

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Land Use Legislation

The adoption of a General Plan by cities and counties became a legal requirement in 1955. At that time, a General Plan consisted of Land Use and Circulation Elements. In 1971, the Legislature created one of the most important features of State planning law by requiring that local zoning and subdivision approval be consistent with the General Plan. Government Code 65302 (a) defines the Land Use Element as follows:

A Land Use Element generally defines the proposed distribution, location, and extent of uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, including agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other categories of public buildings and grounds, and other categories of public and private uses of land. The Land Use Element shall include a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various districts and other territory covered by the plan which are subject to flooding and shall be reviewed annually with respect to such areas.

Purpose and Function

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to establish a pattern of compatible land uses to reflect existing conditions and set standards and policies to guide future development. The uses focus on community growth that is consistent with the City's small-town qualities and rural neighborhood character. By law, the element must set clear standards for density of population and development intensity for each proposed land use category. The Land Use Element, which has the broadest scope of the seven (7) required elements, provides a composite discussion of the issues affecting Villa Park that are more fully addressed than in the other elements through text, diagrams and illustrative land use maps.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

Section 65300.5 of the California Government Code requires the General Plan be consistent throughout (i.e., "internally consistent"). The assumptions and projections used in the Housing Element, for instance, must be consistent with those used in the Land Use Element and the Open Space Element. Local policies must not conflict with Statewide policies pertaining to housing, open space and environmental quality.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sphere of Influence

The City of Villa Park encompasses 2.1 square miles and currently has no opportunity for expansion of its city limits due to the limitations of “sphere of influence” boundaries established by the Orange County Local Agencies Formation Commission (LAFCO). The sphere of influence boundaries are co-terminus with the City limits. Villa Park is completely encircled by the City of Orange with the exception of a small portion controlled by the County of Orange.

Adjoining Areas

Zoning in areas surrounding Villa Park is composed of single-family residential parcels ranging from 6,000 to 20,000 square feet, a planned community district, a multiple family district, sand and gravel extraction district, water reclamation and flood control facilities, and a small amount of professional zoning.

The Santiago Creek Greenbelt, including intercommunity recreational trail linkages, has been in development since the early 1970’s. The former sand and gravel mining operations along Santiago Creek between Bond Street and Cannon Street resulted in extensive pits, some as much as 500 feet in depth. The pits have been converted for flood control and water conservation uses by the County of Orange and the Metropolitan Water District.

Land Use and Zoning Patterns

Land Use Classifications

Land use classifications designated by the Villa Park General Plan are defined in terms of population density and building intensity and are illustrated on **Exhibit II-1**. Single family residential is the predominant land use in Villa Park as shown in **Table II-1**. Land use categories are as follows:

1. Single Family Residential --- 1.75 dwelling units/acre
2. Single Family Residential --- 2.5 dwelling units/acre
3. Single Family Residential --- 3.0 dwelling units/acre
4. Commercial
5. Open Space

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**Table II-1
City of Villa Park
Land Use by General Plan Classification (2007)**

Land Use Classification	Total Acreage ¹	Percentage of Total ¹
SFR – 1.75 du/ac	1170.30	87%
SFR – 2.5 du/ac	57.05	4.2%
SFR – 3.0 du/ac	78.82	5.9%
Commercial	11.55	.8%
Open Space ²	27.83	2.1%
Total	1,344	100%

¹ All calculations are approximate

² 25.9 acres of which lies within the Santiago Creek water reclamation and flood control area

Zoning Districts

Zoning Classifications implemented by the Municipal Code are defined in terms of how land is occupied or planned to be utilized. A total of eleven (11) zoning districts have been formed and are listed as follows:

1. Small Estates: 100 E-4-20,000 square feet
2. Single Family Residence: R-1-13,500 square feet
3. Single Family Residence: R-1-12,000 square feet
4. Single Family Residence: R-1-10,000 square feet
5. Single Family Residence: R-1-9,500 square feet
6. Single Family Residence: R-1-9,000 square feet
7. Single Family Residence: R-1-8,500 square feet
8. Single Family Residence: R-1-8,400 square feet
9. Single Family Residence: R-1-8,000 square feet
10. Architectural Supervision/Commercial Neighborhood: AC-CN
11. Open Space

Availability of Vacant Developable and Sub-Dividable Land Parcels

As illustrated on **Exhibit II-2**, “Developable Land Parcels,” a total of 5 parcels in the SFR – 1.75 du/ac land use district are reported as vacant and remain undeveloped and a total of 2 parcels in the same district are sub-dividable into more than four (>4) lots.

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Non-Residential Development

Neighborhood Shopping Center

Villa Park’s eleven and a half (11.55) acre community Towne Center provides retail, professional, and employment opportunities for its residents, employees and visitors. Also, within the Villa Park Towne Centre are City Hall, the Villa Park branch of the Orange County Public Library, and a United States Post Office contract station.

Schools: Open Space and Recreational Uses

Eighty (80) acres of “Small Estates: E-4-20,000 sq. ft.” zoned property is currently utilized by Orange Unified School District as school sites for educating students residing in the broader Orange, Anaheim and the Villa Park attendance zones.

Infrastructure and Municipal Services

The City of Villa Park remains essentially a “Contract City”, relying heavily upon a volunteer City Council, a small professional staff, key workers, outside professional consultants, and a wide variety of contractual agreements for on-going operations and maintenance.

Table II-2, “Utility Providers,” lists the services and providers of municipal services.

**Table II-2
City of Villa Park
Utility Providers**

Water:	Serrano Water District
Sewer	
Collection:	City-Owned System
Treatment:	O.C. Sanitation District
Maintenance Districts No. 1:	City System
Storm Drainage:	City Maintained System
Refuse Collection and Disposal:	Villa Park Disposal
Electric:	Southern California Edison
Gas:	Southern California Gas Co.
Telephone:	AT&T
Cable TV:	Time Warner

Sewer System

The City owns and operates a sanitary sewer system in coordination with the Orange County Sanitation District for the benefit of the residents of the

community. The system was constructed primarily in the 1960's and 70's and is built-out. The system consists of approximately 153,000 linear feet (29 miles) of collector and trunk sewer mains ranging in size from 8 to 15 inches in diameter. Some of the trunk mains are joint use mains with the City of Orange. It is estimated there are approximately 10 operating septic tank systems remaining in the City.

A "Sewer Service User Charge", which is assessed on the property tax role and based on land use, is for maintenance and rehabilitation of the sewer system within the City. The Orange County Sanitation Districts, of which Villa Park is a member, assesses a "sewer hook-up fee" and a "sewer acreage fee" to support the regional treatment facilities, operations, and new trunk lines.

Storm Drain System

The City operates a drainage system consisting of open channels, pipe and box conduits and various types of inlet structures. Land use is a significant factor in the calculation of the development of the system. The total drainage area of the system is 2.5 square miles and includes some areas outside the City boundaries. The City system was started in the 1960's and has expanded with development. A key element of the system is the Center Street Storm Drain that runs from Mesa Drive down to Serrano Avenue and proceeds down Center Street to Santiago Creek. That portion of the system is owned and operated by the Orange County Flood Control District. In 1997 the City adopted a Master Plan of Drainage that identified certain deficiencies in the system. The City has been addressing these on a priority basis as funds permit.

Contract Services

Villa Park contracts out for many of its services including: Building Department services (permitting and inspection); Civil Engineering; Traffic Engineering; Fire Protection; Law Enforcement; and legal services through an appointed City Attorney.

Other Public Facilities

The City is host to a branch of the Orange County Public Library system, the Villa Park Public Library, which serves Villa Park and adjoining communities. Also, there is a Post Office contract station located in the Towne Centre.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Issues

Challenges to Single-Family Residential Land Use

- Since development in the City of Villa Park is over ninety nine (99) percent complete, the primary issue for the future is to protect and maintain the desirable character and qualities of the single-family residential community.
- Since the majority of residences in the City were built in the 1965-1985 timeframe, appropriate maintenance will be needed to maintain the quality of the housing stock.
- In order to maintain a desirable community, strict adherence to, and enforcement of, the zoning codes of the City is essential. To the extent possible, variances may be approved only under special adverse situations and with appropriate special conditions.
- Limited areas of Villa Park are potentially affected by 100-year and 500-year flooding events. Just over 10% of properties lie within the 500-year flood hazard zone and approximately 2% of properties lie within the 100-year flood hazard zone.

Challenges to Commercial Land Use

- The City's current commercial site cannot be developed further due to infrastructure and expansion limitations.

Opportunities

- Single family residential housing, the predominant land use, is primarily owner occupied, and is in good condition throughout the City. With continued maintenance, existing housing stock is anticipated to remain in sound condition for current and future residents.
- Key infrastructure is in good condition. With continued maintenance and funding road, sewer, and storm drain infrastructure is anticipated to remain in sound condition for current and future residents.
- There is expressed interest and effort by Towne Centre property owners to explore potential improvements to structures and infrastructure within the commercial district.

GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The goals, policies, and implementation programs throughout the General Plan focus on both preserving as well as enhancing Villa Park by managing future growth, maintaining its high quality residential neighborhoods and maintenance and development of the surrounding open space areas.

Land Use Goal # 1: Maintain and enhance the desirable qualities of the neighborhoods that comprise the community.

Land Use Policies:

LU #1: Development – The City shall continue to develop standards that encourage high quality development and take into consideration preservation of the neighborhood setting.

LU #2: Zoning Codes The City shall continue to adhere to and enforce the zoning codes. To the extent possible, issuance of variances should take place only under special adverse situations and with appropriate special conditions.

LU #3: Rental Housing - The City shall have appropriate guidelines or requirements to address rental housing, tenant safety and potential adverse effects on neighborhoods.

LU #4: Maximize Community Resources – Through cooperation and coordination with the four (4) public schools and the Orange Unified School District, the City shall seek to maximize community uses and access to the existing public properties for community uses beyond educational functions. These may include recreation, organized team sports programs, community events, community emergency functions and services for the region, and maintaining usable open space.

LU #5: Community Involvement - The City shall continue to solicit active neighborhood volunteer leadership and participation in addressing neighborhood problems such as graffiti, parking violations, barking dogs, occupancy exceeding single-family residential capacity, rental property management, public nuisances, vandalism, and poor property maintenance.

Action Programs:

1. For each of the land use categories, City staff shall maintain the adopted standards through adherence to current codes, code enforcement, and education of contractors and property owners. Such standards include maximum lot

coverage, floor area ratio, minimum setback requirements, maximum height restrictions, and the residential design standards,

2. The City shall address property maintenance code enforcement on a proactive basis through active public education efforts, open communications and development of minimum thresholds for enforcement actions.
3. City Council and Staff shall annually review and update the City's Zoning Ordinance/Codes in support of the General Plan.
4. City leaders and management shall continue to develop partnerships with community organizations and schools to identify, implement, and fund community safety, enhancement, and beautification projects and programs.
5. The City shall develop guidelines and requirements for the administration of rental housing, tenant safety, and potential impacts on neighborhoods.

Land Use Goal #2: Preserve and enhance the City's infrastructure system to ensure that it meets the needs of current and future residents.

Land Use Policies:

LU #6: Maintain Infrastructure and Utility Services - Identify useful life of key infrastructure and establish appropriate rehabilitation programs.

LU #7: Multi-Jurisdictional Cooperation - The City shall support cooperative planning with other Orange County municipalities and agencies to achieve common interests, identify potential revenue and cost sharing opportunities, and comply with California state requirements where applicable for infrastructure projects.

LU #8: Federal Flood Proofing Standards - The City shall ensure compliance with all current and future Federal flood proofing requirements.

Action Programs:

6. Preserve community aesthetics by effectively and efficiently allocating for prioritized infrastructure maintenance and improvements in the Annual Budget and Capital Improvement Program.
7. Continue to require compliance with FEMA standards of flood proofing for substantial improvement projects located within the 100-year floodplain. Any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvements of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50% of the market value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvement, located in Zone "A", must provide a finished flood elevation one foot above the hundred year storm level.

Land Use Goal #3: Encourage the development of an attractive and diverse retail and professional commercial center serving the needs of the City's residents, businesses and visitors.

Land Use Policies:

- LU #9: Towne Centre Enhancement - The City, along with partnering property owners, shall facilitate through planning and cooperative economic partnerships, enhancements to the appearance, character and viability of the existing Towne Center.

Action Programs:

8. Enhance the existing core commercial area by creating landscape standards, revising the signage design guidelines and standards, and enhancing points of Towne Centre entries.
9. Continue the development of consensus with Towne Centre property owners to focus public and private resources to upgrade structures and infrastructure within the Towne Centre.