americans, Little Saigon is home to the highest municipal concentration of Vietnamese Americans in the nation.*

## Westminster Today: 1990s – Present Day

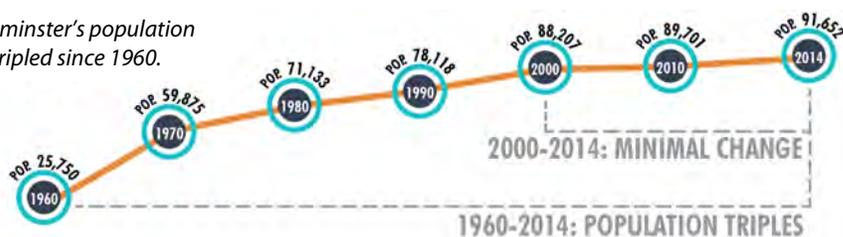
Well-established by the 1990s as a multicultural community with deep roots in Western, Mexican, and Vietnamese histories, in 1996 Westminster was designated an “All-America City” by the National Civic League for civic accomplishments, made possible by the cooperative efforts of business, government, the volunteer sector, and other individuals. Westminster continues to support the needs of a diverse population today and is widely seen as a welcoming community, with many services and venues to serve its visitors and residents including a 400-seat theater at the Westminster Rose Center, a satellite campus of Coastline Community College, Sid Goldstein Freedom Park, and Westminster Mall.

Upgrades to the City’s infrastructure continue, with the City continually investing in multimodal transportation, water services, waste operations, parks and recreation facilities, public administration offices, and public safety services. In the first part of the 2000s, there has been a special focus on improving and maintaining maintenance of those facilities most important to a primarily built-out city, including the community’s roadways, utilities, and parks. Westminster demonstrates its commitment to continue providing a high quality of life for its residents, property owners, business owners, and visitors.

## Demographic Overview (2014)

Like any other community, Westminster is ever changing and growing and its demographics shift from year to year. With that said, this section presents a brief overview of Westminster as it looked when this General Plan was prepared. It provides a framework for understanding the City, its attributes, and relevant issues in planning its future

*Westminster’s population has tripled since 1960.*



*Source: U.S. Census, 2014.*

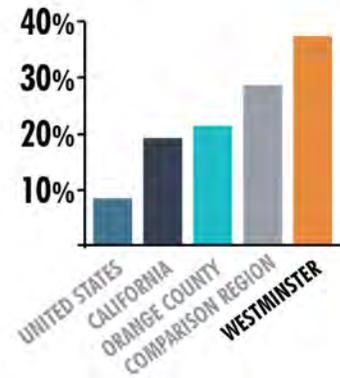
Westminster has the 10th largest population out of 34 cities in Orange County, with 91,652 residents in 2014. From 1960 to 2014, Westminster’s population grew significantly compared to the preceding 50 years. Much of that growth occurred between 1960 and 2000, with only a 2 percent increase during the past 15 years. The age distribution in Westminster has experienced greater variability over time compared to Orange County, evidenced by the significant percentage of “baby boomers” (people born between the mid-1940s and mid-1960s) and their children, known as the “echo boom” (people born between the early 1980s and early 2000s). As of 2012, Westminster had a higher population of residents who are 65 and older. In essence, it is a much older community than its neighbors. Over the next 20 years, as the older generation downsizes from larger houses to smaller, more manageable homes, the housing needs of Westminster’s residents may change. Additionally, there will be an increase in demand for medical care, health care facilities, specialized recreation programs, and comparable services

Westminster is a culturally diverse community—in 2012, nearly 75 percent of residents identified themselves as something other than White (non-Hispanic). Almost half of Westminster’s residents identify as Asian. Both Westminster and its neighbors have approximately equal percentages of residents who identify as White (non-Hispanic), but Westminster’s neighbors have a much larger proportion of residents who identify as Hispanic (23 percent in Westminster, 44 percent in the region). Reflecting its diverse cultural identity, Westminster has a significant proportion of foreign-born residents—approximately 45 percent of residents were born outside of the US based on 2012 numbers. Nearly 40 percent of Westminster residents speak Vietnamese at home; of these, about two-thirds report that they do not speak English very well. Westminster has a much larger population who are 14 years or older and not proficient in English than its neighbors. Westminster’s diverse population base suggests a multicultural future for the City that is enriched by varied ethnic and racial communities and traditions.

### Tomorrow’s Westminster: A Vision Statement

Looking forward to the next 20-30 years, as part of the General Plan Update the citizens of Westminster and City Council crafted a Vision Statement that reflects the set of shared values and priorities that are most important to the community. The various components of the Vision serve as the foundation for the goals, policies and, programs developed for each of the General Plan elements. Westminster’s short-term and long-range decisions by policymakers will be evaluated by their ability to further the aspirations of the community as outlined in this plan as they work to improve the quality of life and economic vitality in Westminster. The Community Vision Statement is presented on the following page.

RESIDENTS WHO SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH AT HOME



Source: U.S. Census, 2012.

## THE FOLLOWING IS A VISION OF WESTMINSTER AS DESCRIBED TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW:



The City of Westminster's civic leaders are forward-thinking, embracing sustainability, innovation, and technology to continually improve the City. We are well-known throughout Southern California for our quality neighborhoods, unique community culture, exciting local and regional destinations, and diversity in economic opportunity.



There is a special **sense and quality of place** in Westminster which sets us apart from our neighboring cities. We have distinct local and regional activity centers, districts, and cultural destinations—including a Downtown and Little Saigon—and places where community members can gather to participate in civic events and other special programs. Our walkable streets, signage, architecture, landscaping, and neighborhoods all contribute to Westminster's unique identity.

We are proud of our **strong community culture** including our history, diversity, and family-friendly atmosphere. Our special places, experiences, and popular parks, programs and community events reflect our commitment to actively celebrate the things that make us unique. People living in Westminster want to continue living in the community for the long-term. We pride ourselves on the amenities and programs that are available in our community.



Our **residential neighborhoods** are some of the most popular places to live in Southern California. Our residents take pride in their homes and our neighborhoods are well-maintained, clean, safe, and supported by strong infrastructure and public services. A variety of **housing choices** are available for people looking to call Westminster home, including first-time homebuyers, families with children, empty-nesters, and retirees.



We have a **thriving economy** with a range of high-quality dining, hospitality, shopping, entertainment, and employment choices. Our business community is strong and invested in maintaining the positive image of Westminster, especially along our corridors and business districts. Businesses in Westminster are prosperous, fill a niche in the regional economy, and contribute the revenue necessary to support our community services.

Our desirable climate, **location** near the beach, and adjacency to major freeways provides people who live, work, and visit here convenient access to popular destinations throughout the region. Within our community, people of all ages and abilities prefer to safely and efficiently **get around** by walking, biking, or using public transit and our extensive network of trails.



Westminster residents of all ages are healthy and active and are well-served by **ample park facilities and recreation opportunities**. These facilities are located equitably throughout the community and contribute to Westminster residents' high quality of life.

## Purpose of the General Plan

The Westminster General Plan is a comprehensive, long-range planning and policy document that will not only guide growth and change within the community, but also preserve and protect the unique qualities that the Westminster community values most. The General Plan is the single most important tool used to help successful communities achieve their vision. A General Plan:

- » Sets the course for decision making;
- » Helps to balance the interests of residents with the needs of business owners and property owners;
- » Helps to inform and educate the citizenry;
- » Serves as an effective management tool for City staff;
- » Provides guidance for economic decisions;
- » Ensures the protection of the natural environment.

This update process is not intended to craft the General Plan from scratch; instead it streamlines and further refines the existing direction already established by the City in the 1996 General Plan. Proposals for development, either developer- or City-initiated, must be analyzed and tested for consistency with the goals, policies, and programs in every applicable element of the General Plan. This test of compliance is also a required criterion for determining significant impacts under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared as a companion document to the General Plan. The EIR assesses the potential impacts that are generated by the goals and policies of the General Plan, and identifies mitigation measures to address those impacts. The associated technical studies prepared for traffic, infrastructure, and cultural resources provided the technical detail used to determine the level of impacts that could be created by the General Plan.

State Law requires each General Plan to be:

1. **Comprehensive.** General Plans must address a wide range of issues associated with city's physical development and social environment, as well as address both the territory within the boundaries of the City, and areas outside of its boundaries that relate and influence its planning vision and activities related to community growth and development, known as the city's Sphere of Influence (see the land use element).
2. **Internally consistent.** All of the Plan's goals, policies, text, maps, tables, figures, etc. cannot conflict with the element in which it appears, or with those of another element. For instance, if land use element policies are likely to result in an increase in population and traffic, the mobility element must provide feasible mitigation to address those impacts. All elements of the General Plan, including adopted optional elements, have equal legal status, so no element takes legal priority over another.
3. **Long-term in nature.** The General Plan must take a long-term perspective, which is usually at least 20 years into the future. Since the General Plan will influence the well-being of both current and future generations, it will need to project future needs and conditions to the best of its ability, in order to better establish goals and objectives.

## Who Will Use the General Plan?

Using the Vision Statement as a foundation for decision-making, city councils, commissions, and staff, along with members of the community and other agencies use the goals and policies of the General Plan on which to make decisions.

**City Council and Commissions:** use the goals and policies of the general plan as a basis upon which to make both long-term and short-term decisions, determine long-term objectives, generate and evaluate budgets, plan capital improvements, and prioritize tasks.

**City staff in all departments:** will also reference the general plan when considering development applications, capital improvements, service programming, and departmental budgeting.

**Community members:** can help implement the vision of the City by seeking guidance for preserving and enhancing the community through the general plan's goals and policies.

**Other local and regional agencies:** will refer to the general plan when projecting needs and services. The general plan is truly the City's collective guide to the future.

All General Plans are required by State law to cover seven topics: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. However, state law also provides local jurisdictions the flexibility to determine the structure of their General Plans, and to include optional elements. For instance, a city or county may combine one or more elements or structure the General Plan by issue, so long as the topics of the mandatory elements are addressed. Because the Westminster community vision articulates a desire for a strong community culture, a special sense and quality of place, and a thriving economy, the city has also elected to include two optional elements: Economic Development and Community Design. The Westminster General Plan has combined and organized the topics as outlined below.

**Land Use (2):** describes goals and policies, for areas both within Westminster's boundaries and unincorporated Sphere of Influence, in both narrative and graphic terms. Land use categories are used to depict the general distribution, location, and extent of public and private uses of land. It also identifies and analyzes projected noise conditions in the community and must include measures to abate or mitigate potential noise levels.

**Economic Development (3):** assesses the economic vitality of the community, and addresses business development, retail sector growth, and employment opportunities.

**Community Design (4):** establishes parameters for the quality and desired character of development throughout Westminster by defining placemaking and community design features, including streetscapes, districts, neighborhoods, gateways, and landscape corridors. The element will also identify historic, cultural, and distinct places throughout the community and provide direction on neighborhood enhancement and preservation.

**Mobility (5):** includes the identification, location, and design of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, pedestrian connections, bicycle facilities, public transit options, trails, and local public utilities and facilities, while planning for all modes of travel (auto, pedestrian, bike, transit). It also serves as an infrastructure plan and must be correlated with the land use element.

**Parks and Recreation (6):** addresses the location, distribution, and design of open space lands used for active and passive recreation, and describes the broad range of community, cultural, educational and recreational programs and resources offered or desired in Westminster.

**Infrastructure and Natural Resources (7):** identifies water, wastewater, solid waste, and telecommunications, and identifies the various biological, water, and energy resources that need to be protected and conserved.

**Public Health and Safety (8):** identifies community safety issues, seismic, geologic, flood, and fire services and wildfire hazards, evacuation routes, and establishes policies to protect the community from them.

**Housing (9):** addresses housing needs for all people of all needs and income levels, and demonstrates how the city will provide for adequate locations that can accommodate mandated housing requirements. State law requires that this element be revised, at a minimum, every eight years.

## How to Read Westminster's General Plan

As the guide for future development and desired conditions, residents, property owners, and business owners should also familiarize themselves with how to read this document. Each element contains a brief introduction, several goals and related policies, and a description of related plans, programs and legislation.

### Goals

A goal in the General Plan is the broadest statement of community values. It is a generalized ideal which provides a sense of direction for action. They are overall statements of desired future conditions. For example: "A safe, aesthetically pleasing, and unified community appearance within the context of distinct districts and neighborhoods."

### Policies

The essence of the General Plan is contained within its policies. Policies are statements which further refine the goals, and guide the course of action the City must take to achieve the goals in the plan. It is important to note that policies are guides for decision makers, not decisions themselves. For example: "Use public landscaping and signage along streets, sidewalks, and property frontages and in public spaces to strengthen the existing City identity."

Policies must be clear to be useful. However, they may range in terms of commitment of resources, importance and/or urgency, and expected results. Therefore, it is important for readers to understand the distinctions between various levels of policy. The following is a list of common terms used in policies, and how to interpret their usage in the policy language. In cases where other action terms are used (and not defined below), an equivalent to the closest applicable term can be used.

- » **Shall:** Absolute commitment to the policy or action, and indicate that the policy must be adhered to in all cases.
- » **Should:** Policy will be followed in most cases, but exceptions are acceptable for good reasons.
- » **Encourage:** Policy is highly recommended and/or desired, and should be pursued when feasible.
- » **Allow:** Policy will be supported within certain parameters and certain guidelines.
- » **Coordinate:** Policy will occur in conjunction with another entity, and the City will carry its share of the responsibility.
- » **Explore:** Effort will be taken to investigate the subject at hand, to discover whether or not further commitment is relevant.
- » **Consider:** Policy may or may not be followed, depending upon the results of analysis that will be completed.
- » **Limit:** Effort will be taken to keep the subject within certain limits, or will at least make undesired change more difficult.
- » **Restrict:** Effort will be taken to keep the undesired action to a minimum.

### Implementation Actions

Details for implementing General Plan policies are contained in the form of "implementation actions". For the Westminster General Plan Update, the specific implementation actions will be defined in a separate document. These implementation actions describe the specific steps necessary to achieve a policy and define the level of commitment necessary. Actions provide the basis for establishing priorities, scheduling, and assigning staff and other resources to specific actions needed to implement the policies of the Plan. Implementation actions also identify who is responsible for implementing the action item and when it should be carried out.

## **Amending the General Plan**

The General Plan is not static, but rather is a dynamic and multi-faceted document that defines and addresses the changing needs of the City. It is based on an on-going assessment and understanding of existing and projected community needs. To assure that the General Plan is kept current, short-term programs and policies may be reviewed periodically to reflect compatibility with budgetary priorities and related program status. Long-term programs and implementation measures must also be given consideration to assure timely funding and development of critical infrastructure and public services and facilities.

### ***Timing***

Mandatory elements of the General Plan may be amended up to four times in each calendar year. The City Council or any citizen may initiate a General Plan Amendment. It is left to the discretion of the local jurisdiction to establish an amendment schedule to be published one year in advance. State law further requires that the Housing Element be reviewed and updated at least once every eight years.

### ***Application Procedures***

Applications for the amendment of the General Plan and the appropriate fees are filed with the City of Westminster Planning Division. An amendment to the General Plan constitutes a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and, therefore, is evaluated for its environmental effects and consistency with other elements of the General Plan. Final approval of General Plan amendments is the responsibility of the City Council subject to satisfying the environmental requirements imposed by CEQA.

### ***Exemptions***

The State Legislature has recognized that occasions arise which require the local jurisdiction to have some flexibility in amending the General Plan. As set forth in the California Government Code, the following are exempt from the General Plan amendment schedule:

- » Amendments to optional elements.
- » Amendments requested and necessary for affordable housing (Section 65358(c)).
- » Any amendment necessary to comply with a court decision in a case involving the legal adequacy of the general plan (Section 65358(d)(1)).
- » Amendments to bring a general plan into compliance with an airport land use plan (Section 65302.3).

## Associated Documents and Agencies

Although the General Plan serves as the primary means to help the City implement its vision, several other management and implementation tools are needed to ensure that the goals and policies identified here are fully realized.

### City Documents

In addition to internal consistency, the General Plan must be consistent with other planning tools, such as the zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, and specific plans. If those documents are determined to be inconsistent with the General Plan, they cannot be approved. On a regular basis, the General Plan should also be reviewed by other departments to determine whether or not efforts such as public works projects or public land acquisition or sale are consistent with the goals and policies identified in the General Plan. The following are some management and implementation tools that are needed to ensure that the goals and policies identified are fully realized.

#### *Westminster Municipal Code*

The Westminster Municipal Code regulates most aspects of city operations. While all of its 17 titles are important to maintaining law and order in the City, some are more closely associated with the General Plan, including:

- » Title 5, Business Taxes, Licenses and Regulations
- » Title 8, Healthy and Safety
- » Title 10, Vehicles and Traffic
- » Title 12, Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places
- » Title 16, Subdivisions
- » Title 17, Land Use

Title 17, Land Use—the City’s Zoning Code—is the primary tool used to implement the General Plan, and regulates the type and intensity of development citywide. The Zoning Code establishes basic regulations applicable to each zone and land use to ensure an appropriate distribution of land uses, and orderly development of the City. Included in the code are development regulations which define limits on building height, setbacks, and landscaping.

#### *Specific Plans*

Specific Plans are detailed plans for the development of a particular geographic area within a City. Similarly to the Zoning Code, it contains detailed development standards, distribution of land uses, infrastructure requirements, and implementation measures for the orderly development of the City. Specific Plans can provide greater flexibility and an opportunity to focus regulations and standards on the goals of the particular area. In 2011, the City of Westminster adopted the Moran Street Specific Plan for approximately 20 acres of land on the south side of Bolsa Avenue between Magnolia and Brookhurst, in the heart of Little Saigon (including Asian Garden Mall). The General Plan Update does not impact the Moran Street Specific Plan, which continues to act as the development plan for the project area.

### ***Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)***

A Capital Improvement Plan is a community planning and fiscal management tool that assesses and coordinates the location, timing, and financing of capital improvements over a short time period, usually 4-6 years. The City of Westminster regularly reviews its Capital Improvement Plan to ensure the City is dedicating the necessary resources where they are most needed.

### **Plans, Programs, and Legislation**

A number of key state and federal legislative mandates influence the content of the General Plan's and must also be addressed, including legislation related to climate change, transportation, housing, and public safety issues as follows:

#### ***Orange County General Plan***

The Orange County General Plan guides land use decisions within the unincorporated areas of Orange County. According to the Orange County General Plan Land Use Plan (2014) the county islands included within Westminster's Sphere of Influence are designated a combination of suburban residential (0.5-18 du/ac), urban residential (18+ du/ac), and community commercial uses.

#### ***County of Orange Master Plan of Arterial Highways***

The County of Orange Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) forms part of the Orange County General Plan and designates the arterial system in the Circulation & Mobility Element of the General Plan. Defined according to specific arterial functional classifications, the MPAH serves to define the intended future roadway system for the County. Cities within the County are expected to achieve consistency with the MPAH in individual General Plan circulation elements. To implement changes to the MPAH, approval from the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is required.

#### ***Measure M***

Measure M (1990) authorized a half-cent retail sales tax increase for the duration of 20 years throughout Orange County to generate revenue to use on local and regional transportation improvements and maintenance projects. Although Measure M expired in 2011, a November 2006 ballot measure renewed the program (now known as M2) through 2031. M2 extends the requirements of Measure M, without increasing sales taxes, to fund freeway, street, transit, and environmental projects identified in a Transportation Investment Plan considered by voters in tandem with the renewal measure.

#### ***Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)***

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a long-range transportation plan developed and updated by SCAG every four years. The RTP identifies regional transportation strategies to address regional mobility needs using growth forecasts and economic projections over a 20-year period. The Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) is a newly required element of the RTP which integrates land use and transportation strategies to achieve California Air Resources Board (CARB) emissions reduction targets. In 2012, the Regional

Council of SCAG adopted the 2012-2035 RTP/SCS: Towards a Sustainable Future. The 2012–2035 RTP/SCS provides a blueprint for improving quality of life for Southern California residents by providing more choices for where they will live, work, and play, and how they will move around.

### ***Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP)***

The Air Quality Management Plan (1994) was prepared by the Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and is updated every three years. It contains policies and measures that help to achieve federal and state air quality standards across the South Coast Air Basin.

### ***California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)***

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature as an instrument for ensuring that environmental impacts of local development projects are appropriately assessed and mitigated where feasible. The main purpose of CEQA is to disclose to the public the significant environmental effects of a proposed discretionary project. The provisions of the law and environmental review procedure can be found in the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines.

### ***Assembly Bill 32***

Assembly Bill (AB) 32, The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, sets a statewide goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) to 1990 levels by 2020 (a 15% reduction from a “business-as-usual” scenario). In May 2014, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) approved first update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan, which defines primary strategies to achieve the most technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reductions. Based on the State Attorney General’s interpretation of AB 32, local GHG reduction targets and strategies must be addressed by the General Plan.

### ***Senate Bill 97***

Senate Bill 97 (2007) acknowledges that climate change is a prominent environmental issue that requires analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

### ***Complete Streets Act of 2008***

The Complete Streets Act (2008) revised requirements for general plan circulation elements to plan for a more balanced multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways, which includes bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors. The Complete Streets Act is intended to help fulfill the State’s commitment to reduce GHG emissions through innovative ways to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and shifting from short trips in the automobile to biking, walking, and using public transit.

### ***Senate Bill 812***

Senate Bill 812 (2010) requires that housing elements of general plans include an evaluation of the special housing needs of persons with disabilities, including developmental disabilities. The full analysis should include an estimate of the number of persons within a jurisdiction with developmental disabilities, an assessment of the housing need, and a discussion of potential resources.

### ***Executive Order S-3-05***

Executive Order S-3-05 aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG reduction targets, and affordable housing allocations. In compliance, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has adopted a Sustainable Communities Strategy, which allocates land uses in its Regional Plan. These allocations are considered in drafting the General Plan's Land Use and Housing Elements.

## **Agencies**

### ***Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)***

The Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is a government agency that is responsible for overseeing the formation and development of local government agencies within Orange County. LAFCo's regulatory authority is to review proposals to annex land to cities or special districts, and their planning authority is to determine and update each city's sphere of influence (SOI).

An SOI is a local jurisdiction's plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of the community (Government Code Section 56076). The Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is the agency responsible for establishing the sphere of influence for incorporated cities in Orange County. Westminster's SOI, originally adopted in 1973 and since amended, includes the four Orange County island areas that comprise Midway City, including Beach/McFadden, Bolsa/Midway, Bolsa/Pacific, and McFadden/Monroe.

### ***Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)***

The Orange County Transportation Authority is the public sector transportation planning body and mass transit service provider for Orange County, CA. The OCTA is responsible for overseeing and operating 66 bus lines, the Countywide Master Highway Plan, and a proposed streetcar line (the OC Streetcar).

## Visioning Process and Community Participation

General Plan preparation is a comprehensive process requiring active participation by City leaders and staff, residents, community groups, and businesses. Preparing a General Plan requires a jurisdiction to conduct a candid assessment of existing conditions and trends, opportunities and constraints, and vision for the future. The input generated by residents and stakeholders informs the General Plan so that it reflects real-world issues experienced by those who live and work in the community. Before the General Plan can be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council for action, various community members, stakeholders, and members of the business community must become involved and volunteer their expertise and insights to help shape the General Plan.

At the direction of the City Council, Staff was tasked with advertising the General Plan Update and educating community members about the process to as wide an audience as possible. The City used a variety of creative methods (in three languages) to reach the community, including advertisements at 100 bus stops, flyers at local businesses, direct mailers to every business owner, property owner, and tenant in the City (32,000 mailings), and advertisements in three local newspapers (in addition to the project website, open town hall, and other meeting-specific advertisements undertaken for the project).

In August of 2014 the Westminster City Council appointed a 21-member General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC). The GPAC was comprised of two City Council Members, representatives from each of the City's various commissions and committees and residents, business owners, and property owners appointed by Council to represent the community's interests. The GPAC met 10 times to provide direction and feedback on the General Plan Update, including a bus tour around Orange County where they were able to see examples of different projects in the region that might represent the community's vision for Westminster. The GPAC played a critical role in shaping the General Plan and the City recognized them for their service at a regular meeting of the City Council following adoption of the General Plan in fall 2016.



*The General Plan Advisory Committee members met 10 times over the course of two years.*



*Invitations to get involved in the General Plan Update were posted at over 100 bus stops in three languages: English, Spanish, and Vietnamese*

*English Translation: "Have a Vision for the City? Let's hear it. Join the conversation."*



*A 21-member General Plan Advisory Committee was appointed by the City Council to provide direction and guidance on development of the General Plan. This is the GPAC taking their Oath of Office.*



*A variety of community meetings were held throughout the process to engage the public and hear their vision for the future of Westminister.*

A dedicated website for the General Plan Update was managed for the entire duration of the project. The website was the go-to location for community members, City staff, and other interested agencies to receive up-to-date information on opportunities for input, upcoming activities, background information, and special topic areas, including land planning and environmental review. The website received over 15,000 individual hits from Spring 2014 – Fall 2016.

The City also hosted a number of community open houses on the Vision Statement, Land Use Plan, and Draft General Plan and Environmental Impact Report. These meetings were well attended and the feedback received was provided to the GPAC and the Planning Commission and City Council for their review and consideration throughout the process. Overall, at these open house-style meetings the community felt strongly about elevating the image and aesthetics of the commercial areas and streets, improving the retail, dining, and entertainment options throughout the City, updating and maintaining current park space, and improving upon the walkability, transit options, and bike facilities throughout the City, and these themes can be seen emphasized in this Updated General Plan.



# 2 LAND USE

## Introduction to Land Use

Land uses in Westminster are characterized as a diverse collection of residential, commercial, light industrial, and public uses that provide residents and visitors with the opportunity to: live in safe and established neighborhoods, dine in a variety of locally owned establishments, work in small businesses, recreate in local parks and bike trails, and create strong ties to the community through civic uses and events. The mix and diversity of uses is essential to the community's ability to thrive and be sustainable over time. As population growth continues, Westminster will need to think strategically about where growth and development will occur in the City and how to accommodate land uses to respond to the community's changing needs, all without compromising the integrity of the uses and experiences the community values the most and would like to preserve.

The quality of life for residents of Westminster—and for people who visit—is shaped by the types and mix of uses that:

- » Contribute to or create a sense of place and well-being
- » Are flexible enough to respond quickly to market conditions and trends
- » Respect and sustain natural resources
- » Support the City's fiscal sustainability
- » Reflect the City's diversity and entrepreneurial spirit
- » Recognize the community's culture and history

The Land Use element includes goals and policies that structure and guide future growth and development, ensure the provision of a range of land uses to support the community's vision of diverse housing options and a vibrant economy, and provide direction on how uses should relate to one another to safeguard safety and compatibility.

The Land Use element combines two state-mandated General Plan Elements—the Land Use Element and the Noise Element. California Government Code Section 65302(a) stipulates that a general plan designate the proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of the uses of the land for housing, commerce, industry, open space, education, and public facilities. It further requires that the land use element include a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity. The Noise Element is required by state law to "identify and appraise noise problems in the community," and noise contours shown in the element are "used as a guide ...for minimizing the exposure of community residents to excessive noise." (California Government Code [CGC § 65302 [f]).

### In This Element...

- » Managing Future Growth
- » Land Use Designations
- » Mixed-Use Areas
- » Land Use Buildout Summary
- » Land Use Compatibility
- » Airport Land Use Planning
- » Noise



*The Land Use Plan was carefully crafted to preserve single-family neighborhoods and direct growth and development to corridors and mixed-use areas. Pictured above is the Abbey Drive neighborhood's annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade.*

### The Use of Photos

The pictures included in this element represent the City's long-term land use vision. In some cases, photos from other communities are used to illustrate a new idea or concept; they have been included for illustrative purposes only. The exact style and scale of development envisioned for Westminster is described in the land use designation section and is guided by the goals and policies of the General Plan

*A General Plan is considered "comprehensive" when it addresses the territory within the boundaries of the City and land outside of its boundaries that relate and influence the City's planning vision and activities. This area is called the "sphere of influence," which is a term established by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). LAFCO is directed by state law to establish and periodically review the spheres of influence for each city in its jurisdiction.*

The Land Use Element is complemented by the additional policy guidance in other elements that relates to a specific topic. For example, the Community Design element provides additional policy and design guidance for such things as the City's image, project design, neighborhoods, cultural resources, and other topics that further enhance the fundamental land uses in this element. The Housing Element is also closely tied to the Land Use Element because the Land Use Element identifies the locations and diversity of housing types available in the City that can be used to achieve housing mandates specified by the State Office of Housing and Community Development. The Parks and Recreation Element provides guidance for the open space and recreational amenities in the community, and the Public Health and Safety Element addresses how the built environment may be impacted by man-made or natural disasters.

### Organization of Element

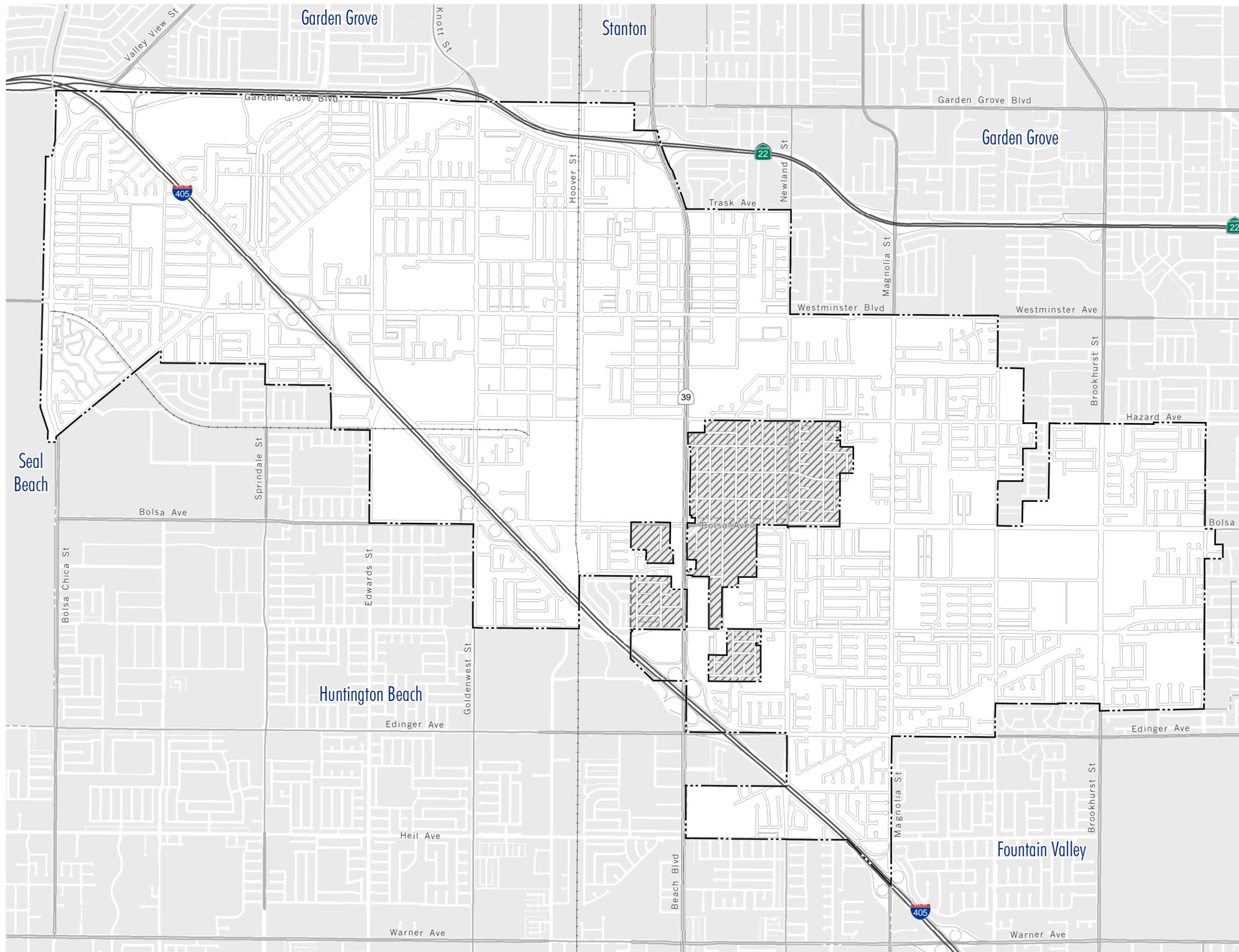
Following a brief overview of Westminster's land use structure, the goals and policies of this element are organized around five topics.

- » **Managing Future Growth.** The scale and style of the City's development pattern and preferred locations for future growth and development.
- » **Land Use Mix.** The range of land uses in Westminster and their reasonable buildout potential, with special attention on mixed-use areas.
- » **Land Use Compatibility.** Direction on how to ensure compatibility between different land uses.
- » **Airport Land Use Planning.** Land use compatibility with the Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos.
- » **Noise.** Mobile and stationary noise impacts in Westminster.

The following sections provide context for these five topics as well as goals and policies to achieve the General Plan vision for land use in Westminster. Descriptions of related plans, programs, and legislation are at the end of this element.

### Westminster's Planning Area

California state law requires that every city and county adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan that addresses the broad range of issues associated with a local jurisdiction's planning area (Government Code § 65300). A sphere of influence is a local jurisdiction's plan for the probable future physical boundaries of the community (Government Code § 56076). Westminster's total planning area covers approximately 10.7 square miles (6,800 acres)—10.1 square miles (6,400 acres) within the City limits and 0.6 square mile (400 acres) of county islands in the City's sphere of influence. The 10.7-square-mile area represents the ultimate possible external borders of Westminster, since the corporate boundaries of adjacent jurisdictions (Seal Beach to the west, Huntington Beach and Fountain Valley to the south, and Garden Grove on the north and east) preclude additional expansion. Westminster's planning area is depicted in *Figure 2-1, Planning Area*.



Land Use

Figure 2-1  
**Planning Area**

-  City of Westminster Boundary
-  City of Westminster Sphere of Influence
-  Unincorporated County Islands
-  Other City Boundaries



The City of Westminster’s sphere of influence was adopted in 1973 by the Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), the agency responsible for establishing the spheres of influence for incorporated cities in Orange County. Westminster’s planning area includes the City’s sphere of influence and all properties within the City limits of Westminster and the four Orange County island areas that comprise Midway City, including Beach/McFadden, Bolsa/Midway, Bolsa/Pacific, and McFadden/ Monroe. LAFCo encourages jurisdictions to consider annexing unincorporated communities within their sphere of influence. However, at the time of General Plan adoption, the City of Westminster has no plans to pursue annexation of its unincorporated communities (but the opportunity may be reevaluated in the future).

Per Senate Bill 244 (described at the end of this element), cities are responsible for considering the needs of disadvantaged communities within their sphere of influence. A disadvantaged community is an unincorporated county island in which the median household income is 80 percent or less of the statewide median household income, based on the most recent US decennial census. At the time of General Plan adoption, two county islands in Westminster (Beach/McFadden and Bolsa/Pacific) and approximately half of the Bolsa/Midway county island are considered disadvantaged communities. Westminster’s General Plan identifies ways to ensure that these communities are provided the land use direction and infrastructure services they need to continue to be safe and secure communities.

## Managing Future Growth

As described in the Introduction, Westminster’s development history dates back to the 1800s when it was established as Orange County’s second colony. Like many communities in Southern California, Westminster experienced periods of rapid growth in the 1920s and again in the decades after the second World War, and became increasingly urbanized throughout the 1900s. Conventional single-family residential housing tracts took shape throughout the community, establishing Westminster as an attractive location for Orange County residents to put down roots. Shopping centers filled in areas along the community’s corridors, providing the City’s residents with access to needed goods and services. This automobile-focused style of urban development resulted in nearly 25 percent of the City’s land use being devoted to roadways, making right-of-way the second most common existing land use based on acres dedicated to the use (after single-family homes). Notably, in Westminster, more land is dedicated to roadways than to commercial, industrial, and public uses combined.

The community’s history of development continues to define the way Westminster looks, feels and functions. Today, Westminster is essentially completely developed, with very few vacant parcels remaining (less than 1 percent of the City’s total area). As a result, the land use plan (Figure 2-2) relies on reusing or repurposing sites that are underutilized or underperforming. Future growth and development will be concentrated in the City’s six new mixed-use areas located along key corridors—Westminster Boulevard, Beach Boulevard, and I-405/SR-22—and around major destinations such as the Civic Center, Westminster Mall, and Little Saigon. These areas, which are the cornerstone of the City’s land use plan, are described in detail on pages 2-11 through 2-17. The land use plan is grounded in the following objectives, which describe the community’s vision for how Westminster grows:



*The Land Use Plan identifies six pedestrian-friendly mixed-use activity centers along key corridors including Westminster Boulevard, Beach Boulevard, and I-405/SR-22 and around major destinations, including the Civic Center, Little Saigon, and Westminster Mall.*



*Westminster is home to range of residential homes, including single-family homes and senior living communities, as pictured above. Demand for new housing in Westminster is expected to continue, and the City will think strategically about how new residential development should be accommodated.*

*See the Economic Development Element for more information related to the City's economic development strategies.*

- » Preserve single-family neighborhoods
- » Create a special sense of place and enhance the community's identity
- » Increase mix of uses and ensure they are distributed throughout the City
- » Focus new development along corridors and near activity centers
- » Repurpose underutilized parcels for new development opportunities
- » Promote fiscally sustainable patterns of development
- » Expand and enhance the City's strengths and assets

These land use objectives shape the policy direction provided throughout the General Plan, and in particular, the Community Design, Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, and Housing elements.

The essence of the Land Use element is to provide guidance on preserving the community's urban pattern while identifying opportunities for revitalization and new investment where existing uses are underutilized or ripe for repositioning in response to market conditions. The mixing of uses and densities in key areas helps focus new development away from the community's existing residential neighborhoods and promotes reduced automobile travel and more walking, biking, and transit use, resulting in improved air quality and a healthier lifestyle for the Westminster community.

### **Housing Demand and the Land Use Plan**

Westminster's central location in Orange County, situated along two major freeways and a state highway and between major job centers, perfectly positions the City for future housing and commercial development and intensification. The General Plan, and in particular, the Land Use Element, recognize the opportunity for new projects to revitalize the City by establishing the goals and policies that guide future land use changes.

As the City continues to grow and intensify, it will be important to provide a variety of future residential development for the senior population, first-time homebuyers, and the City's labor force. New housing developments that are of a high-quality, sustainable design will need to contribute to the City's economic viability by providing a strong, stable tax base from both property tax and sales tax, especially as more land uses are converted to residential from other, revenue-generating uses or job centers. These land use decisions should be made in the context of future fiscal impacts to the operation of the City to ensure that services can be provided to residents.

Where and how new housing opportunities are provided in Westminster is of particular importance to the City. Since Westminster is a predominantly built-out city in a county with ongoing demand for new housing, it is likely that there will be pressure to convert nonresidential uses to residential uses because of the high market value of land in the region. As housing demand increases and available land becomes more limited, it is anticipated that there will be an increasing trend toward higher-density residential development. Careful planning for the integration of these uses into the fabric of the City's existing neighborhoods or as infill along the City's existing commercial corridors will help to fulfill housing needs and maintain the eclectic urban village character in Westminster.

**GOAL LU-1: MANAGING FUTURE GROWTH**

**A sustainable, balanced land use pattern that accommodates residential and nonresidential growth in strategic locations in order to preserve the community's existing single-family neighborhoods.**

**POLICIES**

- LU-1.1 Sustainable Development Pattern.** Provide for an overall pattern of land uses that promotes efficient development; reduces pollution, automobile dependence, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of energy and other resources; ensures compatibility between uses; enhances community livability and public health; and sustains economic vitality.
- LU-1.2 Complete and Livable Neighborhoods.** Maintain a development pattern of distinct residential neighborhoods oriented around parks, schools, community meeting facilities, and other gathering spaces that are connected with neighborhood-serving businesses and walking and biking pathways.
- LU-1.3 Infill Development.** Promote infill residential development that complements existing neighborhoods and surrounding areas. Infill residential development and future housing growth in Westminster is strongly encouraged in areas designated for mixed-use development in order to preserve the character of the community's existing single-family uses.
- LU-1.4 Revitalization of Obsolete and Underused Properties.** Encourage the consolidation of small parcels, joint public-private partnerships, and land clearance and resale to facilitate the transition of underused and obsolete commercial and industrial properties to new development that is compatible with the surrounding uses.
- LU-1.5 Cohesive and Integrated Development.** Encourage the use of specific plans to provide for the cohesive and integrated development of large areas, complex or multi-parcel sites, areas with multiple property owners, and/or areas of particular importance to the community.
- LU-1.6 Preserve Single-Family Neighborhoods.** Direct growth away from established single-family residential neighborhoods onto underutilized parcels along Westminster's corridors and onto major centers of activity.
- LU-1.7 Unincorporated Areas.** Respect the history of the unincorporated neighborhoods in Westminster's planning area and continue to provide land use direction for those areas in accordance with applicable local, regional, and state regulations.
- LU-1.8 Impact Fees.** Require new development to pay its proportionate share of the cost of providing and/or upgrading public facilities and services impacted by new development through impact fees.
- LU-1.9 Special Assessment Districts.** Encourage the use of special assessments as a way to address public improvements (i.e., parks, undergrounding utilities, landscape, lighting, signage, street furniture, or other public improvements) in concert with new development.

*Westminster's 20-Year Vision Statement envisions the community's neighborhoods becoming some of the most popular places to live in southern California, where a variety of housing choices are available for people looking to call Westminster home, including first-time homebuyers, families with children, empty-nesters, and retirees.*

### **Residential Project Criteria: Achieving Maximum Density**

Projects desiring to develop at the higher end of the density range of any residential land use designation will be judged according to their ability to meet the following criteria:

1. Quality architecture, including appropriate detailing, materials, and architectural elements.
2. The relationship of the housing project to its neighborhood, or the creation of a distinctive character and environment for the neighborhood where none currently exists.
3. Inclusion of open space in excess of the minimum requirements, including other amenities. Design of the open space shall give residential projects a distinctive character created through special landscape elements such as fountains, reflective pools, decorative paving, courtyards, and entry elements.
4. Creation of larger building sites through lot consolidation where small, substandard, or irregular lots currently exist.
5. Minimizing the prominence of parking and garages as viewed from the street.
6. Incorporation of through-circulation on the site.
7. Development or provisions for social/cultural amenities (on- or off-site), such as parks, recreation centers, schools, and daycare centers.

The level of density increase granted will depend on the extent to which higher standards are provided.

## **Land Use Designations**

Land use designations refer to the allowable amount, type, and nature of development in Westminster. Major land use designations include residential (housing), commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and public uses (including parks). Each designation allows for different types, intensities, and densities of development that directly correlate to the number of residential units and nonresidential square footage of building area allowed on land within Westminster.

This section describes each category of land use; summarizes the proposed land uses on the land use plan; describes development thresholds (density and intensity); and calculates the City's buildout for population, housing, and employment so that appropriate infrastructure and services can be provided.

Each General Plan land use designation is implemented by a correlating set of zoning designations described in the City's development code. It should be noted that there need not be an equal number of land use designations and zoning classifications. In many instances, multiple zoning classifications may be consistent with a single General Plan land use designation.

### **Residential Land Uses**

The City of Westminster has identified three residential land use types to accommodate a range of conventional single-family homes, small-lot single-family detached and attached homes, and multifamily projects. Each residential land use designation includes a range of allowable densities, calculated as the number of dwelling units allowed per gross acre (du/ac). The lower threshold figure for each of these categories represents a required minimum density, provided all other required development conditions can be met. The higher figure represents a potential maximum density that could be achieved if the proposed development demonstrates high quality design as described to the left.

In addition to the stand-alone residential land use designations described below, Westminster's mixed-use designation (see page 2-10) also allows for residential development (up to 40 du/ac). When reviewing affordable housing projects, the proposed land use designation must be considered alongside state regulations guiding the development of affordable projects (also see the Housing Element).

#### ***Residential Low Density (0–8.0 du/ac)***

Provides for single-family detached residential units, including secondary units, with a density range up to and including 8.0 dwelling units per acre.

#### ***Residential Medium Density (8.1–14.0 du/ac)***

Provides for single-family attached and detached units, such as duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, stacked flats, courtyard homes, patio homes, and zero lot line homes. Small-scale apartment and condominium developments generally consisting of structures with 3 to 5 units may also be appropriate.

#### ***Residential High Density (14.1–25.0 du/ac)***

Provides for a range of multifamily units, including stacked flats, motorcourt clusters, and row townhomes.

## Commercial and Industrial Land Uses

Two commercial land uses and two industrial land uses play a key role in identifying the community's employment centers and major shopping destinations. Each commercial and industrial category allows a range of intensities of development. Building intensities for nonresidential uses are measured by floor area ratio (FAR). FAR is the ratio of the total net floor area of a building to the total lot area and describes the intensity of the use on a site. FAR calculations do not include areas within parking structures or outdoor open storage areas.

Though FAR guides the overall development size and intensity for nonresidential buildings, it does not specify the character of the building. Different interpretations of the same FAR can result in buildings of very different character. The City's municipal code specifies other regulations that affect a building's form and character within the context of the permitted FAR (e.g., building height limits, setbacks, and open space requirements). The Community Design Element supports the municipal code and provides general direction regarding project and building design that must be considered when reviewing development applications.

### **Neighborhood Commercial (0.35 FAR maximum)**

Provides for a variety of commercial uses, including neighborhood-serving retail, personal services, hotels, and low-rise office uses.

### **Regional Commercial (0.65 FAR maximum)**

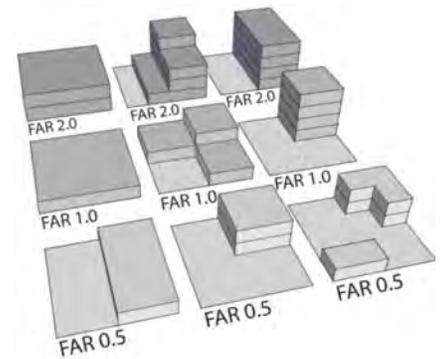
Provides for all facets of freeway-oriented and regional-serving retail and wholesale commercial activity, including entertainment uses, office complexes, and hotels. These areas are located near interchanges and are intended to capture regional clientele due to their visibility from freeways and proximity to high-traffic corridors, including Beach Boulevard.

### **Industrial (0.50 FAR maximum)**

Provides for a range of medium and light industrial uses, such as manufacturing, warehousing, research and development, and other industrial uses that can be conducted indoors or behind effective screening. Ancillary commercial uses are also appropriate here. Uses that generate excessive air or noise pollution are prohibited.

### **Urban Industrial (1.0 FAR maximum)**

Provides for a mix of light industrial and commercial uses, including small manufacturing and artisan production such as food, beverage, apparel, design, furniture, custom, or small run manufacturing. Because the intent of this hybrid industrial/commercial designation is to promote job-generating, low-intensity industrial/commercial uses adjacent to low-density residential uses, residential uses are not allowed. Industrial or flexible building types are appropriate and should match the scale of adjacent residential uses. Flexible buildings allow one or more uses in a single facility, such as office space, research and development, showroom retail sales, light manufacturing research and development (R&D), and limited small warehouse and distribution uses.



*This illustration shows how various building configurations represent different FARs of 0.5, 1.0, and 2.0 on a similar sized parcel. This graphic is intended only to show the relative differences in FAR and does not represent an intensity standard for this General Plan.*



*Light industrial and urban industrial land uses, like those pictures above, are envisioned to be concentrated along Hoover Street (south of Hazard Avenue) and Bolsa Avenue (east of Beach Boulevard).*



*The City's mixed-use areas accommodate a range of residential, retail, office, civic, and limited light industrial uses at six key places throughout the community.*

## Mixed-Use Designations

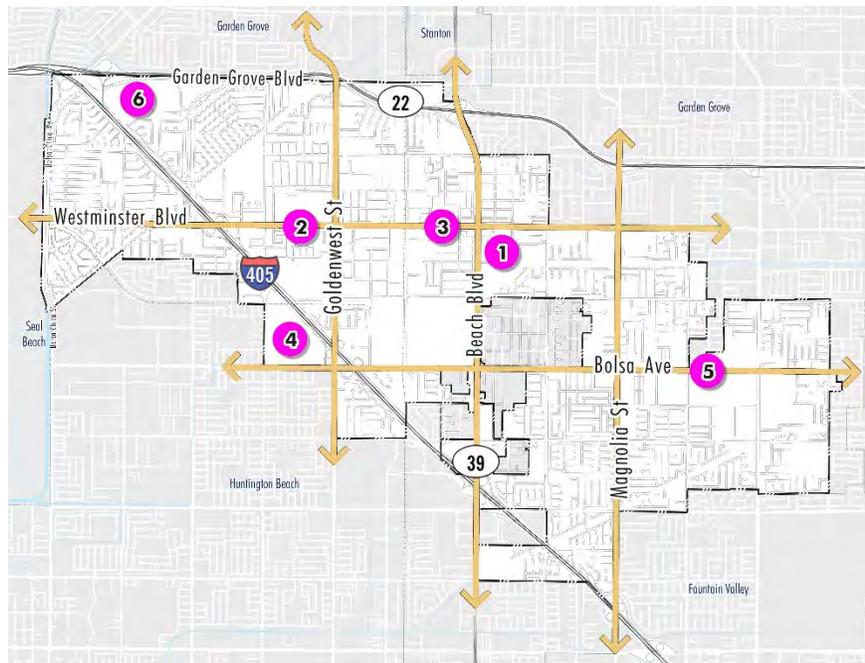
The City of Westminster has identified six distinct mixed-use districts where housing, shopping, employment, and public spaces are envisioned to come together. The mixed-use designation is intended to provide economic vitality and flexibility in land use options to promote growth and development in strategic locations. In general, these special places—the Civic Center, Westminster Boulevard/Downtown, Corridors, Little Saigon, Westminster Mall, and the Northwest District—are envisioned to be pedestrian friendly with higher densities and intensities than the typical patterns of segregated uses. Each district has its own special character and identity and plays a unique role in the community; the intent is to have the districts complement each other, not compete with each other.

The mixed-use areas identified on the land use plan are predominantly located along the City's corridors and around activity centers where uses are desired to be more concentrated and integrated in order to enhance the functionality of a large area. It is intended that the majority of the City's new development will be located in these areas in an effort to promote infill development and to preserve the residential neighborhoods that are an integral part of Westminster's community character.

Due to the special nature of mixed-use development, additional policy guidance is required to ensure that these areas transition in line with the community's vision. While historically Westminster has developed based upon generally effective land use designations, the mixed-use designation provides the City the ability and authority to be more proactive in land use decisions for the focused areas of Westminster where new growth and development is desired. The flexibility built into the mixed-use designation increases the potential to attract quality developments that will benefit the City, supporting the goals and policies articulated in the economic development element.

### Mixed-Use Area Guide:

1. Civic Center (page 2-11)
2. Westminster Blvd/Downtown (page 2-12)
3. Corridors (page 2-13)
4. Westminster Mall (page 2-14)
5. Little Saigon (page 2-15)
6. Northwest District (page 2-16)



A variety of uses can be developed either vertically or horizontally within a single property or multiple properties in mixed-use areas. In general, areas designated mixed-use are envisioned to develop with a mix of residential and nonresidential uses, in line with the distribution identified in Table 2-1. The maximum density permitted in mixed-use areas is 40 dwelling units per acre and a nonresidential FAR up to 1.0 in allowed—except for Mixed-Use Westminster Boulevard/Downtown, where the maximum density is 36 dwelling units per acre and a nonresidential maximum FAR of 1.0. The transition from existing land uses to new development in mixed-use areas will undoubtedly take a significant amount of time. The City will need to prioritize which areas to focus on first based on market conditions, staff resources, and the ability to facilitate new development.

While the density and intensity standards identified for the mixed-use designation provide a good level of flexibility, projects proposed in mixed-use areas must demonstrate consistency with the intent of the mixed-use designation for the specific district in which they are located. If the project does not support the intent of the designation, a general plan amendment to a single-use designation may be required. Development in mixed-use areas may be implemented by a Specific Plan or through conventional zoning designations. The intent and scale of each mixed-use designation is unique. Table 2-1 illustrates the preferred mix of uses (by total land area, not individual parcels) by district. While this mix should be used as a guideline for development, the ultimate composition of the area may vary in response to market conditions.

**TABLE 2-1 PREFERRED LAND USE MIX FOR MIXED-USE AREAS**

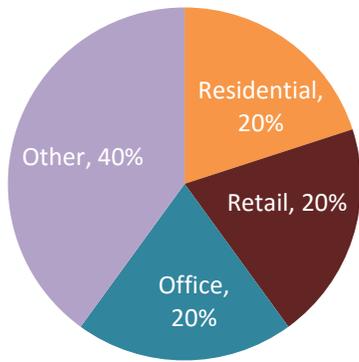
| Designation               | Residential | Retail | Office | Other <sup>1</sup> |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------------------|
| Civic Center              | 20%         | 20%    | 20%    | 40%                |
| Westminster Blvd/Downtown | 50%         | 25%    | 25%    | -                  |
| Corridor                  | 30%         | 35%    | 35%    | -                  |
| Little Saigon             | 30%         | 25%    | 25%    | 20%                |
| Westminster Mall          | 30%         | 70%    | -      | -                  |
| Northwest District        | 50%         | 50%    | -      | -                  |

1. In the Civic Center, “other” refers to public and semi-public facilities, including City Hall, the Police Department building, and the West Justice Center of the Superior Court of California. In Little Saigon, “other” refers to hotel, creative media, technology, and some light industrial uses.



*Focused on supporting a pedestrian-friendly environment, Westminster’s mixed-use areas will include plazas and vibrant streets for community members to enjoy.*

Preferred Land Use Mix: Civic Center



Above: The pie chart represents the preferred land use mix for the Mixed-Use Civic Center District. While this mix should be used as guidance for development, the ultimate composition of the area may vary in response to market conditions. The "other" category includes public and semi-public facilities, including City Hall, the Police Department building, and the West Justice Center of the Superior Court of California.

### Mixed-Use Civic Center (up to 40 du/ac and 1.0 FAR maximum)

The Mixed-Use Civic Center designation applies to approximately 100 acres on the southeast corner of Beach and Westminster Boulevards, adjacent to (and including) the Westminster Civic Center. This designation encourages a range of land uses and development types to create a vibrant civic environment where community members can engage with each other and connect with their community. Specialty commercial retail stores, commercial uses directly related to the Civic Center, new civic facilities, professional offices, entertainment, transit, high-density residential uses, and public and cultural facilities are encouraged in this mixed-use area. A comprehensive specific plan or other master planning mechanism for the future development of the Civic Center area is desired to create customized development standards, integrate special public uses and gathering places, evaluate infrastructure needs, and provide detailed design guidance (alternatively, the land use designation can be implemented through conventional zoning). The Civic Center designation allows residential densities up to 40 units per acre and an FAR of up to 1.0 (where the FAR is in addition to the residential density).



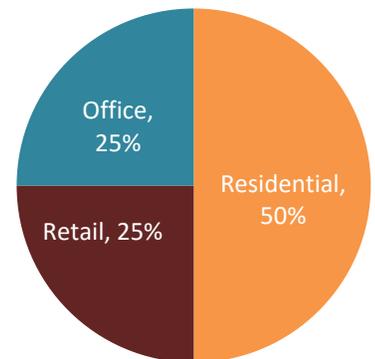
Right: The Civic Center is the heart of the community; the place where civic life and community life come together. The top picture illustrates the wide open spaces of the Civic Center as it exists today. Over time, this area is envisioned to transition to a mixed-use activity center where civic uses blend seamlessly with residential, office, and retail development.

**Mixed-Use Westminster Boulevard/Downtown (up to 36 du/ac and 1.0 FAR maximum)**

The Mixed-Use Westminster Blvd/Downtown designation memorializes the community’s vision to create a local-serving “Downtown” activity center along Westminster Boulevard. This 63-acre area is a key gateway into the community from I-405 and is envisioned to be very pedestrian friendly, with 2- to 3-story retail, office, and residential buildings lining both sides of the boulevard. The center of Downtown is anchored by Westminster Center, a regional commercial shopping, dining, and entertainment destination. Outdoor dining, public plazas, shade trees, public art, and enhanced building frontages are all elements that should define the Downtown area as a very special place in Westminster. Retail uses should be concentrated along the ground floor of buildings fronting Westminster Boulevard and at intersections, and office or residential uses should be located on upper stories. Stand-alone retail, office, and residential uses are all permitted. Very limited light industrial uses may be appropriate adjacent to the freeway. A specific plan or series of multiple specific plans may be the most appropriate implementing tool to facilitate transitions in land use within this area. The Westminster Blvd/Downtown designation allows for residential densities up to 36 units per acre and an FAR of up to 1.0, but typical densities for Downtown are generally expected to range from 24 to 30 du/ac (where the FAR is in addition to the residential density).



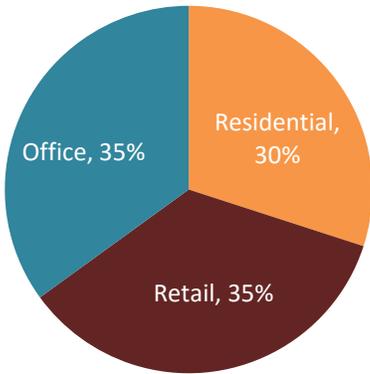
Preferred Land Use Mix: Westminster Boulevard/Downtown



*Above: The pie chart represents the preferred land use mix for the Mixed-Use Westminster Boulevard/Downtown District. While this mix should be used as guidance for development, the ultimate composition of the area may vary in response to market conditions.*

*Left: The “before and after” images on the left represent how Westminster Boulevard can transition over time to a pedestrian-oriented “downtown” with residential, retail, and offices uses. Outdoor dining, enhanced landscaping, and on-street parking come together to create a sense of place along the Boulevard.*

Preferred Land Use Mix: Corridor



Above: The pie chart represents the preferred land use mix for the Mixed-Use Corridor District. While this mix should be used as guidance for development, the ultimate composition of the area may vary in response to market conditions.

### Mixed-Use Corridor (up to 40 du/ac and 1.0 FAR maximum)

This designation applies to 42 acres along Westminster Boulevard and Beach Boulevard (generally the “transitional” areas between the more distinctive destinations of the Civic Center area and Westminster Boulevard/Downtown) and encourages integrated housing and commercial uses, including office. These areas, combined with the MU-Civic Center, are at the City’s major cross-streets and functionally serve as the “heart” of the Westminster community. The mix of uses in the Corridor area can be integrated vertically (i.e., commercial on the ground floor with residential and/or office uses above) or horizontally (residential next to commercial and office uses). While the general form of the Corridor area is expected to be to 2 to 4 stories, the exact scale, size, and mix of land uses will vary based on the location and surrounding land uses. It is anticipated that uses on Beach Boulevard will be denser and more intense than uses along Westminster Boulevard. Densities are envisioned to range from approximately 26 to 36 units per acre, with a maximum of 40 units per acre, and for nonresidential uses, a maximum FAR of 1.0 is allowed (where the FAR is in addition to the residential density).

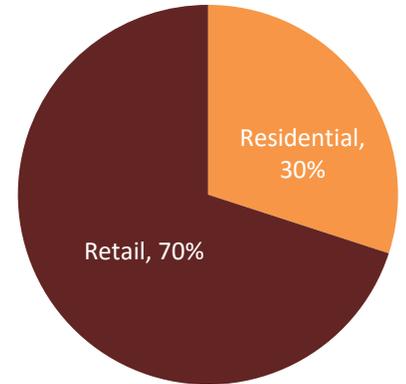


Right: The Mixed-Use Corridor designation generally applies two blocks in all direction of the intersection of Westminster Boulevard and Beach Boulevard. The preferred land use mix is a relatively equal blend of residential, office, and retail uses.

**Mixed-Use Westminster Mall (up to 40 du/ac and 1.0 FAR maximum)**

The long-term vision for Westminster Mall calls for mixing traditional retail uses with new housing, public spaces, and entertainment uses to create an experience-oriented destination at one of Westminster’s most important sales-tax-generating centers. New commercial pad sites are encouraged to infill the existing surface parking area while other parking strategies, including shared parking and wrapped or screened parking structures, should be used to ensure sufficient parking is available on-site. A specific plan or other master planning mechanism for Westminster Mall is required to guide future development. Densities of up to 40 du/ac and intensities up to 1.0 FAR are allowed (where the FAR is in addition to the residential density), but it is expected that new residential projects in this area will generally be between 20 and 30 du/ac and 3 to 4 stories in height. In the future, if the City would like to allow residential projects at densities greater than 40 du/ac, the Westminster Mall area would be well suited to accommodate those types of projects; however, a general plan amendment would be required to increase the allowable density.

Preferred Land Use Mix: Westminster Mall

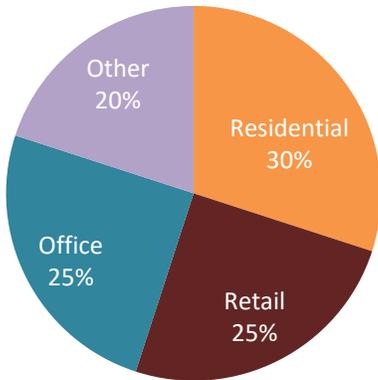


*Above: The pie chart represents the preferred land use mix for the Mixed-Use Westminster Mall District. While this mix should be used as guidance for development, the ultimate composition of the area may vary in response to market conditions.*



*Left: Westminster Mall is one of the community’s major sales-tax generators and is expected to remain as a shopping and dining designation for the community. Over time, there may be opportunities for infill residential and retail development at the Mall leading to a mix of uses that come together to create a special regional mixed-use experience in Westminster.*

Preferred Land Use Mix: Little Saigon



*Above: The pie chart represents the preferred land use mix for the Mixed-Use Little Saigon District. While this mix should be used as guidance for development, the ultimate composition of the area may vary in response to market conditions. The “other” category includes hotel, creative media, technology, and some light industrial uses.*

**Mixed-Use Little Saigon (up to 40 du/ac and 1.0 FAR maximum)**

The Mixed-Use Little Saigon designation applies to 180 acres along and around Bolsa Avenue and supports the mix of residential, commercial, hotel, and creative media and technology (including newspapers, radio facilities, etc.) uses within the Little Saigon area of Westminster. The intent of this mixed use designation is to support the long-term success of an international cultural destination in Westminster that meets the needs of residents, business and property owners, and visitors. Additionally, some light industrial uses associated with the cultural identity of Little Saigon are appropriate between Magnolia Street and Bushard Street. The Little Saigon designation allows residential densities up to 40 units per acre and an FAR of up to 1.0 (where the FAR is in addition to the residential density).

The scale and design of projects in Little Saigon is much different than the rest of the community. Little Saigon is home to the Asian Garden Mall, the largest majority Vietnamese-owned and -operated mall in America and a one-of-a-kind shopping experience. The two-story mall houses dozens of shops, restaurants, and wholesale stores of all types, including a wide variety of imported products and foods. On Moran Street directly across from the Asian Garden Mall is Jasmine Place, a six-story apartment community. The addition of more multistory residential projects is appropriate. The Moran Street Specific Plan guides development for approximately 20 acres of Little Saigon, including the Asian Garden Mall. The specific plan emphasizes the importance of outdoor space and gathering places in Little Saigon and should be used as an example of the vision for the entire district.



*Right: Little Saigon is already an international cultural destination and one of Westminster's most iconic neighborhoods. The photos included on this page highlight the role Little Saigon plays today as a community destination, alongside photos which represent how the area may transition over time to include more residential, commercial, and public space uses.*



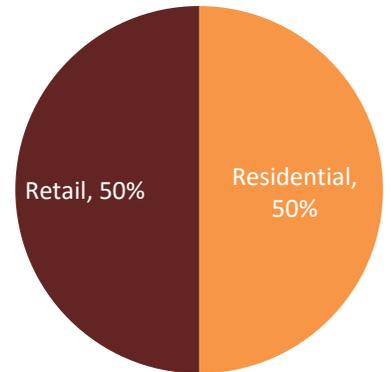
**Mixed-Use Northwest District (up to 40 du/ac and 1.0 FAR maximum)**

The Mixed-Use Northwest District designates 88 acres between I-405 and SR-22 for a mix of high-density residential, regional commercial, and/or signature professional office complexes. Given its adjacency to two major regional transportation routes, the Northwest District is envisioned to be developed in coordination with adjacent regional commercial uses.

At the time of General Plan adoption, the Northwest District is a large mobile-home community. This area provides a unique opportunity to create a large-scale development should existing mobile homes transition over time. Significant lot consolidation would be needed in order for this area to see long-term land use transition. Additionally, the closure of mobile-home communities is influenced by local and state regulations aimed at protecting the rights of mobile-home tenants. Before any changes could be made to the property, significant outreach and coordination with residents of the community would be required.

A conceptual master plan is required for future development of the Northwest District to ensure the area is well integrated with nearby uses and is easily accessed from the freeways. After approval of a master plan, a specific plan may be required to outline specific density and intensity ranges for proposed projects. A maximum density of 40 du/ac and a maximum FAR of 1.0 is allowed (where the FAR is in addition to the residential density).

Preferred Land Use Mix: Northwest District



*Above: The pie chart represents the preferred land use mix for the Mixed-Use Northwest District. While this mix should be used as guidance for development, the ultimate composition of the area may vary in response to market conditions.*



*Left: Located where I-405 and SR-22 come together, the Northwest District has the potential to redevelop should existing mobile homes transition over time. Future development of this area would require master planning to ensure the area is well-integrated with surrounding land uses.*



*Popular amenities at Westminster's parks include barbecues, picnic tables, and children's play areas.*



*Drainage swales and channels throughout the community are essential in stormwater management and flood control.*

*Pictured to the right, the Le-Jao campus of Coastline Community College, located in the Civic Center, provides a local opportunity for higher education.*

## Public Uses

The community's public uses provide space for civic engagement, recreation, and transportation needs.

### Public/Semi-public Facilities

Provides for the full range of public uses, including public schools, universities and colleges, fire stations, libraries, transit facilities, cemeteries, and other similar public uses.

### Park/Open Space

Areas designated for parks, open space, linear parks, trails, and other similar recreational uses. These facilities may occur within utility corridors. In the City's zoning code, publicly owned and maintained parks and open spaces may be classified as public facilities or open space.

### Public Utility Corridor

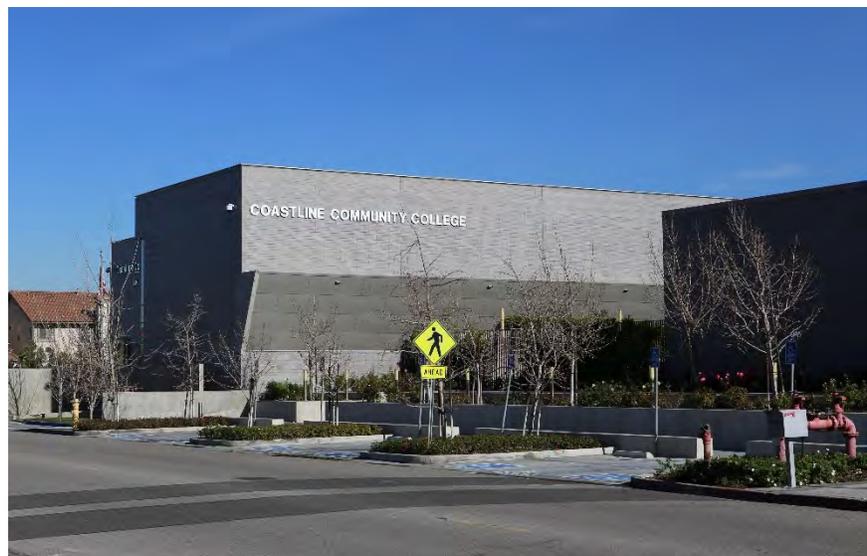
Indicates locations that contain easements for significant public utilities infrastructure, such as transmission lines. Improvements within utility easements may include parks, trails, nurseries, storage, or any other use that is compatible with adjacent land uses and permitted by the utility. Any uses proposed within these easements will require coordination with the appropriate utility provider.

### Flood Control Channel

Identifies areas for natural and man-made floodways to coordinate flood drainage and land development. These areas includes drainage way channels and floodways adjoining the channels, which are required to effectively carry floodwater of any river or stream.

### Railroad Right-of-Way

Identifies areas dedicated to rail service, including track area and associated right-of-way.



**GOAL LU-2: LAND USE MIX**

**A mix of land uses that meets the diverse needs of Westminster’s residents, offers a variety of employment opportunities, and supports the development of regional destinations.**

**Policies**

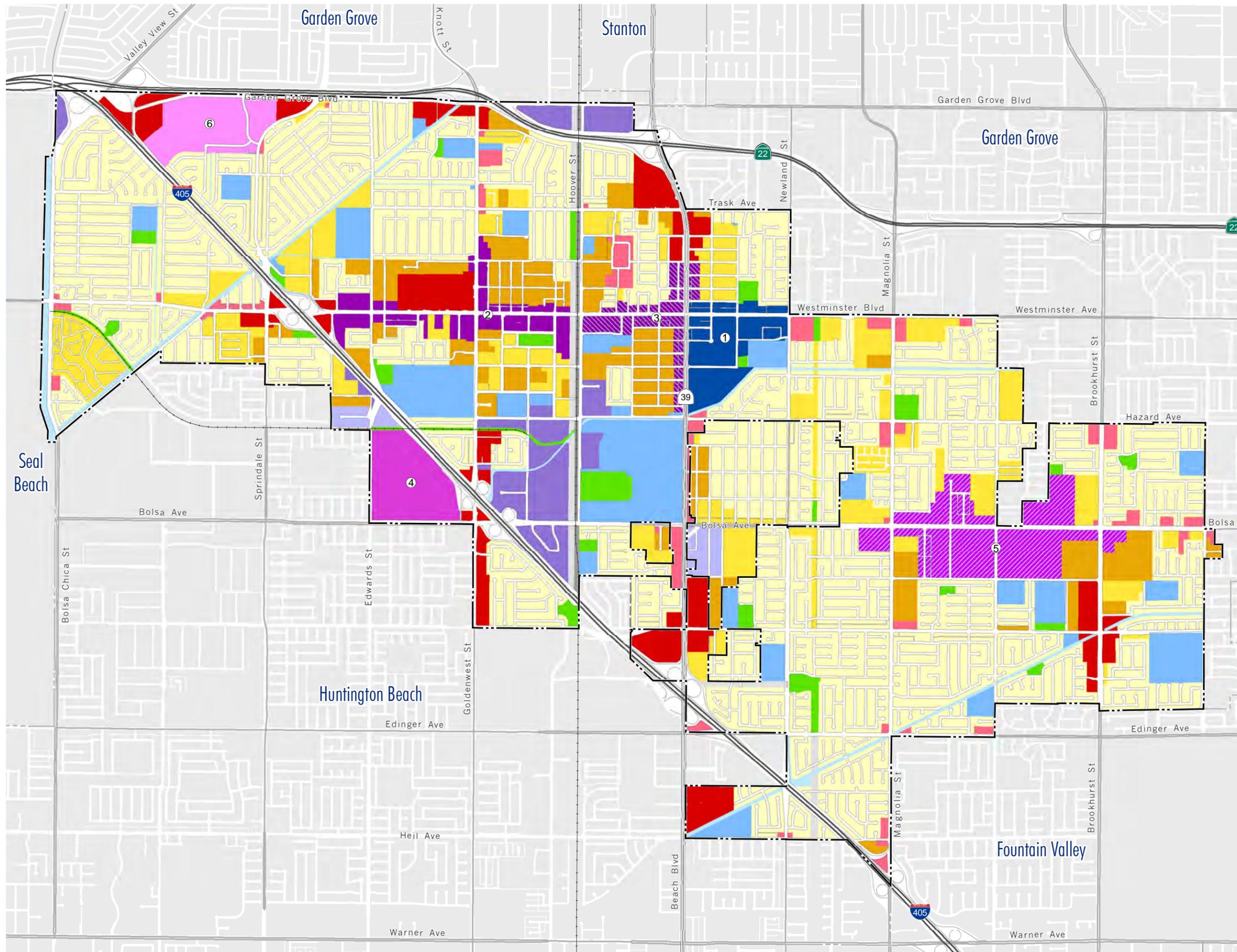
- LU-2.1** **Places to Live.** Provide sites for a range of housing types, locations, and densities in a variety of neighborhood settings equipped with amenities that support a high quality of life.
- LU-2.2** **Places to Work.** Provide for a broad spectrum of land uses that offer job opportunities for Westminster’s residents, including commercial, office, industrial, and business parks.
- LU-2.3** **Places Supporting the Quality of Life.** Provide a diversity of uses and services supporting Westminster’s residents, such as facilities for civic governance and administration, public safety (police and fire), seniors and youth, community gatherings, and comparable activities.
- LU-2.4** **Centers of Activity.** Promote the development of distinct, well-designed, mixed-use destinations that feature residential and commercial uses, blend harmoniously with surrounding uses, are accessible from transit and walking and biking paths, and serve as focal points in the community.
- LU-2.5** **Balancing Jobs and Housing.** Coordinate residential and nonresidential planning and development with regional, county, and other local agencies to further regional and subregional goals for jobs-housing balance.
- LU-2.6** **Land Use Change.** Where opportunities for land use change arise, seek input from adjacent property owners, the surrounding neighborhood or district, and other stakeholders during the consideration process so as to determine appropriateness or inform strategies.
- LU-2.7** **Uses to Meet Daily Needs.** Encourage uses that meet daily needs, such as grocery stores, local-serving restaurants, and other businesses and activities, within walking distance of residences to reduce the frequency and length of vehicle trips.
- LU-2.8** **Development Flexibility.** Allow for flexible development standards in the City’s zoning code provided that the potential benefits and merit of projects can be balanced with potential impacts.
- LU-2.9** **Developable Parcels.** Encourage the consolidation of small lots into bigger developable parcels to create new opportunities for financially viable development that supports the City’s desired land use mix.

**GOAL LU-3: MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT**

**Complementary well-designed activity centers that allow people to live close to shopping, employment, and public uses, contribute to a reduction in automobile use, and provide venues for engaged and enhanced pedestrian activity.**

**Policies**

- LU-3.1 Differentiation of Mixed-Use Areas.** Establish and maintain distinct identities for Westminster’s mixed-use areas by customizing uses, scale, form of development, and amenities.
- LU-3.2 Use Configuration.** Permit a mixture of compatible land uses on a single site or within a single development project in a vertical or horizontal configuration.
- LU-3.3 Development Scale.** Establish standards to ensure that a sufficient scale and footprint of any single use is achieved in mixed-use areas to establish a cohesive environment that minimizes impacts attributable to the adjacency of differing uses. This may define minimum parcel and building sizes, number of housing units, and/or nonresidential square footage, as well as relationships and setbacks among the uses.
- LU-3.4 Corridor Development.** Facilitate the redevelopment of the City’s auto-oriented commercial corridors (particularly Beach Boulevard and Westminster Boulevard) by clustering higher density, pedestrian-oriented mixed uses on larger parcels at key intersections, while re-using intervening parcels for housing mixed with neighborhood-oriented commercial services.
- LU-3.5 A Vibrant Civic Center.** Leverage City-owned property in the Civic Center to jump-start the redevelopment of the site into a vibrant mixed-use activity center with residential, commercial, and civic uses.
- LU-3.6 A Clearly Identifiable Downtown.** Provide for compact and intensified mixed-use development along Westminster Boulevard between Hoover Street and I-405 as a vital, pedestrian-oriented “downtown” that serves as the focal point of community identity and activity, is visually appealing, and is linked to regional and local transit.
- LU-3.7 A Cultural Destination.** Continue to support the development of Little Saigon as an international commercial, social, and institutional destination based on Asian cultures and traditions.
- LU-3.8 Implementation Tools.** Provide flexible development standards implemented through a specific plan or new development code standards for mixed use that ensure compatibility between allowable uses on site and with adjacent uses.
- LU-3.9 Design Integration.** Require that residential and nonresidential portions of mixed-use buildings and sites be integrated through site and building design to ensure compatibility among uses.
- LU-3.10 On-Site Amenities.** Require that residential/commercial mixed-use projects provide on-site gathering spaces (plazas, courtyards, etc.) and other pedestrian-scale amenities, such as benches, fountains, and landscaping, that contribute to the living environment of residents, or contribute funds for their development within proximity to the project.



Land Use

Figure 2-2  
Land Use Plan

- City of Westminster Boundary
- City of Westminster Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries

Land Use Designation

- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Residential High Density
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- 1) Mixed Use Civic Center
- 2) Mixed Use Westminster Blvd/Downtown
- 3) Mixed Use Corridor
- 4) Mixed Use Westminster Mall
- 5) Mixed Use Little Saigon
- 6) Mixed Use Northwest District
- Industrial
- Urban Industrial
- Public / Semi-Public Facilities
- Park / Open Space
- Flood Control Channel
- Public Utility Corridor
- Railroad R.O.W.



## Land Use Buildout Summary

One of the Land Use Element's primary objectives is to establish the reasonable long-term buildout potential for housing units, nonresidential building square footage, population, and employment that could be generated by the Land Use Plan (*Figure 2-2*). Buildout capacity is calculated by three factors: 1) the density and intensity allowed per acre; 2) the number of acres of land that can be developed as a particular land use; and 3) the increases in units, population, square footage, and employment associated with new development at buildout.

The land use buildout summary is not a goal; it simply represents the reasonable development potential that could occur within the community over the coming decades. It is used to help determine things such as roadway improvements, number of parks needed, potential environmental impacts, and mitigation (if any) required to offset impacts that could occur with implementation of the General Plan land use vision. The development potential of each individual parcel is influenced not only by the land use designation, but by market conditions, physical site characteristics, environmental constraints, infrastructure requirements, and detailed standards in the zoning code. Therefore, we do not assume that all parcels develop to their maximum potential (end of the density or intensity range), because there is inherently some variation in development types within any given land use.

The buildout projections are presented in Table 2-2, Land Use Buildout Summary.



*Westminster's Land Use Plan accommodates a range of residential, commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and public facilities.*

**TABLE 2-2 LAND USE BUILDOUT SUMMARY**

| Proposed Land Use Designation    | Acres (1)    | Allowed Density and/or Intensity | Assumed Density and/or Intensity (2) | Units         | Population (3) (4) | Nonresidential Square Feet | Jobs (5)      |
|----------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Residential</b>               |              |                                  |                                      |               |                    |                            |               |
| Low Density Residential          | 2,333        | 0–8.0 du/ac                      | 7 du/ac                              | 16,333        | 53,033             | -                          | -             |
| Medium Density Residential       | 512          | 8.1–14.0 du/ac                   | 12 du/ac                             | 6,141         | 19,938             | -                          | -             |
| High Density Residential         | 373          | 14.1–25.0 du/ac                  | 22 du/ac                             | 8,197         | 26,617             | -                          | -             |
| <i>Residential Subtotal</i>      | <i>3,218</i> | <i>-</i>                         | <i>-</i>                             | <i>30,671</i> | <i>99,588</i>      | <i>-</i>                   | <i>-</i>      |
| <b>Commercial and Industrial</b> |              |                                  |                                      |               |                    |                            |               |
| Neighborhood Commercial          | 111          | 0.35                             | 0.33                                 | -             | -                  | 1,588,574                  | 3,177         |
| Regional Commercial              | 276          | 0.65                             | 0.40                                 | -             | -                  | 4,800,417                  | 12,001        |
| Industrial                       | 171          | 0.50                             | 0.50                                 | -             | -                  | 3,732,079                  | 3,732         |
| Urban Industrial                 | 36           | 1.00                             | 0.45                                 | -             | -                  | 701,943                    | 1,170         |
| <i>Nonresidential Subtotal</i>   | <i>593</i>   | <i>-</i>                         | <i>-</i>                             | <i>-</i>      | <i>-</i>           | <i>10,823,013</i>          | <i>20,080</i> |
| <b>Mixed-Use (6)</b>             |              |                                  |                                      |               |                    |                            |               |
| MU Civic Center                  | 87           | 40 du/ac; 1.0                    | 36 du/ac; 0.60                       | 628           | 2,038              | 1,823,119                  | 3,646         |
| MU Westminster Blvd/Downtown     | 79           | 36 du/ac; 1.0                    | 24 du/ac; 0.35                       | 951           | 3,088              | 604,110                    | 1,510         |
| MU Corridor                      | 45           | 40 du/ac; 1.0                    | 30 du/ac; 0.40                       | 407           | 1,321              | 551,201                    | 1,102         |
| MU Westminster Mall              | 92           | 40 du/ac; 1.0                    | 30 du/ac; 0.50                       | 824           | 2,676              | 1,396,070                  | 3,490         |
| MU Little Saigon                 | 180          | 40 du/ac; 1.0                    | 36 du/ac; 0.60                       | 1,944         | 6,311              | 3,292,670                  | 8,232         |
| MU Northwest District            | 88           | 40 du/ac; 1.0                    | 24 du/ac; 0.35                       | 1,060         | 3,440              | 673,075                    | 1,346         |
| <i>Mixed-Use Subtotal</i>        | <i>571</i>   | <i>-</i>                         | <i>-</i>                             | <i>5,813</i>  | <i>18,874</i>      | <i>8,340,244</i>           | <i>19,327</i> |
| <b>Public Uses</b>               |              |                                  |                                      |               |                    |                            |               |
| Park / Open Space                | 121          | -                                | -                                    | -             | -                  | -                          | -             |
| Public / Semi-public             | 452          | -                                | -                                    | -             | -                  | -                          | -             |
| Public Utility Corridor          | 50           | -                                | -                                    | -             | -                  | -                          | -             |
| Flood Control Channel            | 110          | -                                | -                                    | -             | -                  | -                          | -             |
| Railroad ROW                     | 25           | -                                | -                                    | -             | -                  | -                          | -             |
| ROW                              | 1,695        | -                                | -                                    | -             | -                  | -                          | -             |
| <i>Public Uses Subtotal</i>      | <i>2,453</i> | <i>-</i>                         | <i>-</i>                             | <i>-</i>      | <i>-</i>           | <i>-</i>                   | <i>-</i>      |
| <b>Grand Total (7)</b>           | <b>6,836</b> |                                  |                                      | <b>36,484</b> | <b>118,463</b>     | <b>19,163,257</b>          | <b>39,407</b> |

1. Acres are given as adjusted gross acreages, which do not include the right-of-way for major roadways, flood control facilities, or railroads.
2. Density/intensity includes both residential density, expressed as dwelling units per acre, and nonresidential intensity, expressed as floor-area-ratio (FAR), which is the amount of building square feet in relation to the size of the lot. Historically, citywide buildout levels do not achieve the maximum allowable density/intensity on every parcel and are, on average, lower than allowed by the General Plan. Accordingly, the projections in this General Plan do not assume buildout at the maximum density or intensity but are adjusted downward to account for variations in development.
3. Estimates of population by land use designation are based on reasonable person-per-household factors identified by the 2013 5-Year American Community Survey.
4. A 4.5% vacancy rate was assumed for population based on the 2013 5-Year American Community Survey.
5. Estimates of jobs by land use designation are based on employment generation rates derived from the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (2013) Report.
6. Assumptions for the mix of land uses in each Mixed-Use designation analyzed in the environmental impact analysis are listed in Table 2-1. This mix should be used as a guideline for development, but the ultimate composition of the Mixed-Use area may vary in response to market conditions.
7. Westminster’s proposed General Plan projections refer to realistic long-term development expected under its land use plan over the next 30 to 40 years. The projections detailed on this sheet represent a likely amount of development that could occur over the long-term based on average levels of density and intensity as properties transition over time.

## Land Use Compatibility

As described throughout this element, the City of Westminster features a range of land use types that should come together harmoniously as new development projects are proposed. The City must consider the compatibility between a proposed project and nearby uses. This is of particular importance when considering the impact of new development next to sensitive land uses (residential, schools, and care facilities) or the introduction of sensitive land uses into new areas where similar uses are not already located. For further direction on project and site design, see the goals and policies identified in the Community Design Element. Compatibility issues related to noise impacts are covered in detail at the end of this element.



*Landscape, walls, fences, and enhanced pavement can create soft transitions between uses, as pictured above.*

**GOAL LU-4: LAND USE COMPATIBILITY**

**Compatible residential, commercial, and industrial development that is sensitively integrated with existing development and neighborhoods and minimizes impacts on surrounding land uses.**

**POLICIES**

- LU-4.1 Development Compatibility.** Require that development is located and designed to ensure compatibility among land uses, addressing such elements as building orientation and setbacks; buffering; visibility and privacy; automobile and truck access; impacts of noise, lighting, and glare; landscape quality; and aesthetics.
- LU-4.2 Transitions in Scale.** Require that the scale and massing of new development in higher-density centers and corridors provide appropriate transitions in building height and bulk that are sensitive to the physical and visual character of lower density adjoining neighborhoods.
- LU-4.3 Code Compliance.** Ensure land use compatibility through adherence to the policies, standards, and regulations in the Municipal Code, Development Code, Community Design Element, and other regulations or administrative procedures that manage the form and relationship of projects and uses.
- LU-4.4 Mitigation.** Require new uses to provide buffers between existing uses where potential adverse impacts could occur, such as decorative walls, setbacks and landscaping, restricted vehicular access, parking enclosures, and lighting control.
- LU-4.5 Interagency Cooperation.** Establish and maintain an ongoing liaison with Caltrans, the railroads, utility companies, and other major government and private agencies to help minimize the traffic, noise, and visual impacts of their facilities and operations.
- LU-4.6 Residential Compatibility.** Discourage duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and apartments from being constructed in predominantly single-family residential neighborhoods to preserve the character and integrity of neighborhoods.
- LU-4.7 Commercial and Industrial Development.** Require new commercial and industrial developments to clearly demonstrate that they will have no significant detrimental impacts upon the City and its residents, including, but not limited to, significant adverse traffic, noise, air pollution, and fiscal impacts.
- LU-4.8 Single-Family Home Size and Scale.** Consider the size and scale of new homes proposed in single-family neighborhoods when evaluating the compatibility of a proposed project with the existing environment.

## Community and Military Land Use Planning

The City of Westminster is also required to consider, as part of its Land Use Element, the compatibility between land uses in the City and nearby military facilities, in particular compatibility with airports and military operations and readiness. For Westminster, two relevant facilities are located nearby: the Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Case (JFTB) and the Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach.

### **Airport Compatibility**

Approximately 50 percent of Westminster (generally north of Westminster Boulevard and west of Goldenwest Street) is within the airport planning area of the Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB), which is northwest of Westminster in the City of Los Alamitos. The JFTB is home to an Army Aviation Support Facility and the 1st Battalion of the 140th Aviation Regiment of the California Army National Guard, as well as other units not related to aviation.

The JFTB is within the oversight of the Orange County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), which is required to prepare and adopt an airport environs land use plan (AELUP) for each of the airports within its jurisdiction. The AELUP is a land use compatibility plan that is intended to protect the public from adverse effects of aircraft noise, to ensure that people and facilities are not concentrated in areas susceptible to aircraft accidents, and to ensure that no structures or activities adversely affect navigable space. Although half of the City of Westminster is within the airport planning area, the noise contours of the airport do not encroach into the community, as illustrated on *Figure 2-3, Airport Land Use Planning*. The ALUC is also responsible for reviewing applications for the development of new heliports. The only existing heliport within the City limits is the Huntington Beach Service Center Heliport.

The AELUP identifies standards for development in the airport's planning area based on noise contours, accident-potential zones, and building heights. Land uses in Westminster that are within the airport planning area boundaries, as delineated on *Figure 2-3*, are required to conform to safety, height, and noise restrictions established in the AELUP for the JFTB. Goal and policy direction supporting these restrictions is provided in this section to ensure long-term land use compatibility with JFTB operations.

**GOAL LU-5: AIRPORT LAND USE PLANNING**

**Development that is consistent with the Airport Environs Land Use Plans for the Joint Forces Training Base and Orange County heliports.**

**Policies**

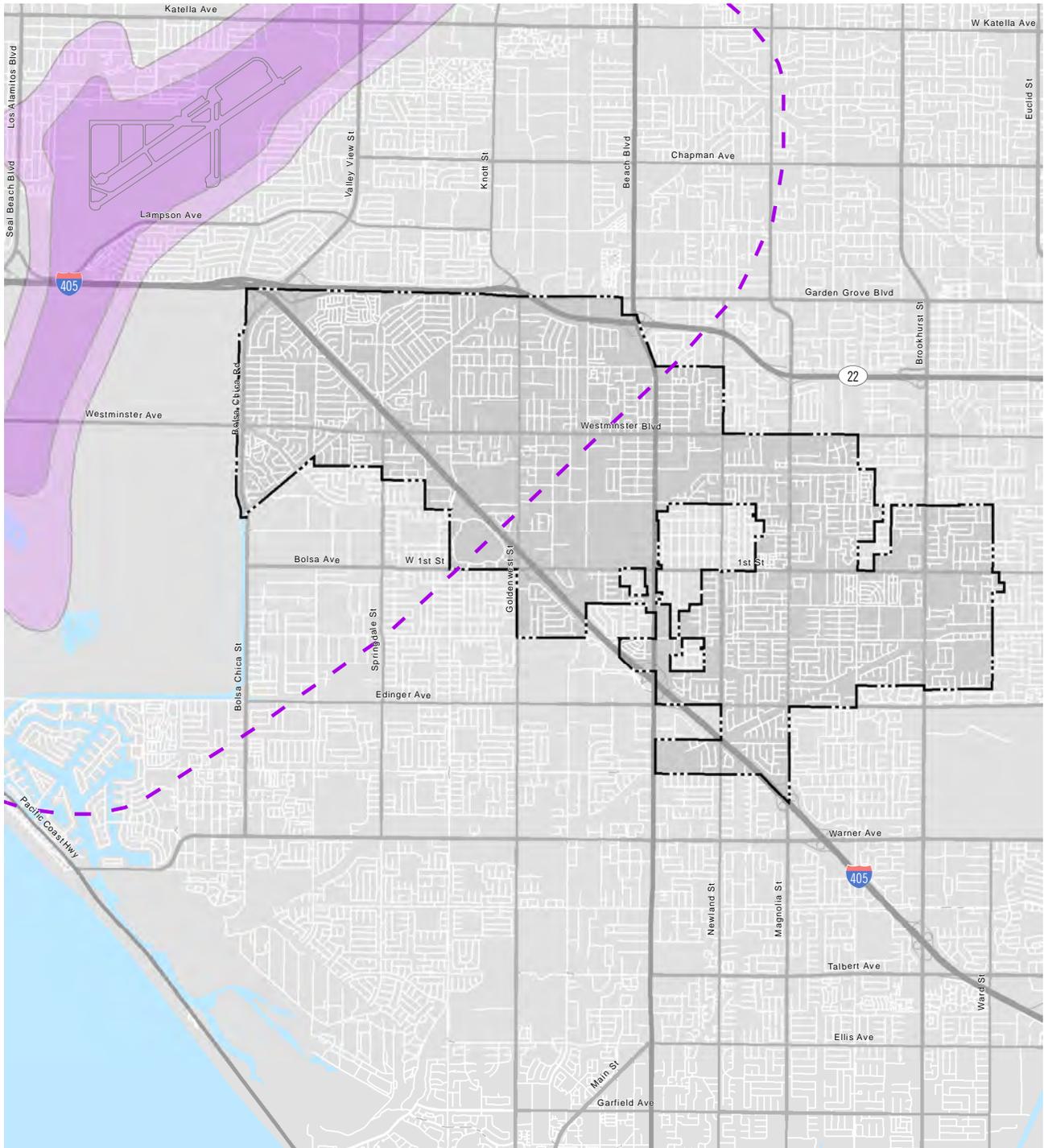
**LU-5.1 Airport Operations Monitoring.** Maintain regular communication and coordination with Joint Force Training Base (JFTB), Los Alamitos, and request advance notice of any operations that could adversely impact the community, even if those impacts are temporary.

**LU-5.2 Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77.** Do not approve buildings and structures that would penetrate Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 77 Imaginary Obstruction Surfaces for JFTB Los Alamitos unless found consistent by the Orange County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). Additionally, in accordance with FAR Part 77, require applicants proposing buildings or structures that penetrate the 100:1 Notification Surface to file a Form 7460-1 Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and provide a copy of the FAA determination to the City and the ALUC.

**LU-5.3 Structures above 200 Feet.** For development projects with structures higher than 200 feet above existing grade, the City shall inform the ALUC and submit materials to the ALUC for review. Proposed projects that would exceed a height of 200 feet above existing grade shall be required to file Form 7460-1 with the FAA.

**LU-5.4 Heliport/Helistop Approval and Requirements.** Approve the development of a heliport or helistop only if it complies with the AELUP for heliports. Ensure that each applicant seeking a conditional use permit or similar approval for the construction or operation of a heliport or helistop complies fully with the state permit procedure provided by law and with all conditions of approval imposed or recommended by the FAA, Orange County ALUC, and Caltrans/Division of Aeronautics. This requirement shall be in addition to all other City development requirements.

Figure 2-3  
 Airport Land Use Planning



Source: Airport Land Use Commission for Orange County, 2002

-  City of Westminister Boundary
-  60 CNEL
-  65 CNEL
-  Airport Planning Area
- Los Alamitos JFTB**

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## **Military Operations and Readiness**

The military is responsible for installations, ranges, airspace, and facilities in the interest of national security. These Military Operations Areas (MOAs) require coordination to ensure that adjacent land uses and those land uses within the vicinity of Military Operations Areas are compatible with and support military training and testing missions.

Recognizing the importance of the Military's mission in California and the jurisdiction's role in land use planning, the City of Westminster must consider the impact of new growth on military readiness activities carried out in the jurisdiction when designating land uses and proposing zoning ordinances on lands adjacent to military facilities or underlying designated military operational areas.

The City's General Plan sets the framework for a process to identify, coordinate and assist in resolving potential land use conflicts within or under MOAs to ensure that new development is compatible with military operations, safeguard mission training and testing requirements, and support military readiness. New development will be reviewed and regulated to avoid impact to MOAs and maintain public safety.

**GOAL LU-6: MILITARY OPERATIONS AND READINESS**  
**Development that is compatible with military operations, safeguards mission training and testing requirements and supports military readiness.**

**Policies**

- LU-6.1 Military Operations Area.** Identify, coordinate, and assist in resolving potential land use conflicts within the Military Operations Area to ensure community safety and to confirm that new development is compatible with military operations and to safeguard mission training and testing requirements, support military readiness, and enhance safety for military personally and residents.
- LU-6.2 Military Readiness.** Consider the impact of new growth on military readiness activities carried out at the Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach when proposing zoning ordinances or designating land uses.

## Noise and Vibration

Noise is defined as unwanted sound—anything from a barking dog to the clatter of a jackhammer—and can disrupt the way people live and work. Many sources of excessive noise—such as freeways—also produce excessive vibration, which can adversely affect health and well-being. Based on the known effects of noise and vibration, local, state, and federal government agencies have established noise thresholds to protect public health and safety.

The greatest source of noise throughout Westminster is vehicle traffic on the I-405 and SR-22 freeways and the City's high-volume corridors, including Beach Boulevard (SR-39), Westminster Boulevard, McFadden Avenue, and Magnolia Street. Other major noise sources are trains passing through the City, stationary equipment at commercial and industrial uses, and parks with active sports fields.

Certain land uses are more sensitive to higher levels of noise and vibration. Residential uses, schools, health care centers, libraries, churches, senior homes, and recreational areas are much more sensitive to noise than commercial and industrial uses. Siting new development of any of these sensitive receptors in the vicinity of substantial traffic or noise-intensive industrial uses can adversely affect sensitive receptors and is considered a land use conflict. The goals and policies in this element promote a healthy noise environment in Westminster for sensitive receptors and commercial and industrial uses.

### Noise Environment

Noise sources throughout Westminster include roadways, commercial and industrial uses, and construction. The three types of noise sources are mobile sources, stationary sources, and neighborhood sources.

#### Mobile Sources

The most common mobile noise source in Westminster is automobile and truck traffic. Noise from motor vehicles is generated by engine vibrations, the interaction between tires and the road, and vehicle exhaust systems. Since traffic will likely increase with new development in the City's mixed-use areas, so will the noise levels in surrounding areas. *Figure 2-4, Future Roadway Noise Contours*, illustrates potential noise impacts of buildout of the Land Use Plan.

In addition, a rail line runs north-south through the City adjacent to Hoover Street. This line is used by the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad, both of which carry freight trains. Any increase in rail traffic on this line would increase noise levels and could impact existing and future noise-sensitive land uses (residential, schools, hospitals, convalescent homes, libraries, churches).

### Measuring Noise

Sound is a pressure wave that travels through the air. It is described in terms of loudness, frequency or pitch, and duration.

The standard measurement unit for loudness is the decibel (dB). Changes of 1 to 3 dB are detectable under quiet, controlled conditions, and changes of less than 1 dB are usually indiscernible. A change of 5 dB is readily discernible to most people in an exterior environment.

The human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies. In the context of community planning and environmental noise, the A-weighted decibel, or dBA, is used to adjust sound levels to reflect the way humans hear.

Because people are more sensitive to noise during the evening and at night, state law requires additions to the measured noise levels during these times for planning purposes. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) averages sound level over 24 hours, with 5 dB added from 7 pm to 10 pm and 10 dB added from 10 pm to 7 am.



*Schools are considered sensitive facilities and should be protected from noise-generating uses.*



*Construction could generate noise impacts that must be mitigated so adjacent uses are not significantly impacted.*

### **Stationary Sources**

All types of land uses may have stationary sources of noise. In residential areas, neighborhood noise is generated by human activity throughout the community, and sources include air conditioners, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, pool equipment, radio/stereo/television, schools, sports arenas, and other entertainment venues. Noise from these sources can become excessive and pose a nuisance to City residents. Commercial uses generate noise from HVAC systems, loading docks, and other sources. Industrial uses generate noise from HVAC systems, loading docks, and machinery, and may generate continual noise depending on the specific type of industry.

Construction equipment is considered a stationary noise source. However, construction activities are usually temporary, occurring in any one location for a relatively limited period of time. Both construction noise and industrial noise can adversely affect sensitive receptors if they are close by and/or not properly regulated.

### **Noise/Land Use Compatibility**

Westminster is responsible for protecting its residents and visitors from unacceptable noise and vibration and controls noise through local, state, and federal programs and policies. Best practices in land use planning require that incompatible uses be separated and cases of incompatibility be mitigated. The California Department of Health Services' Office of Noise Control has adopted a land use compatibility matrix (Table 2-3) that defines ranges of acceptability. The matrix illustrates noise/land use compatibility guidelines for making land use decisions and shows a range of noise standards for various land use categories.

### **Noise Standards**

Chapter 8.28, Noise Control, of the Westminster Municipal Code regulates noise at its source (except transportation sources), protects noise-sensitive land uses, regulates vibration levels, and specifies permitted periods for construction and grading. The City regulates noise levels based on two noise zones. The entire City is designated Noise Zone 1, except multifamily properties, which are designated Noise Zone 2. These zones protect noise-sensitive areas (residential) without excessively inhibiting nonsensitive areas (industrial). Chapter 8.28 also defines how noise is measured as well as special uses that are exempt from the City's noise regulations. The goal and associated policies, below, should be used in tandem with the direction provided in the municipal code.

**TABLE 2-3 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY WITH COMMUNITY NOISE ENVIRONMENTS**

| LAND USES   | ENERGY AVERAGE (CNEL) in dB |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|---|-----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
|   | <55                         | 55 | 60 | 65 | 70 | 75 | 80+ |
| Amphitheater, concert hall, auditorium, meeting hall  | B                           | B  | C  | C  | D  | D  | D   |
| Mobile home   | A                           | A  | B  | C  | C  | D  | D   |
| Hospital, library, school, faith/religious uses   | A                           | A  | B  | C  | C  | D  | D   |
| Hotel, motel, transient lodging   | A                           | A  | B  | B  | C  | C  | D   |
| Single family, multifamily, faith/religious uses  | A                           | A  | B  | B  | C  | D  | D   |
| Parks   | A                           | A  | A  | B  | C  | D  | D   |
| Office building, research & development, professional office, city office building, and hotel | A                           | A  | A  | B  | B  | C  | D   |
| Amusement park, miniature golf, go-cart track, health club, equestrian center                 | A                           | A  | A  | B  | B  | D  | D   |
| Golf courses, nature centers, cemeteries, wildlife reserves, wildlife habitat                 | A                           | A  | A  | A  | B  | C  | C   |
| Commercial retail, bank, restaurant, movie theater  | A                           | A  | A  | A  | B  | B  | C   |
| Automobile service station, auto dealer, manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale, utilities     | A                           | A  | A  | A  | B  | B  | B   |
| Agriculture   | A                           | A  | A  | A  | A  | A  | A   |

Source: Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, Appendix C: Noise Element Guidelines, in *General Plan Guidelines*, October 2003.

Notes: Compatibility zones indicate the degree to which the land uses listed are compatible with the noise levels (CNEL) shown in the table.

**Zone A.** Clearly Compatible. Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction without any special noise insulation requirements.

**Zone B.** Normally Compatible. New construction or development should be undertaken only after detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements are made and needed noise insulation features in the design are determined. Conventional construction, with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice.

**Zone C.** Normally Incompatible. New construction or development should normally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis or noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features must be included in the design.

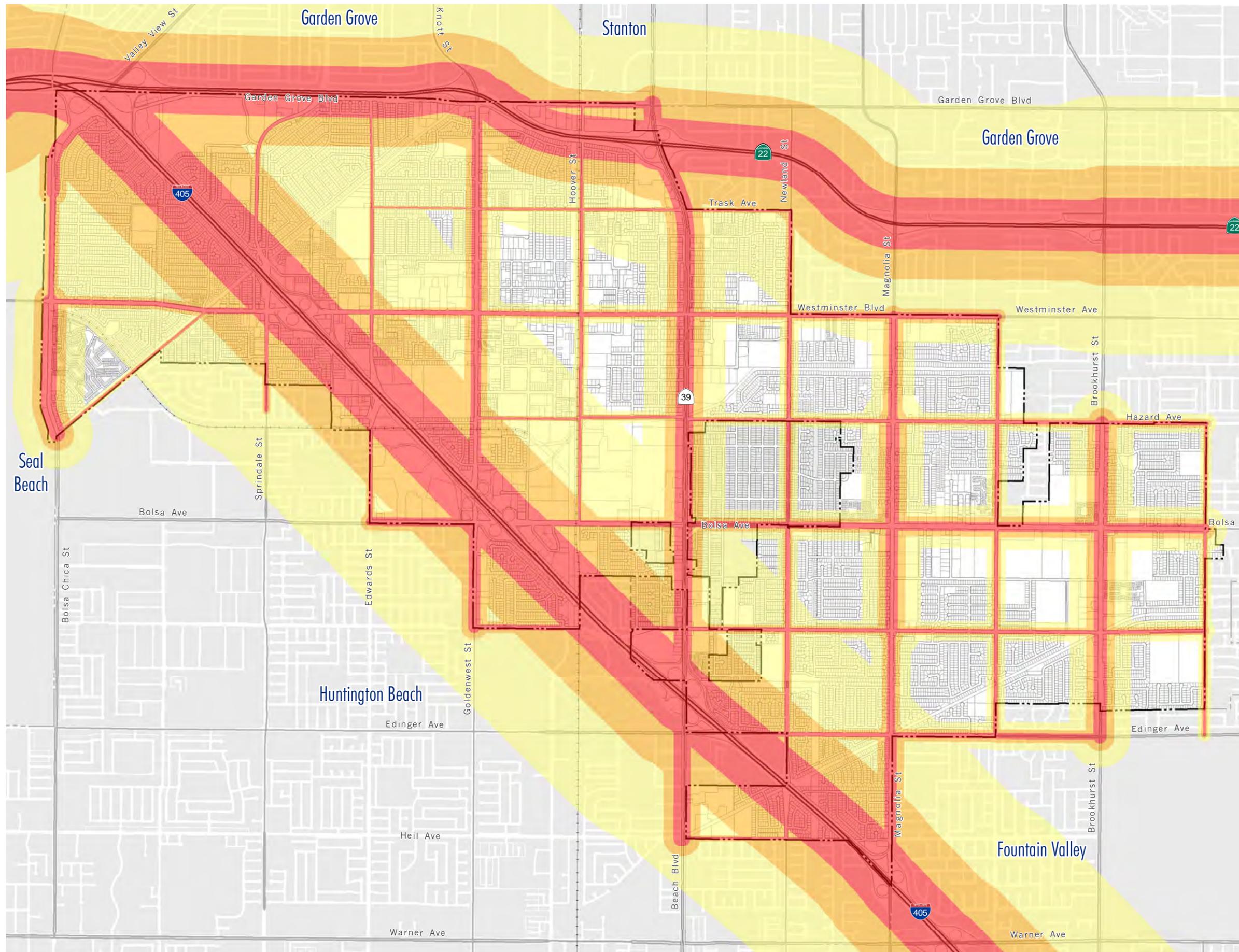
**Zone D.** Clearly Incompatible. New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

**GOAL LU-7: NOISE**

**Community noise and vibration levels that balance the need for peaceful environments for sensitive land uses with the needs of local businesses and regional land uses.**

**Policies**

- LU-7.1 Land Use Noise Compatibility.** Assess the compatibility of proposed land uses with the noise environment when preparing, revising, or reviewing development project applications.
- LU-7.2 Noise Insulation and Vibration Standards.** Require new projects to comply with noise insulation and vibration standards of local, regional, and state building code regulations.
- LU-7.3 Sensitive Facilities.** Locate sensitive facilities such as schools, hospitals, libraries, churches, and convalescent homes away from sources of excessive noise unless proper mitigation measures are in place.
- LU-7.4 Noise Control.** Utilize noise abatement, design techniques, and other mitigation strategies—including staggered operating hours, insulation, building setbacks, noise barriers, insulation, placement of parking and utility areas, and building orientation—to ensure that noise levels do not exceed the limits in the Westminster Municipal Code.
- LU-7.5 Roadway Noise.** Encourage nonmotorized transportation alternatives for local trips and the implementation of noise sensitivity measures, including traffic-calming road design, lateral separation, natural buffers, and setbacks to decrease excessive motor vehicle noise along major arterials.
- LU-7.6 Highway Noise.** Continue to coordinate with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to achieve maximum noise abatement in the design of new highway projects or improvements along 1-405 and SR 22; abatement techniques could include alignment, barriers, lateral separation, or other techniques.
- LU-7.7 Railroad Noise.** Continue to coordinate with railroad companies to support and maintain reasonable limits on rail traffic, the use of bells and whistles, and the speed and hours of rail operation in affected areas of the City, and maintain adequate setbacks and buffer zones along rail lines to reduce adverse noise impacts on sensitive receptors.
- LU-7.8 Interjurisdictional Coordination.** Coordinate with Orange County and the cities of Seal Beach, Huntington Beach, Garden Grove, and Fountain Valley to minimize noise conflicts between land uses along the City's boundaries.



Land Use

Figure 2-4  
**Future Roadway Noise Contours**

- City of Westminster Boundary
- City of Westminster Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries
- 70 CNEL
- 65 CNEL
- 60 CNEL



## Related Plans, Programs, and Legislation

The Land Use Element supports and implements several state and local laws and plans.

### **Municipal Code and Zoning Ordinance**

The City of Westminster Municipal Code and Zoning Ordinance are the primary tools used to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan. Each of the General Plan land use designations is implemented by a correlating set of zoning designations described in the zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance provides more detailed direction related to development standards; permitted, conditionally permitted, and prohibited uses; and other regulations such as parking standards and sign regulations. The land uses specified in the zoning ordinance are based upon and should be consistent with the land use policies in this element. Changes to the zoning ordinance may be necessary due to the adoption of provisions in this General Plan and could require changes to the zoning maps and development standards.

It should be noted that there need not be an equal number of land use designations and zoning classifications. In many instances, multiple zoning classifications may be consistent with a single General Plan land use designation. The maximum allowable development potential of each individual parcel is influenced not only by the land use designation, but by physical site characteristics, environmental constraints, infrastructure requirements, and detailed standards provided in the development code. Actual development is expected to typically occur at levels less than the allowed maximums due to the factors stated above as well as market demand and development trends.

### **Specific Plans**

The General Plan provides overall guidance for the physical development of the City, and specific plans are used to provide more detailed regulatory guidance for special areas or large developments within the City. Specific plans generally comprise a land use plan, circulation plan, development standards, design guidelines, phasing plan, infrastructure plan (water, sewer, or drainage), and implementation plan, pursuant to California Governmental Code Sections 65450 through 65457. They are typically implemented as customized zoning for a particular area of the City and are generally used for large-scale projects that require a comprehensive approach to planning and infrastructure issues. As of 2016, the City had one approved Specific Plan—the Moran Street Specific Plan—which provides guidance for approximately 20 acres in and around Little Saigon.

### **Development Agreements**

State law allows for the preparation of a development agreement between a project proponent and the City. A development agreement provides the developer with additional assurance that the policies, rules and regulations, and conditions of approval in effect at the time a project was approved will not be nullified by a future local policy or regulation change. In exchange, the developer may be required to meet certain conditions or performance criteria, which become part of the agreement. A development agreement can be a useful means of meeting General Plan goals and policies while removing some of the risks faced by the developer. Agreements can remain in effect for a few or several years; this is typically specified in the development agreement terms.

### **Southern California Association of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy**

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a long-range transportation plan developed and updated by SCAG every four years. The RTP identifies transportation strategies to address regional mobility needs using growth forecasts and economic projections over a 20-year period. The Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) is a newly required element of the RTP that integrates land use and transportation strategies to achieve emissions reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board. In May of 2016, the Regional Council of SCAG adopted the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS: A Plan for Mobility, Accessibility, Sustainability and a High Quality of Life. The 2016–2040 RTP/SCS provides a blueprint for improving quality of life for Southern California residents by providing more transportation choices.

### **Senate Bill 244: Disadvantaged Communities**

Senate Bill (SB) 244 requires cities and counties to address the infrastructure needs of unincorporated disadvantaged communities in general plans. A disadvantaged community is an unincorporated fringe, island, or legacy community in which the median household income is 80 percent or less of the statewide median household income. In addition to identifying disadvantaged communities, SB 244 requires cities to analyze the water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, and structural fire protection needs and financial funding alternatives for the extension of services to identified disadvantaged communities. The Infrastructure and Natural Resources Element addresses this requirement for water, wastewater, and stormwater drainage, and the Public Health and Safety Element addresses fire protection needs.

# 3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Introduction to Economic Development

Westminster has identified economic development as a key initiative in the City's 20-year vision. Reflecting its importance, the City has prepared this focused optional element dedicated to establishing the community's economic development goals and policies; in addition, the City has woven in economic considerations throughout the General Plan. The Economic Development Element identifies the community's long-term goals for growth and development of the local economy. It also provides policies intended to guide decision making by elected and appointed officials, City staff, and people and businesses that have invested in or are considering investing in Westminster.

Another key purpose of the Economic Development Element is to ensure that Westminster's future growth and development is fiscally sustainable and resilient to external shocks. Fiscal sustainability includes land use and development patterns that generate municipal revenues equal to or in excess of the amount needed to pay for public facilities and services. It also includes policies that incorporate fiscal thinking into public decision making about land use and development as well as other issues.

Finally, the Economic Development Element establishes the basic foundation by which the City has and will continue to institutionalize economic development as a core function. Although an economic development strategy will provide much of the detail on local activities, the fact that Westminster chose to include an economic development element in the General Plan is evidence of the City's long-term commitment to community economic well-being.

### Organization of Element

Economic development is growth in and diversification of the local economy that achieves a growing tax base and community-defined outcomes. In Westminster, the community has identified the following outcomes, listed in priority order, to be realized from economic development. The goals and policies of this element are organized around these four outcomes.

- » **Quality of Life.** Improvements in the quality of life in Westminster.
- » **Tax Base.** Expansion and diversification of the local tax base.
- » **Jobs and Income.** Expanded job opportunities in Westminster and increases in real wages and household wealth for Westminster residents.
- » **Economic Development Program.** Provides detailed direction regarding the City's comprehensive economic development program.

### In This Element...

- » Opportunity Areas
- » Quality of Life
- » Tax Base
- » Fiscal Vitality
- » Jobs and Incomes
- » Economic Development Program



*The Miriam Warne Community Building, completed in 2010, houses a community room as well as the Westminster Chamber of Commerce. The Westminster Chamber of Commerce is a strong economic development partner for the City of Westminster.*

The Land Use Plan could result in a long-term citywide buildout of approximately 36,000 residential units, 19 million square feet of nonresidential development, and 40,000 jobs. See the Land Use Element for more information related to the buildout summary.



The Civic Center is a hub of civic life in Westminster. Over time, this area is envisioned to become a robust mixed-use center with integrated residential, civic, and retail uses. See the Land Use Element for more information.

The following sections provide context for each topic addressed in this element, followed by goals and policies to achieve the General Plan vision for economic development in Westminster. Related plans, programs, and legislation can be found at the end of the element.

## Planning Context

The General Plan recognizes that to increase the amount of retail spending in Westminster, the City will need to transform its corridors and commercial districts into destinations that will better serve the needs of residents and attract more visitors from beyond the city. At the same time, increased competition from new or upgraded retail developments in other cities could threaten the City's sales tax base. In addition, e-commerce will most likely continue to erode retail sales in the City.

To maintain and expand the City's position, the General Plan encourages commercial districts and corridors to serve niches that are not served elsewhere in the City and to provide a pleasant social experience that cannot be replicated on the internet. The Plan emphasizes creating distinctive gathering places and activity centers that serve the City's residents and visitors. The General Plan discourages providing the same retail chains in the same strip center or shopping mall environment that is available in other markets, which will not be sustainable over the next 20 years.

The City's most significant economic development opportunities will likely occur in the community's six mixed-use areas (as described in detail in the land use element), which are located around key destinations—the Civic Center, Westminster Mall, and Little Saigon—and along the community's key corridors: Westminster Boulevard, Beach Boulevard, and I-405/SR-22. To provide context for the economic development goals and policies identified in this element, the following pages present a brief description of special opportunity areas. These descriptions should be used in conjunction with the descriptions of each mixed-use area in the land use element, including the land use designation, preferred land use mix, example photos, and goals and policies specific to mixed-use development. Over time, shifting economies and changes in the market may necessitate that the City reevaluate its economic development opportunities; if new opportunities are identified, this element may be updated to reflect the City's economic development approach.

### The Civic Center

The Civic Center is generally the area between 13th Street, Westminster Boulevard, Beach Boulevard, and Newland Street, as well as the adjacent areas on the other sides of these streets.

The Civic Center hosts a wealth of public investments in City Hall facilities, the newly constructed police headquarters and parking structure, the West Justice Center, the Westminster Branch Library, and the Rose Theater. It also has several assets for creating a walkable town center, including a supermarket, a pharmacy, and street-fronting retail.

With these amenities, along with the dozens of government employees, professionals, and community members visiting the center daily, the Civic Center has the potential to attract new investment in mixed-use development and transform into a walkable destination. Introducing new residences in this area would provide additional foot traffic and vitality in the evening. Residents and the daytime population of employees and those using

the court and other public services would provide a strong customer base that would make the Civic Center a desirable location for retail and dining.

The City can explore ways to consolidate municipal functions and make more land available for development. The City's ownership of land in this area opens the door for potential public-private partnerships. Leveraging these land holdings could reduce or eliminate the need for public investment in public realm improvements.

### **Downtown: Westminster Boulevard**

Infill development and redevelopment in the area around Sigler Park and Westminster Center (a 433,000-square-foot community-scale shopping center) could transform this part of Westminster Boulevard into a walkable mixed-use downtown district. With its location and the existing draw of the Westminster Center, a downtown district in this location may well attract customers from Cypress, Huntington Beach, and other cities.

To create a walkable downtown, there would need to be investment in the public realm—roadway improvements, sidewalks, landscaping, public parking, etc.—in addition to investments by property owners for new buildings, refurbishment or expansion of existing buildings, façade improvements, and landscaping and parking improvements. To fund the public improvements, a special funding and financing district would likely be necessary (e.g., a landscaping and lighting maintenance district or a business improvement district).

The City should begin this transformation by engaging stakeholders, property owners, businesses, and residents to create a Downtown Westminster Vision Plan. The Vision should identify any needed regulatory changes (unique design guidelines, or a specific plan, etc.), desired physical changes (streetscape, circulation, etc.), organization and marketing framework (business improvement district or Main Street organization), and funding mechanisms (special districts).

### **Beach Boulevard**

Beach Boulevard—also known as State Route (SR) 39—is Westminster's primary north-south commercial corridor and the community's most traveled roadway. In Westminster, Beach Boulevard intersects with I-405 and SR-22, and is often used as a local cut-through corridor for drivers looking to transition from one freeway to the other. Given the corridor's prominence, the impression of many people living, working, and visiting Westminster is heavily influenced by what they see on Beach Boulevard. Development along the corridor is primarily composed of strip-commercial retail centers. Along some portions of the corridor, one or both sides of the roadway are part of the community's unincorporated county islands. The City has designated the area where Beach Boulevard meets Westminster Boulevard as Mixed-Use Corridor, which places special emphasis on high-quality landscaping, setbacks, and right-of-way improvements.

Located along Beach Boulevard at the northern gateway into the City, Westminster Gateway is a 281,000-square-foot community-scale shopping center on Beach Boulevard between Trask Avenue and the Garden Grove Freeway. With its location adjacent to the freeway and at the edge of the City boundary, this center is well positioned to attract retail spending from other cities. The General Plan recognizes the importance of the Westminster Gateway retail center. However, the Plan does not envision major development changes at this center or in the surrounding areas.



*The Westminster Gateway Shopping Center provides retail options for city residents and attracts shoppers from nearby communities because of attractive tenants and adjacency to the Garden Grove Freeway.*



*Little Saigon, home to the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam, attracts niche shoppers with its authentic retail opportunities.*

*The Asian Garden Mall, in the heart of Little Saigon, hosts a weekend night market (pictured above) in the summer.*

## **Little Saigon**

Little Saigon has a highly complex trade area because it is a truly niche market. Its customer base can be divided into three basic categories. First, there are many Vietnamese immigrants and people of Vietnamese ancestry who live in the immediate area (especially Westminster and Garden Grove) and regularly come to Little Saigon specifically for its Vietnamese businesses, including shopping, dining, and entertainment. Second, there are a number of visitors from the Southern California region who come here seeking an authentic Vietnamese cultural experience. Finally, Little Saigon continues to attract tourists from around the world who are excited to experience the largest concentration of Vietnamese businesses outside of Vietnam.

The City has already adopted plans to help the uses in Little Saigon transition over time. The Moran Street Specific Plan was adopted by the City in 2011 to enable a special 20-acre area of Little Saigon (the south side of Bolsa Avenue between Magnolia and Brookhurst, including the Asian Garden Mall), to further develop into a pedestrian-friendly mixed-use area. While the Moran Street Specific Plan only covers a portion of the entire area designated as Mixed-Use Little Saigon, it should be used as an example of the type of development and investment envisioned for this opportunity area.

In addition to the physical redevelopment envisioned for Little Saigon, economic development needs in the area include a coordinated marketing campaign and improvements to the tourism infrastructure—parking, pedestrian connections, and wayfinding. To pay for these, a special funding and financing district would likely be necessary.

## **Westminster Mall**

Situated adjacent to I-405 and the City boundary, Westminster Mall attracts many visitors—and their retail spending—from outside of the City. Nevertheless, Westminster Mall competes with many other regional shopping centers, including South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa, Bella Terra in Huntington Beach, and Long Beach Town Center.

The economic analysis prepared for the General Plan update found little leaked spending and few, if any, opportunities to grow retail spending through attracting new stores. Rather, increases in retail spending would come through out-competing other regional retail destinations.

The General Plan recognizes that at some point in the future, the owners of the mall may wish to consider adding residential uses and transforming it into more of a mixed-use destination. Revitalization could be addressed through a master plan, specific plan, or similar mechanism and a development agreement that defines City benefits and investment. The Land Use Element includes provisions that would accommodate such a transition.

## **Northwest District: I-405/SR-22**

The Land Use Plan also identifies an opportunity for mixed-use development where I-405 and SR-22 merge, referred to as the Northwest District. Although this area represents a key long-term development area in Westminster, the challenges involved in transitioning the existing mobile home community to another use has led the City to prioritize the other areas identified above.

## Quality of Life

Better quality of life is the planned outcome of bringing to Westminster new businesses that provide the goods and services that the community feels it lacks. The community also defined other ways to improve the quality of life:

- » Improve the look and feel of Westminster with more landscaping, attractive streetscapes, updated building facades, and a distinctive community identity and image.
- » Create distinct gateways at major entry points.
- » Develop more destinations in Westminster, especially walkable, mixed-use districts and a downtown area.

These improvements would require public investment, but they also require a thriving economy so that businesses and property owners realize enough profit to reinvest in their properties.

The community also expressed desires for more good restaurants, with a greater variety in cuisine and price; more medical care services, such as a hospital or clinic; and more grocery stores, with a greater variety in scale and type.

The types of businesses that improve the quality of life will likely change over time. Therefore, the General Plan does not target any specific types, but recognizes that improving quality of life is an outcome that will require flexibility.



*The Civic Center, above, provides recreation opportunities, community event spaces, reinforces a distinct community image, and increases the quality of life for community residents, all of which contribute to a strong local economy in Westminster.*



*Medical facilities, such as Kindred Hospital (which provides transitional and long-term care for residents), can attract complementary retail, office, and research uses to locate nearby.*

## GOAL ED-1: QUALITY OF LIFE

**Regionally competitive activity centers and destinations with a wide variety of shopping, dining, entertainment, and services that contribute to an excellent quality of life in Westminster.**

### POLICIES

- ED-1.1 Unmet Need.** In public decisions, discretionary land use and development approvals, and the investment of public resources, give priority to underrepresented commercial sectors in shopping, dining, entertainment, and service businesses.
- ED-1.2 Business Retention and Expansion.** Facilitate and invest in programs and services that retain and help expand existing businesses that contribute to quality of life in Westminster.
- ED-1.3 Business Attraction.** Facilitate and invest in programs and services that attract new businesses in underrepresented commercial sectors, including those that serve or attract higher income residents and visitors.
- ED-1.4 Experience-Oriented Destinations.** Consistent with the land use plan, support public and private investments and development projects that create or improve commercial districts to be amenity rich, pedestrian friendly, and experience oriented, and encourage these districts to be distinct from one another.
- ED-1.5 Existing Commercial Areas.** Improve existing commercial and mixed-use areas by enforcing codes and implementing development standards, investments in the public realm and infrastructure, and economic development services and programs in order to protect against regional retail competition and e-commerce's increasing capture of retail spending; encourage existing retail development to improve layout function and consolidate smaller developments into larger, more competitive, and more identifiable retail centers.
- ED-1.6 Increased Shopping, Dining, and Entertainment.** Increase the number and variety of shopping, dining, and entertainment businesses and establish experience-oriented shopping areas and activity centers to expand Westminster's capture of regional retail spending.
- ED-1.7 New Development.** Encourage commercial development that achieves these objectives:
- + Create an effective concentration of land use that will remain competitive with future surrounding area developments
  - + Provide high sales-tax generating, quality retail and anchor tenants that will generate high sales tax by attracting customers from beyond Westminster and reducing the outflow of local consumer spending
  - + Avoid small convenience-oriented strip centers
  - + Provide functional design and site configuration

## Westminster’s Tax Base and Fiscal Vitality

This economic development outcome—an expanded and diversified tax base—reflects the community’s desire for economic growth to produce public benefits. Generating additional municipal revenues should support new and improved public facilities and services. During the General Plan process, the community expressed “desires” for improvements to and expansions of a broad range of public facilities—underground utilities, recreation facilities, road improvements, and bike and pedestrian facilities—and public services such as code enforcement, public art, recreation programs, and special events.

The 2008–09 recession and the state’s elimination of redevelopment agencies greatly reduced the City’s revenue. At adoption of this General Plan Update, the City is still working to close its long-term structural budget deficit. Funding desired public facilities and services will require either growing revenues by expanding and diversifying the tax base, or establishing new revenue streams through special funding and financing districts, such as assessment districts, community facilities districts, or business improvement districts.

### GOAL ED-2: TAX BASE

**A financially healthy city government with a balanced mix of land uses and special funding and financing districts that increase resources to invest in public facilities and services.**

#### POLICIES

- ED-2.1 Fiscal Decision Making.** Incorporate short-term and long-term economic and fiscal impacts of proposed actions into municipal decision making.
- ED-2.2 Leveraging Private Investment.** When deciding where to invest public resources and how much to invest, consider the degree to which the public investment will leverage private sector investment, whether through development and redevelopment or through the establishment of financing mechanisms, such as assessment districts, business improvement districts, and infrastructure finance districts.
- ED-2.3 Taking Account of Public Resources.** Periodically assess the accuracy of projections for staff time and City financial resources, and use the assessment results to evaluate and improve fiscal decision making.
- ED-2.4 Land Use Plan Changes.** Require the following provisions for general plan amendments that are not part of a City-initiated comprehensive amendment, update, or specific plan:
- + Because retail uses provide sales taxes and lodging uses provide transient occupancy taxes, they are the most lucrative sources of revenue. General plan amendments that change a land use from a designation that permits retail or lodging uses to one that does not should be evaluated for fiscal impacts. Such a change should only be considered in conjunction with a development agreement or other legally enforceable obligation on the property owner(s) that

requires the subject property to generate the same or better fiscal balance for the City.

- + The City may require a development agreement and/or a fiscal impact analysis and mitigation of any short- or long-term negative fiscal impacts for a requested general plan amendment.

**ED-2.5 Public Costs Associated with Development.** Encourage and facilitate development projects to establish new or participate in existing special funding and financing districts for the cost of associated public facilities, infrastructure, and increased public services that align with City goals. The City Council may establish and from time to time change the amount to be recovered from such districts, taking into account the financial feasibility impacts on development generally (not on a project-by-project basis) given regional competition for development and weighed against the public's need for and the City's ability to pay for such facilities, infrastructure, and services.

**ED-2.6 Special Districts.** When community-desired facilities and services are beyond the City's financial resources to provide, support community-driven efforts to establish special funding and financing districts, such as assessment districts, landscape and lighting maintenance districts, business improvement districts, or community facilities districts, whether citywide or limited to a defined neighborhood, district, or corridor.

**ED-2.7 Development Support for Fiscal Vitality.** Secure developments that serve the economic needs of the community and effectively sustain or increase the City's ability to provide all public services and maintenance demands.

## Jobs and Income

The expanded job opportunities outcome could be achieved through the growth and expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new businesses to Westminster. In 2014, only 7.2 percent of employed Westminster residents worked in the City. The economic analysis for the General Plan update found that several economic sectors (especially manufacturing; wholesale trade; and professional, scientific, and technical services) employ many Westminster residents in other cities. These sectors alone have the potential to employ thousands of Westminster residents currently working elsewhere. The outcome of increased real wages and household income entails improving and expanding Westminster residents' access to education, training, and career services. The economic analysis for the General Plan update found that the median household income in Westminster in 2012 was lower than the medians for Orange County and California, and it was 14 percent lower than the median in four comparison cities. Besides benefitting residents, increases in household income could translate to increased retail spending in the City.

### GOAL ED-3: JOBS AND INCOME

**A local economy and business climate that generate new jobs in Westminster, foster increases in household income, and nurture entrepreneurship.**

#### POLICIES

- ED-3.1 Employment Needs of Residents.** When considering the investment of public resources, give priority to investments that support the retention, expansion, and attraction of businesses that provide jobs suited to the education, skills, and occupations of Westminster residents.
- ED-3.2 Competitive Employment Centers.** Encourage office and industrial employment centers that provide competitive advantages to businesses seeking to locate or expand in the region and that increase the number of jobs in the City.
- ED-3.3 Economic Development Services.** Help existing businesses communicate their workforce needs to regional workforce development partners and school district partners. Collaborate with regional economic development partners to market Westminster to potential new businesses. Collaborate with regional business development and educational partners to publicize the educational and training assistance available to Westminster residents, including training to start up and grow businesses.
- ED-3.4 Business Retention and Expansion.** Facilitate and invest in programs and services that retain and help expand existing office and industrial business.
- ED-3.5 Business Attraction.** Facilitate and invest in programs and services that attract new office-based businesses in order to minimize office vacancies in Westminster and to support the development in new offices consistent with the land use plan.
- ED-3.6 A Balanced Business Mix.** Achieve a balanced mix of land use activities and a competitive level of development that optimize economic growth among all business sectors.
- ED-3.7 New Development.** For new industrial development, discourage small, isolated pockets of industrial land uses and encourage industrial development that incorporates a business park subdivision design and permits individual developable lots.

## Economic Development Program

The Economic Development Element presents a long-term focus on ensuring the City's future prosperity and provides goals and policies that are intended to stand the test of time. However, economic and market forces can change, sometimes very quickly. A key implementation action for economic development is the adoption and periodic updating of an economic development program, which provides a short-term action plan identifying the projects, programs, and investments needed to achieve short- and midterm objectives that work toward long-term goals. The City should update the strategy consistently, typically every three to five years. Each update, however, should elaborate on how the strategy is addressing the Economic Development Element's long-term goals.

### GOAL ED-4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

**Effective local programs and partnerships that support local economic development.**

#### POLICIES

- ED-4.1 Economic Development Strategy.** Adopt and maintain an economic development strategy. The strategy shall provide measurable objectives and action plans intended to achieve the goals of this element. The strategy may include additional, shorter-term goals that are not in conflict with this element. Upon adoption of an economic development strategy, the following shall apply:
- + Prioritize the investment of public resources based on the adopted strategy.
  - + Annually review the effectiveness of the economic development strategy.
  - + Every three to five years, comprehensively review the adopted strategy and update it if necessary.
- ED-4.2 Economic Development Partners.** Establish and maintain effective partnerships with local and regional economic development partners, including but not limited to the Westminster Chamber of Commerce, the Orange County Small Business Development Center, and the Orange County Workforce Investment Board.
- ED-4.3 Link for Local Businesses.** Invest in the City's capacity to connect existing businesses with regional economic development service providers as needed and to make regional economic development services providers aware of the needs of Westminster businesses.
- ED-4.4 Real Estate Brokers.** Establish and maintain robust partnerships with commercial and industrial real estate brokers and developers to market Westminster to potential new businesses.
- ED-4.5 Economic Development Training.** Integrate economic and fiscal thinking throughout the City organization and provide periodic economic development training to elected and appointed officials and municipal staff.
- ED-4.6 Evaluating Service Delivery.** Enhance the image of Westminster as business friendly by reviewing and evaluating on a recurring basis the operating efficiency and necessity of City-sponsored programs and services to ensure residents and businesses are provided priority services in a cost-effective manner.

# 4 COMMUNITY DESIGN

## Introduction to Community Design

The General Plan Vision calls out placemaking and enhancement of the City's identity as community priorities. Desiring to create a community image that is distinctive from its neighbors, Westminster has an opportunity, through this General Plan, to set the framework for the appearance, livability, and functionality of the City by creating new high-level design standards for projects and future activity centers. Three main qualities attach people to their communities: social spaces (places to meet and socialize), openness (welcoming and accepting of diversity), and aesthetics (physical beauty and green spaces). The intent of placemaking in Westminster is to foster and create places to congregate, promote inclusiveness, and improve the visual quality of Westminster, resulting in a more dynamic and livable city.

The formation of community in Westminster is grounded in the City's established single-family residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors that generally arose in the 1950s (similar to many cities in Orange County and particularly those neighboring Westminster). Shifting socioeconomic demographics and housing preferences have shaped the mix of uses identified for the future of Westminster. With a contemporary approach of mixing uses, integrating infill development along corridors, and creating activity centers in select areas, Westminster is at the forefront of placemaking and planning in Orange County.

### Organization of Element

The goals and policies of this element are organized around five topics:

- » **Community Image and Placemaking.** Features that create a distinctive community identity and special sense of place for Westminster.
- » **Design Quality.** Guidance for building and site design and architectural treatments to create livable and sustainable projects that convey a quality image of the city.
- » **Enhanced Corridors and Intersections.** Corridors warranting special treatment as primary roadways or key access points for the community and visitors.
- » **Neighborhood Preservation and Enhancement.** Approaches to maintain and enhance the City's established residential neighborhoods.
- » **Cultural Resources.** Preservation of the City's ethnic resources (Little Saigon), historic structures and artifacts, and paleontological and archaeological resources.

Descriptions of related plans, programs, and legislation are at the end of this element.

#### In This Element...

- » Community Identify
- » Sense of Place
- » Building Design
- » Project Design
- » Land Use Transitions and Buffers
- » Enhanced Corridors and Intersections
- » Neighborhood Preservation and Enhancement
- » Cultural Resources



*Enhancing Westminster's unique identity through landscape, signage, and other design techniques will help distinguish the City from its neighbors and contribute to creating a special sense of place.*

## People-Centered Approach

The Community Design Element encourages a people-centered approach to the planning, design, and management of the spaces that serve as gathering places in a community, including:

- » Streets
- » Sidewalks
- » Parks
- » Buildings
- » Other public or private



*Placemaking happens all around Westminster, from the Civic Center to Little Saigon. In addition to these special places, the City's streets, sidewalks, parks, and other civic spaces define the image of Westminster.*

## Placemaking

Placemaking is a people-oriented approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. It draws on local assets and history to create gathering places and activity centers that contribute people's health, happiness, while simultaneously creating a comprehensive identity for a city.

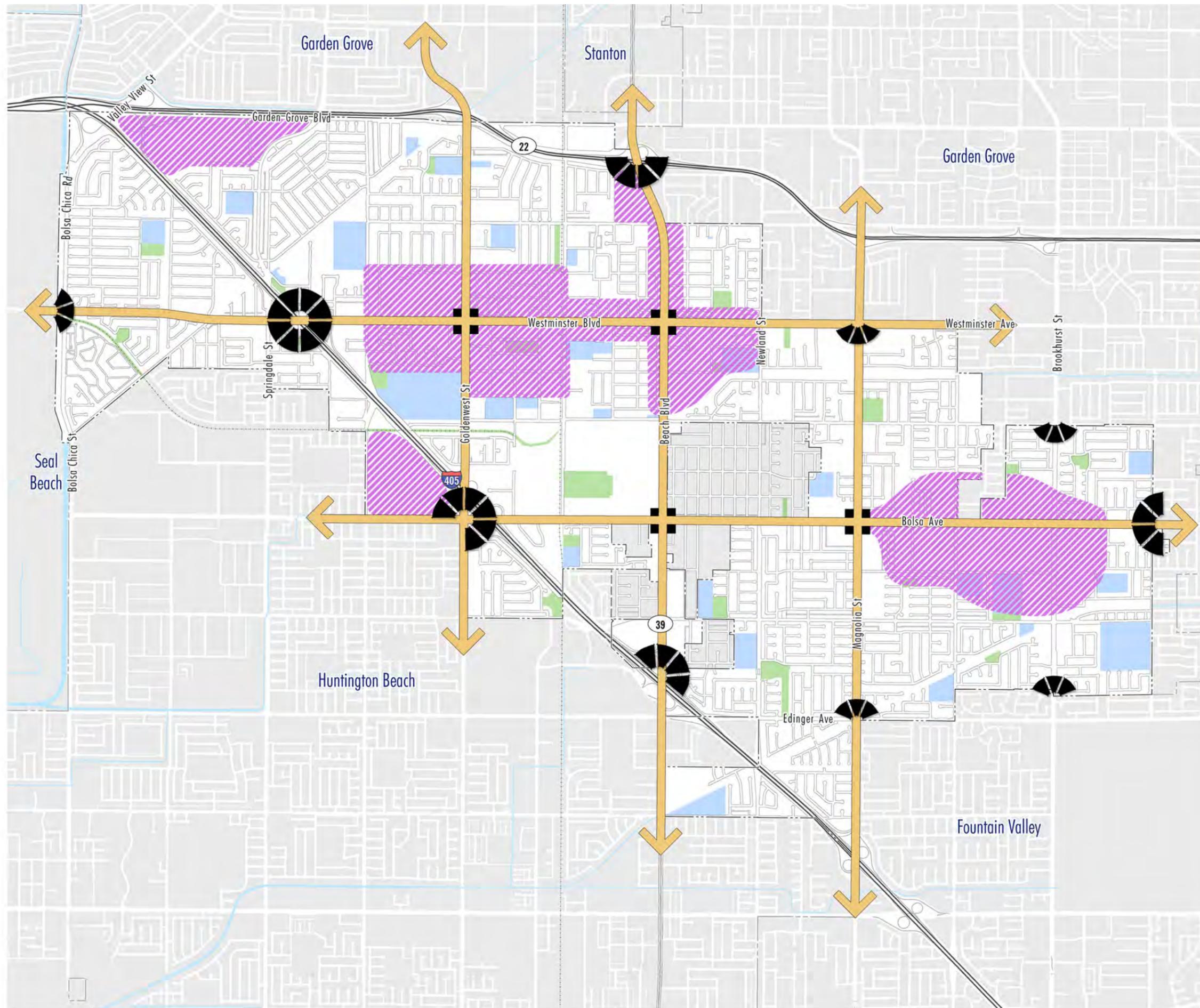
Placemaking can be used to improve all of the spaces that comprise the gathering places within a community—its streets, sidewalks, parks, buildings, and other public spaces—so they invite greater interaction between people and foster healthier, more social, and economically viable communities. Communities can generate special places through application of distinctive landscaping, architectural treatments, and programming of activities that promote interaction and connection with its users in a specific space.

It is important to note that placemaking is not just the act of building or fixing up a space; it is a process that fosters the creation of identifiable and active public destinations—the kind of places where people feel a strong investment in their communities and continually strive to make things better. Since Westminster is largely built out, opportunities to “create place” primarily come from improvements to existing streetscapes and the opportunity to create new squares, plazas or other gathering spaces as existing uses and properties (particularly along Beach and Westminster Boulevards) transition and redevelop over time. Quality design will become increasingly important as infill projects begin to change the look and feel of the City's corridors.

The Community Design Element is intended to enhance Westminster's current community identity by identifying design techniques, guidelines, and features that will contribute to the quality of life desired throughout the City, as described in the Economic Development Element. It will serve as a practical guide to City leaders, property owners, architects, and residents as they develop the best possible projects.

The foundation of placemaking can be found in a city's “community structure.” *Figure 4-1* illustrates Westminster's community structure, which includes gateways into the City, enhanced corridor and intersection locations, and districts (which are predominantly mixed-use areas intended to serve as the City's primary future activity centers). It is in these areas that the City's placemaking efforts will be focused, although they can certainly occur in other areas not shown on the map. For example, the City's established residential neighborhoods are not illustrated on the community structure map, however, there may be opportunities to create unique identifying signage or landscaping treatments to demarcate these areas. This would also be considered a placemaking strategy.

Figure 4-1  
Community Structure



- City of Westminster Boundary
- City of Westminster Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries
- Parks and Open Space
- Schools
- Districts
- Enhanced Corridor
- Enhanced Intersection
- Major Gateway
- Minor Gateway



## Community Design Objectives

The goals and policies in this chapter are intended to stimulate (not stifle) design creativity, and to set expectations for the design quality that is desired by the community. While the objectives of the Community Design Element (listed below) generally focused on citywide, district-, and neighborhood-level details, the City's zoning ordinance and design guidelines further refine the objectives at the project and parcel level and must support the goals and policies identified in the Element.

1. Reinforce/strengthen the community identity of Westminster.
2. Preserve and enhance the visual quality of the City.
3. Promote interaction between people and foster healthier, more social and economically viable communities
4. Protect and strengthen the sense of place and character of neighborhoods.
5. Enhance vehicular and pedestrian corridors through the use of consistent landscaping and design features.
6. Enhance the energy, vitality, and character of the City's gathering spaces, especially in mixed-use districts.
7. Improve upon the architectural quality of Westminster.
8. Encourage environmentally friendly and sustainable design and building practices.



*The Miriam Warne Community Building demonstrates a high quality of design and features enhanced landscaping and building materials. It is also home to the City of Westminster Chamber of Commerce; the signage of the building complements the architecture and reflects a positive image of the community.*



*Gathering spaces where community members can come together to celebrate events and enjoy each other's company help create a strong sense of community identity.*

## Community Image and Placemaking

An attractive and unified community appearance not only increases residents' sense of pride, but creates a positive climate for business and makes a pleasant impression on visitors. The City of Westminster's image is defined by its districts/activity centers (mixed-use areas) and collection of unique neighborhoods. While it is important to retain the character of the City's activity centers and neighborhoods, it is equally important to ensure a comprehensive and cohesive community identity through the implementation of strategic design elements. The community image can be reinforced by carefully placed and well-designed gateways at primary entrances to the City; these gateways define the boundaries of the City and create a sense of arrival. Key gateways into Westminster are identified on *Figure CD-1, Community Structure*.

### GOAL CD-1: COMMUNITY IDENTITY

**A unified and attractive community identity that creates a distinctive sense of place and distinguishes Westminster from other cities.**

#### POLICIES

- CD-1.1 Design Features.** Enhance the City's identity through the use of attractive high quality gateways, city entry signs and design features, cohesive street signs, and other design features at public gathering spaces and other areas, where appropriate.
- CD-1.2 Sense of Place.** Support the enhancement and preservation of neighborhoods that exhibit a special sense of place and quality of design.
- CD-1.3 Individual Neighborhoods.** Strengthen the identity of individual neighborhoods/communities with entry monuments; flags; street signs; and/or special tree streets, landscaping, and lighting.
- CD-1.4 Design Quality.** Support development of the built environment that enhances and improves community image through the use of high-quality architectural features, design elements and natural materials.
- CD-1.5 Property Maintenance.** Improve efforts to enforce Municipal Codes and instill community pride in the appearance and image of the City.
- CD-1.6 Streetscapes.** Promote drought tolerant landscaping, tree planting, and tree preservation along Westminster's streets as a means of improving aesthetics, making neighborhoods more pedestrian-friendly, providing environmental and economic benefits.
- CD-1.7 Gathering Spaces.** Promote lot consolidation and assemblage for redevelopment of small, underutilized, and blighted properties in mixed-use areas to create lot sizes that would allow for incorporation of public plazas and other gathering spaces in project design.

## Design Quality

Physical improvements will help Westminster achieve vibrant places, enhanced value, and livability throughout the City. Physical improvements include overall site design, landscaping, building design and orientation, urban plazas, architectural details, site furniture, building materials, and land use buffers and transitions. Projects and buildings shall be designed with consideration for adjacent land uses, and when incompatibilities arise, projects may be required to provide sufficient land use buffers and transitions to ensure a harmonious environment.

### GOAL CD-2: DESIGN QUALITY

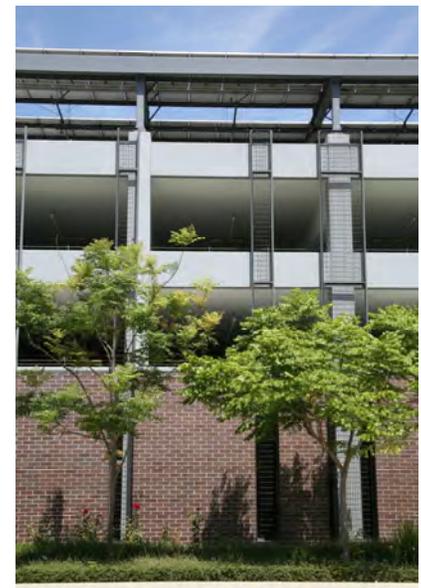
**Projects, developments, and public spaces that visually enhance the character of the community, reinforce civic pride and public safety, discourage blight, and appropriately buffer dissimilar land uses so that the differences in type and intensity do not conflict.**

#### POLICIES: PROJECT DESIGN

- CD-2.1 Special Site Features.** Preserve positive characteristics and unique features of a site during the design and development of a new project; the relationship to scale and character of adjacent uses should be considered.
- CD-2.2 Public and Private Facilities.** Minimize visual impacts of public and private facilities and support structures through sensitive site design and construction. This includes, but is not limited to: appropriate placement of facilities; undergrounding of utilities, where possible; and aesthetic design (e.g., cell tower stealthing).
- CD-2.3 Older Neighborhoods and Businesses.** Develop or participate in programs to rehabilitate older residential neighborhoods and commercial centers to prevent blight and maintain the quality of the built environment.
- CD-2.4 Parking in Mixed-Use Areas.** Design parking lots and structures in mixed-use areas to be functionally and visually integrated into and connected with new projects or adjacent buildings; off-street parking lots should not dominate the streetscene or should be screened by enhanced landscaping to minimize the view.
- CD-2.5 Gathering Spaces in Mixed-Use Areas.** Integrate plaza or gathering spaces in new mixed-use developments, and explore ways to creatively integrate outdoor dining, seating, or other activity-generating features into project design.
- CD-2.6 Public Art.** Consider including public art that reflects the diversity of the City at key gateways, major projects, and public gathering places.
- CD-2.7 CPTED.** Utilize Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques and defensible space design concepts to enhance community safety.
- CD-2.8 Vehicular Access Points.** Minimize new driveways and consolidate access points to improve site design, traffic flow and safety of vehicles and pedestrians in new and existing developments.



*Public art can celebrate the diversity of the City, as exemplified by the Vietnam War Memorial.*



*Parking structures, like the one pictured above attached to the Westminster Police Department building, should be well-integrated with adjacent buildings and designed to support a pedestrian-environment, especially in the City's mixed-use areas.*



*Building designs should incorporate enhanced wall treatments, such as variations in color, and architectural features, to improve their design.*



*Tiered landscaping can soften walls and edges and create a nice transition between residential neighborhoods and busy streets.*

## **POLICIES: BUILDING DESIGN**

- CD-2.9 Building Design and Materials.** Employ design strategies and building materials that evoke a sense of quality and permanence.
- CD-2.10 Building Massing.** Provide special building-form elements, such as towers and archways, and other building features to help distinguish activity nodes and establish landmarks in the community.
- CD-2.11 Architectural Styles.** Use different but complementary forms of architectural styles and designs that incorporate representative characteristics of a given area. Old English architecture should be limited to the Civic Center area.
- CD-2.12 Architectural Features.** Use architectural design features (windows, columns, offset roof planes, etc.) to vertically and horizontally articulate elevations.
- CD-2.13 Wall Treatments.** Provide variations in color, texture, materials, articulation, and architectural treatments. Avoid long expanses of blank, monotonous walls or fences.
- CD-2.14 Property and Landscape Maintenance.** Require property owners to maintain structures and landscaping to high standards of design, health, and safety on all sides of buildings.
- CD-2.15 Variations in Wall Plane.** Avoid use of long, blank walls by breaking them up with vertical and horizontal façade articulation achieved through stamping, colors, materials, modulation, and landscaping.

## **POLICIES: LAND USE TRANSITIONS AND BUFFERS**

- CD-2.16 Landscaping.** Encourage the use of creative landscape design to create visual interest and reduce conflicts between different land uses.
- CD-2.17 Residential Buffers.** Require setbacks and other design elements to buffer residential units to the extent possible from the impacts of abutting roadway, mixed use, commercial, and industrial uses.
- CD-2.18 Walls and Fences.** Design walls and fences that are stylistically well integrated with adjacent structures and terrain, and use landscaping and vegetation to soften their appearance.

## Enhanced Corridors and Intersections

Corridors play an important role in Westminster. Not only are they essential for circulation, they provide valuable opportunities to reinforce the City's community identity through streetscape façade improvements and building design. Design treatments within corridors should have cohesive, yet clearly differentiated design features that reflect the type and extent of uses along it.

To help foster a strong identity along major corridors, the City has designated a number of north-south and east-west roadways as “enhanced corridors” (see *Figure CD-1*). Roadways in this designation are recognized as major transportation routes and will receive special design consideration to ensure they complement the community. The City's visual appearance from freeways and along prominent roadways such as Beach Boulevard is particularly important because it helps visually frame and distinguish the City from adjacent jurisdictions.

The planning goal is to define the City's boundaries, gateways, or entryways and to provide visual links between the community's major activity centers and destinations. This element calls for carefully designed development, coordinated and sustainable landscaping, pedestrian features, lighting, and other aesthetic improvements along corridors to link activity centers.

**GOAL CD-3: ENHANCED CORRIDORS AND INTERSECTIONS**  
**A visually attractive appearance of the City from freeways, interchanges, and enhanced corridors and intersections.**

### POLICIES

- CD-3.1 Streetscape Design.** Create unifying streetscape elements for enhanced landscape streets, including coordinated streetlights, landscaping, public signage, street furniture, and hardscaping.
- CD-3.2 Streetscape Features.** Design new and, when necessary, retrofit existing streets to improve walkability, bicycling, and transit integration; strengthen connectivity; and enhance community identity through improvements to the public right-of-way such as sidewalks, street trees, parkways, curbs, street lighting, and street furniture.
- CD-3.3 Enhanced Intersections.** Apply special treatments at major intersections and crosswalks along enhanced corridors to create a visual focal point, sense of place, and slower traffic.
- CD-3.4 Undergrounding Utilities.** Underground and/or screen existing, new, or relocated electric or communication distribution lines, which are visible from many of the City's enhanced corridors.
- CD-3.5 Corridor Standards.** Require specialized design review for development along enhanced corridors, including but not limited to building height restrictions, setback requirements, and site-orientation guidelines.
- CD-3.6 Façade Improvements.** Encourage businesses to reinvest in frontage, landscape, façade, signage, and general improvements as well as regular general maintenance
- CD-3.7 Freeway Image.** Work with Caltrans to implement a freeway and interchange landscaping and planting program to improve the appearance of the City from Beach Boulevard, I-405, and SR-22.



*Low-water landscaping and monumentation can be integrated into medians to enhance key corridors.*



*Enhancement and preservation of the City's existing single-family neighborhoods is a priority for Westminster.*

## Neighborhood Enhancement and Preservation

Single-family neighborhoods represent approximately 60 percent of the City's acreage. Just as the City's mixed-use districts are intended to serve as gathering places and areas of activity for the community, many neighborhoods also serve this purpose for their residents. Some neighborhoods organize block parties, holiday parades, and other activities that foster community building and connectivity in their respective areas. Maintaining established neighborhoods, finding ways to encourage reinvestment in properties over time (through general property maintenance, building or landscape improvements), and encouraging community activities to build community were identified as community priorities through the General Plan Update process.

**GOAL CD-4: NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT AND PRESERVATION**  
**Neighborhoods that protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community; enhance public and private efforts to maintain, reinvest in, and upgrade existing housing; and provide opportunities for social interaction.**

### POLICIES

- CD-4.1 Public and Private Resources.** Invest public and private resources in the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing to prevent or reverse neighborhood deterioration.
- CD-4.2 Neighborhood Infrastructure.** Maintain adequate neighborhood infrastructure, community facilities, and services as means of sustaining the overall livability of neighborhoods
- CD-4.3 Code Enforcement.** Enforce existing codes by coordinating with HOAs, neighborhood committees, and code-compliance and public-safety personnel.
- CD-4.4 Agency Cooperation.** Cooperate with schools, law enforcement, social service agencies, and other entities to deter criminal activity.
- CD-4.5 Homeownership.** Promote owner-occupation programs, where appropriate, to counteract absentee-owner rentals.
- CD-4.6 Programming.** Continue to support organizations, programs, and events that aim to improve Westminster's neighborhoods and community atmosphere.
- CD-4.7 Neighborhood Character.** Respect the character of all neighborhoods and unincorporated county islands by encouraging them to preserve and improve upon the positive qualities that make each area unique.
- CD-4.8 Regulatory Control.** Comply with state and federal regulations to maintain regulatory control of land uses permitted within residential neighborhoods.

## Cultural Resources

Cultural resources in Westminster are comprised of ethnic resources (Little Saigon), historic structures and artifacts, and paleontological and archaeological resources. These resources serve to preserve its rich cultural history and lend insight into the scientific progress, environmental adaptations and human advancements in the region. The preservation of cultural resources in Westminster will help future generations understand the community's complex history and appreciate its diverse ethnic composition.

### Ethnic Resources: Little Saigon

Founded by the Presbyterian Reverend Lemuel P. Webber in 1870, the Westminster agricultural community has developed into the estimated 90,000-person City it is today in just over 145 years. Now one of the most diverse cultural communities in Southern California, the City's most prominent cultural change was triggered in the 1970s, with the immigration of Vietnamese refugees into Westminster. The success of the Vietnamese integration into the American social, political, and business systems is evident in the growing success of the Little Saigon district, the oldest, largest and most prominent cultural and commercial district of its kind outside of Vietnam. Little Saigon is one of the City's most important cultural destinations. Today, Little Saigon has over 500 businesses that largely cater to the region's Vietnamese community. This area has its own special design aesthetic and the City continues to support it as a mixed-use destination.

### Historic Resources

The State Historical Resources Commission designed the California Register of Historical Resources program for use by state and local agencies, private groups and citizens to identify, evaluate, register and protect California's historical resources.

The Register is the authoritative guide to the state's significant historical and archeological resources. It encourages public recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archeological and cultural significance, identifies historical resources for state and local planning purposes, determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding and affords certain protections under environmental review.

To be eligible for listing in the California Register, a resource must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- » Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States
- » Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history
- » Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values
- » Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation

In addition to having significance, resources must have integrity for the period of significance. Simply, resources must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. A resource that has lost its historic



*Little Saigon is a major cultural resource in Westminster with its own special design style.*



*Special areas of Westminster, including the area around the Civic Center, feature Old English architecture and design elements that recognize the City's history. At the corner of Westminster Boulevard and Beach Boulevard is a collection of Old English-style buildings, once known as Keystone Square, which exemplifies this historic architectural style.*

character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the California Register, if it maintains the potential to yield significant scientific or historical information or specific data.

Approximately 100 historical buildings in the City are listed on the California Historical Resources Inventory, which means they have been evaluated for listing on a local register, the California Register of Historical Resources, or the National Register of Historic Places, or for federal tax credit certifications. (note that listing on the Historical Resources Inventory does not mean that a resource is considered historically significant). In addition, some buildings listed on the Inventory have since been demolished but not removed from the Inventory (i.e., the Westminster School/Seventeenth Street School, which was at the center of the 1947 *Westminster v. Mendez* case). As a result, the number of buildings with historic significance in Westminster is likely much lower than the number identified on the Inventory. The majority of the buildings on the Inventory are single-family homes, the oldest of which was built in 1939, but the list also includes commercial, government, and school buildings. Buildings less than 45 years of age are typically not evaluated for eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.

In addition to those buildings listed on the inventory, there are additional places of local significance in Westminster which at the very least should be considered for designation as local landmarks within the community. This could include the three distinct buildings constructed in an Old English architectural style at the south east corner of the Beach Boulevard/Westminster Boulevard, and other building in the civic center area which captures the Old English style that reflects the community's history. The mosaic artwork of Millard Sheet's decorates the front of the former Home Savings and Loan building near the intersection of Bolsa Avenue and Westminster Avenue should also be evaluated.

### **Paleontological and Archaeological Resources**

Westminster is home to very limited paleontological and archaeological resources. Paleontological resources are the fossilized remains of plants and animals. Archaeology is the branch of paleontology that studies human artifacts, such as places, objects, and settlements that reflect group or individual religious, cultural, or everyday activities.

Near the intersection of Beach Boulevard and Hazard Avenue exists a small pocket of very old alluvial fan deposit, which may range from 1 million years old to 10,000 years old (see *Figure 8-1, Geology Types*). There have been no known fossils recovered within the City, but subsurface paleontological resources may be present in areas that are both developed and undeveloped at depths greater than six feet. For more information—including a detailed description of all geology types—see the Paleontological Resources Assessment prepared for the General Plan Environmental Impact Report, available on the City's website or in person at City Hall.

The City has no known archaeological resources. Five prehistoric sites previously recorded within the City have all been destroyed by urban development. All were shell midden sites or midden sites and probably were remains of processing camps for shells (a midden is a dump of household waste, often including waste from food processing and/or food preparation). No prehistoric villages are known within the City though there were major Tongva villages in the surrounding area, including present-day Long Beach, Santa Ana, and Huntington Beach.

**GOAL CD-5: CULTURAL RESOURCES**  
**An understanding and acceptance of the City’s ethnic diversities and preservation of the rich, historical context of Westminster’s past.**

**POLICIES**

- CD-5.1 Chamber of Commerce Coordination.** Encourage interaction and coordination between the Westminster and Vietnamese Chambers of Commerce.
- CD-5.2 Cultural Events.** Increase public awareness of city-sponsored cultural events and promote activities of organized cultural organizations.
- CD-5.3 Historic Resources.** Evaluate of the condition of historical buildings, the costs of rehabilitation, and the feasibility of preservation or conservation alternatives when considering the demolition or movement of historic structures; when possible, encourage the adaptive re-use of the historic structure.
- CD-5.4 Community Support.** Encourage community support of the Westminster historical society, the Cultural Arts Commission, and the Blakely Park historical area.
- CD-5.5 Performance and Visual Arts.** Promote and preserve the richly diverse cultural heritage of Westminster residents by providing and encouraging performance and visual arts opportunities for all segments of the community.
- CD-5.6 Cultural Center.** Encourage the continued operation of a physical venue for community arts groups, local ethnic groups, schools, as well as a variety of music, dance, and theatrical events.
- CD-5.7 Paleontologic Resources.** In order to protect paleontologic resources in the City, projects that would involve extensive grading or grading of large areas to depths of more than ten feet below grade, should be conditioned to immediately stop grading activities if paleontological or archaeological resources are encountered. At this point a qualified paleontologist approved by the City should be enlisted to investigate the resources and conduct a preliminary assessment to determine whether a paleontologic impact report will be required.

## Related Plans, Programs, and Legislation

The Community Design Element is not one of the seven general plan topics required by state law. However, jurisdictions may include optional elements in their general plans that address topics that are important to the community, including topics that may have an influence on the physical development of the planning area (CA Gov't Code § 65303).

The Community Design Element provides goals and policies to improve the image, character, and quality of life of the City. Urban design is important to the City because it relates directly to the physical form and character of development resulting from implementation of the Land Use and Mobility elements.

### **Westminster Municipal Code and Design Guidelines Manual**

In Westminster, design of a project is evaluated under two different documents: Title 17, Zoning, of the Westminster Municipal Code (WMC) and the City's Design Guidelines Manual; both documents should reflect the goals, policies, and action items in this element. Future development should reflect the intentions of the Community Design Element and should consult the applicable zoning ordinance sections, specific plans, design guidelines, and other provisions in the municipal code when appropriate.

The WMC, including specific plans, includes development and design standards that are mandatory and required under the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. It provides specific development standards to implement the goals and policies in the General Plan. Direction related to setbacks, heights, parking and open space requirements, lighting, and similar issues is provided in the zoning and municipal codes.

The Guidelines—a separate document adopted by resolution—are intended to supplement the development requirements and regulations contained in the WMC to assure quality design of developments within the city that promote the health, safety and general welfare of the community. The Guidelines are tools to be used by developers during the project design phase and by City decision-makers during the development review process. The goal of the Guidelines is to encourage creative architectural and site planning solutions consistent with the overall context of surrounding commercial, industrial and residential developments.

### **Capital Improvement Program**

The capital improvement program (CIP) represents the City's short-range strategic capital investment. The CIP identifies and provides two types of expenditures: strategic improvements to the City's existing infrastructure and one-time projects designed to address important community needs.

At the municipal level, capital projects include local streets, streetscapes, sidewalks and medians, signs, traffic control devices, street lighting, utility boxes, and local public art projects. Local bus stops, bicycle racks, and transit stations are other capital projects. These projects are usually funded by a general fund or, in some cases, gas taxes.

Community facilities can also be CIP projects and can include public buildings such as civic centers, schools, libraries, museums, police and fire departments, courthouses, jails, parks, recreation facilities, pools, and tennis courts.

Community facilities may also include quasi-public buildings like concert halls, convention centers, and hospitals. Quasi-public facilities are financed with local government support but are usually owned and operated by the private or nonprofit sector and may have their own revenue streams.

The zoning and municipal codes and the City's CIP are essential tools for placemaking within communities and regulating development so that it meets the community's expectations for attractive design, building quality, and sustainable development.

### **Assessment District**

An Assessment District can be created to finance new public improvements or other additions to the community, such as enhanced landscaping, street furniture, signs, lighting or other enhancements, funded by a special property tax. Assessment Districts can be created by a local agency, such as a City or a County, in collaboration with property owners who want the improvement(s). The district would include all properties that will directly benefit from the improvement(s). The assessment is based on mathematical formulas that take into account how much each property will benefit from the improvement(s).

### **National Historic Preservation Act**

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 coordinates public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect the nation's historic and archaeological resources. The act authorized the National Register of Historic Places, which lists districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

Section 106 (Protection of Historic Properties) of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Section 106 Review ensures that historic properties are considered during federal project planning and implementation. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency, administers the review process with assistance from state historic preservation offices.

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# 5 MOBILITY

## Introduction to Mobility

The City of Westminster’s Mobility Element seeks to ensure a range of efficient ways to get around the City through a safe, interconnected, multimodal transportation system. The goals and policies identified in this Element have been developed to encourage travel by a variety of modes, including walking, bicycling, public transit, and automobiles. Westminster has developed a comprehensive “complete street” mobility system that meets the needs of all users, of all ages and abilities. This element provides guidance and support to meet the needs of residents, businesses, emergency service providers, and other roadway users. The element also recognizes key objectives for improving air quality, reducing the environmental impacts of vehicular travel, and achieving other community goals such as expanded transit service and pedestrian mobility.

As articulated in its Vision Statement laid out in the Introduction, Westminster believes in the importance of a comprehensive and well-connected mobility network to support existing development and future growth. The Mobility Element generally focuses on the connectivity of the city’s transportation system and supports the other elements within the General Plan, especially the Land Use Element, with which it has the strongest relationship. It provides the framework for multimodal linkages to the City’s activity centers and key destinations in an effort to minimize vehicular trips and create a more walkable environment, especially along the community’s key corridors. The goals and policies in this element also highlight the ability to connect people via active transportation (walking, biking, transit) to the City’s six mixed-use areas. Special attention has also been paid to connecting to regional transportation facilities to ensure the mobility needs of people living, working, and visiting Westminster are well-served as a user moves outside of the City boundary. The element also relates to local economic development and placemaking (as described in the Community Design Element), by defining new street typologies which focus on the users and adjacent land uses and landscaping to make the mobility environment for all users safer and more efficient and enjoyable. Furthermore, future noise contours and air quality policies in the Land Use and Public Health and Safety Elements, respectfully, reflect considerations of future traffic generation, as outlined in this element.

California state law requires that a general plan include “the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals... and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the [general] plan” (Government Code [CGC] §

### In this Element...

- » Existing Mobility System
- » Complete Streets
- » Active Transportation (walking, biking, transit)
- » Parking
- » Transportation Management



*In 2016, the City hosted an event called “Experience Hoover” for community members to experience the roadway’s existing bike and pedestrian facilities and visualize proposed safety improvements along the street.*



*The community's roadway network is envisioned to serve all users of all ages and abilities, including automobiles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.*

65302[b]). This Mobility Element includes all information required of circulation elements, as described in the Government Code, except that the location and extent of "other local public utilities and facilities" is addressed in the Public Services, Facilities, and Natural Resources Element.

## Organization of Element

Following a brief overview of Westminster's existing transportation system, the goals and policies of this element are organized around four topics:

- » **Complete Streets.** Describes how Westminster's streets provide a safe, efficient, and accessible transportation system for all users of all ages and abilities. Goods movement is also discussed as part of the City's complete streets strategy.
- » **Active Transportation.** Discusses the role of walking, biking, public transit in Westminster.
- » **Parking.** Highlights the community's parking challenges and describes creative opportunities to meet the City's parking needs.
- » **Transportation Demand Management.** Outlines strategies for improving the efficiency of Westminster's mobility system.

The following sections provide content for each topic addressed in this element, followed by goals and policies to achieve the General Plan vision for mobility in Westminster. Related plans, programs, and legislation are discussed at the end of the element.

## Existing Mobility System

This section provides a short context for Westminster's existing mobility system, identifies how that system was developed, and communicates the current vision for the future of mobility within the City.

Much of Westminster's transportation system has developed within the last 50 years, in a time where transportation was largely influenced by freeway expansions and an interest and desire to travel by personal vehicles. The automobile-focused transportation system envisioned in the City's previous general plans has largely been realized. However, in recent years, the City has been taking steps to support complete street principles. This includes comprehensive planning efforts—the Moran Street Specific Plan and the City's Active Transportation Plan—which support complete streets and mobility for all users, of all ages and abilities.

In addition to the numerous federal and state laws which influence how cities plan for mobility (outlined in the prior section on "related plans"), changing demographics also influence the city's mobility system. People are expected to live longer, increasing the need for transportation options that serve the population as they age. Additionally, younger people, having grown up through one of the worst recessions in recent history, are more interested in traveling by bicycle, transit, or walking than previous generations. This element responds to these regulatory and demographic changes by shifting the City's focus to developing a long-term multimodal strategy for users of all ages and abilities. The existing transportation system is described below.

## Streets

The city accommodates motorists via its system of freeways, regional streets and local streets. California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) operated and maintained facilities include Interstate-405 (I-405), State Route 22 (SR-22), and Beach Boulevard (SR-39). North/south streets are generally provided on a ½-mile to 1-mile grid system. These key roadways include Bolsa Chica Road, Edwards Street, Goldenwest Street, Hoover Street, Newland Street, Magnolia Street, Bushard Street, Brookhurst Street, and Ward Street. East/west streets are also generally provided on a ½-mile to 1-mile grid system. The key east/west streets include Trask Avenue, Westminster Boulevard, Hazard Avenue, Bolsa Avenue, McFadden Avenue, and Edinger Avenue.

Many city-maintained streets provide for pedestrian and bicycle travel on such facilities as parallel bike lanes, trails, and/or sidewalks (excluding along freeways where pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited).

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) has also identified key roadways in the City as critical components to the regional infrastructure. This includes facilities that have been identified by OCTA as part of the regional Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) for vehicle movement, as part of the OCTA Congestion Management Program (CMP) facilities, and as part of the OCTA Commuter Bikeways Strategic Plan, and the OCTA Districts 1 and 2 Bikeways Strategy.. Most of the facilities described above are designated MPAH facilities. CMP facilities in the City of Westminster include Beach Boulevard (SR-39), Bolsa Chica Road, and Bolsa Avenue. The regional bikeway plan identifies bicycle facilities on Springdale Street, Hazard Avenue, Hoover Street, and Ward Avenue.



*Clean, well-maintained streets with mature landscaping create an attractive image of the community.*



*Local streets are places where community members come together to celebrate living in Westminster.*

*Homes located in more walkable neighborhoods—that is, neighborhoods with a mix of amenities and social destinations within a short distance—often have higher property values over similar homes in less walkable areas.*



*Safe and efficient pedestrian connections can help people reach key destinations throughout the City.*

## **Pedestrians**

Walking is an environmentally friendly mode of transportation that enhances both personal and social wellbeing. This mode of travel also provides many public access, health and economic benefits. Well-designed pedestrian facilities are safe, attractive, convenient, and easy to use. Inadequate facilities discourage users and unnecessary facilities waste money and resources.

Pedestrian paths are primarily developed as part of the roadway and trail systems of a city and reflect the interconnected nature of circulation and transportation systems as a whole. Currently, most of the major roadways through Westminster provide satisfactory and continuous sidewalks. However, there are some locations where sidewalks are discontinuous or are only provided on one side of the road. Many local neighborhood streets suffer from discontinuous sidewalks or have no sidewalks at all.

## **Bicycles**

In addition to meeting some of the community's transportation needs, bicycling provides many improved access to public amenities, and several health and economic benefits. Bicycling could be recognized as an integral component of Westminster's transportation system, currently and in the future. Safe, convenient, attractive, and well-designed bicycle facilities are essential if this mode is to be properly accommodated and encouraged. This mode could be integrated throughout the City's Complete Streets vision, and a network of bicycle facilities linking all areas of the City could be accommodated.

The existing bicycle system in the City of Westminster mainly consists of a limited number of Class II striped bicycle lanes across the City, as well as Class III signed bike routes along Trask Avenue and Hoover Street. Some bikeways are also incomplete and end abruptly. There are many opportunities to improve the quantity and quality of bicycle facilities and the connectivity to key destinations (employment centers, residential areas, and high use activity centers).



*There are many opportunities to improve unsafe biking conditions throughout Westminster through the implementation of "complete street" goals and policies as a priority; see Goal M-1 for more information.*

## Transit

Transit in Westminster includes bus service and Americans with Disability Act (ADA) paratransit service; indirectly, transit service is also provided by the Amtrak and Metrolink commuter rail. Local transit services throughout the City provide service to key multi-modal transportation centers in close proximity to the City, including the Goldenwest Transportation Center and the Buena Park Metrolink station. These services are described below.

### **Bus Service**

Bus service is provided by OCTA. OCTA currently operates seven bus routes within the city.

### **Paratransit Service**

OCTA operates Access Service, a shared-ride paratransit service for qualified applicants. Access service is provided within ¾-mile of, and during similar hours as, OCTA's fixed-route service.

### **Westminster on Wheels (WOW)**

Provides transportation services to seniors, 62 years and older, residing in Westminster, to assist them in remaining independent. The program operates Monday through Friday and reservations are required.

### **Metrolink Commuter Rail**

Metrolink is the regional commuter rail service that links Southern California. The nearest stations to the City are located in Santa Ana, Orange, and Anaheim.

### **Amtrak**

Amtrak is a national passenger rail service connecting San Diego to San Luis Obispo. The nearest stations to the City are located in Santa Ana, and Anaheim.

## Goods Movement

The goods or freight movement system in Westminster is crucial to the well-being of the residents of the City due to its importance for a healthy and vital local economy. Identifying and prioritizing facilities for goods movement is a vital portion of effective planning that can balance economic needs and the needs of other modes of transportation.

Facilities that prioritize goods movement over other modes of transportation must be integrated into the transportation system to ensure efficient delivery. The Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) of 1982 defines state truck routes and key freight corridors. Regional access to Westminster is accommodated by STAA designated I-405 and SR-22 and Beach Boulevard (SR-39). Also, Westminster Boulevard, Bolsa Avenue, Goldenwest Street, and Magnolia Street are designated as truck routes.

A single rail line for freight runs parallel to Hoover Street (in a north/south orientation). It runs once a day in the morning, three to four days a week. The freight line provides access to a wholesale lumber yard south of the city limits and is owned by Union Pacific.



*Bus service in Westminster is provided by the Orange County Transportation Authority.*

## Complete Streets

A complete streets vision is more than implementation of a state-mandated approach during a general plan update process. It is a fundamental shift in how the city will plan and design the street system – recognizing the street as a public space and ensuring that the public space serves all users of the system (elderly, children, bicycles, pedestrians, etc.) within the urban context of that system (e.g. accounting for the adjacent land uses).

The Mobility Element is consistent with and further enhances the state and federal requirements for complete streets by implementing a “complete streets” strategy. Complete streets recognize that each street within the city is unique given its geographic setting, adjacent land uses, and the desired use of that facility. As such, this element identifies a street typology appropriate for the uniqueness of the street and surrounding land uses and identifies which modes of travel (pedestrian, bicycle, vehicles, etc.) should be prioritized on that street.

While many transportation projects have historically been vehicle capacity enhancing and traffic control focused, this Mobility Element supports a new paradigm to evaluate each project and explore all potential solutions to enhance the mobility for all users of the street. Many of these projects will involve repurposing existing right-of-way rather than acquiring and constructing new right-of-way.

The City’s approach to provide complete streets recognizes that optimum service levels cannot be provided for all travel modes on all streets within the city. This is due to competing interests that arise when different travel modes mix. For example, pedestrian friendly streets typically have slow vehicle travel speeds, short-distance pedestrian crossings, and include some type of buffer between the vehicle travel way and the pedestrian walkway. However, automobile friendly streets typically have wide travel lanes, multiple turn lanes (increasing the pedestrian crossing distance), and high automobile speeds.

*As is typical for many cities in Orange County, a quarter of Westminster’s land is dedicated to roadways. This means that streets are not only a major resource for the City’s circulation, but also greatly influence the look and feel of the community.*



*Westminster supports a complete-streets approach to roadway planning.*



*As identified in the photo above, many different mobility users come together along Westminster’s street. Above, an OCTA bus, a rail line, and auto drivers move through an intersection with enhanced pedestrian and bicycle crosswalks.*

## Layered Networks Approach

“Layered networks” is an approach to mobility planning which recognizes that not all streets can provide great service levels for all modes of travel. For example, the best streets to drive on tend to be large, fast, with limited interruptions. Whereas the best streets to walk on tend to have slow vehicles, that are narrow, with buffering from the vehicle travel way. As such, layered networks recognizes that a network of streets that prioritize specific travel modes can provide a comprehensive and appropriate system within a city.

This Mobility Element identifies utilizes a layered networks approach to ensure complete streets. This approach identifies preferred travel modes (auto, pedestrian, bicycle, and/or transit) for each street typology. Non-preferred travel modes are accommodated along the street, but their service is not prioritized. It is understood that the priorities of some of these streets may shift 10 to 20 years into the future. If the desire for transit or other active modes of transportation increases, more streets could move from auto-prioritized to prioritizing other modes. The City should monitor changing community desires and consider updates/amendments to the General Plan Mobility Element to reflect future changes in priority.

*Figure 5-1* depicts the City’s layered network complete street system and identifies the City’s complete streets strategy for prioritizing modes based on street typology; a street network that prioritizes pedestrians and bicycles is shown on *Figure 5-2*, *Figure 5-3* shows the network of streets where automotive travel is prioritized, and a network of streets that prioritize transit is shown on *Figure 5-4*. As shown on the maps, it is this network of priority modes that provides a comprehensive mobility system within the City. This approach also ensures that connectivity for that mode is maintained to ensure mobility throughout the City. *Figure 5-5* provides additional detail for each roadway typology identified in the City’s layered network complete street system, including definitions, an example cross section and photo, and information on priority modes of travel. Exact street dimensions are not identified in the Mobility Element, rather, they will be adopted separately by resolution.



*Specific streets have been identified for pedestrian and bicycle priority use.*

## **Multi-Modal Levels of Service (LOS)**

Level of service (LOS) is a qualitative description of traffic flow based on several factors, such as speed, travel time, delay, and freedom to maneuver. Six levels are typically defined, ranging from LOS "A", representing completely free-flow conditions, to LOS "F", representing breakdown in flow resulting in stop-and-go conditions. LOS "E" represents operations at or near capacity, an unstable level where vehicles are operating with the minimum spacing for maintaining uniform flow.

Traditionally, transportation systems have been designed to achieve a level of service (LOS) from the perspective of the driver, not pedestrians or bicyclists. However, by the mid-2010s, cities throughout the country have designed their transportation systems to achieve levels of service for all travel modes. Some cities, such as Fort Collins, CO, San Francisco, CA, Gainesville, FL, Carlsbad, CA, Charlotte, NC, and others, have been doing this since the early 2000s; and in 2010, national guidelines were developed by the Transportation Research Board to encourage other cities to establish levels of service for all travel modes.

The California Complete Streets Act (2008) requires cities in California to plan for a balanced, multi-modal transportation system that meets the needs of all travel modes. Ideally, a comprehensive multi-modal level of service (MMLOS) methodology would be available to reflect the quality of the transportation system. However, MMLOS is still emerging at the national level and should be monitored for potential integration into the future.

Although LOS will continue to be used as a metric in the City of Westminster to show consistency with this General Plan on auto-priority streets, the City will need to monitor SB 743 and update the City's significance criteria to identify appropriate VMT thresholds for identifying impacts to the transportation system.

## **Future Operations and Street Improvements**

Most of the envisioned Westminster street system is built out. The only planned new connections include three bicycle/pedestrian corridors that are identified on *Figures 5-1 and 5-2*. These new connections include the Bolsa Chica Creek Channel, the East Garden Grove Wintersburg Channel, and the extension of a facility under I-405 along the Hoover Street Alignment.

In addition to the connectivity described above, the Mobility Element does promote reuse of the existing roadway width or minor expansion existing right-of-way (ROW) to accommodate a more complete street. This includes the designation of several multi-way boulevards and the implementation of other complete streets elements in the City, such as the Garden Grove Boulevard Cycle Track. The City has recently implemented a citywide traffic signal system upgrade effort. This effort included retiming of traffic signals, upgrading the controller and detection technology, and integration of the traffic control system to a single point traffic management center. This enables the city to monitor, manage, and adjust traffic signal timing along major corridors to improve mobility and manage vehicle flow within the city. Improved traffic signal timing also enhances the safety for drivers, improves air quality by reducing emissions and brake dust, and improves commute times.

In 2015, the Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG) also developed the Orange County Complete Streets Initiative (OCCSI) Design Handbook, which defines roadway typologies throughout Orange County. The Handbook illustrates both existing and recommended typologies, and recommended design principles and considerations for each roadway type.

Finally, OCTA manages the Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) for Orange County. This document specifically identifies streets in the County that are critical to the movement of vehicles in the County. This mobility element aims to provide maximum balance to provide mobility for all users of all ages and abilities while maintaining consistency with the County's MPAH.

### **Future Traffic Operations**

With build-out of the Land Use Element, the completed street network presented on *Figure 5-1* will have capacity constraints on arterial streets and on freeways within and adjacent to the city. The analysis of the Land Use Plan indicated that the following facilities will operate unacceptably based on policy M-1.3 in the city at build-out and will require additional improvements to operate acceptably, as described below.

**Bolsa Chica Road & Westminster Boulevard (City of Westminster).** Improvement: Add an eastbound right-turn overlap phase.

**Garden Grove Boulevard & Western Avenue (City of Westminster).** Improvement: Optimize the signal timing for anticipated traffic demand.

**Westminster Boulevard & Magnolia Avenue (City of Westminster).** Improvement: Optimize the coordinated PM signal timing for anticipated traffic volume demand.

**Garden Grove Boulevard & Goldenwest Street (Caltrans).** Improvements: Modify the eastbound approach from having one left turn lane, one shared through-left turn lane, one through lane, and one right turn lane, to having two left turn lanes, three through lanes, and one right turn lane.

**Garden Grove Boulevard & SR 22 Westbound Off-Ramp/Eagle Drive (Caltrans).** Improvement: Optimize the signal timing for anticipated traffic demand.

**Bolsa Avenue & Newland Street (County of Orange).** Improvements: Add an eastbound and westbound through lane through restriping and minor roadway widening.

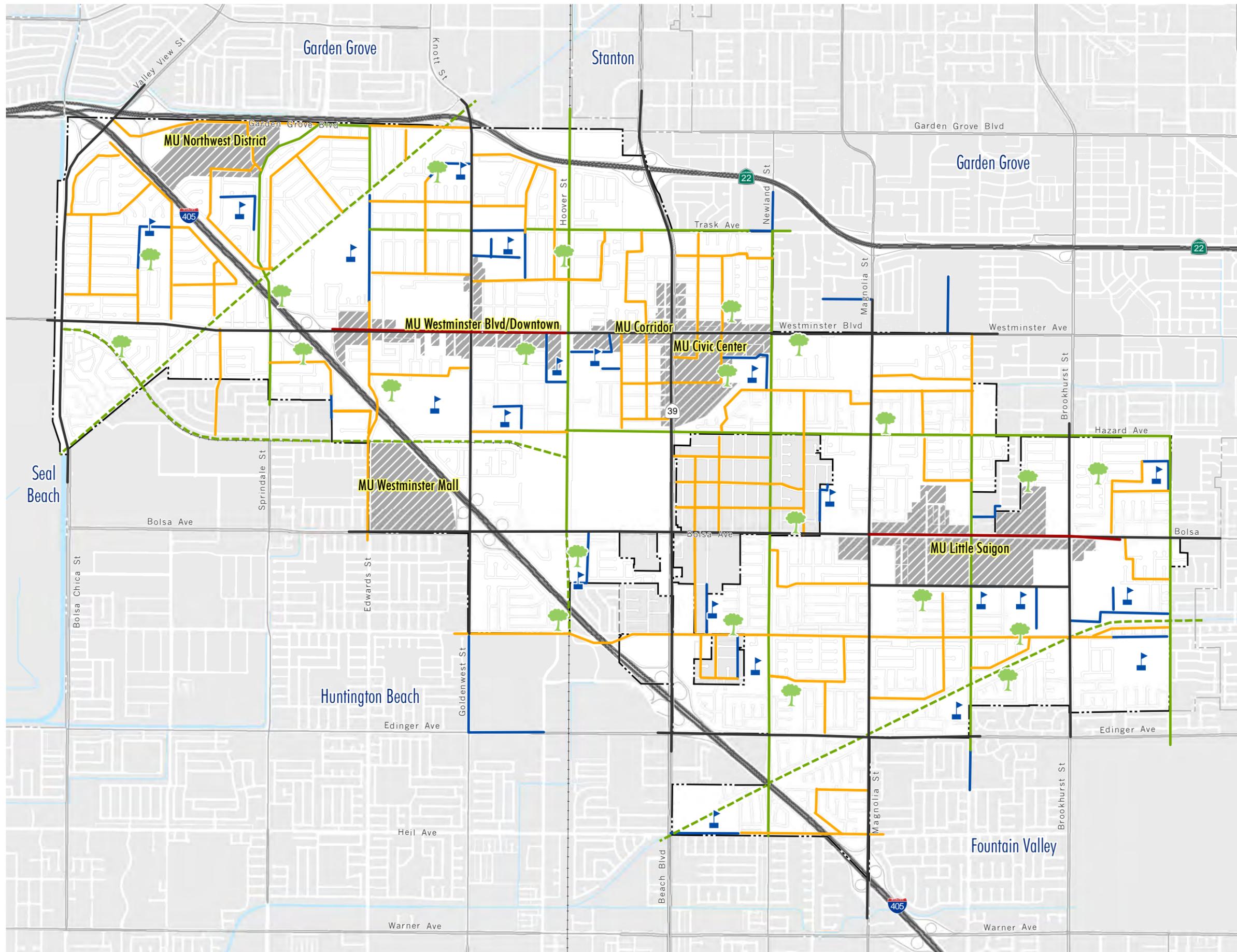
**Edinger Avenue & Newland Street (City of Huntington Beach).** Improvement: Add an eastbound and westbound through lane through restriping.

**GOAL M-1: COMPLETE STREETS**

**A safe, efficient, and accessible transportation system that serves the mobility needs of all users of all ages and abilities.**

**POLICIES**

- M-1.1 Priority Travel Modes.** Develop a comprehensive network of complete streets throughout the City, to provide connectivity for priority modes of travel based on the prioritized modes identified on Figure 5-1.
- M-1.2 Agency Coordination.** Coordinate with Caltrans, OCTA, and SCAG to implement complete streets and maintain consistency with the Orange County Master Plan of Arterial Highways, the Congestion Management Program, and the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- M-1.3 Level of Service.** Maintain level of service (LOS) D for vehicles at intersections and roadways when vehicles are considered a prioritized mode of travel (see Figure 5-1). When vehicles are not prioritized, LOS E for vehicles at intersections and roadways (operating at capacity) shall be acceptable.
- M-1.4 Multi-modal Level of Service.** Monitor SB 743 and multi-modal level of service (MMLOS) methodologies and incorporate into impact assessment as appropriate. When and if these methodologies are applied in Westminster, LOS D for all prioritized vehicle modes of travel should be maintained and LOS E should be maintained for vehicles when identified as a non-prioritized mode of travel.
- M-1.5 Mobility Impacts.** Evaluate potential mobility impacts associated with proposed new developments and require the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures.
- M-1.6 Funding.** Pursue funding for multi-modal infrastructure projects that promote complete streets, such as impact fees and local, regional, state, and federal grants.
- M-1.7 Future Improvements.** Obtain and preserve adequate right-of-way to accommodate future mobility system improvements.
- M-1.8 Residential Streets.** Design residential streets to minimize traffic volumes and/or speed, as appropriate, without compromising connectivity for emergency first responders, bicycles, and pedestrians. This could be accomplished through management and implementation of complete street strategies, short block lengths, narrow streets, and/or traffic calming measures.
- M-1.9 Traffic Calming Tools.** Use traffic-calming tools to assist in implementing complete street principles; possible tools include roundabouts, curb extensions, high visibility crosswalks, and separated bicycle infrastructure.
- M-1.10 Truck Routes.** Designate truck routes to allow the safe and efficient movement of goods for commerce and industry, minimize conflicts with preferred modes, and minimize incompatibility with other sensitive land uses in the City including residential neighborhoods.



## Mobility

Figure 5-1  
Layered Roadway Network

- Multi-Way Boulevard
- Arterial Roadway
- Freeway
- Connector Street
- Local Street
- Bicycle Corridor
- - - Multi-Use Trail (Proposed)
- School Street
- Park
- School
- Mixed-Use Area
- City of Westminister Boundary
- City of Westminister Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries

### Priority Modes of Travel

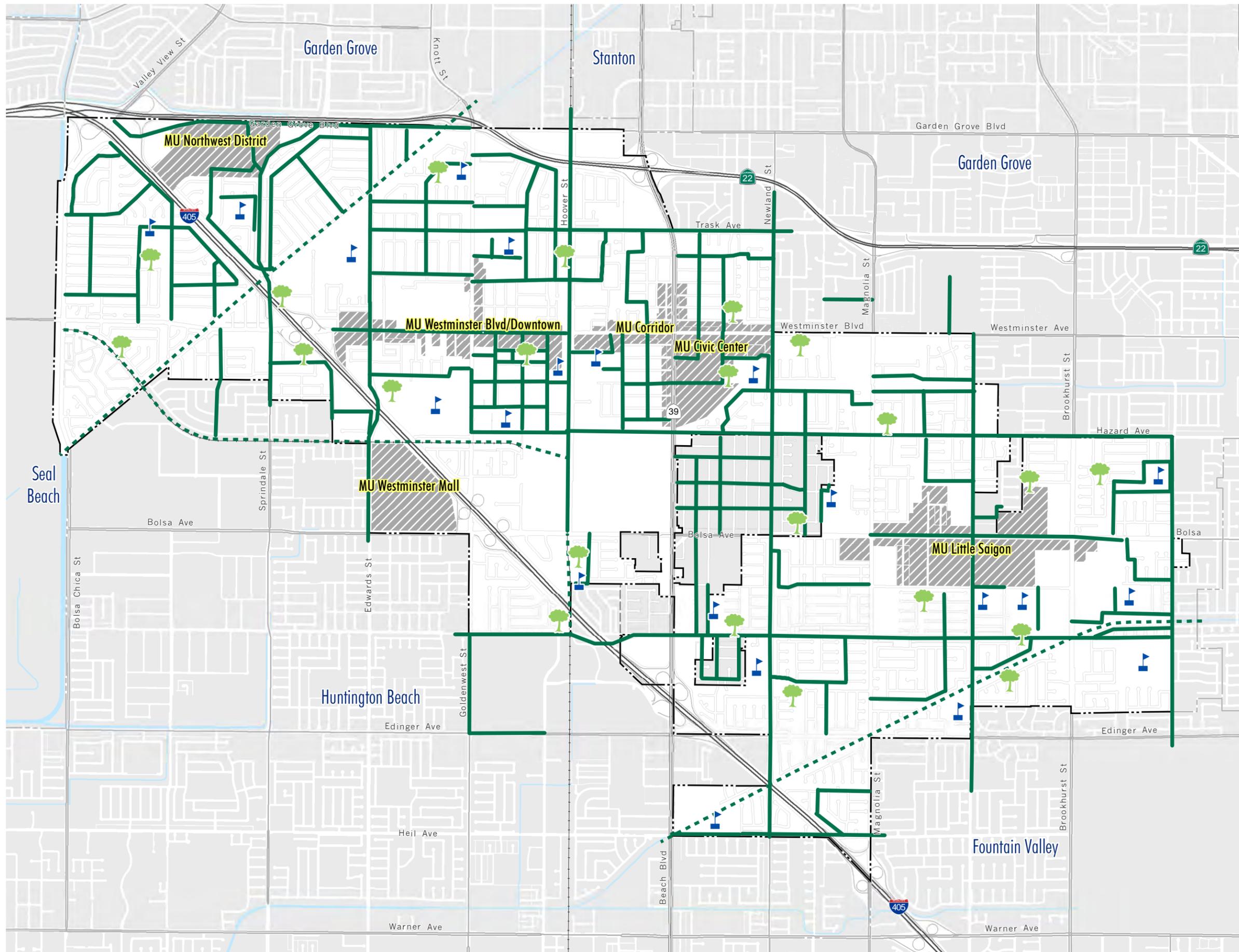
| Typology         | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|------------------|------|------|------------|---------|
| Multi-Way Blvd.  | P    | P    | P          | A       |
| Arterial         | P    | A    | A          | P       |
| Freeway          | P    | X    | X          | P       |
| Connector        | P    | P    | P          | A       |
| Local Street     | A    | P    | P          | A       |
| Bicycle Corridor | A    | P    | P          | A       |
| Multi-Use Trails | X    | P    | P          | X       |
| School Street    | A    | P    | P          | A       |

P= Priority Mode  
A= Allowable Mode  
X= Prohibited Mode



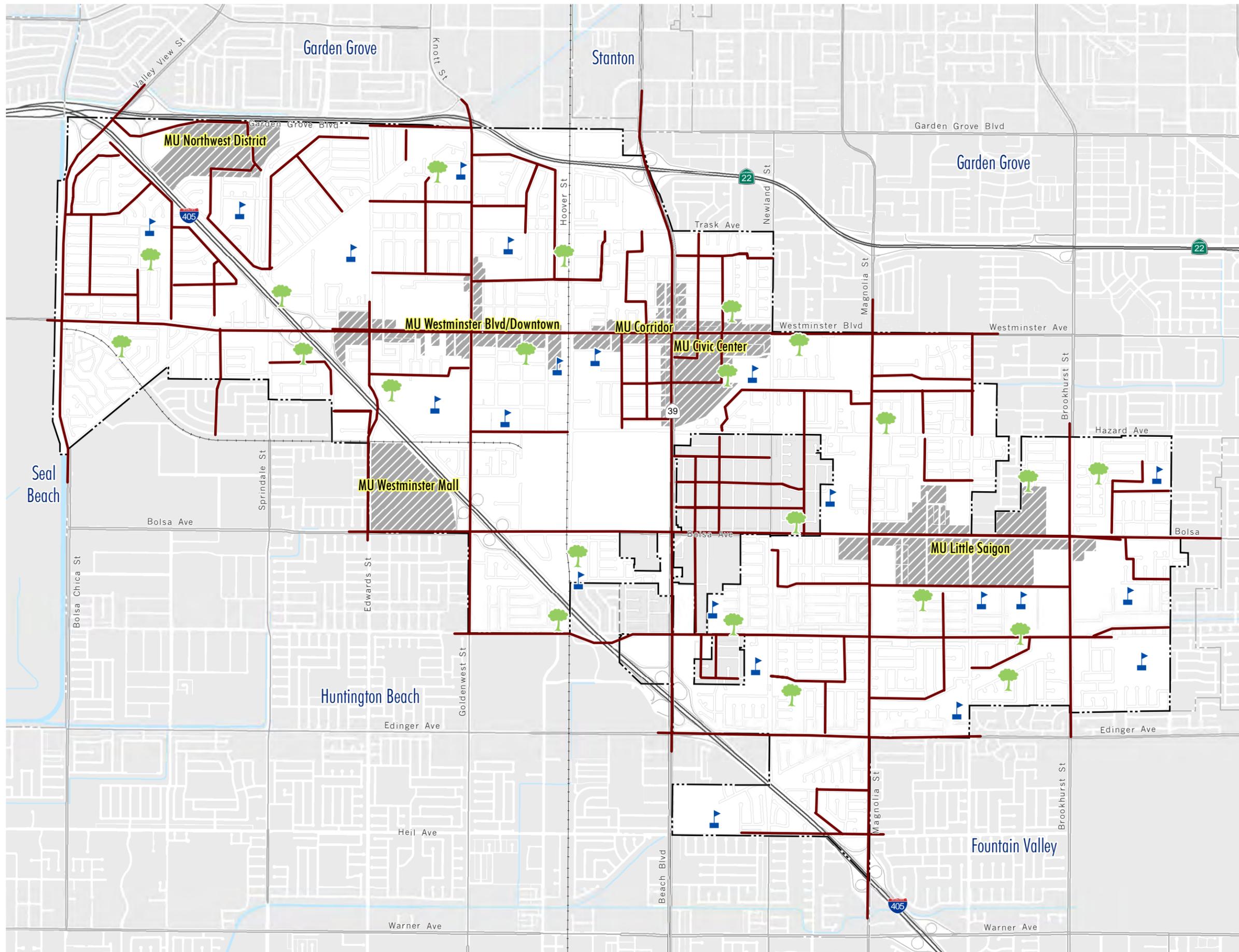
Mobility

Figure 5-2  
Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority



- Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority (Proposed)
- Park
- School
- Mixed-Use Area
- City of Westminister Boundary
- City of Westminister Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries



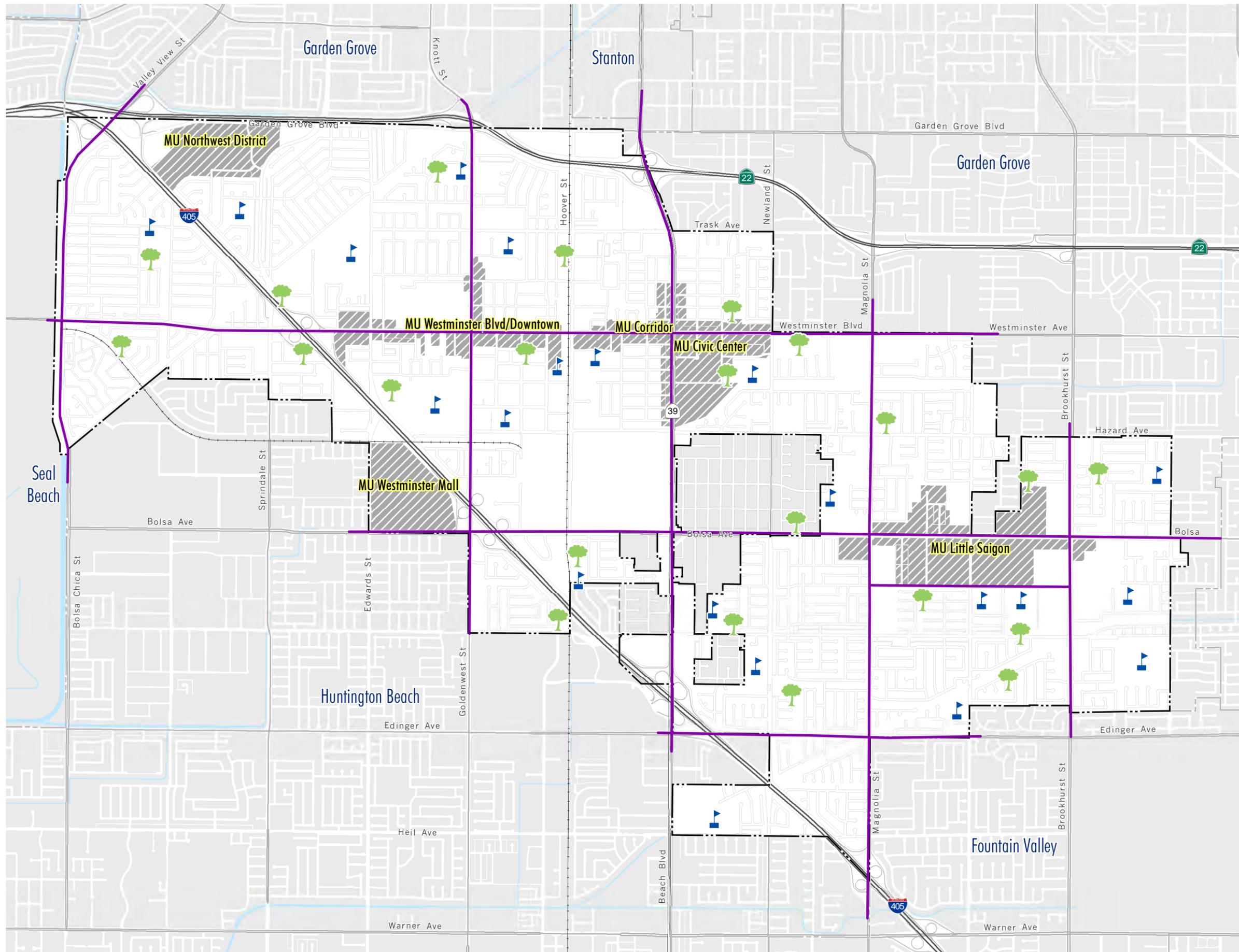


Mobility

Figure 5-3  
Automobile Priority

-  Auto Priority
-  Park
-  School
-  Mixed-Use Area
-  City of Westminister Boundary
-  City of Westminister Sphere of Influence
-  Other City Boundaries





Mobility

Figure 5-4  
Transit Priority

-  Transit Priority
-  Park
-  School
-  Mixed-Use Area
-  City of Westminister Boundary
-  City of Westminister Sphere of Influence
-  Other City Boundaries



## MULTI-WAY BOULEVARD

### Description

Multi-way Boulevards provide through travel lanes near the center of the roadway next to the median (or without a median) to serve through traffic; but local traffic is served via a local circulator roadway that is buffered (by a landscape barrier) from the through trips. The local circulator has a lower rate of speed, such that it is compatible with parking, driveway accessibility, and/ or bicycle/ pedestrian activity in the area. Wide sidewalks with street furniture and way-finding are provided adjacent to the travel way.

Portions of Westminster Boulevard and Bolsa Avenue (by Little Saigon) are designated as future multi-way boulevards. As envisioned, these will consist of a landscaped center median separating two main through lane in each direction (with some areas having an additional left-turn lane). Additional smaller medians or planters will separate one additional frontage lane in each direction intended for local traffic. Class II bike lanes or Class III “sharrows” could be incorporated on the inside frontage lanes. Finally, diagonal and/or parallel parking will be provided along both of the frontage lanes. This facility will improve vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle accessibility to these key retail areas (the Downtown and Little Saigon Areas) by removing that local circulation and connectivity from the through travel lanes. This will also de-emphasize the street as a through route.

### Priority Mode of Travel

| Typology            | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|---------------------|------|------|------------|---------|
| Multi-Way Boulevard | P    | P    | P          | A       |

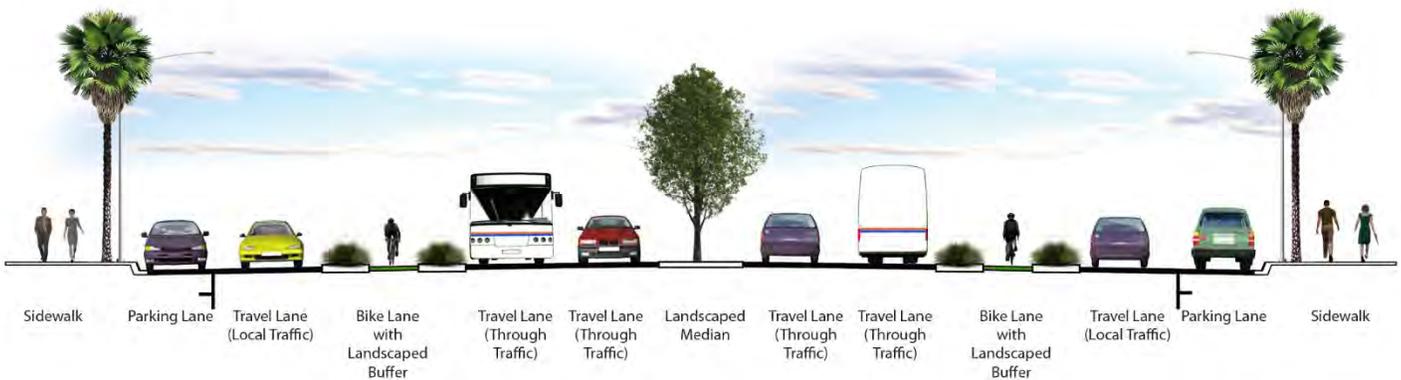
P= Priority Mode, A= Allowable Mode, X= Prohibited Mode

### Example Photo



Shattuck Avenue in Berkeley, California provides an example of a multi-way boulevard which may be appropriate for special segments of Westminster Boulevard in the Downtown area and along Bolsa Avenue in Little Saigon.

### Example Cross-Section



Note: A Shared Lane Marking, or “sharrow,” are road markings which indicate a shared lane for both bicycles and automobiles. Sharrows differ from bike lanes in that they do not include a line separating the path between vehicles and bicycles. See Figure 5-6, *Bikeway Classifications*, for illustrations of bicycle facilities.

**ARTERIAL ROADWAY**

**Description**

These facilities provide for all modes of travel, but they acknowledge that the arterial is a primary link in the City’s vehicular transportation system. Oftentimes four to six lanes are provided with raised medians and higher vehicle speeds are anticipated. Where sufficient right-of-way exists, arterial roadways may include Class II bike lanes. Key facilities include portions of Westminster Boulevard, portions of Valley View Street, Bolsa Chica Street, Westminster Boulevard, Goldenwest Street, Bolsa Avenue, Beach Boulevard, Magnolia Street, Edinger Avenue, Brookhurst Street, and Bishop Place.

**Priority Mode of Travel**

| Typology         | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|------------------|------|------|------------|---------|
| Arterial Roadway | P    | A    | A          | P       |

P= Priority Mode, A= Allowable Mode, X= Prohibited Mode

**Example Cross-Section**



**Example Photo**



Arterial roadways are tasked with moving vehicles safely and efficiently throughout the City. Landscaping and raised medians can help soften the design of this large multi-lane roadway.

## FREEWAY

### Description

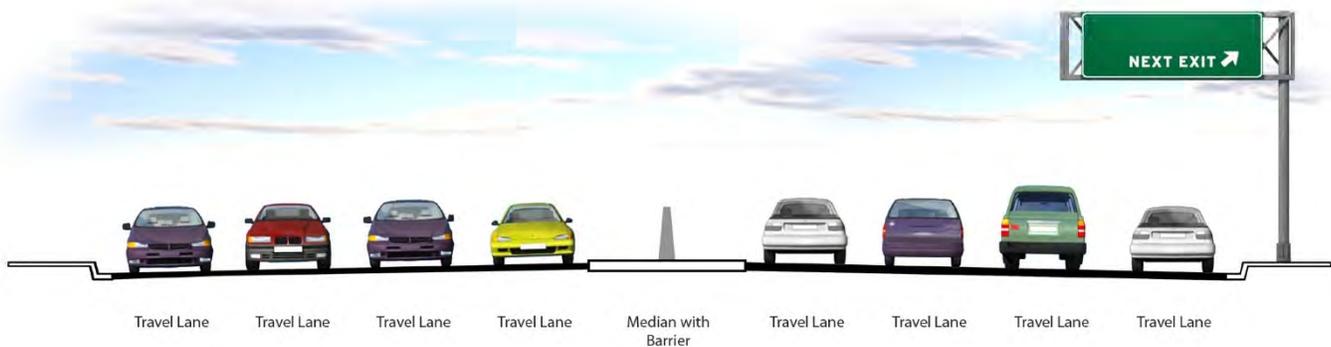
Freeways, which are under the jurisdiction of and operated by Caltrans, provide for interregional travel by automobile. They have high vehicle speeds and can provide access for transit vehicles (although automobiles are prioritized). Bicycles and pedestrians are prohibited on freeways. Freeways in Westminster include SR-22 and I-405.

### Priority Mode of Travel

| Typology | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|----------|------|------|------------|---------|
| Freeway  | P    | X    | X          | P       |

P= Priority Mode, A= Allowable Mode, X= Prohibited Mode

### Example Cross-Section



### Example Photo



Westminster is served by two major freeways, State Route 22, which runs along the City's northern boundary, and Interstate 405 (pictured above), which generally serves as the City's southern boundary. Automobiles and transit vehicles are the only appropriate modes of travel on the community's freeways.

**CONNECTOR STREET**

**Description**

These are streets that are intended to connect neighborhoods together. They should provide accessibility for bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles; however, speeds should be managed to ensure that all modes safely travel together. These corridors are specified along numerous street segments throughout the City and can substantially vary in terms of width. For example, McFadden Avenue is a four-lane roadway and would include bicycle lanes as well as raised medians. In contrast, segments such as Van Buren Street are similar to local streets with smaller right-of-ways. These narrower streets would have Class III "sharrows" as well as street furniture in some areas to encourage pedestrian activity

**Priority Mode of Travel**

| Typology         | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|------------------|------|------|------------|---------|
| Connector Street | P    | P    | P          | A       |

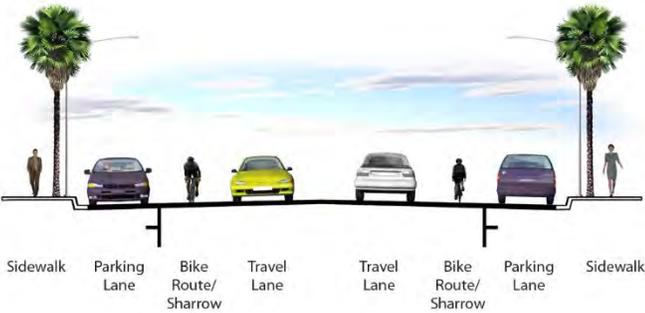
P= Priority Mode, A= Allowable Mode, X= Prohibited Mode

**Example Photo**



Collector streets connect neighborhoods and can vary in size from two-lane to four-lane roadways. Medians may be striped or raised, and multi-modal safety is a priority.

**Example Cross-Section: Small Right-of-Way**



**Example Cross-Section: Large Right-of-Way**



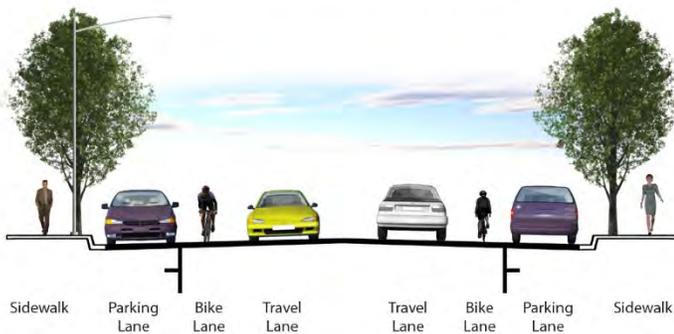
Note: A Shared Lane Marking, or "sharrow," are road markings which indicate a shared lane for both bicycles and automobiles. Sharrows differ from bike lanes in that they do not include a line separating the path between vehicles and bicycles. See Figure 5-6, Bikeway Classifications, for illustrations of bicycle facilities.

**LOCAL STREET**

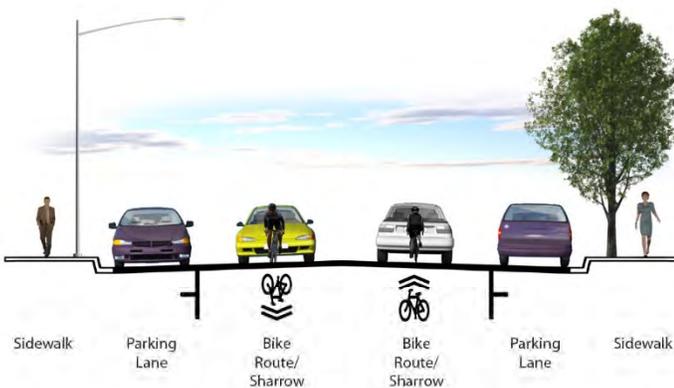
**Description**

Local streets are typically located in neighborhoods and provide access to adjacent land uses (typically housing). On-street parking is typically allowed on both sides of the street. They should be designed to accommodate automobiles, but at a slow rate of speed (typically 25 miles per hour or less). They prioritize pedestrians walking on sidewalks and bicycles typically take the lane within the roadway; Class III “sharrows” may be provided in some areas. Traffic calming attributes (such as bulb-outs, speed lumps, or other devices that minimize speeds) may be present.

**Example Cross-Section with Class II “Bike Lanes”**



**Example Cross-Section with Class III “Sharrows”**



**Priority Mode of Travel**

| Typology     | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|--------------|------|------|------------|---------|
| Local Street | A    | P    | P          | A       |

P= Priority Mode, A= Allowable Mode, X= Prohibited Mode

**Example Photos**



Local streets provide multimodal access to Westminster’s neighborhoods and can be designed as Class III bike facilities, as displayed in the photo on the right.



*Note: A Shared Lane Marking, or “sharrow,” are road markings which indicate a shared lane for both bicycles and automobiles. Sharrows differ from bike lanes in that they do not include a line separating the path between vehicles and bicycles. See Figure 5-6, Bikeway Classifications, for illustrations of bicycle facilities.*

## BICYCLE CORRIDOR

### Description

These roadways provide the main bicycle network for the City. Specifically, vehicle speeds should be managed to travel at 35 miles per hour or less and bicycle infrastructure should be maximized. This would typically include buffered bicycle lanes or separated bicycle lanes (otherwise known as a cycle track or Class IV bicycle facility) on the roadway (or, at a minimum, seven-foot bicycle lanes). Separation can be provided by plastic bollards, raised medians, and/or planters. Corridors include portions of Garden Grove Boulevard, Edwards Street, Trask Avenue, Hoover Street, Springdale Street, Hazard Avenue, Newland Street, Ward Street, and Bushard Street. Raised landscaped medians may also be included in some areas to further encourage slower speeds.

### Priority Mode of Travel

| Typology         | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|------------------|------|------|------------|---------|
| Bicycle Corridor | A    | P    | P          | A       |

P= Priority Mode, A= Allowable Mode, X= Prohibited Mode

### Example Photo



Bicycle Corridors have been identified throughout the City to create a connected network of enhanced bicycle facilities in Westminster, which may include separated bikeways. This is a photo of a bicycle corridor in Temple City.

### Example Cross-Section



*Note: Separated Bicycle Lanes, also called cycle tracks or Class IV bicycle facilities, are delineated right-of-way assigned to bicyclists that have a physical separation between them and a vehicle. See Figure 5-6, Bikeway Classifications, for illustrations of bicycle facilities.*

## MULTI-USE TRAIL

### Description

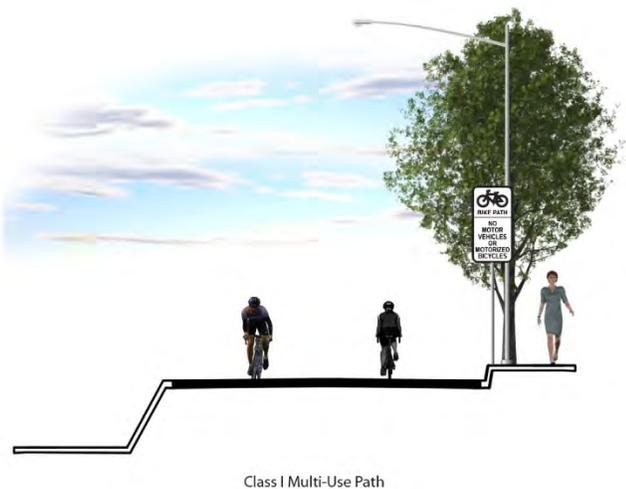
These facilities allow for pedestrians and bicycles only. They are envisioned along flood control facility channels in the City, along a potential Hoover Street extension under I-405, as well as the former U.S. Navy Railroad right-of-way running east-west between Bolsa Chica Road to Hoover Street, with a section located within the City of Huntington Beach. These facilities provide bicycles and pedestrians with their own space for travel. Some off-street pathways may be constructed with both a paved/hard surface with a separate dirt or decomposed granite surface for running/jogging activity. These pathways are also known as Class I bikeways.

### Priority Mode of Travel

| Typology        | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|-----------------|------|------|------------|---------|
| Multi-Use Trail | X    | P    | P          | X       |

P= Priority Mode, A= Allowable Mode, X= Prohibited Mode

### Example Cross-Section



### Example Photo



Off-street multi-use trails will support improved pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout Westminster.

*Note: Class I Bikeways provide a separated corridor that is not served by streets and highways and is away from the influence of parallel streets; they are for non-vehicle use only. See Figure 5-6, Bikeway Classifications, for illustrations of bicycle facilities.*

## SCHOOL STREET

### Description

These are various streets that provide accessibility to schools. Examples include portions of Goldenwest Street, Edwards Street, and Cunningham Drive. Key attributes along a school street include yellow pedestrian markings, high visibility crosswalks, and slow travel speeds. Wide sidewalks, buffered bike lanes, and raised medians (which can also serve as pedestrian refuges) would be provided to ensure that safe routes to school are provided. School streets also vary substantially in terms of width, but efforts would be made to provide similar facilities. School street priority takes priority over all other roadway typologies.

### Priority Mode of Travel

| Typology      | Auto | Bike | Pedestrian | Transit |
|---------------|------|------|------------|---------|
| School Street | A    | P    | P          | A       |

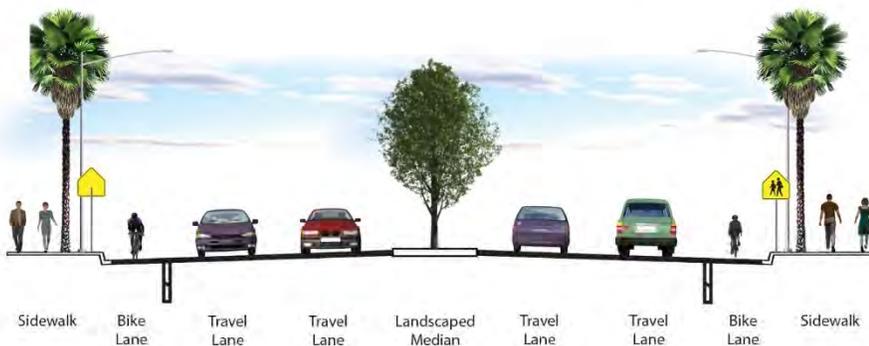
P= Priority Mode, A= Allowable Mode, X= Prohibited Mode

### Example Cross-Section with Small Right-of-Way



School streets feature special design enhancements including bright pedestrian markings, clear signage, and traffic calming measures to slow speed and make the area safe for pedestrians and bicyclists.

### Example Cross-Section with Large Right-of-Way



*Note: Class I Bikeways provide a separated corridor that is not served by streets and highways and is away from the influence of parallel streets; they are for non-vehicle use only. See Figure 5-6, Bikeway Classifications, for illustrations of bicycle facilities.*

## Active Transportation

A balanced transportation system in Westminster will provide adequate facilities for people to bicycle, walk, or take transit to their destinations. To achieve this balanced transportation system, a layered networks approach to travel has been developed.

The City of Westminster is preparing an active transportation plan (ATP) that articulates the community’s vision for developing and improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the City. Once adopted, this Plan will supersede the City’s existing Bike and Pedestrian Master Plans. Specifically, the plan will be used as a vehicle for pursuing local, state, and federal funding to implement new active transportation connections in Westminster. The ATP carries forward the goals and policies identified in the Mobility element by identifying specific strategies to address future bicycle and pedestrian needs in the City, in addition to the implementation actions identified in this General Plan.

Over time, the City envisions robust bicycle connectivity around Westminster through creation of an “east loop” (serving the neighborhoods generally east of Beach Boulevard) and “west loop” (serving the neighborhoods generally west of Beach Boulevard); the loops would come together at or near the Civic Center. Together, these loops would help link people to places throughout Westminster using active transportation facilities.

In addition to the planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the ATP outlines new educational and promotional programs aimed at pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. These programs include bicycle parking improvements, multi-modal (transit) support facilities, bicycle safety and education programs for cyclists and motorists, safe routes to schools programs, community and employer outreach programs, continued development of bikeway network maps, and bike-to-work and school day events, among others.

### Proposed Pedestrian Network

Almost all trips begin and end with walking. Therefore, the pedestrian environment affects all residents and visitors—whether driving, bicycling, or riding transit, most people are a pedestrian at some point in their journey. Adequate pedestrian infrastructure, together with land uses that promote pedestrian activities, can help increase walking as a means of transportation, recreation, as well as exercise, and can consequently provide significant health benefits to those who are able to participate.

Pedestrian facilities (i.e., sidewalks, crosswalks, trails) are a key component of a multi-modal transportation system, which should enable people of all age groups and abilities to safely walk to their destinations. Pedestrian facilities connect various land uses, like neighborhoods, schools, shopping, employment, transit stations, community services, and recreation. Areas that are particularly attractive to pedestrians include Little Saigon, parks, the Civic Center, and downtown, which will offer a pedestrian friendly environment and concentration of shopping, dining and entertainment uses.



*On- and off-street bicycle facilities are envisioned to connect residents to schools, parks, and other key destinations throughout the community.*



*Key roadways that prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists over auto users include: Hoover Street, Newland Street, Bushard Street, Trask Avenue, and Hazard Avenue.*



A Shared Lane Marking, or “sharrow,” are road markings which indicate a shared lane for both bicycles and automobiles. Sharrows differ from bike lanes in that they do not include a line separating the path between vehicles and bicycles.

## Proposed Bicycle Network

Westminster acknowledges that a comprehensive, safe, and well-maintained bikeway network with supporting facilities has multiple benefits. It can help to increase the mode share for bicycling. Reducing the number of short vehicle trips by shifting those trips to bicycling helps improve circulation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contributes to a healthier lifestyle. A comprehensive bicycle network can also promote intermodal connectivity to transit.

On-street bikeways provide direct routes for experienced cyclists comfortable with riding on relatively high vehicle volume and speed streets. New cyclists may be encouraged to use these on-street bikeways by designing the bikeways to increase the comfort of less experienced riders, narrowing travel lanes to reduce vehicle travel speeds, implementing traffic calming and road diets, and by promoting land use patterns that decrease distances between destinations. In addition to incorporating additional routes into the bikeway network, clear directional/way-finding signage and secure bicycle parking at schools, shopping centers, civic areas, employment centers and transit stops will encourage more people to ride bicycles and enhance the level of comfort for all.

### Bicycle Facility Classification System

Caltrans has defined four bikeway facility types. Three are presented in Chapter 1000 of the Highway Design Manual while the fourth is in the process of being implemented into the Highway Design Manual. These facility types are described below, presented in *Figure 5.3, Bikeway Classifications*, and will be discussed in further detail in the City’s Active Transportation Plan.

**Class I Bike Path.** Provides a separated corridor that is not served by streets and highways and is away from the influence of parallel streets. Class I bikeways are for non-vehicle use only with opportunities for direct access and recreational benefits, right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians, and cross flow conflicts are minimized.

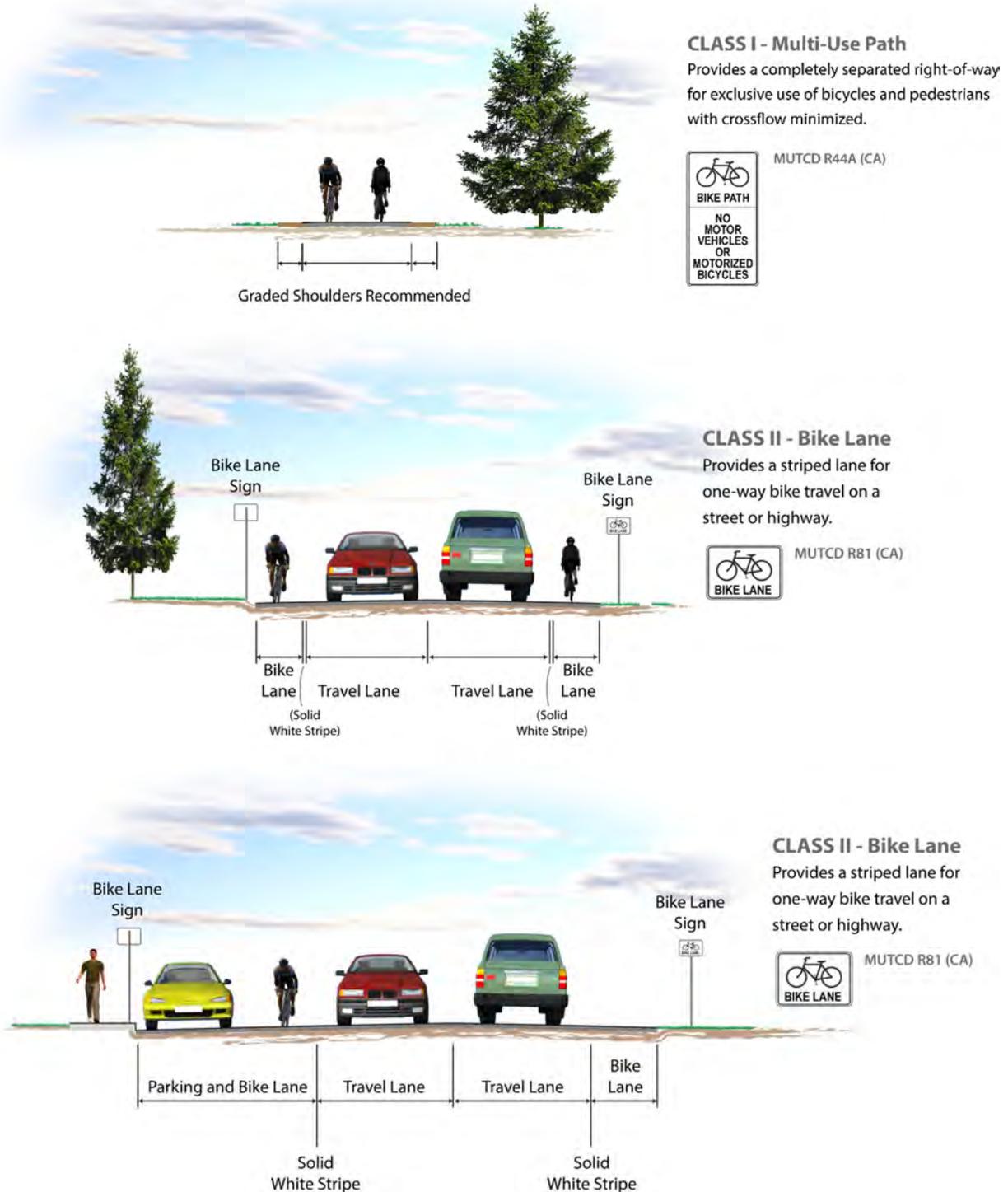
**Class II Bike Lane.** Provides a delineated right-of-way assigned to bicyclists to enable more predictable movements, establishing specific lines of demarcation between areas reserved for bicycles and lanes to be occupied by motor vehicles.

**Class III Bike Route.** Shared facility that serves either continuity to other bicycle facilities or designates preferred routes through high demand corridors.

**Class IV Separated Bikeway or Cycle Track.** Provides delineated right-of-way assigned to bicyclists that have a physical separation between them and a vehicle. This separation can include parked vehicles, bollards, curbs, or any other physical device that provides this separation. This “new” bicycle classification was defined in AB 1193 and amended the streets and highways code to allow for this treatment. Additionally, Caltrans issued Design Information Bulletin 89 (DIB-89) which establishes design guidance for Class IV facilities.

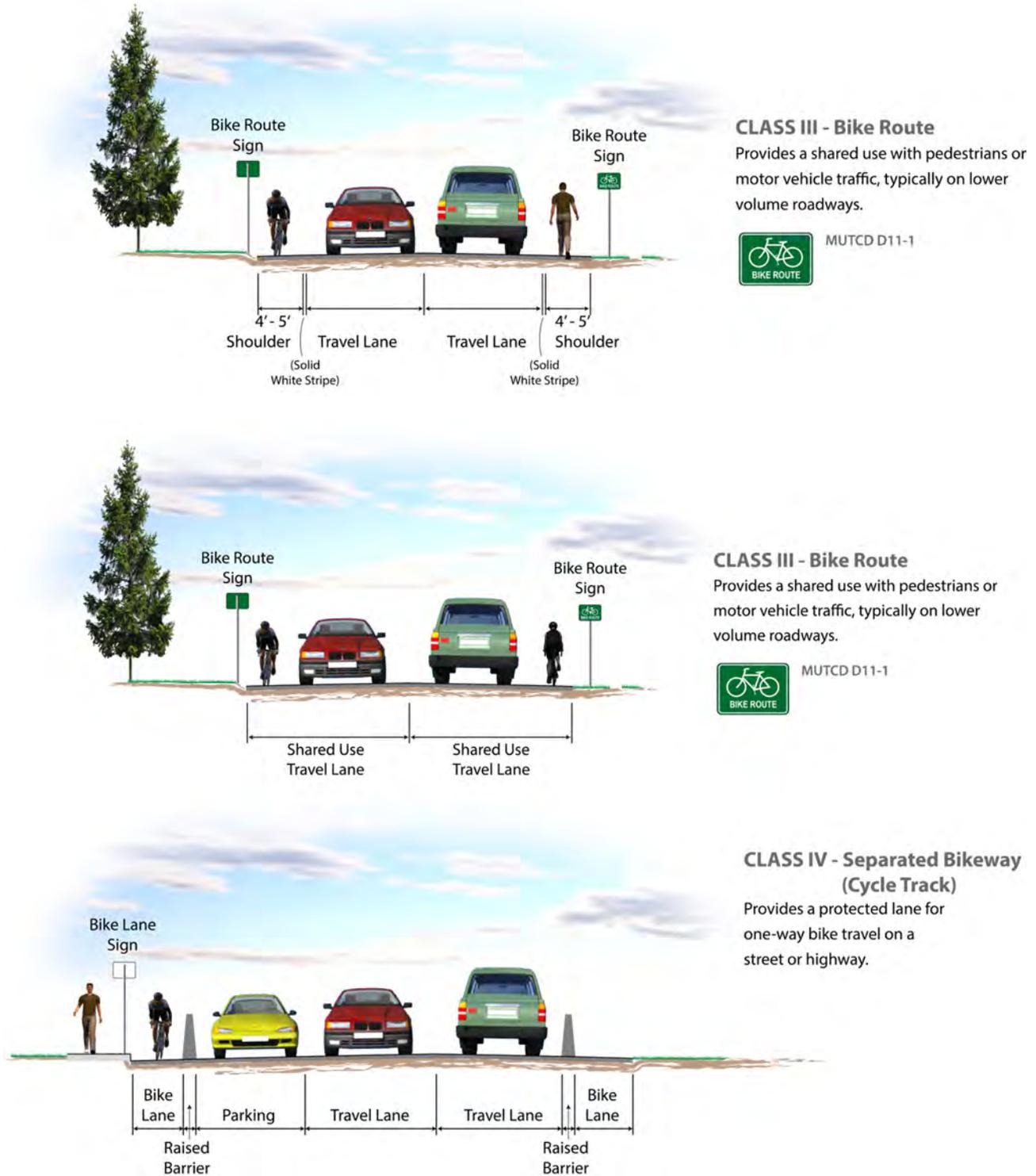
In addition to the four facility types described above, a number of local streets help complete the bicycle network. These streets typically do not have a bikeway designation; however, the entire street systems may be fully adequate for safe and efficient bicycle travel, where signing and pavement marking for bicycle use may be unnecessary. These are most commonly found along local streets where vehicle speeds are relatively low, which enables bicycle travel to be accommodated with vehicle travel.

**Figure 5-6 Bikeway Classifications**





**Figure 5-6 Bikeway Classifications**



## GOAL M-2: ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

**A first rate network of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that supports the City's complete street goals and provides safe, efficient, and accessible connectivity for active modes of travel.**

### POLICIES

- M-2.1 Facility Enhancement.** Enhance the bike and pedestrian priority facilities as identified in *Figure 5-2* as part of development, private grants, signing of shared routes, maintenance activities, etc. consistent with the City's ATP.
- M-2.2 Street Retrofits.** As streets are improved or rehabilitated, incorporate the pedestrian and bicycle facilities to provide a complete street, consistent with the City's roadway design standards.
- M-2.3 Development Projects.** Require the provision of adequate bicycle and pedestrian access for new development projects through the site plan review process and update the development standards to include this provision.
- M-2.4 Agency Cooperation.** Work with Caltrans to provide improved bicycle and pedestrian crossings of freeways in the City and work with the County and other agencies to consider the merits of implementing bicycle paths along drainage channels and utility rights-of-way as shown on *Figure 5-6* and in the City's ATP
- M-2.5 Safe Routes to School.** Encourage the use of bicycles and walking as the preferred transportation mode for trips to and from elementary, middle, and high schools by implementing the School Street typology identified in *Figure 5-5*, and work with local schools to study a "Safe Route to School" Program and a bike safety education program.
- M-2.6 Accessibility Standards.** Design bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in accordance with federal, state, and local design standards, including ADA accessibility standards. Ensure bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is accessible for use by people of all abilities.
- M-2.7 Regional Bike Routes.** Continue coordination of bicycle route planning and implementation with adjacent jurisdictions and regional agencies such as the OCTA Districts 1 and District 2 Bikeways Strategy, and other applicable regional planning documents.
- M-2.8 Intersection and Signal Enhancements.** Enhance pedestrian and bicycle crossing efficiency and safety, including timing of signals, crosswalks, and intersection design features. Provide signal timing that allows intersection crossing at a safe pace.
- M-2.9 Construction Activities.** Protect bicyclist and pedestrian travel paths during public and private sector construction activities and provide safe and accessible alternate routes where necessary.

## Proposed Transit Network

Although the basic regional transit backbone infrastructure has been implemented within the city (discussed earlier in this section), one of the biggest deterrents to transit use is the “first mile/last mile” portion of the transit trip, which refers to the method and ability for transit users to actually connect to their ultimate destination once they get off of the primary transit mode. This concept is also referred to as “door-to-door” transit service, which addresses transit in a more comprehensive manner than “stop-to-stop.” This Mobility element promotes the improvement of the “first mile/last mile”/“door-to-door” transit service through development incentives that incorporate and encourage shuttles and other connectivity to and from the transit infrastructure system. Opportunities exist for new local circulators that could link the city; key destinations include Little Saigon, Westminster Mall, Downtown, and the Civic Center. Additionally, improved bicycle facilities can also help close the first mile/last mile gap, as described in the previous section on bicycle facilities. The Westminster community has public bus, express bus service, paratransit, and vanpooling options available to them. These four services are described in detail below.

### Public Bus

Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) currently offers 66 routes county-wide throughout the week. These routes have set schedules offering service throughout the day to multiple communities. Existing bus routes serving Westminster include Route 25 (serving trips between Fullerton and Huntington Beach), Route 29 (serving trips between La Habra and Huntington Beach), Route 33 (serving trips between Fullerton and Huntington Beach), Route 60 (serving trips between Long Beach and Tustin), Route 64 (serving trips between Huntington Beach and Tustin), and Bravo! Route 560 (serving trips between Long Beach and Santa Ana). This Mobility Element strives to enhance this service to provide better mobility for the City’s residences by providing better linkages for bicycles and pedestrians to bus stations in the City.

### Paratransit

A demand-based door-to-door service available primarily for Senior and Disabled passengers at a discounted rate, but can be expanded to all passengers at a premium rate. OCTA currently operates its ACCESS shared-ride service for passengers meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) eligibility criteria.

### Express Bus Service

Bus service that is intended to run faster than normal bus services between the same two commuter points. Express buses operate on a faster schedule by not making as many stops as normal bus services and often taking quicker routes, such as along freeways. Westminster residents are currently served by two OCTA express bus routes: Route 211 (serving trips between Seal Beach and Irvine) and Route 701 (serving trips between Huntington Beach and Los Angeles).

### Vanpooling

Larger scale carpooling with concurrent savings in fuel and vehicle operating costs. Vehicles may be provided by individuals, by various public and private support programs, by an element of government, or a by an employer. The key concept is that people share the ride from home or a common meeting location and travel together to a common destination or work center. Westminster residents have the option of signing up for existing vanpools or starting new ones through OCTA’s website.



*OCTA bus service connects Westminster to the region.*

**GOAL M-3: TRANSIT**

**A comprehensive and well-connected transit system that expands transportation choices, reduces single-occupancy vehicle trips and related greenhouse gas emissions, and improves air quality.**

**POLICIES**

- M-3.1 Local Service.** Pursue more comprehensive transit services within the City, such as a potential circulator connecting key destinations within the City such as Little Saigon, the Civic Center, the Downtown, and Westminster Mall.
- M-3.2 Regional Service.** Work with OCTA, AMTRAK, Metrolink, SCAG, and private businesses as necessary to expand and improve the public transit service within and adjacent to the City.
- M-3.3 First-Mile/Last-Mile.** Encourage convenient and safe transit, pedestrian, and bicycle linkages to/from transit service to provide better first-mile/last-mile connectivity.
- M-3.4 Park-Ride Lots.** Work to expand park-and-ride facilities by partnering with uses that generate minimal parking demand during typical weekdays (such as assembly uses).
- M-3.5 Bus Stops.** Partner with regional transit operators to provide attractive and convenient bus stops, including shade/weather protection, seats, transit information, and bus shelters as appropriate.
- M-3.6 Funding.** Pursue Federal, State, and OCTA funding programs which may benefit the transit needs of the City, including funds for bus transit shelters, signing, lighting, bike parking facilities, and on-bus bike racks, and advertising to encourage bus ridership
- M-3.7 Fixed-Transit Guideway.** Encourage the possibility of developing comprehensive fixed transit guideways in the City of Westminster.

## Parking

Parking is important to the success of any area. Inadequate parking means that businesses and residents suffer. Too much parking underutilizes valuable land; promotes lower density development; discourages using other forms of transportation (such as public transit); spreads out land uses, thereby reinforcing the use of the automobile. Additionally, too much parking also requires more driveways for site access, introducing conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. Inflexible parking requirements impact the ability to rejuvenate/repurpose older buildings and revitalize activity centers that can be better served and connected by enhancing facilities and amenities for bicyclists and pedestrians. Therefore, it is important to “right size” and manage parking such that there is enough to support the needs generated by the use, but not so much that it wastes land and impairs other ways of getting around.

The City’s Municipal Code provides standards for parking facilities based on land use type within the City. The Code also identifies bicycle parking requirements and allows parking reductions due to transit proximity and shared parking between land uses. The City should expand opportunities that promote “right sizing” of parking facilities, by applying the following techniques:

**Park once.** A strategy in destination districts to enable visitors to “park once” and visit a series of destinations. Park once strategies work well in areas like the Civic Center, Downtown, and Little Saigon areas that are well connected by pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The creation of well-signed centralized parking areas supports this strategy.

**Shared parking.** Continue to allow uses that have different parking demands at different times of the day to share the same parking facilities. This is an effective way to minimize pavement, allow denser land use, provide for more landscaping, and provide improved walkability within a mixed use area. The best example of shared parking is an office building and an apartment building as office’s peak parking demand occurs at 10:00 a.m. and apartment’s peak parking demand occurs at 11:00 p.m.

**Unbundled parking.** Rather than provide free guaranteed parking, “unbundle” the parking from the development and require residents and/or employees to pay for use of a parking space. Renting or selling parking spaces separately, rather than automatically including them with building space is not only more equitable, but can also reduce the total amount of parking required for the building.

**In-lieu parking fees.** Develop strategies in appropriate areas that allow developers to contribute fees toward the development of a common parking facility in lieu of providing on-site parking. This works best in concentrated commercial areas, and assists in paying for unified structured parking and provides developers an opportunity to increase density on their parcels.

**Parking management strategies.** Allow business districts or businesses to manage high demand parking locations and destinations through a number of different strategies including demand pricing, time restrictions, valet parking, and other techniques.



*In Westminster’s mixed-use areas and at other shopping centers, visitors should be encouraged to park once.*

**Private partnerships.** The city, business owners, and developers collaborate to provide both private and public parking opportunities. Instances where this works well include parcels owned by the City, or private underutilized parking lots where a private entity develops, manages, and enforces parking in these public lots.

**Parking locator signs.** Electronic monitoring devices that identify the available parking in a given facility and utilize changeable message signs to assist travelers in identifying available parking locations. This may require modifications to the City’s Zoning Ordinance to be implemented in some areas of the city.

**Reduced parking standards.** Reduce parking standards in areas that are well served by transit, provide shuttle accessibility, provide parking cash out programs (employers pay employees to not drive a single occupancy vehicle to work), or provide other programs that will reduce parking demand.

**Biking equals business program/ Bicycle corrals in-lieu of vehicle parking.** Businesses in certain districts provide bicycle parking or corrals and provide incentives to encourage their patrons and employees to ride rather than drive. In some cases, they may reduce required onsite parking for vehicles if they provide a corral that accommodates more people

**Transit equals business program.** Businesses provide their customers and employees incentives to encourage them to use transit rather than drive.

Although there are additional parking strategies that are available and may become available in the future, most of the strategies work best in smart growth/mixed use development areas and will be necessary to accomplish the goals and visions identified in the General Plan and this Mobility Element.

**GOAL M-4: PARKING**  
**Adequate availability of parking that meets the needs of people who live, work, and visit Westminster.**

**POLICIES**

- M-4.1 Off-Street Parking.** Require new developments to provide sufficient off-street parking to reduce on-street parking congestion and increase both auto and pedestrian safety, and encourage new development to provide electric vehicle charging stations and preferential parking for carpools, vanpools, and alternative fuel vehicles.
- M-4.2 Off-Street Parking Alternatives.** Allow developers to meet their minimum parking requirements via shared parking techniques which can leverage unused parking with nearby parcels, in-lieu fees, or on-street parking.
- M-4.3 Managed Parking Supply.** Manage parking supply through implementation of time limits, pay parking, or permits, while ensuring the preservation of economic development goals.
- M-4.4 Funding for Parking.** Pursue the development of additional parking facilities in high-demand areas such as Little Saigon and park and recreation facilities.

## Transportation Management

This Mobility Element also supports and promotes Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and transportation systems management (TSM) techniques.

### Demand Management

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) consists of programs and policies to reduce the demand for the single occupant automobile. Common techniques include carpool programs, car-sharing and bike-sharing programs, flexible work hours, telecommute provisions, shuttle services to nearby transit stations, employee transit subsidies (e.g. employers will subsidize bus or rail tickets), installation of bicycle facilities (lockers, racks, lanes, showers at employment areas, etc.), or other measures that would reduce the demand to drive. TDM is critical for the city to build-out without expanding the transportation infrastructure beyond what is envisioned in this Mobility Element. Additionally, as previously described, TDM is a major component in improving the effectiveness of transit as it can assist in serving the “first mile/last mile” component of a transit trip.

One key component to improving transit use is improving the “first mile/last mile” experience for transit users. This typically includes end of trip facilities (bike lockers and racks, showers, changing rooms, etc.) and better connectivity from the transit stop to the ultimate destination via bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, local transit circulators, shuttles, etc.

Westminster’s future transit effectiveness will be dependent on major employers assisting with providing some of these “first mile/last mile” facilities through transportation demand management (TDM) measures. TDM is envisioned to include potential shuttle circulators from transit stations to major employers and destinations, showers and changing rooms at those locations, and a host of other typical TDM techniques that would support transit usage and the connection to the ultimate destination. This Mobility Element also supports TDM through potential incentives (such as reduced parking standards for TDM implementation) to further support transit access to these destinations (NCHRP Report 548-A).

### Transportation Systems Management

The City has also implemented a state-of-the-practice Transportation System Management (TSM) system. This system integrates traffic signals in the city to a single access point, allowing city staff to monitor and update signal timings to improve safety and mobility for all users in the city. This Mobility Element supports further implementation of this program and use of other technologies that become available, which have the ability to improve mobility for all users of the city’s transportation system. TSM measures include, but are not limited to: improving design standards (e.g. adjusting design standards to reduce pedestrian crossing distances to promote pedestrian use while allocating more green time toward high demand vehicle movements), upgrading and coordination of traffic control devices, intelligent transportation systems (ITS) (e.g. “smart” systems that manage the system better, such as signal coordination, driver information signs, or other technologies that allow more efficient use of the transportation system), controlling on-street parking, and use of sophisticated electronic control methods to supervise the flow of traffic.



*Dedicated carpool parking spaces and the promotion of ride-share programs can help manage the demand for single occupant automobiles.*

## **GOAL M-5: TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT**

**An efficient and cost effective transportation system that reduces use of single-occupant vehicles.**

### **POLICIES**

- M-5.1 Transportation Demand Management.** Utilize Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures throughout the City, where appropriate, to discourage the single-occupant vehicle, particularly during the peak hours.
- M-5.2 Transportation System Management.** Utilize Transportation System Management (TSM) measures throughout the City to ensure that the City's circulation system is as efficient and cost effective as possible and reflect the desire of the City to implement improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

### **Related Plans, Programs, and Legislation**

The Mobility element supports and implements several state and local laws and plans.

#### ***Assembly Bill (AB) 32***

The Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) of 2006 was signed into law on September 27, 2006. This was a state commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) statewide with specific reduction targets identified in the state law. This bill requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. On January 1, 2012 the greenhouse gas rules and market mechanisms adopted by CARB took effect. CARB recognizes cities as “essential partners” in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The City of Westminster will, like many other cities, voluntarily strive to comply with AB 32 and implement greenhouse gas reduction strategies. ARB has developed a Local Government Toolkit with guidance for GHG reduction strategies such as improving transit, developing bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure (new facilities, linkages, lanes, etc.), increasing city fleet vehicle efficiency, and other strategies. Implementing these strategies can help facilitate a reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by providing realistic alternatives to automobile trips, thereby resulting in a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles.

#### ***Senate Bill (SB) 375***

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375) of 2008, also known as the California Anti-Sprawl Bill, was signed into law on September 30, 2008. The SB 375 regulation provides incentives for cities and developers to bring housing and jobs closer together and to improve public transit. The goal behind SB 375 is to reduce automobile commuting trips and thus help meet the statewide targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions set by AB 32. The legislation required Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to look at the interface between land use and transportation; it also requires MPOs to develop strategies to reduce vehicle miles of travel (VMT), which is a precursor to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

### ***Senate Bill (SB) 743***

SB 743 was signed into law on September 27, 2013. This legislation directed the State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to identify an alternative metric (other than automobile level of service (LOS) to be used for identifying transportation impacts as part of CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act). The purpose of SB 743 is to balance the needs of congestion management, infill development, public health, greenhouse gas reductions, and other goals. OPR has developed a set of draft guidelines to implement SB 743 and have identified vehicles miles of travel (VMT) as the most appropriate metric for CEQA assessment which would replace level of service. Once the guidelines are approved by the Natural Resources Agency (likely late in 2016) the City of Westminster will have two years to update their CEQA guidelines to develop significance criteria consistent with the intent of SB 743 (e.g. a VMT transportation metric).

### ***Assembly Bill (AB) 1358 (California Complete Streets Act)***

In 2008, the State of California passed Assembly Bill (AB) 1358, the California Complete Streets Act. This bill requires that all circulation elements developed after January 1, 2011 include a complete streets approach that balances the needs of all users of the street, including motorists, pedestrians, bicycles, children, persons with disabilities, seniors, movers of commercial goods, and users of public transportation. This Mobility Element focuses on the need to provide complete streets throughout the community and is the core focus of this element.

### ***County of Orange Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH)***

The *County of Orange Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH)* forms part of the Orange County General Plan and designates the arterial system in the Mobility Element of the General Plan. Defined according to specific arterial functional classifications, the MPAH serves to define the intended future roadway system for the County. Cities within the County are expected to achieve consistency with the MPAH in individual General Plan circulation elements. The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) does tie some local funding to MPAH consistency; as such, it is important to maintain consistency with the MPAH. If changes to the MPAH are contemplated by a local agency, OCTA does have a process to undertake to complete assessment and obtain approval from OCTA.

### ***Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)***

The Orange County Transportation Authority is the public sector transportation planning body and mass transit service provider for Orange County, CA. The OCTA is responsible for overseeing and operating 77 bus lines, the Countywide Master Highway Plan, and a proposed streetcar line (the OC Streetcar).

### ***Measure M***

Measure M (voted into effect in 1990) authorized a half-cent retail sales tax increase for the duration of 20 years throughout Orange County to generate revenue to use on local and regional transportation improvements and maintenance projects. Although Measure M expired in 2011, a November 2006 ballot measure renewed the program (now known as M2) through 2031. M2 extends the requirements of Measure M, without increasing sales taxes, to fund freeway, street, transit, and environmental projects identified in a

Transportation Investment Plan considered by voters in tandem with the renewal measure.

Most M2 project have already been programed by OCTA, who administers the program. These projects are all reflected in the Regional Transportation Plan and are consistent with this Mobility Element.

### ***Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)***

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a long-range transportation plan developed and updated by SCAG every four years. The RTP identifies regional transportation strategies to address regional mobility needs using growth forecasts and economic projections over a 20-year period. The Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) is a newly required element of the RTP which integrates land use and transportation strategies to achieve California Air Resources Board (CARB) emissions reduction targets. In May of 2016, the Regional Council of SCAG adopted the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS: A Plan for Mobility, Accessibility, Sustainability and a High Quality of Life. The 2016–2040 RTP/SCS provides a blueprint for improving quality of life for Southern California residents by providing more choices

### ***Transportation Impact Fees***

The Mobility Element influences the City's Transportation Impact Fee (TIF). The TIF identifies the fair share future development will need to pay for improving transportation facilities to accommodate new users. The City will also need to seek funding to maintain, repair, or augment existing roadway facilities and, correspondingly, will need to ensure that the transportation facilities identified in this Mobility element are feasible from a funding perspective.

# 6

## PARKS AND RECREATION

### Introduction to Parks and Recreation

Westminster’s high-quality parks and recreational facilities and services are a source of pride for the community because they provide cultural, recreational, social, and educational opportunities for people of all ages, incomes, and abilities. Parks and recreational spaces and facilities play a pivotal role in the overall health and livability of the Westminster community. Well-designed, accessible, and well-maintained facilities can:

- » Help shape neighborhood identity
- » Provide a place of relaxation and reprieve from urban environments
- » Help to encourage physical exercise and healthy lifestyles
- » Provide a place for gathering and celebration
- » Increase home values and attract high-quality residents and workers

The Parks and Recreation element provides policy direction for the provision of parks, recreational facilities, and community programs throughout the City. The goals and policies defined in this element promote the maintenance and development of a high quality parks and provision of recreational programming that meets the physical, mental, and social needs of all Westminster residents and their varying life stages and lifestyles.

Westminster’s Parks and Recreation element serves as the “open space” element required by the California Government Code. The open space element is required to ensure that “cities and counties recognize that open space land is a limited and valuable resource which must be conserved whenever possible” (California Government Code [CGC] § 65562[a]; see also CGC §§ 65561 and 65302[e]). This Parks and Recreation element meets state requirements for an open space element by providing policy direction for the Westminster parks system and recreational program development. The goals and policies emphasize the vital role parks and recreation programs play in economic development, land use, housing, community health, infrastructure, and transportation goals.

#### In this Element...

- » Westminster Park System
- » Planning for Future Park Needs
- » Management of Park and Recreational Facilities
- » Recreational Programs and Events



*The Splash Pad at Sigler Park is one of the community’s most popular recreation facilities.*

The Parks and Recreation element is supported by and consistent with the other elements of this General Plan, including Land Use (which designates land for open space), Community Design (which identifies parks as key components of the community structure), and Mobility (describes multimodal access and identifies linkages to Westminster's parks and recreational facilities).

### Organization of Element

Following a brief overview of Westminster's park facilities and recreation programs, the goals and policies of this element are organized around three topics.

- » **Facility Planning.** Discusses park acreage, facility location, facility accessibility, and amenities required to meet community needs.
- » **Management of Park and Recreation Facilities.** Details the goals and policies that concern the proper development, management, and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.
- » **Recreation Programs.** Highlights the recreational programs and special events that are available to Westminster youth, adults, and seniors.

The following sections provide context for each topic addressed in this element, followed by goals and policies to achieve the General Plan vision for parks and recreation in Westminster.

### Park and Recreation Facilities Overview

Westminster's park and recreational facilities draw residents and visitors to attend community events, play sports, or simply enjoy the outdoors. More than a dozen parks, special-use facilities, and joint-use facilities offer opportunities for passive and active recreation. The City's existing park facilities, park planning policies, and strategies for management of the park and recreational system are described in the sections below.

### Westminster Park System

The General Plan identifies 121 acres for parks and open space, which includes facilities existing in 2016 and new facilities identified for the City, such as along the City's decommissioned rail lines (see the Land Use element for more information related to the Parks and Open Space land use designation). In addition to those areas, Westminster is home to numerous schools with on-site recreational facilities that can help serve the needs of the Westminster community (note that school sites are not included in the parks and open space inventory).

In 2016, Westminster residents can enjoy the facilities at 24 parks throughout the community, ranging in size from Oasis Park at 0.25 acre to the 12-acre Russell C. Paris Park. These facilities offer a range of amenities, including basketball courts, softball fields, picnic tables, barbecue pits, and children's jungle gyms. The newly added Sigler Park Splash Pad has become an incredibly popular amenity for families to enjoy during the warm summer days. *Figure 6-1, Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities*, illustrates the amenities available to the community.

Westminster desires to maintain its existing facilities and create more developed parkland for the community in a manner that helps define existing neighborhoods, instills pride in parks, and creates opportunities to provide other local services. In light of Westminster's very limited vacant land and the

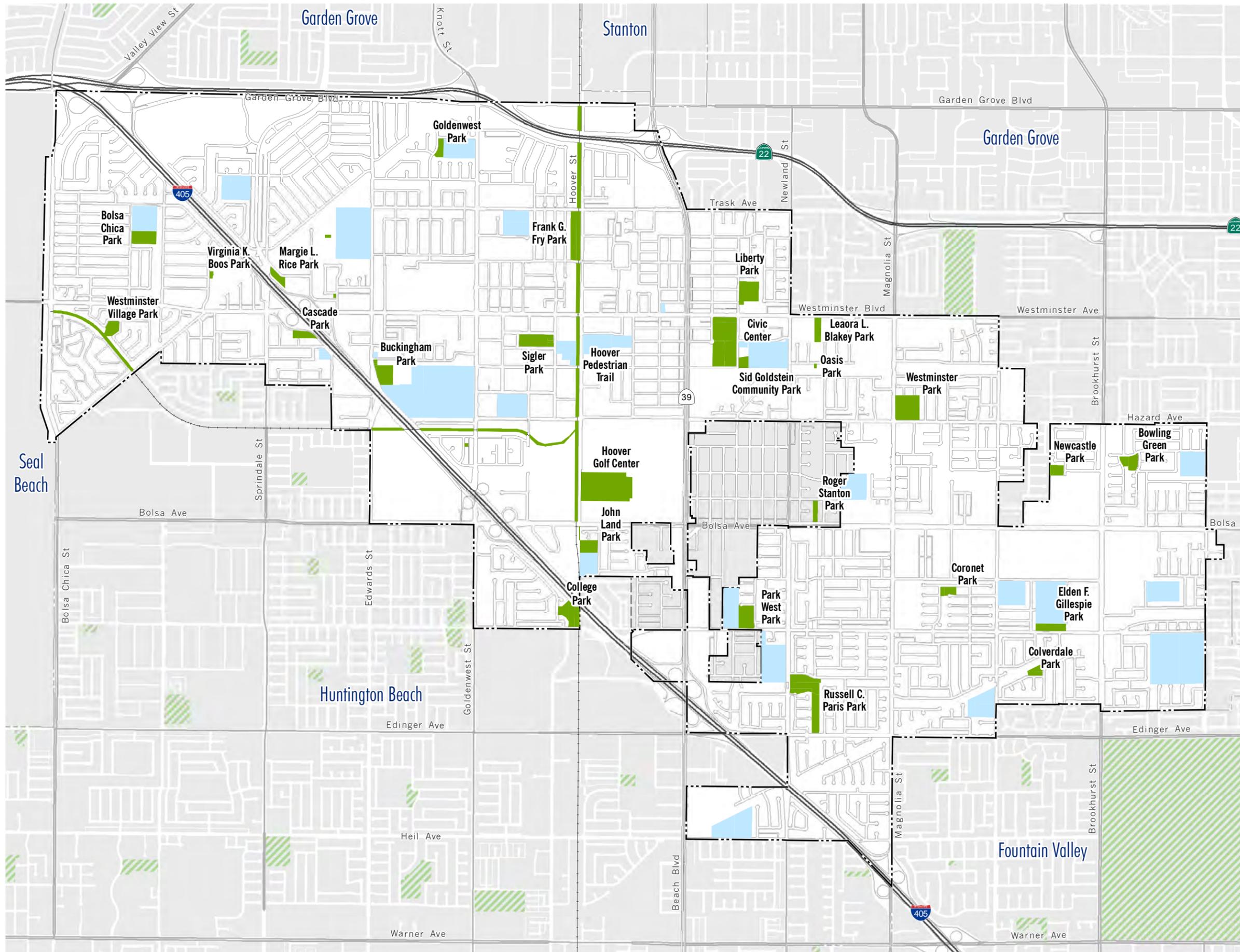


*Interactive play areas for children are a central feature at many of Westminster's park facilities.*

# Parks and Recreation

Figure 6-1  
Existing Parks and  
Recreational Facilities

- Park / Open Space / Trail
- Educational Facility
- Open Space Outside of City Boundary
- City of Westminster Boundary
- City of Westminster Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries





high costs associated with acquiring and converting land to parks, Westminster will continue to explore ways to create new opportunities for public gathering places and recreation facilities in nontraditional settings, including through partnerships with schools and with the development community. Looking forward, public-private spaces like plazas, courtyards, pedestrian paseos, and outdoor dining will play an increasingly important role in creating places where Westminster community members can come together.

**Neighborhood Parks**

Westminster residents have access to a variety of neighborhood parks distributed throughout the community. Neighborhood parks are typically less than 3 acres in size and are intended to serve residents living within walking distance to the park (generally one-half mile). These small-scale parks offer a quiet retreat from everyday life to enjoy nature, walk pets, picnic, or enjoy a stroll. Neighborhood parks also offer opportunities for children to enjoy a playground or for youth and adults to enjoy active recreation. While the majority of Westminster’s neighborhood parks are open to the public, some small neighborhood parks are private. These private facilities are generally provided as an amenity in a residential development and are intended to provide park space exclusively for residents of that development.

**Community Parks**

Westminster’s community parks are typically larger than 3 acres and feature larger amenities, such as fields for soccer, baseball, and basketball. Community parks also serve recreational programming needs by providing outdoor education and/or meeting areas, and are often rented for special events and organized sports programs. Community Parks in Westminster include Westminster Park, Bolsa Chica Park, Sigler Park, and Liberty Park, which includes a skate park, pictured below.



*Modern and well-maintained open spaces, like those found at the Civic Center, create a distinct sense of place and reinforce community identity.*



*Westminster’s skate park is located at Liberty Park. Open seven days a week, the park is designed for entry- and mid-level skaters and is a draw for young people throughout the region.*



*Willmore Elementary School features a playground with a play area, a balance beam, and wall-ball courts.*



*The Hoover Golf Center provides residents an opportunity to practice their golf skills.*

*The Rose Center, pictured to the right, is home to a state-of-the-art theater and banquet facilities.*

### **School Facilities**

Local schools can play a pivotal role in serving local park needs through “joint-use” agreements between the school district(s) and the City. Joint-use is essentially the use of public school facilities for park, recreation, educational, and public services for community members afterschool hours. Joint use can cover more than playgrounds and sports fields they can also include libraries, gymnasiums, cultural and performing art centers, health clinics, and other facilities. Maximizing these opportunities will require commitment and leadership, both from the City and school districts, to work together to find creative solutions, develop and leverage funding resources, and forge agreements to achieve these goals.

The General Plan encourages the use of joint-use facilities throughout Westminster, with special emphasis on pursuing agreements in areas of the City currently underserved by parks, or in areas adjacent to existing parks and recreational facilities so as to more easily leverage resources. Due to the City’s limited land resources and funding, this is one of the most significant opportunities for the City to expand its parks and recreation offerings.

### **Special Use Facilities**

Special-use park facilities are designed to address specific recreational needs in the community and typically include museums, cultural centers, historic monuments, and commercial recreation facilities, like the Hoover Golf Center. The Westminster Rose Center is a shining example of a special use facility in the City. Located in the heart of the community next to the Civic Center, the Rose Center features a 33,840 square-foot building which houses a 419-seat theater, banquet hall and connecting foyers that accommodate a variety of cultural and civic functions. An outdoor courtyard and a 600-foot-long entry plaza provide additional venues for functions. The center is also adjacent to Freedom Park, which houses a Vietnam War Memorial. Over 100,000 people are expected to use the facility annually, including local school districts, international and local performing artists, business people and social and cultural groups.



### Regional Facilities

Several other parks and recreational facilities within a walk, bike ride, or short drive from Westminster offer repose and recreational opportunities beyond the city border. Nearby facilities include Mile Square Regional Park in Fountain Valley, beaches in Seal Beach and Huntington Beach, Garden Grove Park, Huntington Beach Central Park, and El Dorado East Regional Park. Smaller park facilities close to the Westminster border in surrounding communities include Geer Park, Glen View Park, Clegg-Stacy Park, Edgar Park, and Vista View Park. (This is important to note because, in some cases, the public park closest to a Westminster residence may actually be in another city.)

Beyond that, the entire Orange County regional recreation inventory includes 60,000 acres of regional parks, trails, public beaches, harbors, historic sites, and wilderness areas. Westminster residents are fortunate to have such a range of recreation opportunities nearby, so that it is always an option to get outdoors and connect with the local and regional community.

### Flood Control Facilities

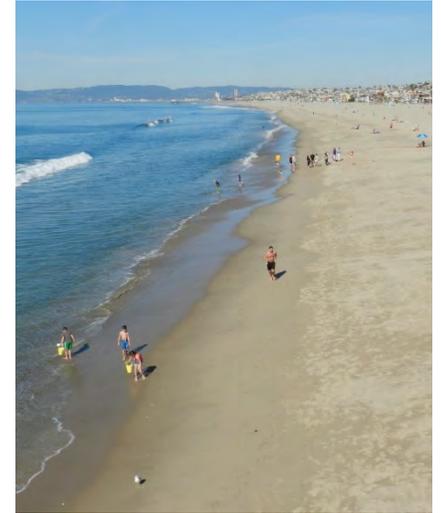
Westminster is home to a number of reinforced concrete flood control channels that run through the City. The future integration of a pedestrian and bicycle path, linear park, and/or greenbelt along these channels could provide the opportunity for a continuous open space system through existing neighborhoods, parks and recreational facilities, and adjoining communities.

### Summary of Existing Facilities

Table 6-1 presents a snapshot of the amenities offered at each of the City's existing parks.



*The Splash Pad at Sigler Park is open during the summer months and is a popular spot to cool-off during hot days. Sigler Park also hosts many community activities, including Safety Day and Dia de la Familia.*



*With easy access to Orange County beaches, Westminster residents can easily take advantage of all the recreational opportunities the Pacific Ocean offers.*



*Mile Square Regional Park (pictured above), a 600+ acre urban park located just outside of the City of Westminster (in Fountain Valley), is home to a range of passive and active amenities that the Westminster community can enjoy. Within the park's boundaries are golf courses, soccer fields, baseball and softball diamonds, an archery range, and a nature area. Photo Credit: Orange County Parks Department.*

**Table 6-1 Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities**

| Neighborhood Park (less than 3 ac) | Address                 | Size (acres) | Key Amenities   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|---|
| Oasis Park                         | 8612 Oasis Ave.         | 0.3          | Tot lot   |
| Virginia K. Boos Park              | 13811 Haileigh St.      | 0.5          | Basketball, tot lot   |
| Sid Goldstein Community Park       | 14180 All American Way  | 1.5          | Tot lot, picnic, restrooms, Vietnam War Memorial  |
| Margie L. Rice Park                | 6060 Hefley St.         | 1.5          | Tot lot, picnic, restrooms  |
| Roger Stanton Park                 | 14900 Park Lane         | 1.5          | Memorial walls (located in Midway City)   |
| Goldenwest Park                    | 13200 Siskiyou St.      | 1.7          | Activity building, BBQs, tot lot, picnic, shade   |
| Cloverdale Park                    | 9721 Cloverdale Ave.    | 1.8          | BBQs, tot lot, picnic   |
| Coronet Park                       | 15252 Oakcliff Dr.      | 1.9          | Basketball, tot lot, picnic   |
| Cascade Park                       | 14100 Cascade St.       | 2            | BBQs, tot lot, picnic   |
| Newcastle Park                     | 14720 Kent St.          | 2.2          | BBQs, basketball, tot lot, picnic   |
| Leaora L. Blakey Park              | 8612 Westminster Blvd.  | 2.3          | Museum  |
| Westminster Village Park           | 5300 Tattershall St.    | 2.5          | Basketball, tot lot, handball, picnic, shade  |
| Bowling Green Park                 | 14700 Bowling Green St. | 2.9          | Activity building, BBQs, basketball, tot lot, picnic  |
| Community Park (more than 3 acres) | Address                 | Size (acres) | Key Amenities   |
| Frank G. Fry Park*                 | 7482 21st St.           | 3.3          | Tot lot, picnic   |
| Elden F. Gillespie Park            | 9801 McFadden Ave.      | 3.5          | Activity building, BBQs, basketball, tot lot, picnic, restrooms, softball, tennis               |
| John Land Park*                    | 15151 Temple St.        | 3.5          | BBQs, tot lot, picnic, shade  |
| College Park*                      | 15422 Vermont St.       | 3.9          | BBQs, basketball, tot lot, picnic   |
| Bolsa Chica Park                   | 13660 University St.    | 4.9          | Activity building, BBQs, basketball, tot lot, picnic, restrooms, shade, tennis                  |
| Buckingham Park                    | 6502 Homer St.          | 5            | Tot lot, picnic, restrooms, softball  |
| Park West Park                     | 8301 McFadden Ave.      | 5            | Activity building, BBQs, tot lot, picnic, restrooms, shade, softball, tennis                    |
| Sigler Park                        | 7200 Plaza St.          | 6            | Activity building, BBQs, basketball, tot lot, handball, picnic, restrooms, softball, splash pad |
| Liberty Park                       | 13900 Monroe St.        | 6.4          | Activity building, BBQs, basketball, tot lot, handball, picnic, restrooms, shade, skate park    |
| Westminster Park                   | 14402 Magnolia St.      | 8.7          | BBQs, basketball, tot lot, handball, restrooms, softball  |
| Russell C. Paris Park*             | 8600 Palos Verdes Ave.  | 12           | BBQs, tot lot, picnic   |
| Civic Center                       | 8200 Westminster Blvd.  | 13           | Community services building, outdoor fitness area, senior center                                |

\* No restrooms

## Planning for Future Park Needs

The City's population is increasing and demographics are shifting. These changes may require certain parks and facilities to be upgraded or reprogrammed in order to meet the future recreational demands of the community. Westminster parks are generally planned according to three criteria: 1) the total quantity of park acreage; 2) the accessibility of parks to homes; and 3) the amenities for different parks to meet community needs.

### *Location and Accessibility*

The City's park facilities are dispersed throughout the community, but residential areas concentrated in the northwest and southeast corners of the City could benefit the most from future (infill) park development. Because the City is mostly built out, it will be imperative to incorporate infill and alternative forms of open space development in order to meet the diverse health and recreational needs of residents.

The City's recreation areas are illustrated on *Figure 6-2, Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan*. This figure also identifies a quarter mile radius (generally considered walking distance) around each public or private park provided as part of planned residential communities. Areas not within a quarter mile of an existing or proposed park should be targeted for new park locations when sites and/or funding become available.

Park accessibility is not only defined by physical distance, but takes into account the safety of the routes used to reach them and the degree to which facilities can be enjoyed by users of all ages and abilities, including children, adults, seniors, and disabled people. Accessible parks should have well-designed facilities that are readily usable by those with disabilities, connecting sidewalks that are an appropriate width and not along major arterials, and transit options available for residents not living within walking distance of park facilities. The Circulation element defines the pedestrian network that connects park and recreational facilities to other activity hubs in Westminster, including residences, schools, and commercial centers.

### *Changing Demographics and Preferences*

Parks and recreational facilities should have amenities that serve the needs of its changing population. Looking toward the future, Westminster's demographics are expected to stay generally consistent, with a consistently high percentage of families with children. This means that the need will remain high for smaller neighborhood parks that are equipped with tot lots, playground equipment, and other amenities suited for younger children.

The City's population makeup will naturally change over time, and these shifts influence preferences for recreational programs. Westminster's senior population is a significant part of its demographic makeup, and surveys point toward a greater demand for more "active" recreational outlets than in past generations. On the other end of the age spectrum, significant increases in the younger adult population will require a focus on more children- and youth-oriented activities and facilities.

The following goal and policies help to ensure a responsive and comprehensive park and recreational system for Westminster.



*The Civic Center provides peaceful outdoor open space for community members to enjoy.*

## **GOAL PR-1: PARK FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE**

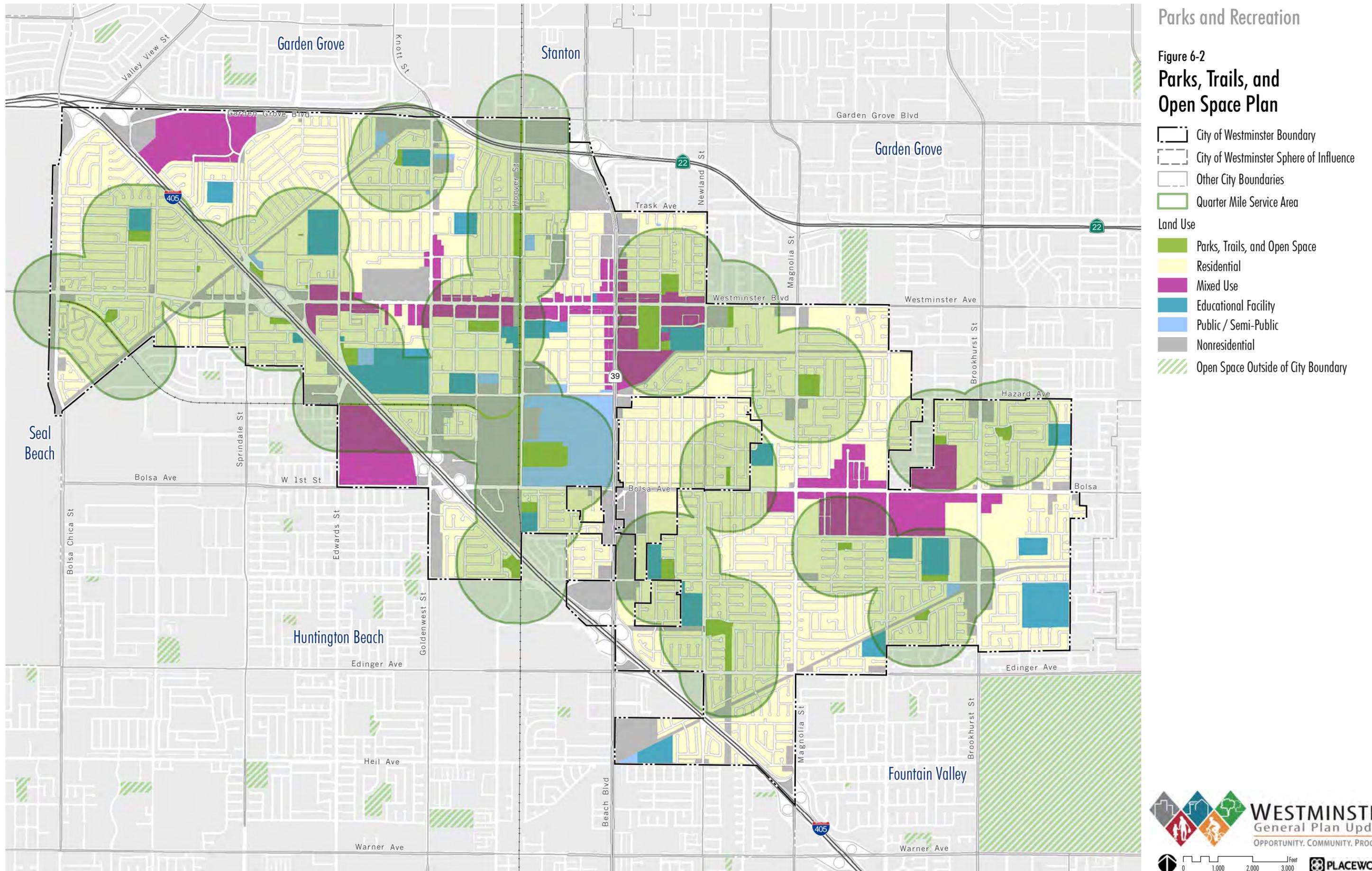
**A diverse system of safe and accessible local public park and recreation facilities that meets the varied needs of the Westminster community.**

### **POLICIES**

- PR-1.1 Park Types.** Provide a range of park types and amenities to meet the active and passive recreational needs of all Westminster residents, regardless of age, ability, or income.
- PR-1.2 Parkland Standards.** Achieve a minimum parkland standard of three acres per 1,000 City residents. Parkland includes traditional parks and recreation facilities, multiuse pathways, off-street bicycle lanes (for example, the Hoover Bicycle Route), and joint-use facilities throughout the City (such as school facilities).
- PR-1.3 Service Area Radius.** Focus new park facilities in areas that are outside ¼-mile walking radius from an existing or proposed park or bike trail, and enhance options for residents to access these facilities through safe walking, bicycling, and transit routes. Physical barriers such as I-405 and SR-22 should also be considered when evaluating service area and access.
- PR-1.4 New Facilities.** Pursue the development of new parks and recreational facilities at utility easements, flood control channels, railroad rights-of-way, vacant parcels, and underutilized facilities.
- PR-1.5 Open Space in Nonresidential Development.** Encourage nonresidential development, including commercial centers, industrial uses, and public facilities, to provide on-site open space for employee use.
- PR-1.6 Safety.** Enhance park safety through playground design, crime prevention technology, night lighting, natural surveillance, unobtrusive landscaping, and increased police and community-based patrols.
- PR-1.7 Accessible Facilities.** Require that new park facility construction and existing facility retrofits meet accessibility standards defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and playground safety requirements (Senate Bill 2733).
- PR-1.8 Park Design.** Encourage new and existing parks to incorporate sustainable landscape and development practices that limit water usage and energy consumption, such as drought-resistant landscaping and low impact development standards.
- PR-1.9 Community Input.** Ensure that programs and facilities in parks reflect the priorities of residents in the surrounding neighborhoods. Regularly conduct community outreach, workshops, and ongoing conversations with neighborhoods to solicit public input on park issues.
- PR-1.10 Quality Parks.** Design parks with attention to place-making elements that foster social interaction and community pride by incorporating design elements (art, landscape, monuments, murals, play equipment, benches) based on a unique theme within each park. Where possible, local and historical cultural elements should be reflected in the park's design.

# Parks and Recreation

Figure 6-2  
**Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan**





## Management of Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Westminster Community Services and Recreation Department collaborates with several public agencies, nonprofits, the local business community, community volunteers, schools, and other organizations to provide for the proper development, management, and maintenance of its parks and recreation facilities.

### Partnerships

To meet the challenge of serving the community's diverse parks and recreational needs, the City should proactively collaborate with other public, private, and nonprofit entities to develop and maintain a diverse range of recreation facilities and services and offset park deficiency. In Westminster, school districts are key players in providing parks and recreational facilities to Westminster residents, particularly youth. As discussed in the Introduction section of this element, the City will explore joint-use agreements with the school districts that serve Westminster in an effort to expand the range of facilities available on a regular basis for public use.

Since the City's Community Services and Recreation Department is committed to providing such a diverse range of park and recreational facilities, a collaborative approach will be essential to ensure that those facilities and services meet the demands.

### Funding

Quimby ordinance fees, developer agreements, and grants can fund the development of public open space, and impact fees and other types of grants can pay for the improvements to existing parks and recreation facilities. Future funding sources may include, but are not limited to, assessment districts, foundation grants, and gifts from private benefactors.

### Park Safety and Maintenance

Parks are among the most cherished amenities in Westminster, and their continued use and enjoyment depend greatly on their condition and safety. Parks and recreational facilities should be regularly patrolled, maintained, and equipped with the latest in surveillance technology to prevent deterioration, ensure their safety, and permit continued public use.

Many of the City's park and recreational facilities were built long ago and need rehabilitation and modernization. In 2015, the City invested over \$10 million into maintenance and repair of its existing facilities. The City's future park and recreational facilities master plan will help to address future maintenance needs and provide an action plan for the continued operation of Westminster's parks and recreation facilities. In addition, the General Plan prioritizes the need for facility reinvestment and the development of funding and implementation steps. This may require additional fees or taxes to implement properly.

The following goals and policies help to prioritize the need for regular maintenance and reinvestment to ensure the continued use and safety of park and recreational facilities.

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*The City can partner with other public, private, and nonprofit groups, including school districts, to help meet the challenge of service the community's diverse parks and recreational needs.*

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**GOAL PR-2: PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY MANAGEMENT**  
**Park and recreational facilities that are well maintained and safe to meet the short- and long-term recreational needs of the City.**

**POLICIES**

- PR-2.1 Parks and Recreational Facilities Master Plan.** Use the City’s parks and recreational facilities master plan to guide future capital improvement projects, recreational programs, and maintenance needs.
- PR-2.2 Parkland Dedication.** Require new developments to provide adequate, usable, and permanent open space on-site, off-site, or via in-lieu fees.
- PR-2.3 Incentives.** Incentivize developers of multifamily residential and mixed-use projects to provide on-site, publicly accessible open space and recreational facilities; incentives could include density bonuses, expedited development review, and the reduction of on-site parking.
- PR-2.4 Partnerships.** Establish creative partnerships with local and regional agencies, private developers, and institutions to develop new, nontraditional types of open space, such as plazas, pocket parks, parklets, rooftop gardens, and enhanced streetscapes.
- PR-2.5 Joint-Use Agreements.** Work with local school districts, private developers, institutional uses, nonprofits, and other organizations to develop joint-use agreements to expand the park and recreation facility offerings in the City.
- PR-2.6 Regional Needs Assessment.** Collaborate with the Orange County Parks and Recreation Department to understand the park and recreational needs of the region and explore opportunities for Westminster to address regional needs to the extent possible.
- PR-2.7 Funding.** Explore conventional and creative funding options for the construction, maintenance, rehabilitation, programming, and periodic modernization of Westminster’s parks, including development impact fees, private donations, gifts and endowments, bond measures, special districts, and federal and state grants.
- PR-2.8 Park Maintenance.** Conduct regular park maintenance and facility inspections on park buildings, playground equipment, and recreational fields to allow for their continued public use and enjoyment.
- PR-2.9 Departmental Collaboration.** Require the collaboration amongst those City departments responsible for park facilities in the Westminster—including Community Services and Recreation, Community Development, and Public Works—when evaluating existing park and recreational facilities, planning future park and facility needs, and when seeking grant funding.

## Recreational Programs and Events

Given that availability of traditional park space is limited in Westminster, programming of public spaces takes on an elevated importance. Recreational programming and special events can benefit a community in a number of ways: they can create a sense of belonging and identity; provide educational and social opportunities; promote healthy lifestyles; improve cultural unity; and improve the quality of life for members of the community regardless of their age, ability, income level, or culture.

In addition to planning for and managing park spaces, the City of Westminster’s Community Services and Recreation Department (CSRD) is dedicated to providing quality recreational programs and supportive services for all Westminster residents. The CSRD has established an extensive recreational program that includes youth and adult classes, sports leagues, and special event coordination. Most of the youth and adult programs run during the school year at Bolsa Chica Park, Liberty Park, and Sigler Park, and have special extended schedules for winter and summer vacations. The CSRD also initiated the “Fun on Wheels” mobile van program, which travels to several locations throughout the City and provides free, quality activities on a drop-in basis throughout the summer.

Westminster residents sometimes organize their own recreational programs and events in places like the Civic Center Sunken Gardens, where residents and visitors alike can be seen practicing tai chi, rehearsing dances, working out in the outdoor fitness center, or taking a leisurely stroll around the facility.

### Diversity of Recreation Activities

The City of Westminster has a diverse population, so a variety of recreation programs and leisure opportunities is important to address their diverse needs. A broad spectrum of recreation programs provides opportunities to come together around a common need and interest—recreation—that spans the differences in our ages, income levels, cultures, and abilities.

#### Youth and Children

Many of the Westminster recreational programs entertain, educate, and enrich the community’s youth. The CSRD offers a number of youth programs on a year-round basis, with extended schedules offered for winter and summer vacations. Some of the classes offered to Westminster children include: art, including drawing and cartooning; dance, from tap to ballet; music, including piano, guitar, and drums; and other special interests, including CPR for children and architecture and engineering with LEGOs.

Local youth sports are also particularly popular in Westminster, and children can choose from organizations such as the American Youth Soccer Organization, Huntington West Little League, District 62 Challenger Baseball, Junior All American Football, and National Junior Basketball.



*The Summer Concerts Series held at the Civic Center Sunken Gardens is a popular activity for Westminster residents.*

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*Bolsa Chica Co-Op Nursery School, located in Westminster, is a collaborative effort and one of the last co-op parent participation preschools in the county.*

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*Westminster's parks serve as venues for a wide range of youth and adult sporting activities.*

### **Adults**

A wide variety of adult exercise, recreation, and education classes are available at the City's park facilities on a year-round basis, including: piano lessons, salsa dancing, first aid, dog obedience training, and many more. In addition, several programs are available through public and private organizations to adults at the Westminster Library, such as a book club and business workshops.

### **Low Income Families**

The Westminster Family Resource Center (founded in 2000) is available to low-income families residing in Westminster and its neighboring cities for counseling services, medical assistance, after-school recreation and enrichment programs, and emergency assistance.

### **Seniors**

The City of Westminster maintains an active calendar for its senior residents, primarily through the Westminster Senior Center in the Civic Center. Special classes and services for the senior community include fitness classes, support groups, Friday dances, senior transportation program, and a variety of trips and excursions. Group activities such as bridge club, mah jongg, chess club, and yarn spinners are available on a weekly basis, and a meal delivery service is provided by the Senior Center for those living at home. Project S.H.U.E. is an intergenerational program hosted by the Senior Center that helps at-risk children in first and second grades reach their grade level through mentoring and tutoring from senior volunteers.

### **Special Events**

The CSRD, in collaboration with other City departments—including Community Development and Public Works—helps to plan and organize the City's special events throughout the year that celebrate Westminster's rich history, cultural diversity, and community pride. Events include the Rose Parade Excursion, Summer Concert Series, Flag Day Celebration, Safety Day, Dia de la Familia, Holiday Community Sing & Tree Lighting Ceremony, and several others. The widely attended Spring Festival showcases the variety of community resources offered throughout Westminster and offers numerous craft vendor booths; children's activities; and displays from the local police, fire, and public works departments. The CSRD also coordinates with privately sponsored events, such as the Tet Parade. Various city departments collaborate with private interests to create this cultural event that is unique to Westminster.

### **Supportive Recreational Services**

Looking toward the future, Westminster will continue to plan for the emerging needs of the community. These needs may arise out of demographic change, preferences for different types of recreational activities or programs, and emerging issues in health and wellness.

### **Community Health**

The CSRD currently offers several health and nutrition programs that help to foster healthy lifestyles for all residents, including first aid, CPR, and support for residents who want to stop smoking.

In addition, the Westminster Family Resource Center partners with several local health agencies to provide counseling, dental and medical assistance, and health and exercise education classes for low income families in the community. The Orange County Community Service Center is also located in Westminster, where representatives from the OC Health Care Agency are available to meet with county residents and provide health-related information.

**Increasing Role of Partnerships**

The City of Westminster has the opportunity to partner with several community organizations and businesses in order to provide a more diverse array of recreational programs and services, including (but not limited to):

- » American Youth Soccer Organization
- » Little League
- » Westminster All Youth Softball
- » Boy and Girl Scouts
- » Westminster Boys & Girls Club
- » Goldenwest College Community Services in Huntington Beach
- » Abrazar
- » Head Start
- » Huntington Beach Adult Education
- » Coastline Community College
- » Local churches and schools
- » Local business community for co-sponsored programs and events such as bowling alleys, karate, and dance studios
- » Westminster Youth Soccer Association

The following goal and policies will ensure the provision of recreational programs and services responsive to the community’s needs.

**GOAL PR-3: RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING**  
**A variety of recreational services, programs, facilities, and activities that are responsive to Westminster’s needs and preferences.**

**POLICIES**

- PR-3.1 Access to Programs.** Encourage recreational programs that are accessible to Westminster residents of all ages, abilities, and incomes.
- PR-3.2 Responsive/Flexible Programs.** Periodically review and update recreational programs and services to ensure that they are responsive to the needs and interests of the community.
- PR-3.3 Community Events.** Continue to plan, host, and support, in partnerships with community organizations, a variety of special events that celebrate Westminster’s strong community pride and cultural diversity, such as the Tet Parade, Dia de la Familia, Safety Day, and Summer Concerts.
- PR-3.4 Intergenerational Focus.** Expand the number of intergenerational programs and services that bring together people of all ages.
- PR-3.5 Special Needs Programs.** Include Westminster residents with special needs (age, physical disability, learning disability, etc.) within existing programming.



*The City of Westminster partners with outside organizations to host the annual Tet Parade in Little Saigon, one of the community’s signature events.*

## Related Plans and Programs

The Parks and Recreation element supports and implements several state and local laws and plans.

### **Quimby Act**

The Quimby Act (1975) is state legislation that authorizes cities and counties to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities (CGC § 66477). The 1982 amendment to Quimby was designed to hold local governments accountable for imposing park development fees. Cities and counties were required to be more accountable and to show a strong direct relationship or nexus between park fee exactions and proposed projects. Local ordinances must now include definite standards for determining the proportion of the project to be dedicated and the amount of the fee to be paid.

The City's Quimby park ordinance establishes a standard of 3 acres of neighborhood and community parkland per 1,000 residents. Neighborhood and community parks typically include open space areas such as pocket parks, tot lots, community centers, sports courts, playgrounds, and passive recreation areas. It is also possible to count other types of open space, including school recreation facilities with joint-use agreements, multipurpose pathways, and common open space provided in developments.

According to its Quimby standard, Westminster's need for parkland at its buildout (118,000 residents) is 355 acres, far more than existing facilities currently provide (a common problem facing many of southern California's built-out cities). In 2016, the City's existing parkland ratio reflected approximately 1 acre of parkland per 1,000 residents. Given Westminster's built-out nature, it is increasingly important for the City to look for creative opportunities to provide new open space experiences as part of new development and through partnerships with local school districts, use of utility facilities and rights-of-way, and redevelopment of underutilized properties.

### **Park Dedication Ordinance**

One of the ways the City manages the provision of parkland is through the Park Dedication Ordinance (§16.12.080), which requires either the payment of fees or dedication of a portion of land based on the City’s parkland requirements. These dedications are intended to help ensure current and future residents have access to sufficient open space in the community.

### **Park and Recreation Facilities Master Plan**

The City of Westminster will prepare a parks and recreation facilities master plan to address Westminster’s future park and recreation needs by identifying opportunities for park acquisition and development, and providing an action plan for the continued operation and maintenance of Westminster’s parks and recreation facilities. The master plan will help decision makers identify and prioritize projects at Westminster’s existing and proposed park facilities.

### **Active Transportation Plan**

The City of Westminster is preparing an active transportation plan (ATP) that articulates the community’s vision for developing and improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the City. Specifically, the plan will be used as a vehicle for pursuing local, state, and federal funding to implement new mobility connections in Westminster. One of the goals of the ATP is to identify opportunities for bicycle, trail, and pedestrian-friendly paths and trails—like the new Hoover Street trail—that connect the community to its parks and recreation facilities and other important community destinations. Linking open space areas near employment, residential, and commercial activity centers will be a high priority for the strategic implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the ATP.



*The City’s Active Transportation Plan implements the goals and policies of the General Plan, and identifies safe and efficient connections to the community’s various park and recreation facilities.*

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# 7

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

### Introduction to Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Adequate infrastructure and the preservation of natural resources are essential to maintain the health, safety, and welfare of a community. A community's infrastructure—its water delivery system, wastewater management program, solid waste and recycling efforts, and access to modern communication facilities—help support the daily needs of residents, business, and visitors. Although the actual physical infrastructure (pipes, storm drains, etc.) may go largely undetected by community members, its effects—clean drinking water, a functioning sewer system, regular trash collection, reliable phone and internet service—are reminders of the influence infrastructure facilities have on quality of life and livability in a city.

The Land Use Element identifies six mixed-use areas where the majority of Westminster's growth is anticipated over the next twenty years. As land uses in these areas transition over time to accommodate new homes and retail uses, there will be a corresponding increase in infrastructure and natural resource demands. The goals and policies in this element are crafted to ensure that current and future generations are well served by a comprehensive infrastructure program; have access to precious natural resources; and know how to conserve these resources, especially in light of local, regional, and state legislation.

California Government Code, Section 65303, allows a city or county to address, in its general plan, issues or topics that may influence the physical development of the planning area, such as an infrastructure system. Though the Government Code does not require a city to include policy guidance related to infrastructure planning, the City of Westminster has identified this topic as a priority and has elected to cover it in detail in the first half of this element. The second half addresses topics required by Government Code, Section 65302, requiring a general plan to address the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. In Westminster, a city that is generally built out, conservation efforts are largely related to biological, energy, and water resources, and these topics are addressed at the end of this element.

#### In This Element...

- » Water Storage and Distribution
- » Wastewater Collection and Treatment
- » Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling
- » Telecommunications
- » Biological Resources
- » Energy Conservation
- » Water Conservation



*Residential homes throughout Westminster feature roof-mounted solar panels which contribute to the City's energy conservation efforts.*



*Low- to no-water landscaping strategies help conserve the City's water supply.*

## Organization of Element

The goals and policies of this element are organized around two overarching topics:

- » **Infrastructure.** Facilities needed for water storage and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, solid waste disposal and recycling, and telecommunications.
- » **Natural Resources and Conservation.** Conservation of biological, energy, and water resources.

The following sections provide context for these two topics as well as goals and policies to achieve the General Plan vision for land use in Westminster. Descriptions of related plans, programs, and legislation are at the end of this element.

## Infrastructure

A reliable resource infrastructure system provides fundamental services for the City. This includes a variety of physical facilities for the conveyance of vital services and functions, such as water storage and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, storm drainage and flood control, solid waste disposal, and telecommunications. Physical infrastructure systems are often taken for granted, but they are an essential part of the community's quality of life.

## Water System

Ensuring the long-term supply of water is one of the most critical issues facing Westminster and communities throughout California. Declining groundwater resources and state and federal laws have made it increasingly challenging to maintain reliable sources of water. The City of Westminster and its water providers recognize that the long-term solution to this challenge must include an integrated water management approach. Westminster also supports water conservation efforts and promotes the improvement of its production facilities, storage facilities, pumping stations, and distribution systems.

The City of Westminster provides water service and distributes water to the City's residents and businesses and part of Midway City. The City's Urban Water Management Plan identifies the framework for how the City manages its water resources to ensure the system's reliability, particularly during multiple dry years (drought).

## Water Supplies

Westminster receives water from two main sources: imported water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), imported water from the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWD OC), and groundwater pumped from Orange County Water District (OCWD) wells. As of 2016, approximately 70 percent of the City's water supply is from 10 city owned groundwater wells within the City's boundaries. The City has drilled two groundwater wells since the 2005 Urban Water Management Plan and upgraded some of the smaller, inefficient wells with new, higher-yielding and more efficient wells. There are currently no plans to add new groundwater wells or import connections.

The City has a 16-million-gallon reservoir facility that was constructed in 2003 and consists of two 8-million-gallon storage tanks, four booster pumps, and a 3,000-gallon per minute well.

Since local water supplies do not meet all of Westminister’s demand, water is imported from the San Francisco-San Joaquin Bay Delta via the State Water Project, and the Colorado River via the Colorado River Aqueduct. Water imports are transferred by the MWDOC from the MWD. MWDOC is one of 28 member agencies in MWD’s service area, and Westminister has three active import water connections.

### **Water Quality**

The Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and other laws require public agencies to achieve water quality standards to protect public health and the beneficial uses of California’s waterways. The City of Westminister meets or exceeds all United States Environmental Protection Agency and State of California Department of Public Health drinking water standards. These two agencies govern the water quality of public drinking water systems.

### **Stormwater System**

The City of Westminister is served by two primary flood control and drainage systems:

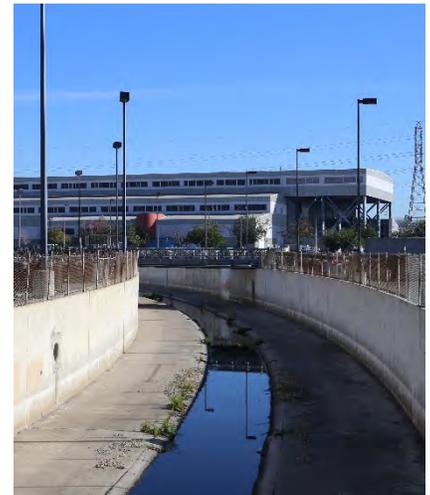
1. City-operated and -maintained storm drain system, including catch basins and storm drain pipes
2. Flood control facilities operated and maintained by the Orange County Flood Control District, including the large flood control channels in the City.

Though storm drains are designed to carry only stormwater, urban runoff—including trash, litter, silt, automotive chemicals and other contaminants—can enter the stormwater system from streets, curbs and gutters. These contaminants ultimately travel, untreated, to local water bodies, including the Westminister Channel, Bolsa Chica Channel, East Garden Grove-Wintersberg Channel, and Anaheim-Barber City Channel, before ending up in Anaheim Bay, Huntington Harbor, and the Pacific Ocean. To prevent this, the regional water quality control board enforces the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) to clean up water resources and reduce the amount of stormwater runoff. Under the NPDES Stormwater Permit issued to the County of Orange and its co-permittees (including Westminister), the City requires the majority of new development projects to incorporate best management practices to minimize pollutant levels in runoff.

### **Water Service to Disadvantaged Communities**

In the City of Westminister, there are several disadvantaged community islands throughout the central portion of the City (for more information, see the discussion on disadvantaged communities in the *Related Plans, Programs, and Legislation* section at the end of this element). These islands are served by an existing water service provider (the City of Westminister) and a storm drain system owned and operated by the City of Westminister and Orange County Flood Control District. The county flood control district and the City have mechanisms in place to ensure the water and storm drain systems are functioning (operation and maintenance) and will not negatively impact the regions of the City with disadvantaged communities.

The following goal and policies implement a strategic and sustainable plan for water delivery. Note that policies specific to water conservation are included later in this element under the natural resources section.



*County-operated flood control channels are an essential part of the City’s stormwater management system.*

**GOAL INR-1: WATER SYSTEM**

**Reliable potable water supply and efficient distribution and stormwater systems to meet the ongoing needs of Westminster residents.**

**POLICIES**

- INR-1.1 Urban Water Management Plan.** Maintain a current Urban Water Management Plan to ensure adequate water supply.
- INR-1.2 Reliable Supply.** Continue to coordinate new development proposals with the Orange County Water District, Municipal Water District of Orange County, and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to maintain a reliable supply of high-quality potable water.
- INR-1.3 Drinking Water Standards.** Continue to supply water that meets or exceeds state and federal drinking water standards.
- INR-1.4 Water Infrastructure.** Ensure that the City’s water infrastructure is adequately sized for storage capacity and treatment to serve existing and future needs, and that adequate capital improvement funding is in place for the rehabilitation or replacement of critical infrastructure.
- INR-1.5 Illegal Connections.** Continue to prohibit illegal connections and discharges into the City’s storm drain system.
- INR-1.6 Public Education.** Increase public awareness about the impacts of stormwater pollution and the need for efficient management of water resources (conservation and reuse practices).
- INR-1.7 Stormwater Runoff.** Minimize the quantity of stormwater directed to impermeable surfaces to allow more percolation of stormwater into the ground.
- INR-1.8 Agency Coordination.** Continue to coordinate with the Orange County Flood Control District to encourage the improvement of channel segments to alleviate local flooding, in accordance with the City’s Stormwater Master Plan.
- INR-1.9 Natural Water Bodies and Drainage Systems.** Limit the disturbance of natural water bodies and drainage systems in Westminster by conserving natural areas, protecting slopes and channels, and minimizing the impacts from stormwater and urban runoff.
- INR-1.10 Hydrology and Pollutant Loads.** Encourage the use of structural and nonstructural best management practices to mitigate any projected increase in pollutant loads and hydrology flows, and ensure that post-development runoff rates and velocities from a site have no significant adverse impact on downstream erosion and stream habitat.

## Wastewater Management

The wastewater system in Westminster is maintained by Midway City Sanitary District (MCSD) and the Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD). Wastewater is sent to OCSD's two treatment plants in Fountain Valley and Huntington Beach. Both plants treat the water with primary and secondary treatment. The first plant sends secondary-treated water to OCWD, who performs tertiary treatment for recycled water; in 2015 about 12 percent was recycled. The second treatment plant treats the sewage and discharges it per state and federal regulations. MCSD expects its current sewer lines to last up to 100 years. The oldest portions of sewer lines are in the central areas of the City and should continue to be monitored for adequacy.

### Disadvantaged Communities

The existing sewer system provides sewer services to the City's disadvantaged communities (for more information, see the discussion on disadvantaged communities in the *Related Plans, Programs, and Legislation* section at the end of this element). There are mechanisms in place by OCSD and MCSD to ensure the sewer system is functioning and will not negatively impact the regions of the City with disadvantaged communities.

#### **GOAL INR-2: WASTEWATER SYSTEM**

**A wastewater collection and treatment system adequate to serve the long-range needs of the community.**

#### **POLICIES**

- INR-2.1 Sewer Facilities Master Plan.** Maintain a Citywide Sewer Facilities Master Plan to identify existing and future wastewater treatment needs, implement needed improvements, and identify potential funding sources.
- INR-2.2 Service Standards.** Continue to coordinate land use development with the Midway City Sanitary District to provide adequate collection, supply, treatment, and disposal of wastewater and adherence to adopted service standards for sewer service systems.
- INR-2.3 New Development.** Ensure that new development pays its fair share contribution to the wastewater treatment and collection system necessary to serve the demands created by the development.
- INR-2.4 Sewer Deposit Best Practices.** Work with Midway City Sanitary District to identify and implement, as feasible, best practices and technologies for wastewater collection and treatment, including those that reduce the amount of wastewater requiring treatment, prevent contamination, avoid sewage spills, maintain the highest possible energy efficiency, and reduce costs and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- INR-2.5 Public Education.** Collaborate with Midway City Sanitary District in developing a public education program that teaches residents and businesses how to limit the amount of oils, pesticides, and toxic chemicals entering the sewer system.

## **Solid Waste and Recycling**

The State of California requires communities to be proactive in addressing waste management for many reasons—the shortage of landfill space, the cost of natural resources to manufacture goods, and the air pollution resulting from manufacturing. In 1989, the state legislature passed Assembly Bill 939, the landmark bill requiring recycling in California. The bill established the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) and required the preparation of countywide integrated waste management plans; the CIWMB is now the California Department of Resources, Recycling and Recover (CalRecycle). AB 939 also required all municipalities to divert 25 percent of their solid waste from landfill disposal through source reduction, recycling, and composting, by January 1, 1995, and half of the waste stream needed to be diverted by the year 2000. The City of Westminster completed its Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE), consistent with AB 939, in March 1992. As a follow-up to AB 939, Assembly Bill 341 increased the statewide solid waste diversion goal to 75 percent by 2020 and mandated recycling for commercial and multifamily residential land uses, schools, and school districts.

### ***Waste Collection and Disposal***

The MCSD collects solid waste and provides recycling services to the City of Westminster and its sphere of influence. In 2014, nearly 99 percent of the solid waste landfilled from the City of Westminster was disposed of at the Frank Bowerman Landfill near the City of Irvine. This landfill was opened in 1990 and is scheduled to close in 2053.

### ***Waste Diversion***

The MCSD follows the “reduce, reuse, recycle” model of waste diversion in an effort to stop trash before it starts. Westminster residents and businesses have access to a range of waste diversion programs and services, including composting, household hazardous waste, electronic waste, public education, recycling, and source reduction programs; and special waste materials programs, including concrete/asphalt/rubble and tires.

The following goal and policies advance the City’s efforts in implementing its integrated waste management programs.

#### **Disposable Rate Targets**

Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by comparing actual disposal rates for residents and employees to target rates (actual rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939). The target disposal rate for Westminster residents in 2014 was 6.3 pounds per day (ppd) per resident, and the actual disposal rate was 3.2 ppd per resident. The target disposal rate for Westminster employees was 27.7 ppd per employee, and the actual rate was 13.3 ppd per employee. These rates demonstrate that Westminster is achieving its disposal rate targets, and both residents and employees are consistent with AB 939 targets.

**GOAL INR-3: SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING**

**Reduced generation and disposal of solid waste to landfills and an increased public awareness and participation in waste diversion programs.**

**POLICIES**

- INR-3.1 Compliance with State Legislation.** Comply with Assembly Bill 939 source reduction and recycling requirements of 50 percent diversion of solid waste from landfills and strive to partner, plan for, and document compliance with Assembly Bill 341 source reduction, recycling, and composting requirements of 75 percent by 2020.
- INR-3.2 Diversion.** Continue implementing waste reduction, reuse, and recycling programs to divert recyclable materials from landfills; expand programs as needed in response to state mandates and local priorities.
- INR-3.3 Landfill Capacity.** Continue to coordinate with the Midway City Sanitary District to ensure adequate landfill capacity in the region.
- INR-3.4 Waste Service Performance Collection Facilities.** Support efforts of the Midway City Sanitary District to maintain adequate residential, commercial, and industrial solid waste and mixed recycling collection service levels and solid waste facilities in accordance with state law, and periodically review waste collection performance to verify adequacy of service.
- INR-3.5 Municipal Waste.** Increase the City's role in the source reduction and recycling components of waste management through recycling programs at City facilities to reduce the quantity of City-generated waste.
- INR-3.6 Fees and Funding.** Work with the Midway City Sanitary District to periodically review collection, recycling, and disposal fees to achieve state and federal mandates, meet community expectations, and reflect cost efficiencies or increases for service delivery.
- INR-3.7 Special Waste.** Ensure that special waste—including hazardous materials, tires, medications, infectious waste, asbestos waste, construction waste, and electronic waste—are recycled and disposed of in a manner that is safe for the environment, residents, and visitors to Westminster.
- INR-3.8 Organic Waste.** Explore opportunities to collect and compost greenwaste, including landscaping, Christmas trees, composting and mulch, and other sources of organic waste, to distribute for use in parks, medians, and other municipal areas, when feasible.
- INR-3.9 Public Education.** Promote citywide educational programs to inform citizens of the benefits of recycling and appropriate recycling options and locations.

## Communication Systems

The City is provided with a range of communication services by national and local service providers that are standard for most urban areas across southern California. Local telephone and cellular phone service providers are regulated in accordance with the California Public Utility Commission, and Westminster has operational cell sites in the City. Cable television and other video services are regulated under franchises with the State of California as a result of AB 2987, the Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act of 2006. Internet service is diversified, with several internet service provider choices for residents and businesses.

Effective communication is essential to the efficient operation of business and government and for individual convenience. The past decade has seen unprecedented, rapid improvements in communications and information technologies. Satellites, the Internet, and widespread use of personal computers and cellular telephones have dramatically changed society. Today, telephone lines, television cables, fiber-optic cables, and wireless technology connect us and provide access to a wealth of information.

The following goal and policies provide direction on the long-term vision for the City's communication platform.

### **GOAL INR-4: COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS**

**A modern and efficient telecommunications system that improves economic development, governmental efficiency, and equitable access.**

#### **POLICIES**

- INR-4.1 Adequate Facilities and Availability of Services.** Work with telecommunications service providers operating in Westminster to ensure a wide range of modern telecommunication services that meet the advanced facility and service demands of existing and future development, and expand service to areas that are underserved or not served by telecommunication technologies.
- INR-4.2 Fiber Optic Network.** Support the development of and connection to a fiber optic communications network for public use (e.g, libraries, streetscapes), City operations, and to attract technology-related industry to the City.
- INR-4.3 Wireless Communication Facilities.** Ensure that wireless communication facilities are designed and sited in a manner that minimizes visual impacts on and from the surrounding environment.

## Natural Resources and Conservation

The City of Westminster has natural resources within and outside its boundaries and is committed to the conservation and protection of biological resources, energy, and water. Preserving the quality of these resources is not only beneficial to current residents, but crucial to the sustainability of future generations.

### Biological

Westminster is largely urbanized with few remaining natural open spaces, and its landscapes primarily consist of nonnative ornamental species that have been planted around commercial, residential, and industrial buildings; in parking lots; along streets; and in the open space areas of the City's parks and schools. Various tree species provide suitable nesting and roosting habitat for resident and migratory bird species. Wildlife in Westminster is limited to species that are adapted to highly urbanized areas, such as birds and small mammal species including raccoons, skunks, opossum, ground squirrels, and small rodents.

Street trees in Westminster are protected by the Street Forest Policy in the City's Municipal Code. Construction operations must place guard devices around vegetation along streets and alleys and in public places to prevent damage to the vegetation, and removal of street trees is subject to the City's review. The City has a Heritage Tree Program, whereby the City designates specific trees in City parks as heritage trees due to their age, size, origin, uniqueness, and/or national or regional rarity. The designation affords some protection for trees, because permission from the Community Services Commission is necessary before removing any listed tree.

### Energy

The use of electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuels helps society function, but also creates a dependency on these energy resources. It is therefore imperative to use them efficiently to conserve them for future generations. Additionally, climate change is increasingly acknowledged as the result of greenhouse gases (GHGs) being released into the air faster than the earth's natural systems can reabsorb them. The predominant source of GHG emissions in most cities is energy use in automobiles, buildings, and large-scale public utilities such as water transmission. The long-term solution to GHG reduction must include decreasing/conserving energy use and increasing production of renewable energy (solar or wind power). See the Air Quality section of the Public Health and Safety Element for additional details.

State law already requires Southern California Edison to diversify its sources of energy to include renewable sources like wind and solar. The City of Westminster has an active Energy Committee that oversees the energy efficiency activities of the City. The City adopted Resolution 4101 to participate in the California Energy Commission Technical Assistance Program, which is committed to seeking funding to implement specific energy projects. The City has also demonstrated its commitment to energy conservation by pursuing Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification for some of its development projects, including the Police Building, which is certified LEED Platinum.



*Southern California Edison is the primary supplier of electricity to the city.*



*The Westminster Police Headquarters is a LEED Platinum-certified building.*



*The City's Water Division regularly attends community events to educate residents, businesses, and visitors about water conservation best practices.*

## Water Conservation

Conserving water is essential to a long-term reliable water supply, and the urban water management plan has a drought contingency plan. During a drought, the City's water shortage contingency plan has three stages of response based on the severity of drought—shortage, severe shortage, and extreme shortage. Besides mandated reductions during drought, Westminster also requires a range of best practices to control the use of potable water where feasible. Strategies include the use of water-efficient landscaping in new development and tiered water rates that encourage conservation.

The Westminster City Council adopted the Water Conservation and Supply Shortage Program Ordinance No. 2449 in 2009, which establishes permanent water conservation requirements and prohibitions against waste that are in effect at all times and do not depend on a water shortage for implementation. In addition to local water conservation ordinances, the City has partnered with the Municipal Water District of Orange County on educational programs, indoor retrofits, and training. These efforts have been part of statewide water conservation ordinances that require reducing landscape irrigation, the amount of water served in restaurants and bars, and the amount of laundry cleaned by hotels.

The City's public education and outreach program is administered by MWDOC, which has established an extensive public education and outreach program to assist its retail agencies in promoting water use efficiency awareness in their service areas. MWDOC has five primary program types—school education programs, value of water communication programs, quarterly water policy dinners, an annual water summit, and water inspection trips.

The Westminster Water Division also holds regular public engagement events to discuss the state of the drought, water supply, and practical steps every resident can take to save water. The Water Division has found that individual contact with residents has the greatest impact on behavioral change and has held Drought Town Halls and HOA and Neighborhood Watch meetings in high-consumption areas to discuss how to reduce water waste and demand. The Water Division also participates in citywide events like Día de la Familia, Spring Festival, Safety Day, Tet Parade and Flower Festival, and Community Expos and gives presentations to councils and the local Kiwanis group.

**GOAL INR-5: NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION**  
**An environment that conserves, protects, and enhances Westminster’s biological, energy, and water resources.**

**POLICIES: BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

- INR-5.1 Biological Resource Protection.** Conserve and protect wildlife ecosystems, riverine corridors, and sensitive habitat areas within the City, including existing trees that are suitable nesting and roosting habitat for resident and migratory bird species.
- INR-5.2 Riparian Habitat.** Work with Orange County Public Works and Orange County Flood Control District to preserve and/or restore riparian communities along and within established flood control channels such as the Bolsa Chica Channel.
- INR-5.3 Natural Habitat Areas.** Coordinate with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to prevent grading activities that would remove or disturb trees for nesting migratory birds.
- INR-5.4 Urban Forest.** Build upon existing streetscapes and develop an urban forest along the City’s commercial and mixed-use streets and in neighborhoods to provide avian habitat, sequester carbon monoxide emissions, foster pedestrian activity, and provide shade.
- INR-5.5 Wetland Preservation.** Preserve wetlands, riparian corridors, and buffer zones in Westminster by establishing reasonable limits on the clearing of vegetation from project sites. Encourage the use of water quality wetlands, biofiltration swales, watershed-scale retrofits, etc., where such measures are likely to be effective and technically and economically feasible.



*Mature trees in Westminster, like the one pictured above, are part of the City’s “urban forest”.*

**POLICIES: ENERGY RESOURCES**

- INR-5.6 Adequate and Reliable Service and Facilities.** Coordinate with Southern California Edison (SCE) and Southern California Gas (SoCal Gas) to continue to supply adequate electricity and natural gas services and facilities, while developing strategies to increase the use of renewable energy sources through financial or permitting incentives.
- INR-5.7 Energy Plan.** Continue to implement the Citywide Energy Action Plan, which promotes energy conservation measures, and consider ongoing programs such as retrofitting appliances and solar-assisted energy requirements.
- INR-5.8 Energy Efficient Building and Site Design.** Continue to encourage new construction to incorporate innovative and energy efficient building and site design, including solar orientation, use of natural daylight, and passive ventilation.
- INR-5.9 Community Education.** Coordinate with SCE to increase public awareness of energy conservation practices and programs, such as rebate programs and energy efficiency audits.
- INR-5.10 Alternative Energy and Fuel Efficient Fleet.** Pursue the use of alternative energy and fuel-efficient City vehicles and equipment that meet or surpass state emissions requirements.



*Shaded parking structures that support solar panels and xeriscape landscaping help to reduce reliance on greenhouse gas-producing fuels, and promote water conservation.*



*Conscientious landscaping reduces water demand, prevents harmful runoff, decreases flooding, and enhances groundwater.*

**INR-5.11 Green Buildings.** Promote City operations as a model for energy efficiency and green building and install, as feasible, energy-efficient lighting, appliances, and alternative-energy infrastructure in City facilities.

#### **POLICIES: WATER RESOURCES**

**INR-5.12 Reclaimed Water Systems.** Continue to coordinate with the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) and Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD) to pursue the use of reclaimed water systems for landscape irrigation and industrial uses, such as the Green Acres Project.

**INR-5.13 Water Conservation and Supply Shortage.** When appropriate, initiate a conservation and supply shortage program to maximize the efficient use of water within the City and to avoid and minimize the effect and hardship of water shortage.

**INR-5.14 Efficient Use.** Coordinate with the MWDOC and OCSD to explore the development of programs that reduce public and private water use and water waste associated with landscape irrigation, including the installation of efficient irrigation systems, recycling runoff, and drought-tolerant landscaping.

**INR-5.15 Landscaping.** Encourage all public and private landscaping in new development and renovation projects to be designed to reduce water demand, prevent runoff, decrease flooding, and recharge groundwater through the installation of irrigation systems, the selection of appropriate plant materials, and proper soil preparation.

**INR-5.16 Distribution.** Utilize the most recent available water conservation technology and green infrastructure to ensure an efficient and cost-effective distribution system.

### **Related Plans, Programs, and Legislation**

The Infrastructure and Natural Resources Element sets broad goals and policies to facilitate adequate infrastructure and natural resources and conservation. These goals and policies are implemented by master plans, some provided by the City and others by regional entities.

#### **2010 Urban Water Management Plan**

The Urban Water Management Planning Act of 1995 states that every urban water supplier shall prepare and adopt an urban water management plan (to be updated every 4 years) that:

- » Plans for water supply and assesses reliability of each source of water, over a 20-year period, in 5-year increments.
- » Identifies and quantifies adequate water supplies, including recycled water, for existing and future demands in normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years.

- » Implements conservation and the efficient use of urban water supplies. Significant new requirements for quantified demand reductions were added by the Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SBX7-7), which amends the 1995 act and adds new water conservation provisions to the Water Code.

The Westminster Urban Water Management Plan addresses long-term plans to deal with water system needs and meet supply demand projections through buildout development. The plan demonstrates how the City effectively manages use of limited resources available to the Water Division.

## **Midway City Sanitary District Sewer System Master Plan and Strategic Plan**

In 2015, the MCSD Board of Directors adopted a new comprehensive Sewer System Master Plan to drive MCSD's efforts and engage the organization to envision service and operations of the sewer system (this report is updated every two years). A corresponding Strategic Plan is updated annually and evaluates a five-year horizon for the entire district. The most recent strategic plan was adopted in 2016. The City of Westminster recognizes that MCSD is an important partner in achieving many of the City's General Plan goals, and this Infrastructure and Natural Resources Element seeks to assist in implementing MCSD's Strategic Plan goals as defined in the Sewer System Master Plan and Strategic Plan.

## **Senate Bill 244: Disadvantaged Communities**

Senate Bill 244 requires cities and counties to address the infrastructure needs of unincorporated disadvantaged communities in general plans. A disadvantaged community is an unincorporated fringe, island, or legacy community in which the median household income is 80 percent or less than the statewide median household income. The Westminster Land Use Element provides a complete overview of the four Orange County islands that are within Westminster's sphere of influence, three of which are wholly or partially classified as disadvantaged communities based on the 2010 Census.

Senate Bill 244 also requires cities to analyze the water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, and structural fire protection needs and financial funding alternatives for the extension of services to identified disadvantaged communities. This Infrastructure and Natural Resources Element addresses this requirement for water, wastewater, and stormwater drainage, and the Public Health and Safety Element addresses fire protection needs.

## **Assembly Bills 939 and 341**

The Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Public Resources Code §§ 40050 et seq.) established an integrated waste-management system that focused on source reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal of waste. AB 939 required every California city and county to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills by the year 2000 and a 75 percent diversion rate by 2020. Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by comparing solid waste disposal rates for a jurisdiction with target disposal rates. Actual rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939. AB 939 also requires California counties to show 15 years of disposal capacity for all jurisdictions in the county or show a plan to transform or divert its waste. AB 939 is supported by AB 341 (Mandatory Commercial Recycling), which provides direction to reduce GHG emissions by diverting commercial solid waste to recycling

efforts and to expand the opportunity for additional recycling services and recycling manufacturing facilities in California.

### **Westminster Energy Action Plan**

The City has developed an Energy Action Plan that identifies ways the city can meet the greenhouse gas reduction goals established by Assembly Bill 32, The California Global Warming Act. AB 32 set a target to decrease emissions statewide to 1990 levels by the year 2020. The City's Energy Action Plan establishes the City's long-term vision and funding strategy for energy efficiency projects to meet its share of reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The primary objectives of the Energy Action Plan are to: 1) reduce the city's carbon footprint and its adverse impacts on the environment, 2) conserve energy at local government facilities, and 3) raise energy conservation awareness in the community. So far the City has implemented a number of energy efficiency projects, including the retrofit of street lights and lighted street signs. In addition, it has integrated these principles into the development of new facilities such as the Miriam Warne Community Building, which received LEED Silver certification.

### **20x2020 Water Conservation Plan**

The 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan was issued by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in 2010 pursuant to Senate Bill 7 (SBX7-7). SBX7-7 authorized the DWR to prepare a plan which implemented urban water conservation requirements—known as the 20x2020 Water Conservation Plan. SBX7-7 requires urban water providers to adopt a water conservation target of 20 percent reduction in urban per capita water use by 2020.

To comply with SBx7-7 regulations, Westminster has joined the tiered Orange County 20X2020 Regional Alliance with 29 retail agencies, the Municipal Water District of Orange County, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. MWDOC reports on Westminster's daily per capita water use, and in 2010 the City's water use was well below the minimum water use reduction target for 2020. To comply with these restrictions, the Westminster City Council has enacted several water restrictions on outdoor watering, decorative water features, car washing, leak repair, and filling pools.

### **Governor's Drought Declaration**

California Governor Edmund Brown Jr. declared a drought state of emergency on January 17, 2014, asking Californians to reduce water use by 20 percent. In response to the drought, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted Resolution No. 2014-0038 (July 15, 2014) and emergency regulations to ensure that water suppliers, their customers, and state residents increase water conservation and prohibit wasting water in urban settings. Water suppliers are required to activate their Water Shortage Contingency Plan, educate customers and employees, increase local supplies, and report progress.



# PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

## Introduction to Public Health and Safety

Public health and safety and protection from the risks of natural and human-induced disasters, emergencies, and hazards are vital in establishing a safe and healthy environment for Westminster’s residents, visitors, and workers.

The Public Health and Safety Element identifies and evaluates potential natural and man-made safety hazards, provides guidance on police and fire services, and defines the policies and actions that aim to minimize the risk of damage to property or injury to people. By identifying threats to Westminster’s health and safety, the community can better guard itself against natural and man-made disasters, and develop effective response and recovery plans during and after such events.

The Public Health and Safety Element addresses the state-mandated general plan safety element. The safety element is required “for the protection of the community from any unreasonable risks associated with the effects of” any relevant hazard (CA Gov’t Code § 65302[g]). Although the topic of air quality is not required in a city’s general plan, the City of Westminster has elected to address it in this element.

The Public Health and Safety Element is supported by and consistent with the other elements of this General Plan, including the Land Use Element (land uses are influenced by the location of potential hazards), Mobility Element (promotes improved air quality through a reduction in vehicle miles traveled), and Infrastructure and Natural Resources Element (identifies the City’s critical infrastructure facilities, which support improved public safety).

### Organization of Element

This element is organized around six topics; each topical section includes background on the topic, followed by goals and policies to achieve the General Plan vision. Related plans, programs, and legislation are described at the end of this chapter.

- » **Community Safety.** Police services, including community policing and sheriff’s department services.
- » **Fire Protection and Urban Fire Hazards.** Fire protection and prevention, volunteer and public education programs, and automatic and mutual aid agreements.
- » **Natural Hazards.** Geologic and seismic hazards, flooding and inundation.
- » **Hazardous Materials.** How hazardous materials should be used, managed, and disposed of.

### In This Element...

- » Community Safety
- » Fire Protection and Urban Fire Hazards
- » Geologic and Seismic Hazards
- » Flooding and Inundation Hazards
- » Hazardous Materials
- » Emergency Preparedness
- » Air Quality



*Every summer, the Community Services and Recreation Department hosts Public Awareness Safety Day. The event helps children and their families familiarize themselves with the City safety staff and services.*



*The new police headquarters building, located in the Civic Center, provides state-of-the-art facilities for the Westminister Police Department.*



*Well-trained and well-equipped police are key to effective public safety services.*

- » **Emergency Preparedness.** Preparedness, response, and recovery during times of emergency.
- » **Air Quality.** Local air quality, including pollution and particulate matter, and the City’s role in mitigating global climate change.

## Community Safety

Police protection in the City of Westminister is provided by the Westminister Police Department (WPD), and the Orange County Sheriff’s Department, North Operations Division, provides that service to the unincorporated community of Midway City. WPD is highly valued throughout the community and provides a wide range of emergency response services and community programs to suppress crime and improve traffic safety, while maintaining high professional standards.

The WPD’s new headquarters opened in 2011 in the City’s Civic Center. Services provided by the WPD are largely paid for with funds from the City’s general fund and a special police services fund, which pays for regional and local narcotics suppression programs, federal grants related to crime prevention, and the Westminister Mall police patrol. The department is organized into various units and divisions, including:

- Animal Control
- Code Enforcement
- Detective Bureau
- East Command
- Forensic Services
- Management Services
- Professional Standards
- Property Unit
- Traffic Unit
- West Command

The main responsibility of a police department is to prevent and suppress criminal activity by enforcing local, state, and federal laws. Crime suppression services in Westminister are divided into two area commands—East and West—which are separated by Beach Boulevard. WPD further divides each of its two area commands into four quadrants, or sectors. The area command service delivery model aggressively addresses crime issues and improves quality of life through community-oriented and problem-oriented policing. Each area command has one police lieutenant designated as the area commander and at least one police service officer; both are responsible for understanding the issues and concerns unique to their service area and for developing strategies and directing resources to solve community issues.

## **Volunteer and Community Policing**

Although it is the responsibility of the police department to ensure a safe living and working environment in Westminster, public safety is also a community-wide effort. The WPD is committed to strengthening its ties with the community by providing interactive and volunteer programs, easier access to resources, and community education. These programs include:

- Neighborhood Watch
- Explorer Program
- Strategic Home Intervention and Early Leadership Development program (SHIELD)
- Citizens Police Academy

Citizens Police Academy participants enroll in a 10-week program to learn about emergency calls, police discretion and ethics, street gangs, SWAT, narcotics, criminal investigations, and more. The Explorer Program is offered to young adults between the ages of 14 and 21 interested in law enforcement. Explorers gain first-hand experience with law enforcement careers—they aid with traffic control at public events, fingerprinting, bike licensing, and rooftop surveillance of automobiles in parking lots. Through programs like these, the WPD hopes to empower and improve the overall quality of life for Westminster residents.

## **Safe Neighborhoods**

Neighborhood safety can be enhanced through code enforcement—the City can ensure a certain quality of life for Westminster residents and that neighborhood and property values are preserved and maintained. Code enforcement staff works closely with the WPD to examine properties—either in response to a complaint or as part of an ongoing, proactive program—in order to protect residents, visitors, and businesses. Code enforcement programs in Westminster address:

- Abandoned vehicle abatement
- Enforcement of home businesses ordinance
- Illegal accessory structures inspection
- Graffiti abatement and public nuisances
- Monitoring pollutant discharge in the storm drain system

## **Traffic Safety/Control**

The Traffic Division of the WPD enforces federal and state traffic laws and manages the investigation and documentation of traffic collisions. In Westminster, enforcement efforts focus on busy intersections, streets, and other areas of concern, as identified by traffic safety statistics. The Traffic Division manages many of Westminster's special events to ensure the orderly control of traffic and playing. The Traffic Division and WPD as a whole actively seek to create safe streets for all users, including drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

## **Orange County Sheriff's Department**

The Orange County Sheriff's Department provides police protection services to the unincorporated county island of Midway City from its West Substation in the City of Stanton at 11100 Cedar Street. Sheriff's department services include staffing for service calls, preventive patrol, traffic enforcement, and specialized enforcement. Currently, the West Substation is adequate to handle the existing personnel and equipment employed and used by the sheriff's department.

**GOAL PHS-1: COMMUNITY SAFETY**

Effective police services that provide protection and promote a safe and healthy community for all Westminster residents, businesses, and visitors.



*Police presence promotes a safe and healthy community.*



*Police officers utilize motorcycles, bicycles, and vehicles to keep Westminster safe.*

**Policies**

**PHS-1.1 High Quality Police Services.** Maintain a high quality level of service and appropriate response times, consistent with community expectations and professional industry standards, for all Westminster Police services, including animal control, emergency operations, crime prevention and suppression, code enforcement, school safety, and traffic safety.

**PHS-1.2 Community Policing.** Empower Westminster residents and promote community-based policing through the Area Command service delivery model and other interactive programs, such as Neighborhood Watch, Citizens Police Academy, and ride-alongs.

**PHS-1.3 Partnerships.** Strengthen communication and coordination between residents; businesses; schools; community organizations; and local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to ensure police services for the community are responsive to local needs.

**PHS-1.4 Resources.** Provide adequate funding to supply the Westminster Police Department with sufficient staff, equipment, facilities, technology, and resources to help achieve community expectations and professional industry service standards.

**PHS-1.5 Development Review.** Ensure that all new projects are designed with public safety in mind to prevent crime and minimize loss through fire incidents.

**PHS-1.6 Public Safety Hot Spots.** Prioritize enforcement activities to minimize safety hot spots. Work with code enforcement to support the timely resolution of cases to ensure compliance with City codes.

**PHS-1.7 Traffic Safety.** Create traffic safety plans and programs to ensure motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users of all ages can safely and conveniently move around the community.

**PHS-1.8 Technology.** Keep abreast of technological advances that can make safety response teams more efficient, and implement where feasible.

## Fire Protection and Urban Fire Hazards

Proper fire protection not only saves lives, but can improve property values, reduce insurance costs for businesses and homeowners, and ensure that residents are living safely and securely. Although quick response times to fires and emergencies minimize the losses from such tragedies, fire prevention tactics are the best strategy for fire protection in the long run.

### Fire Protection Services

Fire protection services in Westminster are provided by the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA), a joint powers authority. OCFA is a regional fire service agency providing fire suppression and prevention, emergency medical response, rescue response, hazardous materials coordination, and wildland management services to many Orange County cities and unincorporated areas. OCFA protects over 1.75 million residents (projected to be 1.9 million in 2020) in a service area of approximately 575 square miles; operates from more than 70 fire stations; and uses nearly 500 response vehicles, including fire engines, paramedic vans, and aerial trucks. Four OCFA fire stations provide protection to Westminster: three in the City and one in unincorporated Midway City. As the City builds out under the General Plan land use plan, additional fire stations may be required. The City will continue to work with OCFA to monitor the need for additional fire stations.

### Fire Prevention

Fire prevention services provided by OFCA—including community education, safety inspections, and review of plans for fire and life safety—are necessary to help identify and eliminate hazardous conditions that pose a threat to life, the environment, and property in Westminster. The OCFA Community Risk Reduction Department (formerly known as Fire Prevention) is responsible for all fire prevention activities, including planning and development services, prevention field services, pre-fire management, and investigation services (see sidebar).

### Fire Suppression and Emergency Fire Response

The Operations Department of OCFA provides emergency response to fires and hazardous materials incidents, emergency medical aid, and rescues in the City and its unincorporated communities. The majority of service calls are for emergency medical service. Response times can be impacted by a number of conditions—the most significant of which is the large area served by OCFA and congestion on major arterial roadways during the late afternoons and early evenings. Staffing and equipment levels are currently optimum given the number of calls generated within the area.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) reviews fire protection resources within each community, and establishes a Community Fire Protection Rating system from which most insurance rates are based. The ISO rating consists of three components—fire dispatch, fire department operations, and sufficiency of water supply and infrastructure. Westminster (in the ISO West region) maintains a Class 3 rating out of 10, where 1 generally represents superior property fire protection, and Class 10 indicates that the area’s fire suppression program doesn’t meet ISO’s minimum criteria. Westminster’s rating is typical for most cities in the southern California region.

### OCFA Fire Prevention Services

**Planning and Development Services** interacts with the development community and municipal staff to ensure that buildings and developments meet state and local fire and life safety requirements. This OCFA section reviews all tract and parcel maps, permits for conditional use, site development, and plans related to the development and construction process.

**Prevention Field Services** conducts fire safety inspections, enforces and educates the community about applicable fire codes and ordinances, and ensures that public safety issues are researched and addressed as appropriate.

**Pre-fire Management** takes a proactive approach to fire prevention through systematic risk mitigation, vegetation fuel mitigation, road maintenance, vegetation management/home gardening education, and other collaborative activities in OCFA communities.

**Investigation Services** conducts accurate fire investigation and evaluation and initiates early intervention strategies. It also manages the Fire FRIENDS program administration.



*Aerial fire-fighting is an important tool in urban fire suppression, allowing access to fires if roadways are blocked.*



*Having the proper equipment is essential to keeping firefighters safe.*

### **Fire Volunteer and Public Education Programs**

The Communications and Public Affairs and Human Resources departments are responsible for coordinating OCFA employment, volunteer programs, public education programs, and administration activities. One OCFA volunteer program available to the community is the Fire Explorer program, which gives young adults exposure to career opportunities in the fire services. Fire Explorer volunteers learn to use various tools, develop mechanical skills and aptitude, and gain a greater awareness of personal and fire safety.

The Communications and Public Affairs Department oversees large-scale educational campaigns and community outreach events, including the messaging material and delivery systems that promote public safety awareness. Campaigns include drowning prevention, wildfire awareness, fire safety, and neighborhood smoke alarm installations.

### **Automatic and Mutual Aid Agreements**

Fire-fighting agencies work together during emergencies. These arrangements are handled through automatic and mutual aid agreements, which obligate fire departments to help each other under predefined circumstances. Automatic aid agreements require the nearest fire company to respond to a fire regardless of the jurisdiction, and mutual aid agreements require fire department resources to respond outside of their district upon requests for assistance.

The City of Westminster is part of an operational area group served by OCFA, which requires all jurisdictions in the group to have mutual aid agreements. Each of the cities is also part of a joint powers agreement, which provides for the joint use and operation of machinery, equipment, vehicles, and personnel in the event of a fire, disturbance, or other local emergency that cannot be met solely by the requesting city or jurisdiction.

### **Urban Fires**

Due to the urban nature of Westminster and surrounding communities, there is very little risk of wildland fire hazards (fires in woodland, brushland, or grassland areas). The primary fire hazard is urban fires, which burn in developed areas and include commercial, industrial, and residential structure fires.



*The Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) participates in community events promoting fire and life safety.*

**GOAL PHS-2: FIRE HAZARDS**

Persons and property protected from urban fire hazards.

**POLICIES**

- PHS-2.1 California Fire Code.** Require all development to comply with the provisions of the most recently adopted California Fire Code.
- PHS-2.2 Development Review.** Continue to coordinate all development proposals with the Police Department and the Orange County Fire Authority to ensure that proposed projects incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles, and to determine if sufficient resources exist to meet any anticipated project-specific demand.
- PHS-2.3 Fire Station Facilities.** Periodically consult with Orange County Fire Authority to ensure that their facilities are appropriately located throughout the community based on existing and proposed land uses.
- PHS-2.4 Urban Fire Risks.** Work with the City's fire service provider to maintain an ongoing fire inspection program to reduce fire hazards associated with multifamily development, critical facilities, public assembly facilities, industrial buildings, and nonresidential buildings.
- PHS-2.5 Interagency support.** Participate in the mutual aid system and automatic aid agreements to back up and supplement capabilities to respond to emergencies.



*A portion of Westminster is served by Orange County Fire Station No. 64*

## Geologic Hazard Definitions

**Lateral Spreading.** The downslope movement of surface sediment as a result of liquefaction in a subsurface layer. Given that the City is in a potential liquefaction area, lateral spreading can be a concern.

**Ground Subsidence.** The ground surface sinks, or settles, due to extraction of oil, gas, or groundwater. There is little potential for widespread permanent subsidence in Westminster.

**Collapsible Soils.** Collapsible soils compact and collapse when wetted and/or subject to a load. The suitability of site soils for supporting future development should be evaluated.

*An active fault is a fault that shows evidence of surface displacement within the last 11,000 years is subject to the requirements of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, which prohibits structures for human occupancy across traces of active faults.*

## Natural Hazards

The identification and mitigation of relevant natural hazards in Westminster will result in better protection of the community's health and welfare. To ensure the safety of the Westminster community, geologic, seismic, and flooding hazards are considered in the following sections and figures.

### Geologic and Seismic Hazards

Geologic hazards are generally defined as surficial earth processes that have the potential to cause loss or harm to the community or the environment.

#### Geologic Hazards

Under certain circumstances, Westminster's geologic setting can produce hazardous conditions, most commonly due to seismic or flood events. Other geologic hazards include lateral spreading, subsidence, and collapsible soils (see sidebar). As shown in *Figure 8-1, Geologic Map*, the majority of Westminster consists of young deposits (less than 126,000 years old), which are susceptible to uneven settlement during seismic events as well as erosion. Seismic shaking can cause these geologically young deposits to become more tightly packed, reducing their volume and resulting in uneven settling and potential structural damage. Areas at or near the contact between alluvium and bedrock, or between artificial fill and natural soils, are also susceptible to seismically induced settling. These hazards can be mitigated through development standards and public awareness, and much of the damage they cause can be avoided.

#### Seismic Hazards

There are no active fault lines running through the City. However, all of southern California is a seismically active area, and shaking from nearby faults could result in significant damage. The Westminster area could be affected by the Newport-Inglewood Fault (2 miles to the southwest), the Whittier-Elsinore Fault (15.6 miles to the north), the Chino Fault (24.3 miles to the northeast), the Palos Verdes Fault (13 miles to the southwest), the San Andreas Fault (47 miles to the northeast), and the San Jacinto Fault (45 miles to the northeast). Regional faults are identified on *Figure 8-2, Seismic Hazards*.

A major earthquake in the region could result in casualties and damage caused by collapsed buildings, damaged roads and bridges, fires, flooding, and other threats to life and property. The US Geologic Survey's third California Earthquake Rupture Forecast, released in March 2015, estimates a 96 percent chance that the greater Los Angeles area (which includes Westminster) will experience an earthquake of magnitude 6.0 or above by 2044, and a 31 percent chance for a magnitude 7.5 or above earthquake in the same time period.

Although seismic shaking from the San Andreas Fault would have local impacts, the seismic shaking damage from the Newport-Inglewood Fault and the San Joaquin Hills Fault would likely be more substantial due to their proximity to Westminster. The Newport-Inglewood Fault, which runs from Inglewood through Huntington Beach and out into the Pacific Ocean in the Newport Beach area, is capable of producing earthquakes in the magnitude 6.3 to 7.5 range. This fault was responsible for the magnitude 6.4 earthquake in Long Beach in 1933.

## **Ground Shaking**

Ground motion/shaking is the primary cause of damage and injury during earthquakes and can result in surface rupture, liquefaction, landslides, lateral spreading, differential settlement, and building and infrastructure failure, which could lead to fire and other collateral damage. Ground movement during an earthquake depends on the magnitude of the earthquake, distance to the fault, focus of the earthquake energy, and type of geologic material. Areas underlain by bedrock usually experience less ground shaking than areas underlain by unconsolidated soils.

Fires and structural failure are the most hazardous results of ground shaking. Most earthquake-induced fires start from broken power lines, gas lines, or electrical equipment. These problems can be exacerbated by damage to street and hydrant infrastructure that may impact the ability to provide effective emergency response after a significant seismic event.

## **Liquefaction**

Liquefaction is when soils lose their load bearing capacity because of ground shaking or other extreme pressure and behave like a liquid. Westminster is on an alluvial floodplain and has the prerequisites for liquefaction—loose unconsolidated soils, shallow groundwater, and the potential for strong seismic shaking—which means the entire City is susceptible to liquefaction, as depicted on *Figure 8-2, Seismic Hazards*.

## **Critical Structures and Utilities**

Advances in engineering techniques and building codes have reduced the threat of seismic-related collapse in new buildings. However, earlier buildings are still at risk—unreinforced masonry, precast concrete tilt-up walls, soft-stories, and nonductile concrete frames. Certain facilities in the City are considered critical for disaster planning and recovery effort. Critical facilities of particular concern in Westminster include: the Westminster Rose Center, the Miriam Warne Community Building, the Police Department building, Westminster City Hall, and the City Senior Center.

Seismic shaking and liquefaction can cause major damage to nearly all utility systems, both aboveground and underground. Damage to phone lines and/or cell towers will prevent automatic reporting of fires from sprinkler monitoring systems. Damaged roads will impact effective emergency fire and medical response. Ruptured water lines will also knock out hydrants and sprinkler water supplies. Any one or a combination of these occurrences could make the response and recovery process difficult and could place lives and property at risk.

## **Building Codes and Development Standards**

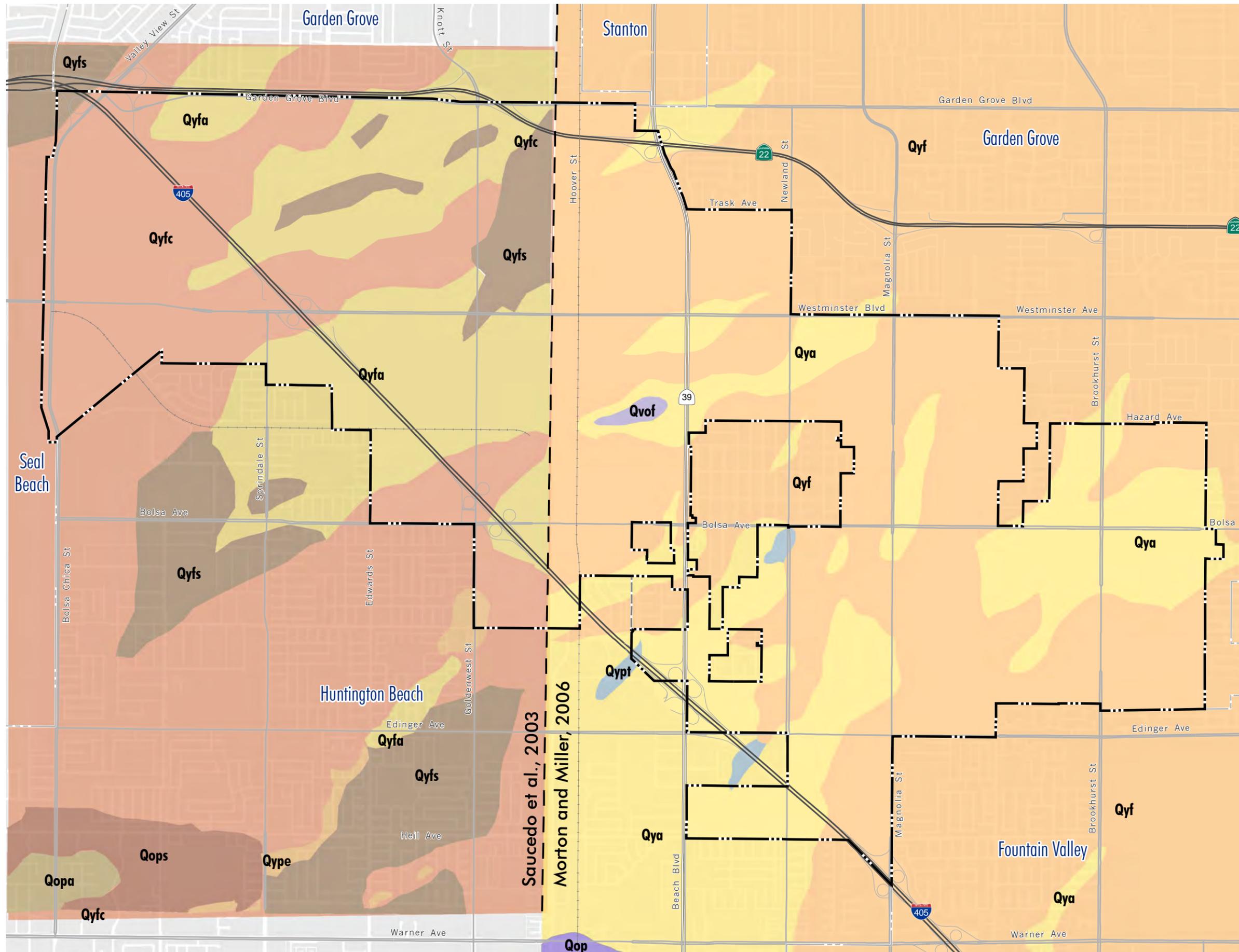
Pursuant to the Westminster Municipal Code, structures for human occupancy must be designed and built to meet or exceed California Building Code (CBC) standards for earthquake resistance. The CBC provides minimum standards to protect property and public safety by regulating the design and construction of excavations, foundations, building frames, retaining walls, and other features to help mitigate the effects of earthquakes. The CBC also provides additional seismic safety standards for schools, hospitals, infrastructure, and critical facilities.

**GOAL PHS-3: GEOLOGIC AND SEISMIC HAZARDS**  
Minimal risk of injury, loss of life, property damage, and social and economic impacts caused by geologic and seismic hazards.

**Policies**

- PHS-3.1 Hazard Identification.** Continue to collect and maintain current information on geologic hazards, and update citywide mapping on a continual basis.
- PHS-3.2 Geotechnical Study.** Require that any development proposed in areas with potential for geologic or seismic hazards prepare a geotechnical hazard study that addresses and offers mitigation for ground shaking, landslides, liquefaction, expansive soils, subsidence, and erosion.
- PHS-3.3 State and Local Safety Standards.** Enforce state and local seismic and geologic safety laws, standards, and guidelines, including the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, Seismic Hazard Mapping Act, and the California Building Code throughout Westminster.
- PHS-3.4 Utility Systems Resilience.** Coordinate with relevant utility service providers to ensure that major utility systems remain resilient in the event of a major earthquake or other seismic hazard.
- PHS-3.5 Multi-agency Cooperation.** Develop cooperative partnerships and strengthen communication among public agencies, residents, nonprofit organizations, and businesses to promote sharing of educational information regarding seismic and geologic hazards and safety.

Figure 8-1  
Geology Map



- City of Westminister Boundary
- City of Westminister Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries

**Geology Type (Morton and Miller, 2006)**

- Qop: Old Paralic Deposits
- Qvof: Very Old Alluvial Fan Deposit
- Qya: Young Axial Channel Deposits
- Qyf: Young Alluvial Fan Deposits
- Qypt: Young Peat Deposits

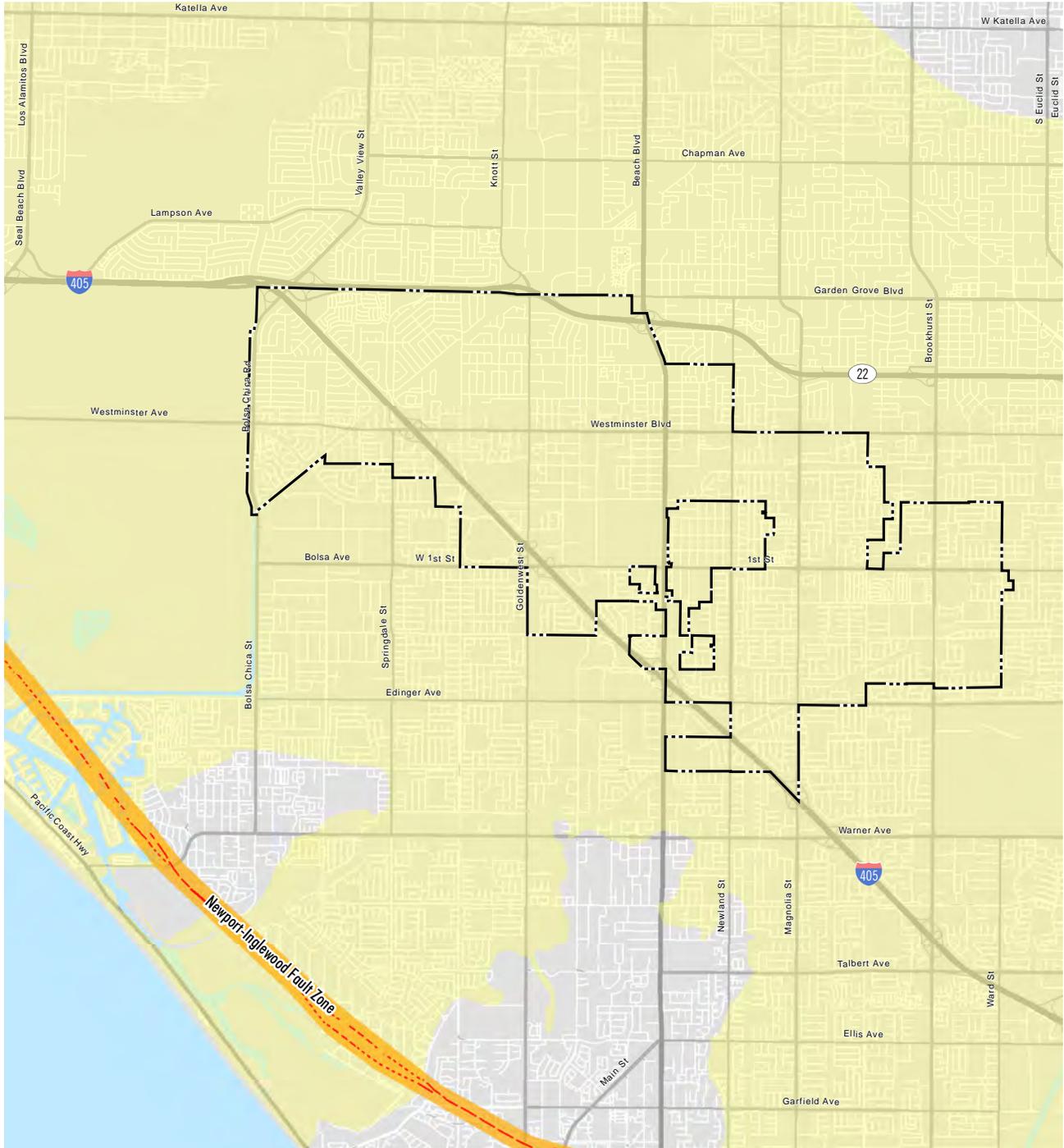
**Geology Type (Saucedo et al., 2003)**

- Qopa: Old Paralic Deposits, Sand
- Qops: Old Paralic Deposits, Silt
- Qyfa: Young Alluvial Fan and Valley Deposits, Sand
- Qyfc: Young Alluvial Fan and Valley Deposits, Clay
- Qyfs: Young Alluvial Fan and Valley Deposits, Silt
- Qype: Young Paralic Estuarine Deposits

For more information—including a detailed description of all geology types—see the Paleontological Resources Assessment prepared for the General Plan Environmental Impact Report, available on the City’s website or in person at City Hall.



Figure 8-2  
Seismic Hazards



Source: California Department of Conservation, Alquist-Priolo Potentially Active Faults 2007

- Accurately Located Fault Traces
- - - Approximately Located Fault Traces
- . . . Inferred Fault Traces
- · - · - Concealed Fault Traces
- Earthquake Fault Zone
- Liquefaction Zone
- City of Westminister Boundary

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## Flooding and Inundation

Orange County is particularly susceptible to heavy rains and flood inundation. Some of the heaviest rains recorded on the west coast of North America have been in southern California, and enormous public work projects were completed to mitigate flood damage across the region. Some flooding occurs at an average of every other year in the Orange County area.

Several factors determine the severity of floods, including rainfall intensity and duration; creek and storm drain system capacity, and the ground's infiltration rate. Floodwaters can carry large objects downstream with enough force to destroy stationary structures such as homes and bridges and break utility lines. Floodwaters saturate materials and earth, causing instability, collapse, and/or destruction of structures as well as loss of life.

### Flooding in Westminster

The City of Westminster is on the alluvial plains of the San Gabriel and Santa Ana rivers, which have had a long history of floods. Floods are the most common natural hazard in the City, especially in the community's lowest-lying areas around Beach Boulevard and 13th Street. They can be caused by heavy rains, localized storm cells, storm channel overflow, Santa Ana River overflow, Prado Dam release, or infrastructure failure. The damage caused by flooding can be very costly to unprepared residents and businesses.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, approximately 50 percent of the City (parts of the southeastern portion and areas along waterways) is designated in Special Flood Hazard Areas subject to inundation by the 1 percent annual chance flood (see *Figure 8-3, Flood and Inundation Map*). The 1 percent annual chance flood—also called the 100-year flood or base flood—is the flood that has a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any year. All 100-year flood areas in Westminster are designated Zone A, which means that the water-surface elevation of the 1 percent annual chance flood has not been determined.

Most of the rest of the City is in the 500-year flood zone, where the probability of flooding inundation decreases to 0.2 percent. Areas within the 100-year flood zone are required to purchase of flood insurance per the National Flood Insurance Program, and they are subject to special standards and regulations that apply to new construction, and in some cases, existing buildings. Flood insurance is available for properties in the 500-year flood zone, but is not mandated by the National Flood Insurance Program.

### Master Plan of Drainage

In 2004, the City of Westminster completed a storm drainage study to identify drainage improvements needed throughout the City, assess and prioritize those projects, estimate costs for their construction and maintenance, and relate the program costs to revenues from the City's stormwater utility fee. The highest-priority projects in this study included the McKay Drainageway, Little Dry Creek, Airport Creek, and South Branch Hylands Creek.

*Low-lying portions of the City of Westminster are prone to urban flooding, also called ponding. Although this is not a major problem in the City, it requires ongoing maintenance of existing storm drains and flood control channels.*



*Drainage swales play in important role in water management.*

Overbank flooding of the Santa Ana River is a public safety hazard. Flooding is also a concern along the City's storm drainage channels and in areas of the City that lack inlet or drain capacity. The City's stormwater infrastructure is covered in detail in the Infrastructure and Natural Resources Element of the General Plan.

Over the years, Westminster has suffered from a number of flooding events, many of which were catalysts to improving the way the community addresses flood hazards and mitigates impacts. The Los Angeles flood of 1938 inundated much of Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside counties, and five major rivers overtopped their banks. The area from Beach Boulevard to Ward Street and Garfield Avenue to the ocean was under water, and more than 100 people lost their lives. This flood was the reason for the construction of the Prado Dam.

Since that time, improvements have been made to the Westminster channel between Magnolia and Brookhurst, to the East Garden Grove/Wintersburg Channel, and to the flood control channel on Hazard Avenue just west of Beach Boulevard, which eliminated many historical flooding issues on surface streets in Westminster. The City also installed new storm drain systems in the area of Pacific and 10th Street, and Richardson Way and 19th Street, which eliminated a majority of the surface flooding issues. Heavy rain can still cause localized flooding, but not as much as previously observed.

### ***Critical Facilities***

During flooding events, utilities and other critical facilities can suffer significant damage. A flood can sweep away everything in its path, including aboveground infrastructure such as electricity line poles and traffic signal control boxes. When the water mixes with sediment, oil, and/or sewage, flooding can also damage roads and block storm drains, which can further exacerbate the damage. Underground infrastructure can be damaged by inundation or exposed, requiring repair or reconstruction. To mitigate these impacts, utilities in flood-prone areas should be designed and constructed accordingly, and flood-proofing techniques should be identified in communities with above-ground infrastructure to ensure continued operations during floods.

### ***Seismically Induced Inundation***

Dam failures can result from a number of natural or human causes, and the potential and severity for flooding depends on the speed of inundation, topography, and location of the dam failure. Seismically induced inundation refers to flooding that occurs when water retention structures, such as dams, fail due to an earthquake. During a dam failure, a flood wave gradually builds to a peak and then declines until the reservoir is empty. Dam failure can result in loss of life, property damage, and displacement of persons residing in the inundation path. Damage to electricity-generating facilities and transmission lines could also impact life support systems in communities outside the immediate hazard areas.

In Westminster, the Prado Dam on the Santa Ana River poses potential inundation hazards, because the entire city is within its inundation zone. In the event of a dam failure, floodwaters from Prado Dam would flow through the relatively narrow, 10-mile-long Santa Ana Canyon. The floodway ranges from about 3,000 feet wide in the canyon to over 15 miles wide downstream at Interstate 5. The densely populated flood zone extends approximately 21 linear miles and would impact approximately 110,000 acres and well over one million people.

## GOAL PHS-4: FLOODING AND INUNDATION

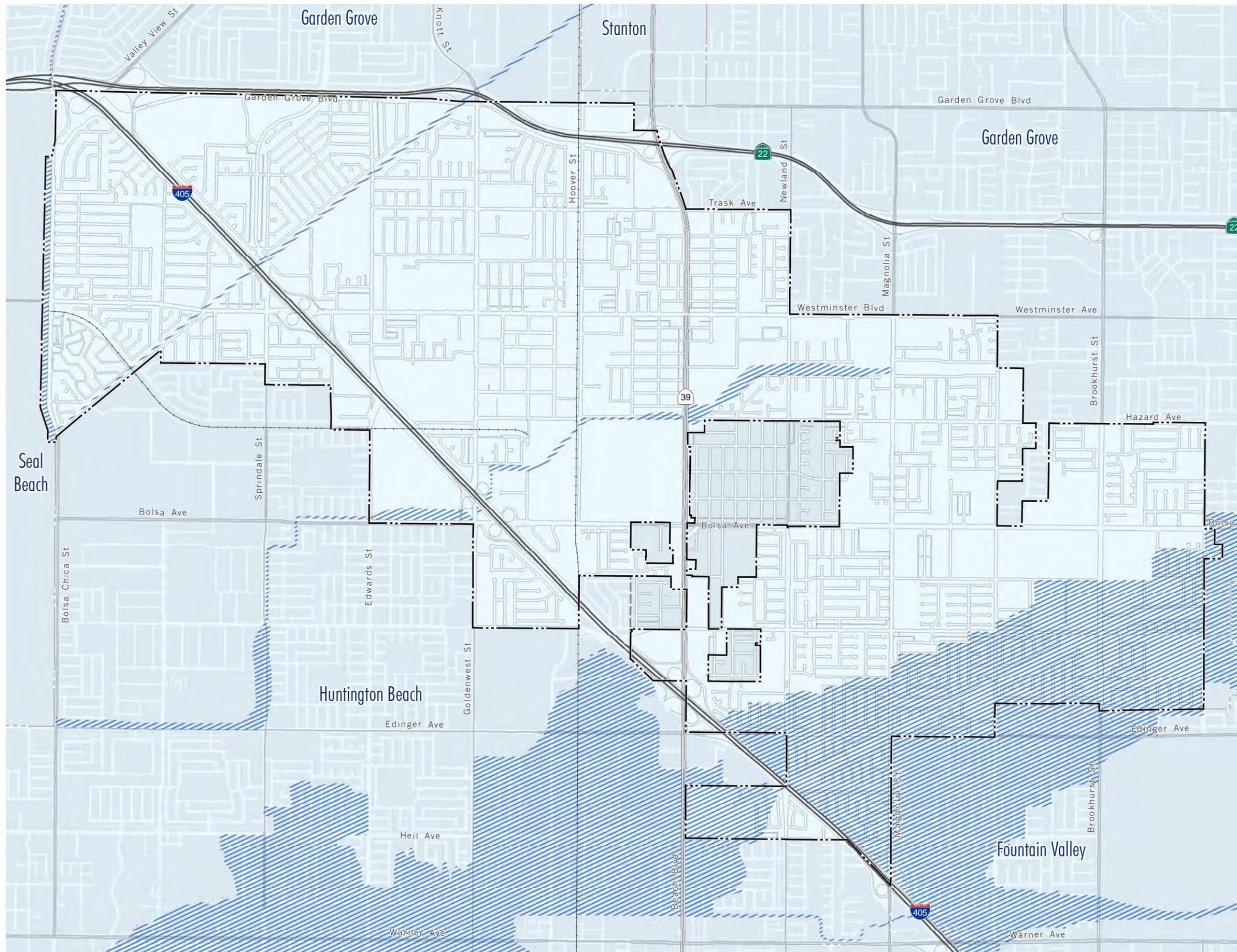
Minimal injury, loss of life, property damage, and social and economic disruptions caused by flood and inundation hazards in Westminster.

### Policies

- PHS-4.1 National Flood Insurance Program.** Support policies, procedures, and recommendations of the National Flood Insurance Program for areas in the 100-year flood zone with respect to zoning, subdivision, building codes, and overlays to maintain the City's eligibility for flood insurance and qualification for disaster assistance.
- PHS-4.2 Floodplain/Flood Hazard Zone Development.** Prohibit development in the 100-year flood zone unless adequate mitigation is provided against flood hazards.
- PHS-4.3 Critical Public Facilities.** Design and construct utilities and critical public facilities in flood-prone areas to maintain their structural and operational integrity during floods.
- PHS-4.4 Interagency Coordination.** Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships among local, regional, state, and federal agencies with responsibility for flood protection—including Orange County Public Works and Orange County Flood Control District—to minimize flood hazards, educate the community, and improve safety.
- PHS-4.5 High Priority Projects.** Cooperate with the Orange County Flood Control District in evaluating the effectiveness of existing flood control systems in the City, and prioritize funding for the maintenance and construction of improvements to drainage facilities and roadways identified in the City's Master Plan of Drainage and Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- PHS-4.6 Best Management Practices.** Prevent flooding by ensuring that the City's storm drainage culverts, channels, and facilities are adequately sized, maintained, and upgraded and that new developments integrate low-impact development best management practices (e.g., permeable pavements).

*The City's Infrastructure and Natural Resources Element deals directly with the maintenance and enhancement of the City's infrastructure systems, including its water delivery and stormwater systems. A functioning stormwater system is a key factor in reducing the potential for flooding. See Goal INR-1: Water System, and its related policies for more information.*

Figure 8-3  
**Flood and Inundation Map**



- City of Westminister Boundary
- City of Westminister Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries
- 100-Year Flood Zone (Zone A)
- Prado Dam Inundation Area (entire City)



## Hazardous Materials

According to the California Health and Safety Code, materials are considered “hazardous” when their quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics can pose a significant hazard to human health and safety or to the environment. “Hazardous materials” include toxic metals, chemicals, and gases; flammable and/or explosive liquids and solids; corrosive materials; infectious substances; and radioactive materials. Improper disposal or handling of hazardous materials can be harmful to people’s health and can pollute the ground, water, or air.

Beyond the immediate risk to human life, public health, air quality, and water sources and other potential environmental impacts of hazardous material releases, there are long-term public health and environmental impacts that could result from sustained use or exposure to certain substances.

### Hazardous Waste in Westminster

The California State Warning Center receives thousands of reports of hazardous material spill across the state annually. Most are minor incidents, but some could have significant impacts to human health and the environment and require remediation. In Westminster, hazardous material locations include medical research and development facilities, pharmacies, automotive-related businesses, and industrial businesses. In addition to fixed locations, a number of roadways and underground pipelines are used to transport hazardous materials in the City including Interstate 405, State Route 22, Beach Boulevard, and railroads. An accident involving vehicles or pipelines transporting hazardous materials can impact nearby residents and businesses.

Although past occurrences of hazardous spill incidents can indicate future impacts, the mechanisms by which the City approves and regulates businesses that use hazardous materials are constantly improving, as are technological advances and industry standards. As a result, it is anticipated that incidents will decrease over time as newer technologies, standards, and regulations further improve safety and prevent and minimize releases of hazardous materials.

### Hazardous Waste Management

Managing the production, transport, and proper disposal of hazardous materials is imperative to ensure a safe and healthy living environment in Westminster. The City works in conjunction with several other government entities to ensure a clean environment through various land use policies and its municipal code, expediting the cleanup of contaminated sites, and making sure proper measures are taken to manage hazardous materials and plan for hazardous waste incidents.

### Superfund Site

One area in the City was added to the federal Superfund list of the nation’s most contaminated sites in October 1991. The contamination was the result of oil refinery sludge dumping in the 1930s. The site was removed from the Superfund list in 2004 following cleanup efforts. Between the years of 1993 and 2014, the California Office of Emergency Services Regional Information Management System reported 94 spills in Westminster.

Properties contaminated with hazardous materials throughout the City are regulated at the federal, state, and local level and are subject to compliance with strict laws and regulations for investigation and remediation. The use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials by Westminster residents and commercial and industrial tenants or owners are required to comply with the regulations of several agencies, including:

- The California Department of Toxic Substances Control
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- California Division of Occupational Safety and Health
- California Department of Transportation
- Orange County Health Care Agency
- Orange County Fire Authority
- Westminster Municipal Code

Compliance with these agencies will ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and minimize the potential for safety impacts.

### **San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station**

The San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station is approximately 35 miles southeast of Westminster. It was shut down in 2012 and permanently retired in 2013 after attempts to restart it failed. Although it is no longer operational, a large volume of nuclear waste is stored on site. Westminster is in the station's "ingestion pathway zone," that is, the area where radioactive material released from the plant could contaminate food or water and potentially be ingested. Orange County Health Care's Environmental Health division is responsible for initiating the monitoring, sampling, and surveying of the probable and actual route of radioactive material from the San Onofre site.

#### **California Hazardous Chemical Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Program**

In Westminster, the County of Orange is responsible for administering the state's hazardous chemical emergency planning and community right-to-know program. In the event of a hazardous material incident in Westminster, the County of Orange will act as lead agency within the city limits and provide an incident commander to oversee the response efforts, with support from OCFA and the City's Police and Public Works departments.

**GOAL PHS-5: HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

A safe and healthy environment that is well protected from the production, use, storage, disposal, and transportation of hazardous materials and waste.

**Policies**

- PHS-5.1 Hazardous Waste Facility Siting.** Ensure that facilities which generate, treat, use, store, or dispose of hazardous materials or waste are sited properly and compatible with surrounding land uses, in accordance with the City's Storage and Handling Ordinance and the Orange County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.
- PHS-5.2 Development Review.** Require projects involving the use, transport, or storage of hazardous waste or materials to demonstrate compliance with appropriate federal, state, county, and local regulations to minimize the potential of a hazardous event.
- PHS-5.3 Hazardous Material Disclosure.** Require that essential information is provided to the Orange County Fire Authority in accordance with the Hazardous Materials Disclosure Ordinance.
- PHS-5.4 Household Hazardous Waste.** Encourage the proper use and disposal of household hazardous waste, including motor oil, e-waste, paints, medications, and gardening products, and stay current on state and federal legislation regarding the disposal of household hazardous materials and waste.
- PHS-5.5 Transportation.** Coordinate with the County of Orange, the California Department of Transportation, and other relevant parties to enforce state and local laws regulating the transport of hazardous materials through the City of Westminster, and locate truck routes away from sensitive land uses in case of spills.
- PHS-5.6 Regional Facilities.** Coordinate with Orange County Environmental Health to monitor the potential risks associated with the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station.

## Emergency Operations Center

When conducting and coordinating disaster operations, some of the primary functions of the EOC include:

- » Addressing rescue, evacuation, medical care, food, shelter, and the immediate public health and safety needs of Westminster residents.
- » Restoring infrastructure—e.g., sanitation, water, electricity, gas, streets, or highways—essential to the health, safety, and welfare of residents.
- » Meeting people’s recovery needs, such as temporary housing, food stamps, employment, etc.
- » Providing for the recovery of the community to its predisaster state to the greatest extent possible.

## Emergency Preparedness

As described throughout this element, Westminster is at risk from a number of environmental and man-made hazards that have the potential to threaten human life, public health, and property to varying degrees. Effective management of these disasters involves: 1) Proper hazard mitigation and event preparedness; 2) Response during or soon after the event, and 3) Post-event recovery. These three tasks require coordination and preparation between government agencies, residents, and businesses in the community.

### Preparedness

The Westminster Emergency Operations Plan—adopted in 2016 and described in detail under the Related Plans and Programs section of this element—addresses the City’s planned response to emergency situations associated with natural disasters and national security emergencies. The plan incorporates concepts and principles of the California Emergency Management System (SEMS), the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and the Incident Command System into the City’s emergency operations. The plan is intentionally flexible to be useful in all emergency situations and helps to facilitate the response and short-term recovery activities.

### Response

The City of Westminster has adopted SEMS/NIMS for emergency preparedness and participates in the Orange County Operational Area. SEMS is an integrated emergency management system that involves government, nongovernmental organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, and the private sector to work together to manage threats and hazards. As stated in the emergency operations plan, the City of Westminster is SEMS compliant and therefore eligible for federal preparedness grants and awards.

The City’s Emergency Operations Center is the central physical location where key City staff gather to coordinate response to an emergency. Personnel assigned to the emergency operations center are responsible for multi-agency/multi-jurisdictional coordination, policy implementation, information management, and resource coordination to support incident commanders in the field.

### **Critical Facilities**

Certain facilities in the City are considered critical for disaster planning and recovery effort. The City’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies 14 critical facilities, including the police station, fire stations, several City-owned properties, the Family Resource Center, Westminster Rose Center, Miriam Warne Community Building, and key overpasses at Valley View Street, Westminster Boulevard, and Beach Boulevard. Damage to these facilities has the potential to impair response and recovery and may lead to disruption of services. In addition to these facilities, other lifeline services are critical to the City’s safety and survival, such as water, sewer, energy, communications, and transportation. Preparing for emergencies includes building in system redundancies so that a single event (e.g., power failure or road failure) does not prevent the provision of essential services, such as paramedics or water supply. *Figure 8-4, Critical Facilities and Evacuation Routes*, identifies the City’s critical facilities.

### **Evacuation Routes**

During most emergencies, evacuation routes move people to safe locations and transport critical equipment to hazard areas. State Route 39 (Beach Boulevard), a state-operated facility, runs north-south and is one of the most important emergency access/evacuation routes for the City because of its central location. Also, the Westminster Boulevard bridge at Bolsa Chica Road provides a route across the Bolsa Chica channel at the west border of the City. Several other key roadways could also be used as evacuation routes in the event of an emergency, including Magnolia Street, Brookhurst Street, Garden Grove Boulevard, and Westminster Boulevard.

The best evacuation route to use during an emergency depends on several factors, including the type of emergency, its location, weather conditions, road conditions, and traffic volume. *Figure 8-4* identifies local, regional, and state/federal evacuation routes.

### **Recovery and Prevention**

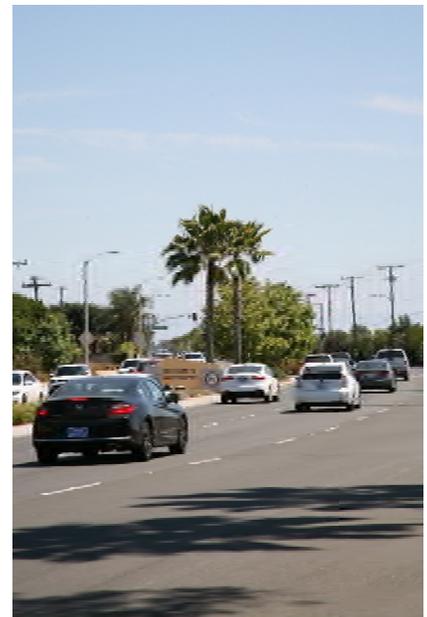
After an emergency, the director of the California Office of Emergency Services is responsible for bringing together representatives from federal, state, operational area, and city agencies and the American Red Cross to coordinate assistance and establish support priorities. After an emergency, priorities include:

- Reinstatement of family autonomy
- Provision of essential public services
- Permanent restoration of public and private property
- Identification of residual hazards
- Plans to mitigate future hazards
- Recovery of costs associated with response and recovery efforts

In Westminster, the City Manager is responsible for coordinating and managing post-event recovery and prevention activities.



*Electricity-generating facilities and transmission lines fuel critical life support systems in areas in and around the immediate hazard.*



*The City’s evacuation routes are identified along key roadways, as illustrated in Figure 8-4.*

**GOAL PHS-6: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

A prepared and resilient community that responds effectively to natural and human-induced disasters and emergencies, minimizing loss of life, injury, property damage, and disruption of vital services.

**Policies**

**PHS-6.1 Critical Facilities.** Coordinate with service providers to ensure the resilience of critical facilities—including police and fire stations, the Westminster Rose Center, and the Family Resource Center—lifeline services, and infrastructure, and plan for the use of critical facilities during postdisaster response and recovery.

**PHS-6.2 Emergency Operations and Hazards Planning.** Ensure that the City has an up-to-date local hazard mitigation plan and emergency operations plan to be effective in responding to emergencies and hazards.

**PHS-6.3 Emergency Management Systems.** Ensure compliance standards and protocol provisions are in place for emergency response organization, communication, and incident management to maintain eligibility for federal and state grants.

**PHS-6.4 Automatic and Mutual Aid.** Continue to participate in automatic and mutual aid agreements with adjacent service providers to ensure efficient and adequate resources, facilities, and support services during and after emergencies.

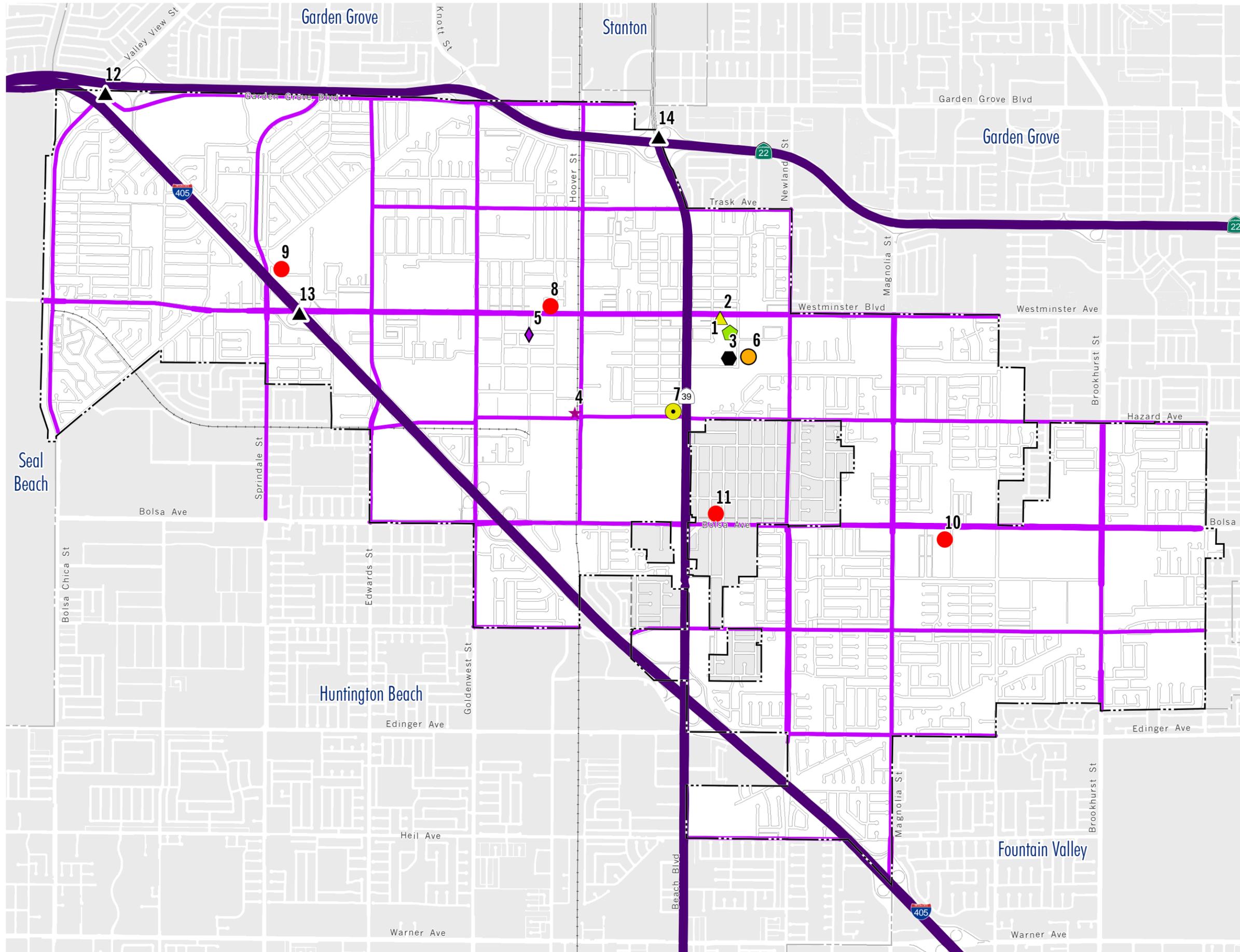
**PHS-6.5 Emergency Evacuation Routes and Access.** Maintain, update, and regularly exercise emergency access, protocols, warning systems, and evacuation routes to assess their effectiveness.

**PHS-6.6 Disaster Preparedness.** Work with relevant agencies to conduct periodic emergency and disaster preparedness simulations with other nearby jurisdictions to test and improve emergency response.

**PHS-6.7 Public Education and Training.** Enhance the public’s awareness of emergency preparedness and public safety hazards through an ongoing community education program, including the Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) program.

**PHS-6.8 Communication.** Maintain proper communication protocols and procedures among emergency service providers; local, state, and federal government agencies; businesses; schools; utilities; and other relevant parties to ensure quick and efficient response in the event of an emergency.

Figure 8-4  
**Critical Facilities and  
 Evacuation Routes**



- City of Westminister Boundary
- City of Westminister Sphere of Influence
- Other City Boundaries

**Critical Facilities**

- 1) Westminister City Hall
- 2) City Senior Center
- 3) Police Department
- 4) Municipal Corporation Yard
- 5) Family Resources Center
- 6) Westminister Rose Center
- 7) Miriam Warne Community Building
- 8) Fire Station 64
- 9) Fire Station 65
- 10) Fire Station 66
- 11) Fire Station 25
- 12) I-405 Overpass at Valley View Street
- 13) I-405 Overpass at Westminster Boulevard
- 14) SR-22 Overpass at Beach Boulevard

**Evacuation Routes**

- Interstate
- Local Road



## Air Quality

Over the years, Westminster has become increasingly more affected by human activities that can negatively impact air quality (i.e., through increased vehicle emissions). Transportation, industrial uses, and other activities using fossil fuels release pollutants into the atmosphere that have caused both air pollution and a global “greenhouse” effect.

### Westminster’s Air Quality Environment

Westminster is in the South Coast Air Basin, which includes all of Orange County and the nondesert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties. The South Coast Air Basin is a coastal plain with broad valleys and low hills, bounded by the Pacific Ocean in the southwest, and high mountains form the remainder of the perimeter. The general region lies in a high-pressure zone of the eastern Pacific and as a result, the climate is mild, tempered by cool sea breezes.

Poor air quality can cause a number of health issues, including diminished lung capacity, higher frequency of asthma and emphysema, lower immune responses, and even cancer and shortened lifespan. Air pollution also affects sensitive vegetation and ecosystems, including forests, wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas.

Ambient air quality standards and historical trends and projections for the City are regulated and documented by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), the regulating authority over emission sources in the South Coast Air Basin. Rules and regulations adopted by SCAQMD limit the emissions that can be generated by various uses and activities and identify specific pollution reduction measures that must be implemented in association with various uses and activities. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) also regulates air pollution emanating from transportation sources—vehicles, trucks, railroads, and marine vessels.

The predominant source of air pollutants in Westminster is vehicular traffic. Air pollutant emissions from traffic on freeways and corridors directly affect adjacent areas. Other sources of pollution of concern in Westminster include lawn and garden equipment and commercial equipment.

### Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors, such as schools, day care centers, hospitals, and convalescent homes, are particularly sensitive to air pollutants because children, the elderly, and the unwell are more susceptible to air-quality-related health problems than the general public. Residential and recreational land uses are also considered more sensitive to poor air quality because people are usually home for extended periods of time, and activities associated with recreational areas place a high demand on the respiratory system. CARB recommends that sensitive land uses not be within 500 feet of a freeway; after 500 feet, studies have shown significant decrease in pollution levels.

### Air Pollution (AKA “Smog”)

Air pollution (commonly known as “smog”) consists of different components, including ground-level ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen dioxide. When all of these pollutants are released into the air, they react with each other in sunlight to produce what we see as smog. Ocean breezes bring the smog inland, and warmer air traps the smog close to the ground where people live and breathe.

*The City's focus on creating new bike connections and an Active Transportation Plan shows some of the efforts to reduce vehicular trips in the City, which also helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Mobility Element provides additional direction on these topics.*

## **Climate Change**

Global climate change is one of the most widely discussed issues in the United States. Global climate change refers to a change in earth's weather patterns, as measured by wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperature. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change argues that global climate change is very likely caused by humans, and that temperatures and sea levels will continue to rise despite human efforts to control future emissions. Particularly in California, global climate change can lead to a number of harmful effects, including a shrinking Sierra Nevada snowpack that could threaten the state's water supply; public health threats caused by higher temperatures and more smog; damage to agriculture and forests due to reduced water storage capacity, rising temperatures, increasing salt water intrusion, flooding, and pest infestations; critical habitat modification and destruction; eroding coastlines; increased wildfire risk; and increased electricity demand.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

The Earth's temperature is determined by the balance between solar radiation that enters Earth's atmosphere from space, and outgoing energy that is radiated back to space as heat. Atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHGs) absorb solar radiation and prevent heat from escaping the atmosphere. Greenhouse gases are gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and are called greenhouse gases. The four main greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and fluorinated gases (synthetic by-products of industrial processes). As the number of GHGs in the atmosphere increase, more heat is retained, which results in an overall warming of the atmosphere. For about 1,000 years before the industrial revolution, the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere remained relatively constant. However, the past 150 years have shown a rapid escalation in the warming rate that cannot be explained by natural causes alone.

Although GHGs are needed to warm the Earth's surface to a level that supports life on the planet, scientists believe that human activities, such as electricity generation, vehicle emissions, and farming practices, have increased the concentration of GHGs in the atmosphere to the point of affecting the global climate. Careful and thorough attention must be paid to limiting GHG emissions in Westminster so that the community does its part to combat the devastating effects of global climate change.

### **Emissions in Westminster**

Similar to other jurisdictions in southern California, Westminster's GHG emissions primarily originate from transportation (vehicle trips beginning and ending in the City), residential and nonresidential building energy use, off-road equipment, solid waste management, and wastewater and water services. Fortunately, these five areas offer some of the best opportunities for reducing GHG reductions to meet the City's mandated targets.

**GOAL PHS-7: AIR QUALITY**

Improved air quality through reductions in pollution, particulate matter, and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Policies**

- PHS-7.1 Integrated Planning.** Develop a multidisciplinary approach (land use, economic development, and transportation) to mitigate against adverse effects of climate change and reduce vehicle miles traveled and associated vehicle emissions.
- PHS-7.2 GHG Emissions.** Align the City's local GHG reduction targets with the statewide GHG reduction targets of Assembly Bill 32, and align the City's long-term GHG reduction goal with the statewide GHG reduction goal of Executive Order S-03-05.
- PHS-7.3 Regional Coordination.** Support the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Air Quality Management Plan, the Southern California Association of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, and Orange County Transportation Authority's Congestion Management Plan to reduce air pollution at the regional level.
- PHS-7.4 Air Quality Monitoring.** Collaborate with the California Air Resources Board and South Coast Air Quality Management District to properly measure air quality at emission sources and enforce the standards of the Clean Air Act.
- PHS-7.5 Sensitive Receptors.** Buffer sensitive land uses, such as residences, schools, care facilities and recreation areas, from major air pollutant emission sources, including freeways, manufacturing, wastewater treatment facilities, and similar uses.
- PHS-7.6 Construction Activities.** Meet state and federal clean air standards by minimizing particulate matter emissions from construction activities.
- PHS-7.7 Airborne Pollutants and Noxious Odors.** Comply with regional, state, and federal standards and programs for control of all airborne pollutants and noxious odors, regardless of source.
- PHS-7.8 Energy Efficiency.** Comply with the mandatory energy efficiency requirements of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) and Building and Energy Efficiency Standards.



*The City of Westminster promotes a "complete streets" network, which provides safety and efficient mobility options for all users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and drivers. See the Mobility Element for goals and policies related to complete streets and active transportation, which also support the City's goal of improved air quality.*

*Conservation of natural resources, including energy, is a priority of Westminster. Detailed guidance on energy conservation is provided in the Infrastructure and Natural Resources Element of the General Plan.*



## Related Plans, Programs, and Legislation

The content of the Public Health and Safety Element builds upon and implements several state and local laws and plans concerning hazards, emergency operations, and public safety.

### Westminster Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City of Westminster Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2015) helps to reduce the community's vulnerability to disasters by identifying critical facilities, capabilities, resources, information, and strategies for risk reduction and helping to guide and coordinate hazard mitigation actions. The updated plan ensures that the City evaluates current hazard conditions; that its policies are consistent with current City standards and/or other relevant federal, state, or regional regulations; and that is consistent with Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements.

The plan includes a set of strategies for education and outreach programs intended to reduce the community's risk from natural hazards; foster the development of partnerships; and implement risk reduction activities.

### Westminster Emergency Operations Plan

The Westminster Emergency Operations Plan (2016) addresses the City's planned response to natural and human-caused disasters. The plan, written by the City Emergency Management Coordinator, is a preparedness document that incorporates concepts and principles from the California Standardized Emergency Management System, the National Incident Management System, and the Incident Command System for the City's emergency operations. The plan:

- Defines the scope of preparedness and summarizes operational concepts
- Describes organizational structures, roles and responsibilities, and policies and protocols for providing emergency support
- Facilitates response and short-term recovery activities
- Includes pre- and post-incident public awareness, education, and protocols
- Assigns jurisdictional and/or functional area representatives

### Climate Change Legislation and Programs

The California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) was passed by the California state legislature on August 31, 2006, to place the state on a course toward reducing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. AB 32 follows Executive Order S-03-05's mandate to reach 2000 emissions levels by 2010 and 1990 levels by 2020.

AB 32 directed CARB to establish a mandatory reporting system to track and monitor stationary sources that generate more than 25,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent emissions per year; prepare a plan demonstrating how the 2020 deadline can be met; and develop appropriate regulations and programs to implement the plan by 2012. The first **Scoping Plan** was adopted in 2008, and the first update in 2014, in which CARB updated the statewide GHG emissions inventory to reflect GHG emissions in light of the economic downturn and measures not previously considered. The new inventory identifies that an estimated 80 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>-



*Parks, street trees, and other green programs play an important role in reducing urban contributions to climate change.*

equivalent reductions are necessary to achieve the statewide emissions reduction of AB 32 by 2020 (CARB 2012).

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the MPO for the Southern California region, which includes the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Imperial. SCAG's targets under SB 375 are an 8 percent per capita reduction from 2005 GHG emission levels by 2020 and a 13 percent reduction by 2035. SCAG's current **2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)** was adopted in April 2016 to update the 2012 RTP/SCS. In general, the SCS outlines a development pattern for the region that, when integrated with the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies, would reduce vehicle miles traveled from automobiles and light duty trucks and thereby reduce GHG emissions from these sources.

**Senate Bill 375**, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, was adopted to connect the GHG emissions reductions targets established in the 2008 Scoping Plan for the transportation sector to local land use decisions that affect travel behavior. Its intent is to reduce GHG emissions from light-duty trucks and automobiles (excludes emissions associated with goods movement) by aligning regional long-range transportation plans, investments, and housing allocations to local land use planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled and vehicle trips. SB 375 required CARB to establish GHG emissions reduction targets for each of the 18 metropolitan planning organizations in the state.



*The City of Westminster strives to be a safe, healthy community that is an enjoyable place for people to live, work, and visit.*



# 9 HOUSING

Under separate cover.