
3.9 LAND USE/PLANNING

3.9.1 Introduction

This section describes the existing land use characteristics of the Project Area, identifies the potential conflicts of the Proposed Project with applicable land use plans and policies, and identifies potentially significant land use changes resulting from implementation of the Proposed Project.

Information for this section is based on the City of Lake Forest General Plan, Lake Forest Municipal Code, and field observations. Full bibliographic references are noted in the end of this section.

No comments with respect to land use were received during the NOP comment period.

3.9.2 Environmental Setting

■ Regional Characteristics

The City of Lake Forest, with a population of approximately 77,770 as of January 2004, is an area of 16.6 square miles located in the heart of South Orange County and Saddleback Valley, between the coastal floodplain and the Santa Ana Mountains (see Figure 2-1, Regional Location). The western portion of the City is near sea level, while the northeastern portion reaches elevations of up to 1,500 feet.

The City of Lake Forest was originally part of Rancho Canada de los Alisos, which was originally deeded to Jose Serrano in 1846. After the fall of the rancho system, the area was used for dry farming and later citrus groves. A small town called El Toro developed as a shipping, commerce, and social center. The town did not grow substantially until imported water was extended to the area in the 1960s. During the 1970s, a number of Planned Communities were developed with several man-made lakes. Prior to 1991, Lake Forest was part of unincorporated Orange County, and as such, several of the Planned Communities that make up the residential areas of Lake Forest were planned, entitled and developed under county jurisdiction. In 1991, when the City of Lake Forest incorporated it inherited many established Planned Communities with previously adopted planned community zoning and entitlements for those areas.

The City developed primarily as a residential community served by a commercial and business sector. Development of most of the City is governed by approved zoning in the form of Planned Community texts—all of which were originally adopted by the County before the City incorporated. The Planned Communities in the City include the following:

- Lake Forest
- El Toro
- Baker Ranch
- Pacific Commercentre
- Rancho de los Alisos
- Rancho Serrano

- Serrano Highlands
- Foothill Ranch
- Portola Hills

Development type and density are established for the Planned Communities and pre-incorporation development agreements apply to a number of the Planned Communities. Development within each planned community is designed to be compatible and form a consistent visual image. In other areas of the City, particularly near Interstate 5, residential neighborhoods have not developed as part of planned communities.

The Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park is a prominent feature in the northern portion of the City, located generally between the planned communities of Portola Hills and Foothill Ranch. Aliso Creek, Serrano Creek, and two smaller creeks traverse the city. Significant portions of Aliso Creek and Serrano Creek include trails and open space and have a natural/undeveloped character. The City also has two manmade lakes, which are located within residential developments.

One- to three-story commercial development is concentrated near Interstate 5 and along the primary arterials of El Toro Road, Lake Forest Drive, Bake Parkway, and Portola Parkway. The southern portion of the City is the most developed.

■ Project Area Characteristics

The Proposed Project consists of seven properties that consist of 838 acres of vacant land in the City of Lake Forest, north and south of SR-241 (Figure 2-2, Project Location). These seven properties range in size from 13 acres to 387 acres. Not all of the seven parcels are contiguous to each of the others. The seven properties are located within the larger Opportunities Study Area of the City (OSA) that represents the area formerly encumbered by the 65 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) contour of the former MCAS El Toro.

The Project Area includes vacant lands, consisting of undeveloped areas and previously graded sites; agricultural uses, light industrial, business park, commercial, and surface parking lot uses. The primary land uses in the Project Area, outside of the opportunities study are light industrial, commercial, and business park uses. The area is bisected from east to west by SR-241, and the area is served by a network of developed arterial roadways.

Table 3.9-1 summarizes the existing land uses within each of the Project Area sites. As shown in the table, most of the sites contain limited structural development. Uses primarily include vacant lands, agricultural uses, and mineral resource recovery. A detailed description of land uses on each site follows.

Site 1 (Shea/Baker Ranch): This 387-acre parcel is largely vacant. The site is located south of SR-241 and north of Commercentre Drive. The site is bordered on the east by Bake Parkway and on the west by the City of Irvine boundary. The property is bisected by the proposed extension of Alton Parkway. To the west is the open space preserve in the City of Irvine and the Borrego Wash, which is an Orange County flood channel that has been channelized upstream of Site 1 and south of Irvine Boulevard, but that remains in its natural condition within the Site. Contained on the site are two single-family

residential units, agricultural uses consisting of a nursery, avocado grove, and composting area, an RV storage facility, and large vacant graded areas adjacent to Bake Parkway. A small wetlands seep exists near the intersection of Alton Parkway and Commercentre Drive.

Site No.	Site Name	Acreage	Existing Uses
1	Shea/Baker	387	Largely vacant Agricultural uses: nursery, avocado grove, composting area RV storage Two single-family dwellings
2	Portola Center	243	Vacant Bisected by Glenn Ranch Road, a major thoroughfare
3	IRWD	82	Agricultural (row crops) support structures Office building and water tanks for the Irvine Ranch Water District
4	Baker	50	Gravel washing and associated facilities Parking facilities Nursery
5	Whisler/Greystone	13	Primarily vacant Residential dwelling and pasture land Small citrus grove
6	Pacific Heritage	18	Primarily Undeveloped One residential street—Peachwood Drive
7	Nakase	45 ^a	Nursery and support structures

SOURCE: EIP Associates 2005(field notes from site visit by J. Spranza)

^a Only 45 acres of this 121-acre Nakase holding would be utilized for development under the Proposed Project

Site 2 (Portola Center): This site, located north of SR-241 and bisected by Glenn Ranch Road, consists of 243 acres of vacant land with varied topography, ranging from hilly to flat in some areas. Surrounding land uses include the Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park to the northwest and northeast, residential development to the north, and open space in the remaining areas. The area immediately south of the Project Area is a Southern California Edison utility corridor. The westernmost portion of the site, almost completely surrounded by the Whiting Ranch Wilderness area, is not proposed for development and will be retained as permanent open space.

Site 3 (IRWD/Lewis): This parcel is located between Bake Parkway and Lake Forest Drive, north of Trabuco Road and south of Commercentre Drive. This site consists of 82 acres that currently support water district facilities as well as agricultural row crops and support structures. The site also contains an office building for the Irvine Ranch Water District. Surrounding land uses include residential areas to the west, east, and south, industrial complexes to the north, and open space to the east and west of the site.

Site 4 (Baker Ranch): This 50-acre site, located immediately south of and adjacent to SR-241 and bisected by a proposed extension of Rancho Parkway, contains gravel mining and associated facilities, parking lots, a construction staging area for Southern California Edison's Viejo system project, and a

container nursery. Surrounding land uses include industrial complexes to the west, SR-241 to the north, Portola Parkway to the east, and open space and a commercial shopping center to the south. The primary existing land use on this site is a sand and gravel mining operation.

Site 5 (Whisler/Greystone): This 13-acre site is undeveloped, with hilly topography. The parcel is generally located at the corner of Regency Lane and Osterman Road. There is a small citrus grove and a single (vacant) residential dwelling with associated pastureland. Surrounding land uses include residential development to the south, a park to the east, and industrial and commercial uses to the north and west.

Site 6 (Pacific Heritage): This parcel consists of 18 acres of vacant land with foothill-type topography. The parcel is immediately adjacent to Site 3 (IRWD) and located at the northern end of Peachwood Drive. Surrounding land uses include residential development to the west and south, open space to the north, and the IRWD property to the east. The site is undeveloped. The southern portion of the site contains a residential street (Peachwood Drive).

Site 7 (Nakase): This is the site of the current Nakase Brothers Nursery operations, located on Bake Parkway just south of Rancho Parkway. The parcel totals 121 acres and consists of growing grounds and support structures such as a greenhouse and office area. There are no major trees on the Project Area. The site is bordered on the east and south by industrial and commercial complexes, and Serrano Creek runs along the eastern edge of the site. Across Bake Parkway to the west are existing business park uses and vacant land. An existing commercial shopping center is located to the north, across Rancho Parkway. The Proposed Project would utilize the northernmost 45 acres of this parcel bordering Rancho Parkway.

3.9.3 Planning and Regulatory Framework

■ Federal and State

There are no federal or state regulations applicable to land use.

■ Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

SCAG's Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) and RHNA are tools for coordinating regional planning and development strategies in southern California. The RCPG includes policies related to Growth Management, Water Quality, Air Quality, Open Space, and Transportation.

■ Local

The City of Lake Forest General Plan

Land Use Element

The City of Lake Forest General Plan contains goals, policies, and plans that are intended to guide land use and development decisions. The General Plan consists of a Land Use Policy Map and the following six elements, or chapters, which together fulfill the state requirements for a General Plan:

- Land Use Element
- Housing Element
- Circulation Element
- Recreation and Resources Element
- Safety and Noise Element
- Public Facilities/Growth Management Element

Policies that relate to Land Use are listed below.

- Goal 3.0** New development that is compatible with the community.
- Policy 3.1** Ensure that new development fits within the existing setting and is compatible with the physical characteristics of available land, surrounding land uses, and public infrastructure availability
- Policy 3.2** Preserve and enhance the quality of Lake Forest residential neighborhoods by avoiding or abating the intrusion of disruptive, non-conforming buildings and uses
- Policy 3.4** Blend residential and non-residential development with landscaping and architectural design techniques to achieve visual compatibility
- Goal 4.0** New development conforming to the established planned community development plans and agreements
- Policy 4.1** Ensure that all proposed amendments to approved planned community development plans and agreements will not create unacceptable impacts to surrounding existing and planned development, the natural characteristics of the sites, fiscal stability of the City, and the public facilities and services that support development.

Safety and Noise Element

Policies related to Land Use are listed below.

- Goal 5.0** Consideration of the effects of noise in land use planning
- Policy 5.1** Utilize noise/land use compatibility standards as a guide for future planning and development decisions

- Policy 5.2** Provide noise control measures, such as berms, walls, and sound attenuating construction in areas of new construction or rehabilitation

3.9.4 Methodology

Impacts to land use were evaluated by comparing applicable land use regulations to Proposed Project uses in order to identify if the project would comply with existing regulations. In addition, land uses on-site and adjacent to the Project Area were identified and compared to uses proposed by the project, in order to determine if these uses would be compatible. Uses were compared based upon type of use, intensity of development, and potential for air, noise, traffic, and hazardous materials to affect adjacent uses.

3.9.5 Thresholds of Significance

The City of Lake Forest has developed thresholds of significance related to land use. Based on the City's thresholds, the Proposed Project and Landowner Concept Plan would result in significant impacts related to land use if they would:

- Propose a use not currently permitted by the General Plan Land Use Map.
- Propose a use not currently permitted by the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.
- Propose a use not permitted by an applicable Planned Community or Specific Plan.
- Propose a use that would create a nuisance for adjacent properties.
- Propose a use that is incompatible with surrounding land uses (e.g., difference in the physical scale of development, noise levels, traffic levels, or hours of operation).

3.9.6 Impacts

CEQA requires that the Proposed Project's potential environmental impacts be compared to on-the-ground conditions in the Project Area at the time the Notice of Preparation is issued or at the time the analysis of such impacts is commenced. Such on-the-ground conditions are considered, and often referred to as, the environmental or CEQA "baseline." Thus, the following section analyzes the Proposed Project's potential environmental impacts on baseline conditions. However, it should be noted that the land under consideration for the Proposed Project, while currently undeveloped, would not necessarily remain undeveloped. Most sites within the Project Area are subject to existing development agreements or entitlements and, in the absence of the Proposed Project, would in the future likely be developed with approximately 9.8 million square feet of industrial and commercial space under the existing General Plan. Given this, the analysis of alternatives to the Proposed Project in Chapter 4 of this EIR, under the "No Project/Reasonably Foreseeable Development" alternative, analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with buildout of the existing General Plan. That analysis includes a comparison of the impacts of buildout of the existing General Plan with the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project.

Impact 3.9-1 **While the Proposed Project proposes uses that are not currently permitted by the General Plan Land Use Map, Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, and Planned Community designation, the Proposed Project will, as necessary, amend such maps, ordinances, and designations to address future buildout of the Proposed Project.**

Significance Level: **Less than significant**

The Proposed Project includes changes to General Plan designations. As such, these uses differ from those currently included in the General Plan Land Use Map. The existing General Plan Land Use designations were created while land use restrictions were in effect due to the adjacent uses at MCAS El Toro. The Proposed Project reconsiders the land use designations in portions of the area formerly encumbered by the 65 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) contour. The Proposed Project includes a General Plan Amendment to ensure that no inconsistencies would remain between the Proposed Project and the General Plan. In addition to the changes in the General Plan land use designations, the Proposed Project also includes an amendment to the Mixed Use land use category as described in the General Plan to allow High Density Residential uses within Mixed Use areas.

The City of Lake Forest Planning and Zoning Code, Title 9 of the City's Municipal Code, is one of the primary means of implementing the General Plan. The Proposed Project includes a Zone Change to apply appropriate zoning designations to implement the proposed GPA (see Table 3.9-2 for zoning and land use changes). The Zoning Map would be revised to be consistent with the proposed changes to General Plan Land Use designations. The Proposed Project Land Use Map, as shown in Figure 2-3 (Proposed Project Land Use Map) in Chapter 2 (Project Description) of this EIR, includes residential uses on all parcels, while these areas are currently zoned for urban activity, commercial, business park, general agriculture, and open space. In some cases, the proposed zoning will require additional planning documents, and therefore, such documents as an amendment to the Planned Community text will be considered. Further, as part of the proposed zoning, a unit cap and maximum square footage of commercial development would be assigned to each of the properties. For Site 1, the Baker Ranch

Planned Community text will be amended. Development on Site 2 will amend the existing Portola Hills Planned Community text. Because the Proposed Project includes changes to the Zoning Map, no residual inconsistencies between proposed uses and the City Zoning Code would remain.

Several regionally and locally adopted land use plans, policies, and regulations would be applicable to development under the Proposed Project. These include the 1997 Air Quality Management Plan, 1999 Amendment for Ozone, SCAG’s Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide, and the Santa Ana and San Diego Basin Plans. Consistency of the Proposed Project with the 1997 Air Quality Management Plan and 1999 Amendment for Ozone in the City is discussed under Impact 3.3-1 of Section 3.3 (Air Quality), and inconsistencies would not occur.

The Santa Ana and San Diego Basin Plans specifically (1) designate beneficial uses for surface and ground waters, (2) set narrative and numerical objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the state’s anti-degradation policy, and (3) describe implementation programs to protect all waters in the region. In cases where a Basin Plan does not contain a standard for a particular pollutant, other criteria are used to establish a standard. Other criteria may be applied from SWB documents (e.g., the Inland Surface Waters Plan and the Pollutant Policy Document) or from water quality criteria developed under Section 304(a) of the *Clean Water Act*. Development within the City would be required to comply with all applicable water quality requirements established by the Santa Ana and San Diego RWQCBs and SWRCB. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would be consistent with the relevant Basin Plans and the *Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act*.

Table 3.9-2 Proposed Zoning and Land Use Changes

Site ^a	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning
Site 1	Urban Activity - Baker Ranch Planned Community	Amend Baker Ranch Planned Community text to include a residential planned community of up to 2, 815 units and up to 320,000 square feet of commercial uses. The PC amendment will add new zoning designations to the existing BRPC and will provide additional development standards and design guidelines.
Site 2	Business Park, Commercial – Portola Hills Planned Community	Amend Portola Hills Planned Community text to remove the business park and commercial zoning designation and replace it with a new residential planned community of up to 1,132 units and up to 178,720 square feet of commercial uses.
Site 3	Agriculture (A1)	Site 3 will be zoned R2-PD. The Lake Forest Municipal Code includes the R2 Multifamily Dwelling District (LFMC Chapter 9.56) to provide for the development of multifamily residential neighborhoods. The PD Planned Development District (LFMC Chapter 9.124) is a companion zoning designation which allows for development which utilizes innovative design features and site planning techniques to provide for better use of common areas, open space and other amenities. The zoning will include a unit cap of 833 apartments.
Site 4	Urban Activity (Sand & Gravel Overlay)—Baker Ranch Planned Community	Amend Baker Ranch Planned Community text to allow for residential and mixed use on Site 4. The PC amendment will add a new zoning designation to the site that allows for residential and mixed used up to a maximum of 475 dwelling units and 150,000 square feet of commercial uses.

Table 3.9-2 Proposed Zoning and Land Use Changes		
Site ^a	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning
Site 5	Agriculture (A1)	Site 5 will Be Zoned RS-PD. The Lake Forest Municipal Code Includes the RS Residential Single-Family District (LFMC Chapter 9.48) to provide for the development of medium-density single-family residential neighborhoods. The PD Planned Development District (LFMC Chapter 9.124) is a companion zoning designation which allows for development which utilizes innovative design features and site planning techniques to provide for better use of common areas, open space and other amenities. The zoning will include a unit cap of 85 single-family units.
Site 6	Open Space/High Density Residential—Serrano Highlands Planned Community	The Serrano Highlands Planned community will be amended to include an additional 85 residential units and will change the zoning designation of property from Open Space to Medium Density Residential. The Medium Density Residential designation allows single-family residential neighborhoods.
Site 7	Agriculture (A1)	The Zoning for Site 7 will not change. The zoning will remain A1 Agricultural District (LFMC Chapter 9.10), which includes public parks, playgrounds and athletic fields as permitted uses.

SOURCE: City of Lake Forest NOP 2004
 For information on sites 7 and 8, see Land Use Overlay section
^a Refer to map and legal description for location of each site.
 r = residential unit cap
 c = commercial square footage cap

The city has a number of developments regulated by Planned Community Text that were inherited from the County upon incorporation of the City. The Planned Communities serve as tools for the systematic implementation of the General Plan and are intended to implement and regulate land use and development within a specific project boundary. The Planned Community Text, once adopted, establishes the zoning for a site and must be Consistent with the General Plan. Sites 3, 5, and 7 would not be in a Planned Community. Sites 1, 2, 4 and 6 would be located within existing Planned Communities. Amendments would be completed such that the Planned Communities are in conformance with the proposed General Plan. With these subsequent Planned Community Amendments, no inconsistencies would occur.

The existing City General Plan was reviewed in order to ensure project compatibility with applicable policies. The policies listed in Table 3.9-3 were selected for analysis due to potential conformity issues with the Proposed Project. As demonstrated by the analysis below, the project is determined to be consistent with these policies. All other policies from the General Plan have been reviewed. Policies were determined to be either not applicable to the Proposed Project, or the project was compatible with the policies, with no additional analysis required.

Table 3.9-3 Project Consistency with General Plan Policies	
Policy	Consistency Discussion
Housing Element	
Policy 1.2. Facilitate the development of affordable housing by offering development incentives.	Consistent. An Affordable Housing Implementation Plan (AHIP) will be included in individual development agreements in order to ensure that affordable housing is provided. A percentage of the units will be "affordable housing" as defined by State law, with deed restrictions and/or other restrictions in place to ensure continued affordability for a period of at least 30 years..

Table 3.9-3 Project Consistency with General Plan Policies

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Consistency Discussion</i>
Policy 1.5. Encourage the development of residential units whose design and market intent is to meet the needs of special groups, such as the elderly, the physically challenged, and the homeless.	Consistent. The AHIP requiring affordable housing will allow for housing a diverse population base. In addition, all ADA requirements would be adhered to in order to ensure access for physically challenged persons.
Policy 1.10. Encourage residential developments to incorporate a minimum of 15 percent affordable units.	Consistent. An Affordable Housing Implementation Plan (AHIP) will be included in individual development agreements in order to ensure affordable housing. Affordable housing would be provided on site for most of the sites.
Land Use Element	
Policy 1.1. Achieve a land use composition in Lake Forest that promotes a balance between the generation of public revenues and the costs of providing public facilities and services.	Consistent. The Proposed Project would result in an estimated \$630,000 surplus, which would not be realized under current conditions.
Policy 1.3 As future conditions in surrounding areas change, the future use of land presently within the Business Development Overlay will be reviewed.	Consistent. The Business Development Overlay was established over the Project Area to ensure a balance of land uses consistent with the restrictions of the former 65 CNEL. The overall purpose of the Opportunities Study, and the resulting Proposed Project, was to examine the impacts and benefits of changes to the allowed land uses in the Project Area, which is within the Business Development Overlay.
Policy 1.9. Preserve all designated open space areas until sufficient parkland exists in the City to meet the established parkland standard to provide adequate recreational opportunities for the community except any land within the Regional Park/Open Space designation requiring reconfiguration to create a continuous open space link.	Consistent. The City requires dedication of 5 acres per 1,000 population. For this project, the parkland requirement has been divided into two categories: neighborhood parks and community parks. Neighborhood parks will be required at a rate of 3 acres per 1,000 population on each site or fees paid in lieu. The community park requirement will be met by the payment of fees in lieu of dedication of 2 acres per 1,000 population and will provide the land for the public facilities. The Project would consist of a total of up to 47 acres of neighborhood parks (based on 3 acres per 1,000 population. The Project proposes to provide more than the required amount of parkland.
Policy 3.1. Ensure that new development fits within the existing setting and is compatible with the physical characteristics of available land, surrounding land uses, and public infrastructure availability.	Consistent. The issuance of Site Development Permits as part of specific development proposals would require review by the City of project compatibility with adjacent areas.
Policy 3.2. Preserve and enhance the quality of Lake Forest residential neighborhoods by avoiding or abating the intrusion of disruptive, non-conforming buildings and uses.	Consistent. The issuance of Site Development Permits as part of specific development proposals would address potential land use conflicts. Refer to Impact 3.9-2 for additional detail.

Table 3.9-3 Project Consistency with General Plan Policies

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Consistency Discussion</i>
Policy 5.3 Focus efforts at economic development and business retention on the commercial and industrial areas throughout the City, including the Foothill Transportation Corridor, the San Diego Freeway (I-5) and along major thoroughfares.	Consistent. The overall intent of the Proposed Project, as discussed in Section 2.7 of Chapter 2, is to achieve a balanced community. The Project Area has been designated in the existing General Plan for commercial and industrial uses because of its location in the MCAS El Toro CNEL contour and crash zone. The redesignation of business park and light industrial areas to residential uses is in response to the need for housing in Orange County and consistent with the intent of this Policy. Efforts for economic development and business retention will continue along the San Diego Freeway and major thoroughfares and new residential development would likely benefit established commercial and industrial areas of the City. In addition, the Proposed Project includes commercial opportunities adjacent to the Foothill Transportation Corridor, and the Proposed Project would not preclude the City from focusing economic development on established commercial and industrial centers
Policy 5.7 Preserve the fiscal well-being of the community by ensuring that land use designation changes for land within the Business Development Overlay will not result in a loss of future net revenue for the City.	Consistent. The Proposed Project would result in an estimated \$630,000 surplus, which would not be realized under current conditions.
Recreation and Resources Element	
Policy 2.1 Conserve and protect important natural plant and animal communities, such as areas supporting rare and endangered species, riparian areas, wildlife movement corridors, wetlands, and significant tree stands through appropriate site planning and grading techniques, revegetation and soil management practices, and other resource management techniques.	Consistent. Proposed changes to land use designation would not affect the protection of natural plant and animal communities. The mitigation program identified for biological resources (MMs 3.4-1 through 3.4-5) would conserve and protect important and natural plant and animal communities.
Policy 2.4 Conserve and protect important topographical features, watershed areas, and soils through appropriate site planning and grading techniques, revegetation and soil management practices, and other resource management techniques.	Consistent. Proposed changes to land use designation would not affect the protection important topographical features, watershed areas, and soils. Impacts on Geology and Soils were determined to be less than significant from the Proposed Project.
Policy 7.5. Implement land use policy aimed at achieving a greater balance between jobs and housing in Lake Forest.	Consistent. The overall intent of the Proposed Project, as discussed in Section 2.7 of Chapter 2, is to achieve a balanced community. The redesignation of business park and light industrial areas to residential uses is in response to the development pressures in Orange County and the need for additional housing. Please also see discussion for Policy 5.3, above. South Orange County is a job-rich region, and the provision of additional housing in the City would help satisfy the increased demand for housing, thus promoting a greater balanced between jobs and housing in the City, and the commercial component of the Proposed Project would provide additional jobs in the City.
Policy 7.6. Integrate air quality planning with land use and transportation planning.	Consistent. The Proposed Project is consistent with the AQMP, which integrates air quality planning with land use and transportation planning and promotes jobs-housing balance in jobs-rich south Orange County.

Table 3.9-3 Project Consistency with General Plan Policies	
<i>Policy</i>	<i>Consistency Discussion</i>
Safety and Noise Element	
Policy 5.1. Utilize noise/land use compatibility standards as a guide for future planning and development decisions.	Consistent. Development under the Proposed Project would be required to adhere to the interior and exterior noise standards as outlined in Table SN-2 of the General Plan. These standards have been taken into account in siting of the public facilities, residential, and commercial uses. All feasible mitigation measures to reduce noise have been included in this EIR and would reduce noise impacts to a less-than-significant level. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would not generate noise levels that exceed the standards established.
Public Facilities/Growth Management Element	
Policy 4.1. Work closely with the Orange County Flood Control District in determining and meeting community needs for flood control facilities and maintenance.	Consistent. This EIR includes analysis of potential impacts to flooding and the need for further flood control facilities. The project would not significantly impact flood control facilities, and the City will continue to work with OCFCO to meet community needs for flood control.
Policy 7.1. Work closely with the County of Orange, Caltrans, surrounding jurisdictions, and other transportation agencies to provide needed transportation facilities.	Consistent. The traffic facilities that are addressed in this EIR either as part of the Proposed Project or as mitigation reflect coordination with the transportation planning efforts of the County of Orange, Caltrans, and surrounding jurisdictions, such as the City of Irvine.
Policy 8.1. Utilize information on the jobs/housing balance in the City and region as a factor in land use decision-making.	Consistent. The overall intent of the Proposed Project, as discussed in Section 2.7 of Chapter 2, is to achieve a balanced community. The redesignation of business park and light industrial areas to residential uses is in response to the development pressures in Orange County and the need for additional housing. In effect, the Proposed Project promotes jobs-housing balance in jobs-rich south Orange County.

As discussed within this impact, implementation of the Proposed Project would not be inconsistent with any applicable adopted plans, regulations, or policies. Therefore, impacts associated with potential inconsistencies with applicable land use plans would be less than significant.

Impact 3.9-2 Development of Sites 1 through 6 of the Proposed Project would not result in uses that would be incompatible with or create a nuisance for adjacent properties.

Significance Level: Less than significant

The Proposed Project would result in development of residential units on Sites 1 through 6, in addition to commercial development on Sites 1, 2, and 4, and public facilities on Site 7 (see Table 3.9-4). The majority of the Project Area is comprised of land devoid of structural development and includes vacant land, agricultural areas, mining activities, and previously graded lands. A total of 5,415 residential units and 648,720 sf of commercial development, in addition to a sports park, Community Center, and Civic Center, would be built on the seven sites. The intensity of land uses on site would increase substantially over existing uses. Where the majority of the Project Area is perceived as vast areas of undeveloped land,

the overall character would change to sites with roadways, landscaped areas, signage, and residential dwellings. Residential units would include a range of densities from very low density of 2.7 units per acre to high density of 23 to 43 units per acre. The replacement of vacant, undeveloped areas with residential uses, roadways, and commercial uses would replace the undeveloped, semi-rural character of these parcels with a neighborhood setting. In areas with low-density development (portions of Site 1 and 2, and Sites 5 and 6), substantial pockets of open areas would remain, although many of these areas would be developed with formalized landscaping rather than the existing natural character of the area.

Table 3.9-4 Proposed Uses by Parcel—Proposed Project

Parcel	Proposed Use			
	Residential	Commercial	Public Facilities	Park
1	●	●		●
2	●	●		●
3	●			●
4	●	●		●
5	●			
6	●			
7			●	

Approximately 5,415 additional residential units would result from Project buildout. Of the 838 acres of development, 598 acres (71 percent of the total Project Area) would be designated with residential uses. Thus, the majority of the Project Area would be dedicated to residential uses. A total of 82 acres (10 percent) would be designated as open space, and the balance of the Project Area would include mixed use, public facility, and community park uses.

Land use incompatibility can occur where differences exist among uses that are near each other. These incompatibilities may result from differences in the physical scale of development, noise levels, traffic levels, hours of operation, and other factors. General Plan policies identified above under Section 3.9.3 include concepts aimed at achieving land use compatibility. Policies 3.1 and 3.2 of the Land Use Element require that new development fit within the existing Lake Forest environment. Policy 3.4 requires use of landscaping and architectural design to achieve visual compatibility. Policies 5.1 and 5.2 require use of noise/land use compatibility standards as a guide for future planning and development decisions, and use of noise control measures in areas of new construction.

The City Zoning Ordinance and Planned Community texts, which implement the policies articulated in the General Plan, are the primary regulatory documents used to ensure land use compatibility. Both contain standards for development, such as minimum lot sizes, building setback and maximum height limitations, parking and landscaping requirements, and other standards designed to promote compatibility. In addition to the Zoning Ordinance, the City Subdivision and Grading Ordinances are important regulatory tools to control the subdivision and alteration of land in preparation for development. These ordinances are reviewed and updated periodically to maintain consistency with new state and local legislation, court decisions, and community values.

Land use compatibility is also addressed as part of the City's Site Development Permit and environmental review process. Proposed development projects are reviewed by the City to promote high quality in urban design and to minimize associated environmental impacts. Precise development project planning may also be reviewed by the City and other public agencies through a site development process to ensure compatibility and consistency with surrounding development in the community. Proposed development will also be reviewed for consistency with the noise, safety, and building height criteria.

Systematic enforcement of City ordinances and monitoring of development within and around the planning area will be used to minimize conflicts of use. Development monitoring by the City can be used to ensure that affected public agencies are capable of providing necessary facilities and services in support of proposed development. During Phase 2 of the Opportunities Study, concept plans brought forth by landowners—that were modified in order to develop the Proposed Project—were reviewed by the City. Issues of land use compatibility were addressed, and the concept plans were modified in order to provide adequate separation of uses and a mix of product types that would be compatible with adjacent non-residential uses. This process was reviewed and approved by the City Council. During implementation of site-specific development, implementation of the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance would minimize conflicts between adjacent land uses, and minimize the potential for nuisance from adjacent land uses to each other.

Proposed residential uses would be located adjacent to a variety of uses, including open space, public facilities, commercial, business park, light industrial, and mining uses. The discussion that follows summarizes compatibility of proposed residential (and commercial, where applicable) uses with adjacent uses.

Residential Uses. On Sites 2, 5, and 6, future residential development would abut areas with existing residential uses. Project implementation would represent an extension of similar uses into additional areas, and no conflicts of use would occur. Sites 2 and 6 place low-density and low-medium-density residential development adjacent to residential uses of a similar density and scale. Development on Site 3 would consist of medium-density residential, largely adjacent to existing commercial and light industrial. Site 5 would consist of low-density residential development adjacent to high-density residential development to the south. Proposed residential uses in this area would include up to 7 units per acre where existing adjacent residential uses allow densities of 25 to 43 units per acre, such that the land use intensity of these adjacent residential areas would differ from one another. Proposed residential uses would have less site coverage, less building massing, and greater setback distances between units. Although the intensity of these uses would differ, they would not conflict with one another due to the similarity of land use on the sites. Impacts would be less than significant.

Commercial uses on Sites 1, 2, and 4 would also be located adjacent to residential uses. Commercial uses can include larger development with more site coverage and larger structures. However, larger commercial uses such as a supermarket are not contemplated on Site 2. Commercial uses would also result in activities that are somewhat louder than residential uses, and involve more vehicular trips. While the precise types of commercial facilities are not known, uses envisioned on Site 2 include a mixed-use core with residential uses over ground-floor retail. Mixed-use residential uses, by design, would be compatible with commercial uses. Impacts would be less than significant.

Open Space. Sites 2, 3, and 6 would place residential development adjacent to open space areas, which consist of large, undeveloped areas. Thus, no conflicts of use would occur. Impacts would be less than significant.

Public Facilities. Public facilities within the Project Area include water storage facilities and offices on Site 3 (associated with IRWD). Water storage facilities are a fairly dormant use, consisting of water storage tanks with minimal traffic, noise, and employees associated with occasional maintenance. Offices can function similar to business park uses, as described below, although operate as a less intense use due to the size and scale of the facilities. These types of uses generally result in a fairly low level of activity, and would, therefore, be compatible with any adjacent residential uses. The 45-acre public facility component of the Proposed Project on Site 7 would be adjacent to existing commercial uses, and despite increased activity that would be associated with these uses compared to the current nursery use, would not be incompatible with surrounding development.

Business Park. Sites 1 and 4 would result in residential development adjacent to business park uses. The current RV storage facility located on Site 1 is an interim use and would be removed under the Proposed Project. Business park development represents a relatively intense land use, due to the number of employed persons associated with this use and the high floor-area-ratio associated with this type of development. As such, the scale of residential uses differs from business park uses. Due to the density of residential units, and the number of employees generally associated with business park uses, localized congestion during peak hours would be anticipated, as discussed in Section 3.14 Traffic. However, this congestion would not cause inherent conflicts in the operation of business park or residential uses. Further, other than traffic on arterial roadways, business park uses do not include any activities that would be particularly noise producing, or result in other environmental effects that could be perceived as a nuisance to adjacent residential uses. During the site-specific development process, residential development would be required to conform to General Plan policies, and the implementing Zoning Ordinance requirements. In most cases, residential development would be required to secure a Site Development Permit prior to project development. This permit is reviewed by the Planning Commission in order to assure compliance with City policies. These policies require development to consider compatibility with adjacent uses during the design process. As part of this consideration, setbacks, visual screening, noise barriers, location of parking and entrances, location of loading and trash areas, and other features as necessary would be incorporated into project design as appropriate to address consistency. In addition, residential uses located on Site 4 would be mixed-use residential uses, which, by design would be compatible with commercial uses, and, as such, would be similarly compatible with business park uses. Although business park and residential uses differ from each other, locating these uses adjacent to each other would not result in conflicts of use. Impacts would be less than significant.

Light Industrial. Development on Site 3 would locate residential uses adjacent to light industrial uses. This site is otherwise separated from other residential and light industrial uses by differing elevations. Differences in visual scaling of light industrial uses adjacent to residential uses would be similar to the differences described above with business park uses. As light industrial uses could involve the use of manufacturing equipment, use of hazardous materials, and require the loading/unloading of materials, there is the potential for incompatibility to result. Particularly, the operation of manufacturing equipment would either increase ambient noise levels and/or degrade existing air quality on a temporary or

permanent basis, depending on the specific use and type of equipment. Light industrial uses could also involve the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, which could result in accidental spills in the area, as discussed in Section 3.7 (Hazards and Hazardous Materials). Additionally, loading and unloading activities could create noise incompatibilities with adjacent sensitive receptors. Service vehicles associated with light industrial uses could also create localized congestion, as well as conflicts associated with truck traffic through or next to residential uses. Other land use incompatibilities include the potential for odors from light industrial activities. During the site-specific development process, residential development would be required to conform to General Plan policies discussed above, and the implementing Zoning Ordinance requirements. In most cases, residential development would be required to secure a Site Development Permit prior to project development. This permit is reviewed by the Planning Commission in order to assure compliance with City policies. These policies require development to consider compatibility with adjacent uses during the design process. As part of this consideration, setbacks, visual screening, noise barriers, location of parking and entrances, location of loading and trash areas, and other features as necessary would be incorporated into project design as appropriate to address consistency. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mining Uses. Mineral resource recovery operations occur on Site 4. It is anticipated that in 2007, mineral resources will be depleted, mining activity will cease, and the site will be reclaimed. Adjacent areas are planned for business park uses (to the east on the Rados property), and church and commercial uses (to the south on the Saddleback Church property). Given the timing of the Proposed Project, it is anticipated that mining activities would be completed prior to development of Site 4. Any remaining reclamation activities on adjacent areas would occur in the short term only, and would be temporary, such that no long-term conflicts of use with development on Site 4 would result. Impacts would be less than significant.

In summary, proposed uses would not result in incompatibilities or nuisances that rise to the level of significance. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Impact 3.9-3 Development of Site 7 of the Proposed Project would not result in uses that would be incompatible with or create a nuisance for adjacent properties.

Significance Level: No impact

A portion of the existing Nakase nursery would be developed with a sports park, civic center, and Community Center. Forty-five acres of the 121-acre Nakase Nursery site would host all three public facilities. The public facility components are assumed as a 44,000-square-foot (sf) Community Center, a 44,000 sf Civic Center, and a 39-acre sports park, and would be located on the northern portion of the site, adjacent to Rancho Parkway. Existing nursery and support structures would be replaced with these facilities. The perceived intensity of development on the site would substantially increase, similar to that described under Impact 3.9-2, above.

Community facilities would be located adjacent to commercial, business park, industrial, and nursery uses. Existing adjacent uses and the proposed public facilities are not considered sensitive receptors, as they are commercial and industrial operations and contain no residential. Thus, congestion, noise, air

emissions, and other potential nuisances that could affect sensitive receptors would not be an issue. All activities would be required to conform to noise standards contained in the City Municipal Code.

Industrial and nursery facilities may also use hazardous materials, including pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals. These materials could affect adjacent uses if these materials are not properly contained, disposed of, or result in a spill, potentially affecting adjacent users of community facilities and/or the sports park. Further, all hazardous materials would be handled in accordance with applicable regulations, minimizing the potential for impacts. Any potential conflicts could be minimized through buffers, siting, and design determined appropriate when these facilities are built, in conformance with General Plan policies. No impact is identified.

3.9.7 Mitigation Measures

Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

3.9.8 Summary of Impacts

Table 3.9-5 summarizes the potential long-term adverse impacts of the Proposed Project related to land use in the Project Area, and identifies the significance of those impacts after any applicable mitigation measures.

Table 3.9-5 Summary of Impacts		
Impact	Threshold	Significance
3.9-1	While the Proposed Project proposes uses that are not currently permitted by the General Plan Land Use Map, Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, and Planned Community designation, the Proposed Project will, as necessary, amend such maps, ordinances, and designations to address future buildout of the Proposed Project.	Less than significant
3.9-2	Development of Sites 1 through 6 of the Proposed Project could result in uses that would be incompatible with or create a nuisance for adjacent properties.	Less than significant
3.9-3	Development of Site 7 of the Proposed Project would not result in uses that would be incompatible with or create a nuisance for adjacent properties.	No impact

3.9.9 References

EIP Associates. 2004. Opportunities Study Area Photos, December.

Lake Forest, City of. 1994. *City of Lake Forest General Plan*.

———. 1996. *Lake Forest Municipal Code*.