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Introduction

The Land Use Element is a guide to land use planning within the City of San Juan Capistrano and affects many of the issues addressed in the other General Plan elements. The Land Use Element identifies the type and location of future land uses within the City. The specific land uses and their location within the community in turn affect the remaining General Plan elements. For example, the location and type of land uses outlined in the Land Use Element affect the circulation system that is identified in the Circulation Element, and the open space facilities identified in the Land Use Element affect the Conservation & Open Space Element policies. The land uses identified in the Land Use Element also reflect community’s goals for its future form and character.

The community’s desire to preserve its rich history and control future development resulted in the City incorporation in 1961. As a city, state law requires that San Juan Capistrano prepare and adopt a General Plan as a tool to manage growth and development. The Land Use Element is a mandatory element or chapter of the General Plan.

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to describe present and planned land use activity which has been designed to achieve the community’s long-range goals for the future. The Land Use Element identifies the proposed general distribution, location, and extent of land uses such as open space and recreation, residential, commercial, industrial, and public/ institutional. The element consists of text, maps, and diagrams which outline the future land uses within the City and how these uses are integrated with the other General Plan elements and policies. The Land Use Policy Map is a particularly important feature of the element since it shows the location, and types of development within the City. The Element also describes the intensity or density of development planned for the community. The Land Use Element also addresses the relationship between development and environmental quality, potential hazards, and social and economic objectives.

The Land Use Element of the San Juan Capistrano General Plan represents the City’s desire for long-range changes and enhancements of land uses. The current Element and its
Land Use Element

policies form a continuation with policies and goals to create a future in which the traditional character of the City is preserved and enhanced by new development. Finally, the goals and policies contained in this Element establish the constitutional framework for future land use planning and decision making in San Juan Capistrano.

**Scope and Content of the Land Use Element**

The Land Use Element complies with the requirements of the General Plan Land Use Element mandated in Government Code Section 65302(a). The Element is comprised of three sections: 1) Introduction, 2) Issues, Goals and Policies, and 3) the Land Use Plan. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major land use issues are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues. The goals, which are overall statements of the community’s desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for reviewing development proposals, planning facilities to accommodate anticipated growth, and accomplishing community development strategies. To achieve the goals and policies, a logical, organized land use pattern is established in the Plan with standards for future community development. The Plan contains the Land Use Policy Map which graphically identifies the planned land uses within San Juan Capistrano. The land use designations are described, including the type and density of allowed uses, and a statistical summary of the future land use composition is provided. Neighborhood areas which may involve more focused planning efforts are also identified. Specific implementation programs for the element are located in the General Plan Implementation Program (Appendix A).

**Related Plans and Programs**

There are a number of related plans and programs that are considered in the formulation, adoption and implementation of local land use policy. Related plans and programs are both local and regional in nature. Regional planning agencies, such as the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), recognize that planning issues extend beyond the boundaries of individual cities. Efforts to address regional planning issues such as air quality, transportation, affordable housing and habitat conservation have resulted in the adoption of regional plans. The form and distribution of development in San Juan Capistrano are affected by regional plans. Relevant local and regional plans related to the Land Use Element are discussed briefly in the following sections.
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Guidelines

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature in response to a public mandate for thorough environmental analysis of projects that might affect the environment. The provisions of the law and environmental review procedure are described in the CEQA Statutes and the CEQA Guidelines which were amended in 1998. Implementation of CEQA ensures that during the decision making stage of development, City officials and the general public will be able to assess the environmental impacts associated with private and public development projects.

City of San Juan Capistrano Zoning Ordinance

San Juan Capistrano adopted its first Zoning Ordinance 1961 and adopted the current Zoning Ordinance and related Zoning Map in 1975. The ordinance has since been updated to incorporate changes to the General Plan and within the community. The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for the Land Use Element. Together, the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map identify specific types of land use, intensity of use, and development and performance standards applicable to specific areas and parcels of land within the City.

Historic Town Center Master Plan

The Historic Town Center Master Plan was adopted by the City in 1995 to address the specific needs of the downtown area. The Master Plan contains goals and policies for the downtown area based on the opportunities and constraints that were identified during the planning process. These goals and policies provide direction on how the General Plan should be implemented in the historic downtown center.

Los Rios Precise Plan

The Los Rios Precise Plan was adopted in February 1978 and is in the process of being revised. The Precise Plan addresses the special planning needs identified by the community for the historic Los Rios District. The Plan provides goals, policies and specific development standards for future development in the Los Rios Precise Plan area. Implementation of the Precise Plan is consistent with the goals and policies contain within this General Plan.
City of San Juan Capistrano Redevelopment Plan

The City of San Juan Capistrano created a Community Redevelopment Agency in 1983 in accordance with the California Community Redevelopment Law to eliminate blight within the designated redevelopment project area. With the adoption of Assembly Bill 1290, the Community Redevelopment Agency has prepared a five year implementation plan in 1994 for the San Juan Capistrano Central Redevelopment Project Area. This plan was updated in 1997. The Redevelopment Plan is one of the tools that the City utilizes to implement policies included in the Land Use Element.

County of Orange Coastal Sage Scrub Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP)

The Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP was established to form a regional habitat planning and management system to address the long-term viability of sensitive plant and animal species (particularly the California gnatcatcher, cactus wren and orange-throated whiptail lizard) in the coastal sage scrub of Orange County. The NCCP establishes the framework for the establishment of a biological habitat reserve, and growth is allowed to continue to occur within this framework. The Orange County NCCP for the Southern California region is based on voluntary and collaborative participation among property owners, local governments, state and federal agencies and environmental organizations.

SCAG Growth Management Plan

The SCAG Growth Management Plan recommends methods to direct regional growth to minimize traffic congestion and better protect environmental quality. The goals of the Growth Management Plan include balancing jobs and housing. While SCAG has no authority to mandate implementation of its Growth Management Plan, principal goals have implications for the land use composition of San Juan Capistrano. The SCAG goals are generally reflected throughout all of the General Plan elements, including the Land Use Element.

South Coast Air Quality Management Plan

The South Coast Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) mandates a variety of measures to improve air quality. To comply with the AQMP, the Land Use Element organizes land
uses in relation to the circulation system, promotes commercial and industrial land uses with convenient access to transportation, and provides a balanced Land Use Plan that promotes a favorable relationship between jobs and housing.

**Orange County Growth Management Element**

The purpose of the Orange County Growth Management Element is to ensure that the transportation system and other public facilities are adequate to meet the current and projected needs of Orange County. The Element establishes the following major policies:

1. **Development Phasing**: Development will be phased according to Comprehensive Phasing Plans (CPPs) adopted by the County. Phasing is limited to roadway and public facility capacities;

2. **Balanced Community Development**: Development will be balanced to encourage employment of local residents, and both employment and employee housing in the County, as well as in individual Growth Management Areas (GMAs);

3. **Traffic Level of Service**: Future development creates the need for improvements to major intersections significantly impacted by growth, and a developer fee program is included to pay for improving affected intersections on a pro-rata basis;

4. **Traffic Implementation Programs**: The Element requires that all new development provide necessary transportation facilities and intersection improvements as a condition of development approval; and,

5. **Public Facility Plans**: The Element requires comprehensive public facility plans for fire, sheriff/police and library services. New development participates on a pro-rata basis.

Implementation of the Orange County Growth Management Element involves the establishment of: 1) Growth Management Areas (GMAs) to implement Comprehensive Phasing Plans, 2) Facility Implementation Plans to address the financing of public facilities for each GMA, 3) County-wide implementation and evaluation of compliance with development phasing and improvements, and 4) traffic improvements/public facility
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

According to state planning law, the Land Use Element must be consistent with the other General Plan Elements. Each element is independent and all the elements together comprise the General Plan. All elements of the General Plan are interrelated to a degree, and certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are the primary subjects of other elements. The integration of overlapping issues throughout the General Plan elements provides a strong basis for implementation of plans and programs, and achievement of community goals.

The Land Use Element relates very closely to all of the other General Plan elements. This element establishes the planned land use pattern for San Juan Capistrano based on the historic formation of the City and the community's vision of the future. Alternatively, the other General Plan elements ensure that infrastructure and public facilities are available to accommodate planned land uses, and that the unique qualities of San Juan Capistrano are safeguarded and enhanced.

For example, the Housing Element of the General Plan provides the basis for establishing housing stock that meets the affordability requirements and other special needs of the community. The Circulation Element provides a Circulation Plan to accommodate increased traffic from planned development. The use of alternative transportation modes and reduction of automobile trips are addressed in the Circulation Element to meet the transportation demands from new development, and to mitigate the impact of development on regional air quality and traffic conditions.

A number of the areas are designated for parks and open space on the Land Use Policy Map for recreational and aesthetic purposes. The Parks & Recreation and Conservation & Open Space Elements provide policy and plans to maintain and enhance existing parks and recreational facilities and to develop new facilities to meet new demand from population growth. Conservation & Open Space policy is also designed to protect natural resources.

Land uses designated in the Land Use Element are also affected by the Cultural Resources Element which provides the basis to protect and preserve cultural resources which may otherwise be negatively affected by new development. The Community...
Design Element also is designed to promote the traditional character of the community by creating design guidelines for new development identified in the Land Use Element.

The Safety, Floodplain Management, and Noise Elements ensure that planned land uses identified in the Land Use Element are compatible and will not result in public safety hazards or exposure of people to excessive noise.

As development continues in San Juan Capistrano, utilities and public services must be available for new businesses and residents. The Public Facilities & Utilities, and Growth Management Elements address the availability of utilities and services for planned development including law enforcement, fire protection, public schools, community centers, libraries, water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, flood control, solid waste, telephone, cable and transportation facilities. These two elements assure that adequate utilities and services are available for planned development identified in the Land Use Element.
Land Use Element

Issues, Goals, and Policies

The Land Use Element addresses future land use within the community. The Element focuses on how vacant land will be allowed to develop, as well as how certain developed land may be redeveloped for other use. The principal goal should be to preserve the character of a small, rural, village-like community with abundant open space.

Six major issues are addressed in the goals, policies and implementation actions of the Land Use Element. These major issues include: (1) balancing land uses within the City to ensure that revenue generation matches service provision responsibilities; (2) controlling and directing future growth within the City so that the community character is preserved; (3) protecting open space areas to protect the public safety and the visual quality of the community; (4) promoting economic development within the community; and (5) enhancing and preserving the character of existing neighborhoods. Each issue and the related goals, policies and implementing actions are identified and discussed in the following section.

Balance of Land Uses

San Juan Capistrano is primarily a residential community. While the City requires revenue generated by commercial and industrial uses to support the needs of the existing community, these non-residential land uses must be compatible with the existing community. Land uses such as open space areas can be used to buffer residential areas from non-residential uses. Land use designations can also limit the types of industrial and commercial activities which may occur to those which are most compatible with residential areas. The City is also fortunate that it is located between Disneyland and Legoland and has the Mission to attract tourists traveling between the two larger attractions.

Land Use Goal 1: Develop a balanced land use pattern to ensure that revenue generation matches the City's responsibility for provision and maintenance of public services and facilities.
**Land Use Element**

**Policy 1.1:** Encourage a land use composition in San Juan Capistrano that provides a balance or surplus between the generation of public revenues and the cost of providing public facilities and services.

**Policy 1.2:** Encourage commercial, tourist-oriented, and industrial development that is compatible with existing land uses within the City to improve the generation of sales tax, property tax, and hotel occupancy tax.

**Policy 1.3:** Encourage mixed commercial and residential use projects in the Mission District downtown area to conserve land and provide additional housing opportunities and population to support commercial services and retail sales.

San Juan Capistrano, as well as the surrounding region, has experienced substantial growth over the past 25 years. New development brings change, and a changing community character. While recognizing that change is inevitable, the community is still able to plan and guide future development so that it complements the existing community, and enhances the existing character and themes found in San Juan Capistrano.

**Land Use Goal 2: Control and direct future growth within the City to preserve the rural village-like character of the community.**

**Policy 2.1:** Continue controlling growth through the implementation of the City's residential growth management program.

**Policy 2.2:** Assure that new development is consistent and compatible with the existing character of the City.

**Policy 2.3:** Ensure that development corresponds to the provision of public facilities and services.

Land use density varies depending upon the ability of the specific land to support residential development. Development in the flat lands in the valley floor, if located outside of the floodplain, creates lower risks to residents in comparison to the hillsides which are subject to landslide and erosion. As a result, higher densities of population could be allocated to those areas posing lower risks.
Land Use Goal 3: Distribute additional population within the City based on risk factors.

Policy 3.1: Confine higher density land uses to the valley areas outside of the floodplain.

Policy 3.2: Limit density of development in the hillsides, floodplains, and other high risk areas.

Open space and natural features provide visual quality in San Juan Capistrano. Open spaces also can protect community safety by limiting development in high risk areas such as hillsides and floodplains. The quality of life can also be maintained by preserving areas which contribute to the community in an open space capacity, such as groundwater recharge and recreational areas.

Land Use Goal 4: Preserve major areas of open space and natural features.

Policy 4.1: Preserve areas of natural hazards, such as landslides and floodplains, which would jeopardize the public health and safety.

Policy 4.2: Implement land and open space-rights acquisition programs to allow for the long-term preservation of open space resources.

Policy 4.3: Preserve designated ridgelines and the immediate adjacent area to maintain the open space character of the community.

Economic Development

San Juan Capistrano has preserved its historic downtown central business district. The area provides a focal point for the community, and is pedestrian-friendly which allows people to walk from destination to destination. Unfortunately, recent economic studies indicate that locally served retail is overbuilt and can not be supported. Past changes in the economic environment has encouraged strip development outside of the core commercial area. This type of development, which typically serves a local market, threatens the viability of the existing downtown commercial area. The location of regional related retail generally occurs outside the historic downtown and could change the visual character of the community. To preserve the viability of the downtown area, and to preserve the character of San Juan Capistrano, the community should
carefully encourage commercial development within the central business district.

**Land Use Goal 5:** Encourage commercial development which serves community needs and is located in the existing central business district.

**Policy 5.1:** Encourage the location and retention of businesses within the downtown Mission District.

In a recent report by Keyser Marston Associates, San Juan Capistrano was found to have an oversupply of commercial uses serving the local community. With the small local population, these commercial centers are underutilized, and many are not well maintained, which has a negative visual impact on the community.

**Land Use Goal 6:** Enhance or redevelop underperforming commercial centers.

**Policy 6.1:** Allow for the transition of the oversupply of commercial land use to other economically viable revenue producing land uses.

San Juan Capistrano has experienced substantial residential growth over the last 25 years. The City contains a number of distinct neighborhoods defined by natural and man-made physical features, including San Juan, Oso, and Trabuco Creeks, steeply sloped areas defining the west and east portions of the community, Interstate 5, and the railroad line. Recognition of these areas can encourage more focused neighborhood-level planning and improvements in the future, particularly in older neighborhoods.

**Land Use Goal 7:** Enhance and maintain the character of neighborhoods.

**Policy 7.1:** Preserve and enhance the quality of San Juan Capistrano neighborhoods by avoiding or abating the intrusion of non-conforming buildings and uses.

**Policy 7.2:** Ensure that new development is compatible with the physical characteristics of its site, surrounding land uses, and available public infrastructure.
**Policy 7.3:** Utilize programs for rehabilitation of physical development, infrastructure and undergrounding of utilities within the City to improve community neighborhoods.

**Policy 7.4:** Protect the existing population and social character of older areas subject to rehabilitation and redevelopment.

**Related Goals and Policies**

The goals and policies described in the Land Use Element are related to and support subjects included within other General Plan elements. In turn, many goals and policies from other elements directly or indirectly support the goals and policies of the Land Use Element. These supporting goals and policies are identified in Table LU-1.
Table LU-1
Related Goals and Policies by Element

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Plan Elements</th>
<th>Land Use Issue Area</th>
<th>Balance of Land Uses</th>
<th>Control and Direct Growth</th>
<th>Population Distribution and Open Space</th>
<th>Economic Development</th>
<th>Community and Neighborhood Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Circulation</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1, 1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation &amp; Open Space</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Noise</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.2, 1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Design</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 3.2, 3.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.2, 2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Management</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.9, 3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Facilities &amp; Utilities</td>
<td>1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1</td>
<td>1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Floodplain Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
San Juan Capistrano is a City where land use decisions are affected by the community’s desire to preserve and protect its historic character and large areas of open space. The nature and character of existing development, the desire for greater economic development, planned infrastructure capacity, and concerns for environmental sensitivity all have an influence on the development of land use policy and planning for future land use.

Natural and human made corridors located through the community also affect land use planning in San Juan Capistrano. The City’s creeks, roadways and railway form constraints to development, but also provide opportunities for land use. While limiting development in the floodplain, the creeks provide recreational opportunities and add to the character of San Juan Capistrano. The roadways and railway create physical barriers and are sources of noise, but they also provide access to the City and carry customers to the commercial uses located along the major roadways.

The Land Use Plan describes the approach that will be used to build upon the community’s history of sound planning. The Plan addresses the issues identified in the previous section of the Element. The goals and policies described in that previous section provide the basis for the Plan and are supported by approaches to maintain an advantageous balance among land uses, control and direct growth, reduce the risk to new residents from natural hazards while preserving open space, promote viable commercial development, and preserve existing neighborhood character.

The variety of land uses within San Juan Capistrano affects the important balance between the generation of public revenues and the provision of public facilities and services. Achieving and maintaining a balance of land uses can ensure fiscal stability and also create a desirable community in which people can work, shop, reside and recreate.

The majority of San Juan Capistrano is developed, and limited vacant land is available for future new development. As a result, future growth will occur with the development of the few remaining vacant parcels of land and the redevelopment of
currently developed parcels. The Land Use Plan identifies the land uses for these parcels which will create a land use composition that provides a balance between the generation of public revenues and the cost of providing public facilities and services.

Implementation of the Land Use Plan will also assist in creating a balance between the number of jobs and housing units within the City. A balance between jobs and housing allows some people to live and work within the same community. This results in a reduction of traffic, thereby reducing the level of air pollution and improving the quality of life for the community.

San Juan Capistrano is located within a housing rich sub-region. The City has identified vacant or underutilized parcels that are appropriately located for employment generating uses. The City will implement the Land Use Plan to assure that a balance of land uses occurs, maintaining fiscal stability and an improved jobs/housing balance.

**Land Use Classification System**

The Land Use Policy Map (Figure LU-1) illustrates the various types and distribution of land uses planned for San Juan Capistrano. The land use classification system is presented in Table LU-2 and includes 28 land use designations. These land use designations identify the types and nature of development allowed in particular locations depicted on the Land Use Policy Map.

The residential category includes seven designations that allow for a range of housing types and densities. The non-residential categories include a variety of designations, such as neighborhood commercial, general commercial, industrial park, light industrial, quasi-industrial, and office/research park to promote a wide range of revenue- and employment-generating businesses. Other non-residential designations include public/institutional and open space & recreation to provide for public uses and open space.
### Table LU-2
#### Land Use Classification System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Land Use Groupings</th>
<th>Dwelling Units Per Gross Acre or Maximum Floor Area Ratio(a)</th>
<th>Average Dwelling Units Per Acre or Floor Area Ratio(b)</th>
<th>Land Use Designation and Summary Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Space &amp; Recreation</td>
<td>0.20:1</td>
<td>0.0001:1</td>
<td>1.0 General Open Space- An individual use or combination of the uses listed in other open space and recreation designations. Site-specific uses are determined during review of development applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.10:1</td>
<td>0.005:1</td>
<td>1.1 Open Space Recreation - Outdoor recreational facilities, including golf courses, swimming pools, tennis courts and equestrian clubs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.10:1</td>
<td>0.005:1</td>
<td>1.2 Neighborhood Park - Small neighborhood parks serving residential areas in immediate vicinity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.05:1</td>
<td>0.01:1</td>
<td>1.3 Community Park - Major active recreation sites, serving a larger population and geographic area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.20:1</td>
<td>0.05:1</td>
<td>1.4 Specialty Park - Unique or specialized forms of recreational activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.01:1</td>
<td>0.001:1</td>
<td>1.5 Regional Park - Active and passive recreational activities serving a large population and geographic area extending beyond the City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.01:1</td>
<td>0.0001:1</td>
<td>1.6 Natural Open Space - Natural open space land preserving highly visible open space areas and allowing equestrian/hiking trails and public utilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.40:1</td>
<td>0.1:1</td>
<td>1.7 Recreation Commercial - Indoor recreational activities, including bowling, cinemas, gymnasiums and similar activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>0.1:0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 Very Low Density - Detached single-family dwellings. Allows up to 1 dwelling units per gross acre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1-2.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1 Low Density - Detached single-family dwelling. Allows up to 2 dwelling units per gross acre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1-3.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.2 Medium Low Density - Single-family dwelling. Allows up to 3.5 dwelling units per gross acre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.6-5.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.3 Medium Density - Single-family dwellings, mobile home parks, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings including condominiums, and townhomes. Allows up to 5 dwelling units per gross acre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1-8.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>2.4 Medium High Density - Single-family dwellings, mobile home parks, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings including condominiums, and townhomes. Allows up to 8 dwelling units per gross acre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.1-18.0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.5 High Density - Single-family dwellings, mobile home parks, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings including condominiums, townhomes, and apartments. Allows up to 18 dwelling units per gross acre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.1-30.0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.6 Very High Density - Single-family dwellings, mobile home parks, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings including condominiums, townhomes, apartments, and cooperatives. Allows up to 30 dwelling units per gross acre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May 7, 2002

San Juan Capistrano General Plan

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Table LU-2
Land Use Classification System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Land Use Groupings</th>
<th>Dwelling Units Per Gross Acre Range or Maximum Floor Area Ratio(a)</th>
<th>Average Dwelling Units Per Acre or Average Floor Area Ratio(b)</th>
<th>Land Use Designation and Summary Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>0.25:1 0.50:1</td>
<td>0.20:1 0.30:1</td>
<td>3.0 Neighborhood Commercial - Retail, office, and service-oriented business activities serving a local community area and population. 3.1 General Commercial - Retail, office, and service-oriented business activities serving a community-wide area and population of a broader market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>0.40:1 0.40:1 0.40:1</td>
<td>0.30:1 0.30:1 0.30:1</td>
<td>4.0 Industrial Park - Light industrial and manufacturing uses. Allowable uses include wholesale businesses, light manufacturing and assembly, research and development, warehousing and storage, and distribution and sales. 4.1 Quasi-Industrial - Light industrial and manufacturing uses, including those allowed in the Industrial Park designations. Also allows variety of regional and sub-regional commercial activities, such as vehicle sales and large box retail. 4.2 Agri-Business - Agricultural crop production and sales, and animal breeding, boarding, raising and training. 4.3 Light Industrial - Light industrial and manufacturing uses. Allowable uses include research &amp; development light manufacturing and processing, offices, warehousing and storage, and high technology production. 4.4 Office/Research Park - Single-tenant and multi-tenant offices, including legal, medical, financial, administrative, R&amp;D, corporate and general business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public/Institutional</td>
<td>0.40:1 0.30:1 0.30:1</td>
<td>0.25:1 0.25:1 0.25:1</td>
<td>5.0 Public &amp; Institutional - Schools, churches, fire stations, community centers, utility substations, and office complexes. 5.1 Existing Public Schools - Existing public schools. 5.2 Potential Public Schools - Future public schools. 5.3 Assisted Care Facilities - Specialized care and housing facilities for seniors and persons requiring special medical housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special</td>
<td>Varies Varies</td>
<td>Varies Varies</td>
<td>Special Study - Areas that have unique features, environmental conditions, and/or development constraints requiring special regulations or standards designed to address or preserve those conditions. Specific Plan/Precise Plan - Areas governed by a specific plan or precise plan adopted prior to development. Planned Community - Denotes large areas of land under single or common ownership for detailed planning and development for residential, commercial, industrial, public/institutional, recreation and open space uses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Maximum allowable level of development standard for individual parcels of land.
(b) Assumed overall average level of development. Since the development which has occurred to date has not reached the maximum allowed level of density or intensity on every parcel of land, future development is expected to be less than the maximum on a city-wide basis. Therefore, an average level of density/intensity is used when projecting: 1) total future dwelling units/population for residential development; and 2) future square footage for non-residential development where floor area is used as a measurement of building intensity.
Land Use Density and Intensity

This Element uses certain terminology to describe the 28 land use designations. The term *density* is used for residential uses and refers to the population and development capacity of residential land. Density is described in terms of dwelling units per gross acre of land (du/gross acre).

Development *intensity*, which applies to non-residential uses, refers to the extent of development on a parcel of land or lot (i.e., the total building square footage, building height, the floor area ratio, and/or the percent of lot coverage). Intensity is often used to describe non-residential development levels; but, in a broader sense, intensity is also used to express overall levels of both residential and non-residential development types. In this Element, floor area ratio and building square footage are used as measures of non-residential development intensity.

Floor area ratio (FAR) represents the ratio between the total gross floor area of all buildings on a lot and the total area of that lot. The FAR controls the intensity of use on a lot. FAR is determined by dividing the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the land area of that lot. For example, a 20,000 square foot building on a 40,000 square foot lot yields a FAR of 0.50:1. A 0.50:1 FAR allows a single story building which covers most of the lot, or a two-story building with reduced lot coverage. Figure LU-2 depicts the calculation of FAR.

State General Plan law requires that the Land Use Element indicate the maximum densities and intensities permitted within the Land Use Plan. The land use designations shown on the Land Use Policy Map are described in detail in this Element. Table LU-2 lists each of the land use designations shown on the Land Use Policy Map and provides a corresponding indication of maximum density or intensity of development. Maximum allowable development on individual parcels of land is governed by these measures of density or intensity. The table also includes the average overall level of development within each land use designation within the planning area. These average levels of development represent an anticipated overall density and intensity of development for the planning area and are, therefore, less than the absolute maximum allowed for an individual parcel of land. For various reasons, many parcels in the community have not been developed to their maximum density or intensity and, in the future, maximum development...
as described in this Element can be expected to occur only on a limited number of parcels.

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

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

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) = \( \frac{\text{Gross Building Area (All Floors)}}{\text{Lot Area}} \)

The overall future development of the City is anticipated to occur at the average level of density or intensity indicated in Table LU-2. Development at an intensity or density between the average and maximum levels can occur only where projects offer exceptional design quality, important public amenities or benefits, or other factors that promote important goals and policies of the General Plan.

**Land Use Designations**

All land in the San Juan Capistrano planning area is assigned to one of the 28 land use designations described below:

**Open Space & Recreation Designations**

1.0 **General Open Space**: The General Open Space designation is general in nature and provides for the possible combined development of several of the uses or the individual development of one of the uses specifically identified by the other open space and recreation designations. The determination of site-specific uses is based on more detailed studies during review of development applications. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.20:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.0001:1.
1.1 **Open Space Recreation:** The Open Space Recreation designation provides for outdoor recreational facilities, including golf courses, swimming schools, tennis clubs, equestrian clubs, and caretaker facilities. The maximum intensity of development is a floor ratio of 0.10:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.005:1.

1.2 **Neighborhood Park:** The Neighborhood Park designation provides for well distributed small neighborhood parks to serve residential areas in the immediate vicinity. These parks will be either public or private and will include areas for active sports play, tot lots, picnic areas, support facilities and caretaker facilities. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.10:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.005:1.

1.3 **Community Park:** The Community Park designation provides for major active recreation sites, including large multipurpose fields for community events and informal recreation, sports fields and courts, concessions, maintenance/support facilities and caretaker facilities. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.05:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.01:1.

1.4 **Specialty Park:** The Specialty Park designation provides for unique or specialized forms of recreational activities, such as community event space, outdoor amphitheater, or nature study center, as well as support/caretaker facilities. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.20:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.05:1.

1.5 **Regional Park:** The Regional Park designation provides for future use of the Prima Deshecha landfill as phases are closed and available for active and passive recreational development. Activities that may be developed include multipurpose sports fields and courts, a golf course, picnic areas, camping facilities, concessions, maintenance/support facilities and caretaker facilities. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.01:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.001:1.
1.6 **Natural Open Space:** The Natural Open Space designation provides for natural open space land that separates developed areas from one another, preserves natural features like creeks, ridgelines or hillsides, or includes natural hazards like landslides. This designation includes approximately 449 acres located in the southern portion of the City. Within this area is a designated ridgeline that is continuous and generally is oriented in a east/west direction, including two connected spine ridgelines. Since a portion of the designated ridgelines are located in close proximity to the common boundary with the adjacent General Open Space, all areas within 200 feet of this ridgeline are considered Natural Open Space. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.01:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.0001:1. Development is limited to those structures which are directly related to maintenance and caretaking of the natural open space.

1.7 **Recreation Commercial:** The Recreation Commercial designation provides for indoor recreational activities, including bowling, cinemas, gymnasiums and similar activities, as well as outdoor activities such as golf courses, tennis clubs, athletic fields and support/caretaker facilities. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.40:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.1:1.

**Residential Designations**

Future development of land within residential designations shall be designed to fit into the general topography of the parcel, so as to appear to be a part of a natural setting. For the purposes of designing projects within residential designations, specific topographical features noted in this and other elements of the General Plan for preservation shall be accommodated. Developments are encouraged to use clustering of units to promote the retention of open space for scenic purposes, as well as to preserve ridgelines, unique topographic features and sensitive natural habitat areas. In implementing this provision, a slope formula will be considered for future development standards that will reduce the density of development for steeper slopes within the residential land use designations.

In the zoning ordinances which are prepared to implement this plan, it is anticipated that more than one zoning district designation may apply to any of the residential categories.
2.0 Very Low Density: The Very Low Density residential land use designation provides for the development of very low density single-family dwellings and accessory buildings and is generally located in hillside areas. Uses such as mobile and modular homes, second single-family units, guest houses, public facilities, and others which are compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of very low density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

The Very Low Density residential land use designation has been assigned to areas within the City that have unique or significant hillside features such as ridgelines, creeks, slopes, sensitive habitat areas or mapped landslides. This designation has a density range from zero to a maximum of 1.0 unit per acre.

The maximum density of this land use designation may be exceeded to complement General Plan Housing Element policy in accordance with the density bonus provisions of Section 65915 of the California Government Code.

2.1 Low Density: The Low Density residential land use designation provides for the development of low density single-family dwellings and accessory buildings. Uses such as mobile and modular homes, second single-family units, guest houses, public facilities, and others which are compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of low density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

This designation allows a maximum of 2.0 dwelling units per gross acre. The maximum density of this land use designation may be exceeded to complement General Plan Housing Element policy in accordance with the density bonus provisions of Section 65915 of the California Government Code.

2.2 Medium Low Density: The Medium Low Density residential land use designation provides for the development of medium low density single-family dwellings and accessory buildings. Uses such as mobile and modular homes, second single-family units, guest houses, churches, schools, family day care homes, public facilities, and others which are compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of medium low density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

This designation allows a maximum of 3.5 dwelling units per gross acre of land. Development under this designation should maintain a medium low density character. The maximum density of this land use designation may be exceeded to complement General Plan Housing Element policy in
accordance with the density bonus provisions of Section 65915 of the California Government Code.

2.3 Medium Density: The Medium Density residential land use designation provides for the development of medium density single-family detached and attached dwelling units, mobile home parks, duplexes and multi-family dwellings, such as townhomes and condominiums, as well as accessory buildings. Uses such as mobile and modular homes, second single-family units, guest houses, churches, schools, family day care homes, public facilities, and others which are compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of medium density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

This designation allows a maximum of 5.0 dwelling units per gross acre of land. Development under this designation should maintain a medium density character. The maximum density of this land use designation may be exceeded to complement General Plan Housing Element policy in accordance with the density bonus provisions of Section 65915 of the California Government Code.

2.4 Medium High Density: The Medium High Density residential land use designation provides for the development of medium high density single-family detached and attached dwelling units, mobile home parks, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings, such as townhomes and condominiums, as well as accessory buildings. Uses such as mobile and modular homes, second single-family units, guest houses, churches, schools, family day care homes, public facilities, and others which are compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of medium high density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

This designation allows a maximum of 8.0 dwelling units per gross acre of land. Development under this designation should maintain a medium high density character. The maximum density of this land use designation may be exceeded to complement General Plan Housing Element policy in accordance with the density bonus provisions of Section 65915 of the California Government Code.
2.5 High Density: The High Density residential land use designation provides for the development of high density single-family detached and attached dwelling units, mobile homes, modular homes, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings, such as townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and cooperatives, as well as accessory buildings. Uses such as mobile and modular homes, second single-family units, guest houses, churches, schools, family day care homes, public facilities, and others which are compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of high density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

This designation allows a maximum of 18.0 dwelling units per gross acre of land. Development under this designation should maintain a high density character. The maximum density of this land use designation may be exceeded to complement General Plan Housing Element policy in accordance with the density bonus provisions of Section 65915 of the California Government Code.

2.6 Very High Density: The Very High Density residential land use designation provides for the development of very high density single family detached and attached dwelling units, mobile homes, modular homes, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings, such as townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and cooperatives, as well as accessory buildings. Uses such as mobile and modular homes, second single-family units, guest houses, churches, schools, family day care homes, public facilities, and others which are compatible with and oriented toward serving the needs of high density single-family neighborhoods may also be allowed.

This designation allows a maximum of 30.0 dwelling units per gross acre of land. Development under this designation should maintain a very high density character. The maximum density of this land use designation may be exceeded, with City Council approval to complement General Plan Housing Element policy in accordance with the density bonus provisions of Section 65 915 of the California Government Code.
Commercial Designations

3.0 Neighborhood Commercial: The Neighborhood Commercial land use designation provides for a variety of retail, office, and service-oriented business activities serving a local community area and population. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with primary uses, such as public facilities, may also be allowed. Neighborhood commercial land uses serve local areas and generally include professional and business offices, retail and commercial services, and public facilities. Site development standards for this land use designation encourage smaller projects and provide for appropriate setbacks, parking, landscaping, buffering from residential land use areas and other features which create well-designed, attractive projects. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.25:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.20:1.

3.1 General Commercial: The General Commercial land use designation provides for a variety of retail, office, and service-oriented business activities serving a community-wide area and population, as well as broader market area. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with primary uses, such as public facilities, may also be allowed. General Commercial land uses serve local, as well as broader market areas and generally include professional and business offices, retail and commercial services. Site development standards for this land use designation encourage larger tenant projects and provide for appropriate setbacks, parking, landscaping, buffering from residential land use areas and other features which create well-designed, attractive projects. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.50:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.30:1. Adjacent to Mission San Juan Capistrano in the area identified as the historic downtown, the maximum and average floor area ratio shall be considered for the whole area and not for individual parcels.
Industrial Designations

4.0 Industrial Park: The Industrial Park designation provides for a variety of light industrial and manufacturing uses that are non-polluting and which can co-exist compatibly with surrounding land uses. Uses allowed do not in their maintenance, assembly, manufacturing or operations create smoke, gas, dust, sound, vibrations, soot or glare to any degree which will be obnoxious or offensive to persons residing or conducting business in the City. Such activities are to be conducted within the building.

Allowable uses include research & development, light manufacturing and processing, offices, warehousing and storage, high technology production, and related uses. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with primary uses may also be allowed. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.40:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.30:1.

4.1 Quasi-Industrial: The Quasi-Industrial designation provides for a variety of light industrial and manufacturing uses, including limited regional and sub-regional commercial activities that are non-polluting and which can co-exist compatibly with surrounding land uses. Uses allowed do not in their maintenance, assembly, manufacturing or operations create smoke, gas, dust, sound, vibrations, soot or glare to any degree which will be obnoxious or offensive to persons residing or conducting business in the City.

Allowable uses include research & development, light manufacturing and processing, large single tenant distribution and sales, automobile sales and leasing, offices, warehousing and storage, high technology production, and related uses. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with primary uses may also be allowed. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.40:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.30:1.
4.2 Agri-Business: The Agri-Business designation provides for the production and sales of agricultural crops. Allowable uses include field and row crops, orchards and vineyards, nurseries, greenhouses and hydroponic gardens, as well as animal breeding, boarding, raising and training. A single family home associated with the primary uses is also allowed. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with primary uses may also be allowed. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.10:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.05:1.

4.3 Office/Research Park: The Office/Research Park designation provides for single-tenant and multi-tenant offices that include professional, legal, medical, financial, administrative, research & development, corporate and general business offices and other supporting uses. Also included are small convenience or service commercial activities intended to meet the needs of the on-site employee population. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with primary uses may also be allowed. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.40:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.25:1.

Public/Institutional Designations

5.0 Public & Institutional: The Public & Institutional designation provides for schools, churches, fire stations, community centers, utility substations and office complexes. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with primary uses may also be allowed. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.40:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.25:1. The Land Use Element identified approximately 186 acres for Public & Institutional land uses which include provisions for private schools (grades K-12).

Future proposed amendments to the Land Use Element and Land Use Policy Map for private schools should only be considered if it is demonstrated that such a facility will be for the general public benefit and will not impact the financial viability of the City.

5.1 Existing Public Schools: The Existing Public Schools designation provides for existing public schools. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with primary uses may also be allowed. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.30:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.25:1.
5.2 **Potential Public Schools**: The Potential Public Schools designation provides for potential public schools. This designation is not associated with a specific parcel of land, but indicates a general area in which a future school may be located. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.30:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.25:1.

5.3 **Assisted Care Facilities**: The Assisted Care Facility designation provides for limited special public/institutional facilities that provide specialized care for seniors and persons requiring special medical housing. Allowable uses include senior assisted care housing, nursing homes, and other specialized housing of a similar nature. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.40:1 and the average intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.40:1.

**Special Designations**

**Special Study**: The Special Study designation overlays the base land use designation of properties that have unique physical features, environmental conditions and/or other development constraints requiring special regulations or standards designed to address or preserve those conditions. Such properties may be developed for land uses other than those provided for under the land use designation currently assigned to that parcel. For such properties, preparation of a development plan by a project proponent, including special regulations or standards addressing the relevant features, conditions and/or constraints is required and will be considered by the City Council in determining whether to approve a requested general plan amendment and zone change.

**Specific Plan/Precise Plan**: The Specific Plan/Precise designation provides for areas governed by a specific plan or precise plan adopted prior to development. The maximum intensity of development will be determined based on the land uses and associated acres identified in the specific or precise plan.
Planned Communities

San Juan Capistrano contains four areas designated as Planned Community (depicted in Figure LU-3). The purpose of the Planned Community designation is to allow for the utilization of innovative land planning and building design. The Planned Community designation allows for flexibility in the design of a development project which may not be available with the other land use designations. Table LU-3 summarizes the designated land uses for each of the four Planned Communities and identifies the land use mix allowed for each Planned Community. The percentage mix of land uses for the planned communities serves as a guideline for developers, but may be modified with the approval of the City.

Development Capacity

The Land Use Plan for San Juan Capistrano includes average levels of residential and non-residential development, where all land in the planning area is developed according to the Plan. The average levels of development establish a capacity for the Land Use Plan that is expressed as estimates of total dwelling units, total population, and total square footage of non-residential development in the future.

Table LU-4 summarizes the development capacity of the Land Use Plan. This table provides a breakdown of land uses within San Juan Capistrano for purposes of identifying the estimated development capacity of the Land Use Plan.

The degree to which the estimated capacity exceeds projected population is referred to as “overage”. Some overage is desirable to make allowances for inevitable small pockets of undevelopable land, to allow for difficulty in recognizing development trends in completely vacant areas, to allow for unforeseen need for public utilities, and to recognize that some owners will maintain their land in an undeveloped state beyond the time span of the Plan. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has recommended that Plan capacity not exceed approximately 1.20 to 1.25 times the projected population.

The measurement of capacity is accomplished by dividing the difference between maximum population capacity of the Plan by the projected population. For the San Juan Capistrano planning area, the maximum population capacity of the Plan is approximately 38,520 and the projected population is approximately 36,440, resulting in a capacity of 1.06.
Figure LU-3
Planned Communities

December 14, 1999
San Juan Capistrano General Plan
### Table LU-3
**Planned Communities:**
**Allowable Uses Guideline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned Community</th>
<th>Allowed Land Use Mix Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Crystal Cathedral Ministries Planned Community              | 80% Public Institutional (includes retreat center)  
                                                             20% Assisted Care Facility (may include a wellness center. Maximum floor area ratio for Public Institutional will not be allowed unless the project offers exceptional benefits to the community.)  |
| Oso Ranch Planned Community                                 | 40% Public Institutional  
                                                             30% Affordable Family/Senior Housing  
                                                             30% Medium Density Residential                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Pueblo Serra Planned Community                               | 100% Office/Research Park (with support accessory uses such as hotel, food services, etc.)                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Whispering Hills Planned Community                           | 100% Very Low Density Residential                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Forster Canyon Planned Community (Pacifica San Juan): 257.0 acres | 5% Low Density Residential  
                                                             26% Medium Low Density Residential  
                                                             10% Medium Density Residential  
                                                             3% High Density Residential  
                                                             6% Office/Research Park  
                                                             8% Open Space Recreation  
                                                             39% General Open Space  
                                                             4% Public Institutional                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Distrito La Novia-San Juan Meadows Planned Community: 153.8 acres | 7% General Commercial  
                                                             3% High Density Residential  
                                                             44% Open Space Recreation  
                                                             28% Low Density Residential  
                                                             18% Natural Open Space                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
## Table LU-4
### Development Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Designations</th>
<th>Acres*</th>
<th>Expected DUs per acre or FAR</th>
<th>Dwelling Units</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
<th>Average Persons Per Dwelling Unit</th>
<th>Population²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Space &amp; Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Open Space</td>
<td>1,552</td>
<td>0.0001:1 FAR</td>
<td>1,552</td>
<td>6,795</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space Recreation</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>FAR</td>
<td></td>
<td>141,134</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Park</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.05:1 FAR</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,316</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Park</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>0.05:1 FAR</td>
<td></td>
<td>58,370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Park</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.01:1 FAR</td>
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<td>6,534</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Park</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>0.05:1 FAR</td>
<td></td>
<td>25,221</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Open Space</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>0.001:1 FAR</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,956</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation Commercial</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.0001:1 FAR</td>
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<td>43,560</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUBTOTAL</td>
<td>3,404</td>
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<td>289,886</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low Density Residential</td>
<td>1,488</td>
<td>1 du/ac</td>
<td>1,488</td>
<td>4,330</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Density Residential</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>2 du/ac</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium Low Density Residential</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>3.3 du/ac</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium Density Residential</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>4.5 du/ac</td>
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<td>7,36</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium High Density Residential</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>7.5 du/ac</td>
<td></td>
<td>11,524</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High Density Residential</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>17 du/ac</td>
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<td>5,293</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Family/Senior Housing</td>
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<td>Los Rios Specific Plan</td>
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<td>10,437,188</td>
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DUs or du = dwelling units
FAR = Floor Area Ratio

* Does not include the 93 acres located in the City's sphere of influence.

Growth for the 93 acre sphere of influence is based on expected FARs identified above:

- Public & Institutional: 65 acres - 707,850 square feet
- Assisted Care Facility: 16 acres - 278,784 square feet
- General Open Space: 3 acres
- Roadways: 9 acres

¹ A 10% reduction in acreage has been made to account for undeveloped and recently subdivided areas, and areas served by private roads.

² Persons per dwelling unit is calculated based on average persons per dwelling unit of 2.91
Control and Direct Growth

The City of San Juan Capistrano has experienced great levels of growth over the years. To preserve its historic village atmosphere, and provide sufficient levels of public services to new development and residents, growth in the City should continue to be controlled. Controlled and directed growth will allow new development to occur without negatively affecting San Juan Capistrano's unique character that existing residents enjoy.

Controlling growth in San Juan Capistrano is not a recent idea. The City adopted a Residential Growth Management Program in 1976 which limits the number of residential building permits granted each year to 400. This policy will continue to be implemented to manage the future development of the remaining developable lands within the planning area. Revision and enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance to allow density or intensity up to the maximum level allowed by the General Plan for projects which include important benefits or amenities will encourage the goals and policies of the General Plan.

The approximate 9.5-acre parcel located at the southeast corner of Valle Road and San Juan Creek Road has been designated as a location for a hotel and convention facility. This facility must be designed and located consistent with Specific Plan 82-09.

The City has identified the Historic Town Center as an area with important historical and social value worth protecting. Figure LU-4 depicts the area contained within the Historic Town Center Master Plan. The Master Plan establishes a "blueprint" to guide development in the downtown that implements the goals contained in the General Plan. Implementation of a town center revitalization plan will encourage a diversity of commercial and service uses which balance the community’s commercial need with those of tourism-based development while maintaining fiscal and economic viability. The City will continue to implement a town center revitalization plan to provide additional housing opportunities and population to support these commercial services and retail sales.

Another area identified within the community for special planning is the historic Los Rios neighborhood. The Los Rios Precise Plan District contains some of the oldest structures in the County and, and the Rios Adobe may be the oldest, continually-inhabited residence in California. Figure LU-5 depicts the location of the Los Rios Precise Plan planning area. The original Los Rios Precise Plan was adopted in 1978, and the City is in the process of revising the Plan. The revised Precise
Precise Plan Boundary

Source: City of San Juan Capistrano
Los Rios Precise Plan, (February 1978)

Figure LU-5
Los Rios Precise Plan Area

December 14, 1999
Plan will allow the District to evolve, while preserving the essence of the area; its historical diversity and rural character. The City will continue to implement the Los Ríos Precise Plan to preserve the viability of the Los Ríos area and the entire downtown area.

Oso/Trabuco Creek Properties

In the northwesterly portion of the City, approximately 70 acres of land located north of the intersection of Oso and Trabuco Creeks is identified as a Special Study area. These properties are presently designated for Agri-Business and have been used for farming purposes for over 20 years. The California Department of Conservation identifies these properties as Prime Farmland, meaning the properties provide the best combination of physical and chemical features to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. In addition to farming, the Agri-Business designation allows animal breeding, boarding, raising and training, nurseries, and a single family home on each legal parcel. The properties currently have no access to public roads.

With their physical position between the two creeks, portions of the properties are within the inundation area of a 100-year flood. The properties have experienced loss of land adjacent to the creeks in recent years as development upstream has resulted in greater water volumes and velocities along Oso and Trabuco Creeks.

As much as the San Juan Capistrano area, these properties are located within a high fire hazard area and are susceptible to wildland fire. With several recorded prehistoric and historic archaeological resources in the same general area, the properties also have potential for such resources to be present.

Recognizing the unique physical and environmental conditions of these properties, the Special Study designation overlays the base Agri-Business designation. These properties may be developed for land uses other than Agri-Business in the future following preparation of a development plan, including special regulations or standards addressing the physical features, environmental conditions, and development constraints identified above and any others that may be identified through the environmental review process specified by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and its Guidelines. The development plan will then be considered by the City Council in determining whether to approve a requested general plan amendment and zone change.
The Community Design and Public Services & Utilities Element also identify additional implementation programs which target the compatibility of future development and redevelopment within the City and the provision of sufficient levels of public services and utilities.

The Land Use Element identifies where the future growth in population will occur in the City. Future growth in areas which are susceptible to natural hazards, such as the floodplain and the hillsides where flooding and landslides occur, has been limited through the use of natural open space easements, and the designation of lower intensity land uses in these high risk areas.

In addition to preserving open space areas for safety issues, the City of San Juan Capistrano has identified the preservation of open space as an important factor for preserving the open space, rural character that the residents of San Capistrano enjoy. Approximately 40 percent of the City is designated for open space, creating an island of undeveloped, natural beauty in the urbanized southern Orange County region. The preservation of ridgelines is especially important as these areas are visible from all parts of the community and create a natural boundary between San Juan Capistrano and its neighbors. The Conservation & Open Space Element identifies programs for the long-term protection of open space resources.

The City Zoning Ordinance is one of the primary regulatory documents that is used to ensure land use compatibility and public safety. The Ordinance contains standards for development, such as allowed uses, setbacks, parking and landscaping, that are designed to promote compatibility and public safety. In addition to the Zoning Ordinance, the City Subdivision Ordnance and grading regulation are important regulatory tools to control the subdivision of land and alteration of land in preparation for development. To protect the safety of the community and preserve the natural open space character of the City, San Juan Capistrano will review and amend, when necessary, its Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance and grading regulations to ensure that they are consistent with new state legislation and court decisions and provide the required level of protection for the community.

Systematic enforcement of the City's ordinances and regulations and monitoring of development within and around the community will be used to maintain the public safety and quality of life. Development monitoring by the City can be used to ensure that City facilities and services are able to provide sufficient levels of public services to new development, ensuring the public safety.
Economic Development

The promotion of the City's historic, village character is important to the residents of San Juan Capistrano. This historic character is centered around the central business district which traditionally has formed the focal point for the community, bringing people together as they shop and visit the areas surrounding the Mission. Preserving and improving the image of the central business district requires attracting and retaining commercial businesses which are compatible with the community and serve the community's needs for a downtown area, as well as assuring that these businesses succeed. Concentrating commercial activities within the central business district also discourages the creation of new strip commercial developments outside of the downtown area that would change the character of the community.

In 1998, the City of San Juan Capistrano commissioned a study by Keyser Marston Associates, Inc. and Linda Congleton Associates to prepare an economic strategy for the City. The resulting Market Based Economic Strategy identifies implementation programs which will allow for the transition of underperforming commercial uses to viable revenue producing uses and increase outreach to the business community. To position the community for a successful transition to the 21st century, the City will implement the economic strategies outlined in the Keyser Marston report.

The Community Redevelopment Agency is also involved with economic development within the City, and will continue to implement the Redevelopment Plan for the Central Redevelopment Project. Figure LU-6 depicts the Central Redevelopment Project area which includes the downtown area. The Community Redevelopment Agency's goals include: the elimination of blight conditions in the Redevelopment Project Area; the prevention of recurrence of these blight conditions; the improvement or construction of public services and infrastructure and the improvement of the Project Areas environment; the implementation of the Redevelopment Plan; and the encouragement and fostering of economic development within the Project Area.
Other programs which will be implemented by the City to foster economic development within the community include implementing programs that attract and support businesses within the community. Information will be actively distributed to members of the business community through the use of newsletters and the Internet. Assistance with the permitting process and permit streamlining will be implemented to speed the process of applying and receiving City permits and reduce the business cost associated with long delays.

With the substantial growth that San Juan Capistrano has experienced over the last 25 years, it is important for the City to assure that new development complements and conforms with the existing community character. This assures that the historic character of the City is preserved and existing neighborhoods are not negatively affected by new development. Older neighborhoods within San Juan Capistrano may also require additional rehabilitation to improve their visual character.

The City will work with the Community Redevelopment Agency to implement the Redevelopment Plan to improve neighborhoods within the Central Redevelopment Project. In addition, a graffiti removal and prevention program will be implemented to avoid the negative impacts of graffiti on communities and incentives to encourage rehabilitation will be offered. The Community Design and Public Service & Utilities Elements include implementation programs which assure that new development within the community is compatible with the existing neighborhood, and that public service providers will be able to provide sufficient levels of service to the new development.