

4.8 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This EIR section analyzes the potential for adverse impacts on the existing land use characteristics of the project site and adjacent areas resulting from implementation of the proposed project. The Initial Study/Notice of Preparation (IS/NOP [Appendix 1]) identified the potential for the proposed project to result in impacts associated with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations. Issues scoped out from detailed analysis in the EIR include physical division of an established community and conflicts with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Data used to prepare this section were taken from a foot survey of the area, the EIR for the Master Plan of Recreational Uses for Central Park (Central Park Master Plan EIR), and the City's General Plan Land Use Element. Full bibliographic entries for all reference materials are provided in Section 4.8.5 (References).

All comments received in response to the Initial Study/Notice of Preparation (IS/NOP) circulated for the proposed project were taken in to consideration during preparation of this Environmental Impact Report, and if relevant, have been addressed in this section or others within this document.

4.8.1 Environmental Setting

■ City of Huntington Beach

The City of Huntington Beach, located in northwestern Orange County, is a beach community about 35 miles southeast of Los Angeles, immediately adjacent to the Pacific Ocean. The City consists of approximately 17,730 acres, or 27.7 square miles, and is nearly built out with a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, public uses, and streets/highways.

■ Huntington Central Park

Huntington Central Park (Central Park) is the largest city-owned park in Orange County covering approximately 356 acres of land, approximately 266 of which are developed. Central Park has a variety of uses including picnic facilities, open grass fields, paved trails, dirt paths, playgrounds, lakes, a nature center, an equestrian center, disc golf, an amphitheater, and a dog park. In addition, the city's Central Library is located within the park, as is the new Sports Complex featuring baseball and soccer fields, children's play areas, food concessions, restrooms, and large surface parking lots. Central Park offers activities and events year round for all ages.

■ Project Site Characteristics and Land Uses

The project site is a vacant 5-acre area of land located southwest of the intersection of Goldenwest Street and Talbert Avenue, within the 356-acre Huntington Beach Central Park. There are no developed structures or recreational equipment on site; rather, it is void of all development. Due to the undeveloped nature of the area, there are no currently designed uses for the site itself. However, nearby schools occasionally use the area as part of a larger cross country route through Central Park, and incidental

remote control vehicle use occurs on the site. One hole associated with the adjacent disc golf course has temporarily been located on-site, at the site's southern boundary.

■ Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is located approximately 3 miles north of the City's Downtown. The site is surrounded in its entirety by Central Park lands and facilities. Adjacent surrounding uses are as follows:

- *East (across Goldenwest Street)*: Surface parking lots/Sports Complex and Central Library
- *North*: Undeveloped area/ShIPLEY Nature Center
- *West*: Passive parkland
- *South*: Huntington Beach Disc Golf Course/Equestrian Center

■ Existing General Plan/Zoning Designations

The project site has a General Plan Land Use designation of OS-P (Open Space—Parks) and a Zoning Designation of OS-PR (Open Space—Parks & Recreation). These designations allow for public park and recreational facilities on the project site (General Plan Land Use Element Table LU-2a).

The OS-PR designation was established to provide areas for public or private use and areas for presentation and enhancement, specifically for Parks and recreation. Within the OS-PR lands, park and recreation facilities are subject to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Approval by Planning Commission.

The site is currently identified as the future location of the Low Intensity Recreation Area in the Central Park Master Plan EIR. Project elements were not solidified at the time of preparation of the Central Park Master Plan; however, it was assumed that general elements/activities might include barbeque and picnic amenities, restroom, tot lot, and an open turf area. Implementation of the proposed project would result in a more intensive land use.

4.8.2 Regulatory Framework

■ Federal and State

There are no federal or State regulations related to land use that apply to the proposed project.

■ Local

City of Huntington Beach General Plan

The City of Huntington Beach General Plan outlines an order of progress through which the City can grow and maintain economic and environmental integrity. As a policy, the General Plan serves as a guide to the adoption of laws necessary to execute its intent. The General Plan is composed of 16 elements, as follows:

- Land Use
- Urban Design
- Historic and Cultural Resources

- Economic Development
- Growth Management
- Housing
- Circulation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Recreation and Community Services
- Utilities
- Environmental Resources/Conservation
- Air Quality
- Coastal
- Environmental Hazards
- Noise
- Hazardous Materials

The applicable goals, objectives, and policies of each of the above-listed elements are discussed in the section pertaining to the relevant resource in this EIR.

Land Use Element

Goal

- Goal LU 2** Ensure that development is adequately served by transportation infrastructure, utility infrastructure, and public services.
- Policy LU 2.1.1** Plan and construct public infrastructure and service improvements as demand necessitates to support the land uses specified in the Land Use Plan (as defined in the Circulation and Public Utilities and Services Elements of the General Plan).
- Policy LU 2.1.2** Require that the type, amount, and location of development be correlated with the provision of adequate supporting infrastructure and services (as defined in the Circulation and Public Utilities and Services Elements of the General Plan).
- Policy LU 2.1.3** Limit the type, location, and/or timing of development where there is inadequate public infrastructure and/or services to support land use development.
- Policy LU 2.1.6** Monitor the capacities of other infrastructure (water, sewer, and other) and services and establish appropriate limits on development should their utilization and demands for service exceed acceptable levels of service.

Consistency Analysis

Infrastructure improvements (i.e., utilities, storm drains, onsite roadways, etc.) necessary to serve the proposed development would be constructed on site. The future onsite utilities would connect to existing facilities and some improvements to existing infrastructure may also be required. In addition, as discussed in Section 4.11 (Public Services), existing public services would be adequate to serve the proposed project. Consequently, the proposed project would not conflict with these applicable policies.

Goal

- Goal LU 4** Achieve and maintain high quality architecture, landscape, and public open spaces in the City.
- Policy LU 4.1.1** Require adherence to or consideration of the policies prescribed for Design and Development in the Huntington Beach General Plan, as appropriate.
- Policy LU 4.1.2** Require that an appropriate landscape plan be submitted and implemented for development projects subject to discretionary review.
- Policy LU 4.1.8** Use reclaimed water for irrigation of public and private landscape, as feasible.
- Policy LU 4.2.1** Require that all structures be constructed in accordance with the requirements of the City's building and other pertinent codes and regulations; including new, adaptively re-used, and renovated buildings.
- Policy LU 4.2.4** Require that all development be designed to provide adequate space for access, parking, supporting functions, open space, and other pertinent elements.
- Policy LU 4.2.5** Require that all commercial, industrial, and public development incorporate appropriate design elements to facilitate access and use as required by State and Federal Laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Consistency Analysis

The proposed project would be constructed in accordance with existing laws and regulations including the City's building code, and any applicable State and federal law requirements such as ADA. The proposed landscaping plan would require City approval prior to implementation; however, the City does not currently have recycled water infrastructure available to serve the project. Adequate access to and from the project would be provided through the entrance at Goldenwest Street. Sufficient parking would be provided throughout the project site, and would be surrounded by Central Park open space. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with these applicable policies.

Goal

- Goal LU 5** Ensure that significant environmental habitats and resources are maintained.
- Policy LU 5.1.1** Require that development protect environmental resources by consideration of the policies and standards contained in the Environmental Resources/Conservation Element of the General Plan and federal (NEPA) and State (CEQA) regulations.
- During the development review process:
- a. N/A
 - b. Review any development proposed for non-wetland areas to ensure that appropriate setbacks and buffers are maintained

between development and environmentally sensitive areas to protect habitat quality.

Consistency Analysis

As discussed in Section 4.3 (Biological Resources), implementation of the proposed mitigation measures would ensure the protection of species/habitats, through focused surveys, agency consultation, and off-site habitat conservation and/or enhancement. As such, through implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, which are designed to protect sensitive species and their habitats within the City from development and related construction activities.

Goal

- Goal LU 7** Achieve a diversity of land uses that sustain the City’s economic viability, while maintaining the City’s environmental resources and scale and character.
- Policy LU 7.1.1** Accommodate existing uses and new development in accordance with the Land Use and Density Schedules.
- Policy LU 7.1.2** Require that development be designed to account for the unique characteristics of project sites and objectives for community character and in accordance with the Development “Overlay” Schedule, as appropriate.
- Policy LU 7.1.5** Accommodate the development of a balance of land uses that maintain the City’s fiscal viability and integrity of environmental resources.

Consistency Analysis

Implementation of the proposed project would be consistent with the existing General Plan Land Use designation for the site, although a CUP would be required. Further, the proposed project would result in development of a new senior center in a location adjacent to similar community resources such as the Central Library, Sports Complex, and Shipley Nature Center. The proposed project would include a substantial amount of landscaping to enhance the project site within its natural setting, and the new senior center use would not be out of character considering the nearby uses within Central Park. The integrity of environmental resources on-site would be maintained, as discussed throughout this EIR. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with these applicable policies.

Goal

- Goal LU 8** Achieve a pattern of land uses that preserves, enhances, and establishes a distinct identity for City’s neighborhoods, corridors, and centers.
- Policy LU 8.1.1** Accommodate land use development in accordance with the patterns and distribution of use and density depicted on the Land Use Plan Map, in accordance with the principles discussed below:
- a. Create a network of interrelated activity centers and corridors through the use of distinct functional roles, activities, and/or through the form and scale of development

- b. N/A.
- c. N/A
- d. N/A
- e. N/A
- f. Site development to capitalize upon potential long-term transit improvements.
- g. Establish linkages among community areas, which may include pedestrian and vehicular paths, landscape, signage, other streetscape elements, open space, transitions in form, scale, and density of development, and other elements.

Consistency Analysis

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the development of a senior center facility on existing open space/parkland, which would require a CUP. Proposed development would be compatible with the established recreational land use pattern in the area, including existing community facilities of the central library and sports park across Goldenwest Street. Within that framework, the site's uses would result in compatibility within the surrounding parkland. The proposed project is adjacent to Goldenwest Street, which is a major thoroughfare in the City and is served by OCTA. The proposed project would include pathways, landscaping, and signage that would link the proposed project site to the surrounding park uses. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with this applicable policy.

Goal

Goal LU 14 Preserve the City's open spaces.

Policy LU 14.1.1 Accommodate the development of public parks, coastal and water-related recreational uses, and the conservation of environmental resources in areas designated for Open Space on the Land Use Plan Map and in accordance with Policy LU 7.1.1

Policy LU 14.1.3 Require that structures located in the City's parks and other open spaces be designed to maintain the environmental character in which they are located.

Policy LU 14.1.6 Provide for the protection of the City's environmental resources in accordance with the Natural Resources and Hazards Elements of the General Plan.

Consistency Analysis

The proposed project would add a senior center facility on land currently designated for recreational uses, in compliance with the Land Use Plan. The proposed senior center would be designed to maintain the environmental character of the area. (Refer to Section 4.1 Aesthetics for a discussion of impacts to Visual Resources.) The proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts to natural resources (cultural, biological, geological, and hydrologic resources) as discussed throughout this EIR. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with these applicable policies.

4.8.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

■ Analytic Method

The analysis in this section addresses the compatibility of land uses identified in the proposed project with existing and planned land uses adjacent to the project site. Consistency with applicable policies pertaining to land use is addressed. Analysis of other elements of the General Plan is provided in the applicable resource sections of this EIR.

■ Thresholds of Significance

The following thresholds of significance are based on Appendix G to the 2007 CEQA Guidelines. For purposes of this EIR, implementation of the proposed project may have a significant adverse impact if it would do the following:

- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?
- Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan
- Physically divide an established community

■ Effects Not Found to Be Significant

Threshold	Would the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?
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No habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan is applicable to the project site. No impact would occur, and no further analysis of this issue is required in the EIR.

Threshold	Would the project physically divide an established community?
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The proposed project would not disrupt or physically divide an established community. The project involves development of a vacant site within the City's Central Park. Central Park is surrounded by existing residential uses; however, the proposed senior center would not cut off an existing or proposed transportation route and would be compatible with existing uses. Therefore, no impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required in the EIR.

■ Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold	Would the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?
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Impact 4.8-1 The proposed project would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Implementation of the proposed project would not require any General Plan or zoning map amendments. Rather, the project would require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow development of the senior center facility. Although the project would be consistent with these designations, the Central Park Master Plan EIR previously identified the site as a Low Intensity Recreation Area. Implementation of the proposed project represents a departure from this land use category and would result in a change to the Central Park Master Plan, from Low to High intensity uses on site.

One hole associated with the adjacent disc golf course has temporarily been located at the southern boundary of the project site. This hole would be relocated back to the official permanent disc golf course area located immediately south of the project site. As such, no loss of this recreational use would occur as a result of the proposed project.

The site's primary current use is its contribution to the low-intensity development character of the area. As stated in Impact 4.11-2 (Recreation), the existing use of the project site qualifies as an undeveloped passive use recreational area, which primarily provides access to the formal path located to the west. Development of the proposed project site would change from a vacant area where limited recreational opportunities exist, to a site with a developed senior center where uses would occur during regular weekday hours, as well as occasional nighttime and weekend operations. The site would have more development than other areas west of Goldenwest Street, including McCracken Meadow, the disc golf course, and the Shipley Nature Center. However, the proposed use is compatible with adjacent recreational facilities, as it would neither hinder these activities nor detract from their enjoyment.

It should be noted, and as discussed in further detail under Impact 4.11-2 (Recreation), the change in type of recreational use from passive to active would represent a 5-acre change within the Central Park Master Plan area (from Low to High Intensity Use). Currently, 231 acres, or 65 percent, of Central Park are developed or planned for use as passive recreational areas. The change from passive to active at the project site would represent a 2 percent reduction of passive recreational space in Central Park, which would not be considered a significant loss of passive recreational space.

As discussed in Section 4.9 (Noise), noise generated by proposed activities would be less than significant at adjacent recreational activities as well as at existing residential uses that surround Central Park. As discussed in Section 4.1 (Aesthetics), the proposed project would introduce a developed element to the area west of Goldenwest Street. Nonetheless, the site is currently undeveloped, with minimal visual characteristics. The substantial landscaping provided around the senior center could improve the character of the site by providing green space and visual relief from the existing barren condition.

Additionally, the permitted height limit for the project site is 45 feet, with an additional 10 feet permitted for architectural projections. The overall height of the new structure would be approximately 30 feet, with architectural projections reaching up to 46 feet. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the permitted building heights for the site. Increased local traffic resulting from proposed development would access the site from the intersection of Goldenwest and Talbert Streets, and would not introduce traffic to adjacent parkland areas. Further, CO emissions from vehicles would be less than significant and would not adversely affect adjacent recreational uses (refer to Section 4.2 [Air Quality]). The proposed project would also be consistent with the presence of developed community facilities, such as the Central Library and Sports Complex, east of the site across Goldenwest Street. Impacts from noise, visual, traffic, and air quality at adjacent recreational uses would be less than significant, and the proposed project is identified as a recreational use, consistent with the Zoning Designation for the site. Therefore, the proposed project would be compatible with adjacent land uses.

Implementation of the proposed project is consistent with the Open Space-Park land use designation of the site. The General Plan for the City of Huntington Beach has been reviewed. The proposed project would not conflict with the environmental plans and goals of the City, as discussed in detail above under Section 4.8.2. The proposed project would be designed to maintain the environmental character of the area.

Implementation of the proposed project would address current and future anticipated demand among the senior population. The proposed project is consistent with the designation provided in the *City of Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance*. Overall, impacts to land use would be ***less than significant***.

4.8.4 Cumulative Impacts

This cumulative impact analysis considers development of the proposed project, in conjunction with other development within the vicinity of the project in the City of Huntington Beach.

Development of cumulative projects is anticipated to generally conform to the requirements of the City of Huntington Beach and would be subject to review by the City. The proposed project would result in less-than-significant land use impacts from its change in land use, because this change would result in compatibility with adjacent uses. Cumulative land use impacts have the potential to occur where a number of projects have the potential to change the overall land use of an area or negatively affect adjacent existing land uses. None of the cumulative projects located within one mile of the project site include General Plan Amendments. For those cumulative projects that do require General Plan Amendments (such as project numbers 10 through 13, 15, and 16 in Table 3-4 [Cumulative Projects]), environmental review is required to ensure that such land use changes would not result in significant impacts. If significant land use impacts are identified through the CEQA process, mitigation measures would be required to reduce identified impacts. Cumulative projects primarily result in development or redevelopment of sites in order to enhance existing land use patterns within areas of the City, and are therefore generally anticipated to be compatible with adjacent uses. As such, cumulative impacts resulting from changes in land use would be less than significant. As such, the project's contribution to cumulative land use changes would not be cumulatively considerable and would be less than significant.

4.8.5 References

Huntington Beach, City of. 1996. *General Plan*, May 13.

———. 1999. *Huntington Central park Master Plan of Recreation Uses Draft Master Environmental Impact Report*, February 26.