
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

F. LAND USE AND PLANNING

This section describes the existing land use conditions at the project site and in the surrounding area. It also evaluates the consistency of the proposed project (including both Area A and Areas B1 and B2) with applicable local land use plans and policies and compatibility with existing and future land uses. Also reviewed is the project's consistency with pertinent regional plans.

1. APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

The project site is located within the City of Huntington Beach, and specifically within the Beach Boulevard Commercial Corridor and Community District Subarea 6B. The Beach Boulevard Commercial Corridor runs along Beach Boulevard and is the primary commercial corridor of the City, with a mix of uses including mini-retail centers, auto dealerships, hotels, medical, office, entertainment uses and residential uses. Its development is characterized as strip commercial with a mix of individual and multi-tenant buildings. The project site is also part of a smaller identifiable area, designated as Subarea 6B in the City's General Plan Land Use Element. Uses within the Subarea 6B designation include commercial and community-serving uses permitted in the General Commercial (CG) land use category. The following sections describe the relevant plans and policies for the project area.

a. City of Huntington Beach General Plan

The City's General Plan, adopted in May 1996 with various elements of the General Plan being amended or updated from 1997 through 1999, is the fundamental policy document for the City and provides the framework for management and utilization of the City's physical, economic and human resources. The General Plan is organized by the following resource topics: Land Use, Urban Design, Historic and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Growth Management, Housing, Circulation, Public Facilities and Public Services, Recreation and Community Services, Utilities, Environmental Resources/Conservation, Air Quality, Coastal, Environmental Hazards, Noise, and Hazardous Materials.

(1) General Plan Goals, Policies and Programs

For each of the topical elements, the General Plan identifies "Issues" and "Goals, Objectives and Policies." A list of General Plan goals that are particularly relevant to the project site and/or proposed development is included as Table IV.F-1 on page 135. The goals, objectives, and policies of the Historic and Cultural Resources Element and the Coastal Element have not been included in the table. These goals and policies do not apply to the project site since the site is not located within a historic district or coastal zone and no archaeological resources have been identified on-site based on the City's archaeological resource inventory.

Following is a review of applicable Land Use issues, goals, policies and objectives. A discussion of issues/goals/policies for the other topical areas is included within the respective environmental sections of this EIR (e.g., Urban Design policies in the General Plan are reviewed in Section IV.A. Aesthetics/Light and Glare).

(2) General Plan Land Use Element Issues and Policies

The Land Use Element for the City governs how land is to be utilized and defines the types, density, design, and distribution of commercial, residential, industrial, agricultural, public, and private open space uses. Since most of the City has been developed, the fundamental patterns, distribution, and form of development have been established. Residential neighborhoods are structured as large "super blocks" throughout the City, and commercial areas are generally located along major streets. Land use issues identified in the General Plan which are applicable to the project site and proposed project include:

- The requirement to establish distinct commercial and mixed use centers.
- The need to infill and recycle existing uses in a manner that does not adversely disrupt existing neighborhoods.
- The need to address residential units in some areas of the City, which are incompatibly located in districts, thereby creating conflicts with adjoining uses.

Specific policies for Commercial Development include:

LU 10.1.3: Require the incorporation of facilities to promote the use of public transit, such as bus turnouts and drop-offs where appropriate.

Table IV.F-1

RELEVANT GENERAL PLAN GOALS

LAND USE ELEMENT	
LU 1	Achieve development that maintains or improves the City's fiscal viability and reflects economic demands while maintaining and improving the quality of life for the current and future residents of Huntington Beach.
LU 2	Ensure that development is adequately served by transportation, infrastructure, utility infrastructure, and public services adequately serve development.
LU 4	Achieve and maintain high quality architecture, landscape, and public open spaces in the City.
LU 5	Ensure that significant environmental habitats and resources are maintained.
LU 10	Achieve the development of a range of commercial uses.
LU 11	Achieve the development of projects that enable residents to live in proximity to their jobs, commercial services, and entertainment, and reduce the need for automobile use.
URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT	
UD 1	Enhance the visual image of the City of Huntington Beach.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT	
ED 1	Provide economic opportunities for present and future Huntington Beach residents and businesses through employment and local fiscal stability.
ED 2	Aggressively retain and enhance the existing commercial, industrial, and visitor-serving uses while attracting new uses to Huntington Beach.
ED 3	Enhance Huntington Beach's economic development potential through strategic land use planning and sound urban design practices.
HOUSING ELEMENT	
H-1	Conserve and improve existing affordable housing in Huntington Beach.
GROWTH MANAGEMENT ELEMENT	
GM-1	Reduce traffic congestion.
GM-2	Ensure that adequate transportation and public facilities and public services are provided for existing and future residents of the City.
CIRCULATION ELEMENT	
CE 1	Provide a balanced transportation system that supports the policies of the General Plan and facilitates the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the City while providing a balance between economic development and the preservation of residential neighborhoods, and minimizing environmental impacts.
CE 2	Provide a circulation system which supports existing, approved, and planned land uses throughout the City while maintaining a desired level of service on all streets and at all intersections.
CE 4	Encourage and develop a transportation demand management (TDM) system to assist in mitigating traffic impacts and in maintaining a desired level of service on the circulation system.
CE 5	Provide sufficient, well-designed, and convenient on- and off-street parking facilities throughout the City.
CE 7	Maintain and enhance the visual quality and scenic views along designated corridors.
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES ELEMENT	
PF 1	Protect the community from criminal activity, reduce the incidence of crime, and provide other necessary services within the City.
PF 2	Ensure adequate protection from fire and medical emergencies for Huntington Beach residents and property owners.
RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES ELEMENT	
RCS 2	Provide adequately sized and located active and passive parklands to meet the recreational needs of existing and future residents, and preserve natural resources within the City of Huntington Beach and its sphere of influence.
RCS 5	Provide parks and other open space areas that are efficiently designed to maximize use while providing cost-efficient maintenance and operations.

Table IV.F-1 (Continued)

RELEVANT GENERAL PLAN GOALS

UTILITIES ELEMENT	
U 1	Provide a water supply system which is able to meet the projected water demands; upgrade deficient systems and expand water treatment, supply, and distribution facilities; and pursue funding sources to reduce the costs of water provision in the City.
U 2	Provide a wastewater collection and treatment system which is able to support permitted land uses; upgrade existing deficient system; and pursue funding sources to reduce costs of wastewater service provision in the City.
U 3	Provide a flood control system which is able to support the permitted land uses while preserving the public safety; upgrade existing deficient systems; and pursue funding sources to reduce the costs of flood control provision in the City.
U 4	Maintain solid waste collection and disposal services in accordance with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB939), and pursue funding sources to reduce the cost of the collection and disposal services in the City.
U 5	Maintain and expand service provision to City of Huntington Beach residences and businesses.
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES/CONSERVATION ELEMENT	
ERC 1	Improve and enhance the overall aesthetic value and appearance of the City of Huntington Beach through the provision and maintenance of public and private open space.
ERC 2	Protect and preserve significant habitats of plant and wildlife species, including wetlands, for their intrinsic values.
ERC 5	Conserve the natural environment and resources of the community for the long-term benefit and enjoyment of its residents and visitors.
AIR QUALITY ELEMENT	
AQ 1	Improve regional air quality by a) decreasing reliance on single occupancy vehicular trips, b) increasing efficiency of transit, c) shortening vehicle trips through a more efficient jobs-housing balance and a more efficient land use pattern, and, d) increasing energy efficiency.
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS ELEMENT	
EH 1	Ensure that the number of deaths and injuries, levels of property damage, levels of economic and social disruption, and interruption of vital services resulting from seismic activity and geologic hazards shall be within levels of acceptable risk.
NOISE ELEMENT	
N 1	Ensure that all necessary and appropriate actions are taken to protect Huntington Beach residents, employees, visitors, and noise-sensitive uses from the adverse impacts created by excessive noise levels from stationary and ambient sources.
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ELEMENT	
HM 1	Reduce, to the greatest extent possible, the potential for harm to life, property, and the environment from hazardous materials and hazardous waste.

Sources: City of Huntington Beach General Plan, Huntington Beach Planning Department, 1996 and subsequent updates.

LU 10.1.4: Require that commercial buildings and sites be designed to achieve a high level of architectural and site layout quality.

LU 10.1.5: Require that buildings, parking, and vehicular access be sited and designed to prevent adverse impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.

LU 10.1.6: Require that commercial projects abutting residential properties adequately protect the residential use from the excessive or incompatible impacts of noise, light, vehicular traffic, visual character, and operational hazards.

LU 10.1.11: Promote the introduction of a diversity of uses in general commercial centers, particularly those containing anchor grocery stores that improve their relationship with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

LU 10.1.12: Require that Commercial General uses be designed and developed to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, and compatibility with existing uses.

(3) General Plan Land Use Designations

The General Plan Land Use Element designates the project site as Mixed Use-Vertical Integration of Housing (MV-F10-d-a). The MV land use designation applies to areas in the City with single use structures containing Neighborhood Commercial (CN) and General Commercial (CG) uses. These uses include retail commercial uses, professional offices, eating and drinking establishments, household goods, food sales, drugstores, building materials and supplies, personal services, recreational commercial uses, overnight accommodations, cultural facilities, government offices, and educational, health, institutional, and similar uses. In addition, this land use category allows for mixed use structures incorporating residential units on the second floor and/or at the rear of commercial uses with restrictions on the types of commercial uses to ensure compatibility with the housing.

In addition, the project site is located in Community District Subarea 6B as designated in the General Plan Land Use Element. Uses within the Subarea 6B designation include commercial and community-serving uses permitted in the CG land use category. Land use density and intensity in Subarea 6B allows for a maximum total building floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.5 for commercial development. The property may be fully developed with commercial uses or combined with housing at a maximum density of 25 units per net acre. The height limit for Subarea 6B is four stories. The design and development standards for Subarea 6B call for a unified “village” character, using consistent architecture and highly articulated facades and building masses, and siting buildings around common courtyards and pedestrian areas. Other design and development standards for this subarea include incorporating a visual landmark at the intersection of Beach Boulevard and Warner Avenue, limiting access to and from Beach Boulevard, and providing pedestrian linkages with surrounding residential and commercial areas.

(4) Resolution No. 96-57

Subsequent to the May 1996 adoption of the General Plan, Resolution No. 96-57 was adopted (adopted July 1, 1996). This resolution encourages "Applications for commercial

development on large parcels of land adjacent to major arterial highways or other vacant or under-utilized parcels in the City," and stipulates the following:

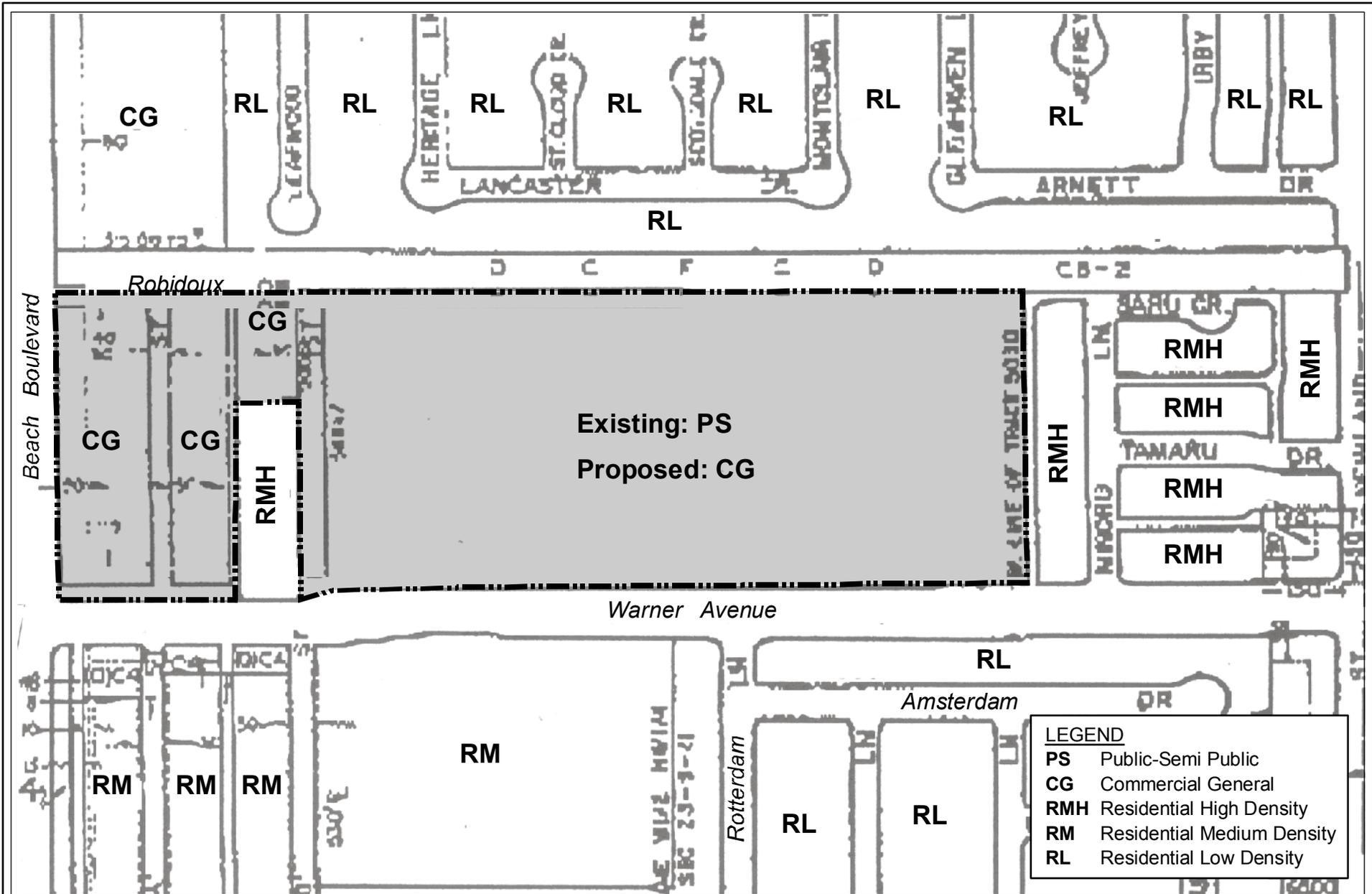
- The City shall review any commercial site plan that mitigates the potential impacts to the surrounding neighborhood to the greatest extent possible, while still allowing for a market-driven development.
- The City Council acknowledges and supports the required land use review and public hearing process, the professional recommendation of City staff, and the advisory role and recommendations of the Planning Commission.
- The City Administrator shall work toward the pursuit of commercial development opportunities on large parcels adjacent to major arterial highways, including vacant/surplus school sites, or any other underutilized sites or parcels in the City of Huntington Beach.
- That the property owner/applicant for any such commercial/retail project shall pay all entitlement fees necessary for the processing of the project.

b. City of Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance

The City of Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance regulates development through land use designation, building restrictions, and stipulation of development standards. The current zoning for the eastern portion of the project site (Area A and Area B2) is (PS) Public-Semipublic. The current zoning for the western portion of the project site (Area B1) is General Commercial (CG). The Southern California Edison (SCE) substation located at the northwest corner of Warner and B Streets is zoned Medium High Density Residential (RMH), but is not part of the proposed project. Figure IV.F-1 on page 139 illustrates on-site and surrounding zoning.

The permitted uses, building restrictions, and development standards associated with the PS zone are not discussed in detail in this section since proposed development within Area A would require a Zoning Map Amendment, changing the PS-zoned area of the site to CG. A wide range of uses are permitted by-right within the CG zone, including: retail/wholesale sales and rentals of building materials, supplies, and services; eating and drinking establishments, including fast food and take-out services; food and beverage sales (no alcohol); retail sales; maintenance and repair services; and business and professional offices.¹⁷ The following uses are permitted within the CG zone by Conditional Use Permit (CUP): eating and drinking

¹⁷ *City of Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Section 211.04.*



LEGEND	
PS	Public-Semi Public
CG	Commercial General
RMH	Residential High Density
RM	Residential Medium Density
RL	Residential Low Density



Source: City of Huntington Beach

Figure IV.F-1
**Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse and
 Northeast Corner of Beach Boulevard/Warner Avenue
 Zoning Designation**

establishments serving alcohol or with drive-through services or outdoor dining; alcoholic beverage sales; vehicle sales and services such as service stations and commercial parking; hotels and motels; and quasi-residential uses such as residential hotels.¹⁸ The CG zone has a general building height of 50 feet above grade and a maximum FAR of 1.5.¹⁹ Required setbacks include 10-foot front and street setbacks, and a 50-foot setback or 25-foot entirely landscaped setback along Beach Boulevard. Side and rear setbacks are not required except where abutting a residential zone. Minimum site landscaping of 8 percent of a lot is also required.²⁰ Additional issues that are addressed within the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance include mechanical equipment, refuse storage, fences and walls, loading, and parking.

c. Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) was adopted in 1994 as a policy document that sets broad goals for the Southern California region and identifies strategies for agencies at all levels of government to use in guiding their decision-making. It includes input from each of the 13 subregions that make up the southern California region (which is comprised of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial, and Ventura Counties).

Adopted RCPG policies related to land use are contained primarily in the Growth Management chapter. The primary goal of Growth Management policies is to address issues related to growth and land use by encouraging local land use actions that could ultimately lead to the development of an urban form that will help minimize development costs, save natural resources, and enhance the quality of life in the region.

The following Growth Management policies are relevant to the proposed project and are included under the category of "Policies Related to the RCPG Goal to Improve the Regional Standard of Living":

- SCAG shall encourage patterns of urban development and land use that reduce costs on infrastructure construction and make better use of existing facilities.
- SCAG shall support local jurisdictions' effort to minimize the cost of infrastructure and public service delivery, and efforts to seek new sources of funding for development and the provision of services.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *City of Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Section 211.06.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

2. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

a. On-site Land Uses

An aerial photograph showing the project site and surrounding land uses is shown in Figure IV.F-2 on page 142. The 25.6-acre project site is currently developed with the former Rancho View School in Area A; commercial uses, office uses, and nine residential units in Area B1; and the Ocean View School District Bus Maintenance Facility in Area B2. Area A, within the central portion of the project site, comprises approximately 13.0 net acres and includes the former school buildings, a surface parking lot, associated walkways, open space and landscape areas. A large portion of Area A consists of an open grass field which includes 6.4 acres of open space with three baseball fields, three softball/Little League fields, four basketball courts and one volleyball court. The six baseball/softball fields are currently used by youth sports organizations for Ocean View Little League baseball. Access to Area A is currently provided via B Street.

Area B1 comprises 6.3 acres to the west of B Street. This area is developed with approximately 30,575 square feet of commercial and office development, including 19,875 square feet of commercial/retail uses (a small retail shopping center, gas station/mini-mart, liquor store, auto shop, and tire shop) fronting Beach Boulevard and/or Warner Avenue, a 4,200 square foot fast food restaurant on Beach Boulevard at Robidoux Drive, and a 6,500 square foot two-story office building on A Street at Robidoux Drive. Area B1 also includes 9 single-family residences, five of which are located on A Street, three of which are located on B Street, and one that is located at the southwest corner of Robidoux Drive and B Street facing Robidoux Drive, for total development in Area B1 of approximately 41,300 square feet. Area B2 consists of 4.9 net acres located east of the former Rancho View School site. The portion of this area that is not occupied by the Ocean View School District Bus Maintenance Facility contains undeveloped land. Access is provided to Area B2 via Warner Boulevard.

b. Surrounding Land Uses

A Southern California Edison (SCE) electrical substation is located at the northwest corner of Warner Boulevard and B Street, immediately adjacent to and surrounded on three sides by the project site. This property, however, is not a part of the proposed project or the project site. Other surrounding land uses include: automobile dealerships located to the northwest and single-family residential uses directly to the north of the project site across the Ocean View Flood Control Channel; multi-family residential uses to the east; single- and multi-family residential uses to the south across Warner Avenue; and retail/commercial and office uses to the west across Beach Boulevard.



No scale

Source: PCR Services Corporation, 2002

Figure IV.F-2
**Low's Home Improvement Warehouse and
Northeast Corner of Beach Boulevard/Warner Avenue
Project Site and Surrounding Land Uses**

The automobile dealership located northwest of the project site is characterized by a large open lot for vehicle display, a showroom with offices, and an auto repair/maintenance facility. The buildings are generally one-story in height. The automobile dealership uses nighttime lighting for display of the vehicles and security purposes. The residential dwellings located east and south of the project site consist predominately of one-story single-family detached homes, one story multi-family attached apartments, and two-story multi-family attached apartments. The western boundary of the project site is typical of the Beach Boulevard Corridor and includes general commercial properties, such as fast-food restaurants, gas stations, and various commercial offices.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

a. Significance Thresholds

A significant impact related to land use and planning would occur if the proposed project were determined to:

- Be in substantial conflict with the General Plan land use designations or relevant zoning regulations;
- Be inconsistent with applicable plans and policies, or regulations of agencies with jurisdiction over the project;
- Be incompatible with surrounding uses; or
- Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

b. Project Level Impacts

(1) Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies

(a) City of Huntington Beach General Plan Goals

Following is an overview assessment of the proposed project's consistency with relevant General Plan Goals as listed by Element in Table IV.F-1 on page 135. As applicable, a more detailed review of relevant General Plan Goals and Policies is included in the respective sections of this EIR (i.e., Traffic/Transportation, Aesthetics, Recreation, etc.).

Land Use Element

The proposed project (including both Area A and Areas B1 and B2) complies with the intent and is consistent with the land use goals to improve the City's fiscal viability, achieve the development of a range of commercial uses, and provide jobs and commercial services in proximity to residents. The project also would be adequately served by transportation and utility infrastructure and public services. No impacts related to potential inconsistency with the Land Use Element are anticipated.

Urban Design Element

As further detailed in Section IV.A. Aesthetics/Light and Glare of this EIR, the proposed development in Area A would replace older, deteriorating school facilities with new retail buildings. Future development associated with Area B1 would result in redevelopment of existing commercial and residential uses. New development would not occur within Area B2. Proposed landscaping and architectural treatments would enhance the visual character of the site. The proposed project complies with the intent of the Urban Design Element and no impacts related to potential inconsistency with the Urban Design Element are anticipated.

Housing Element

As discussed in Section IV.H. Population and Housing, if developed in accordance with the underlying General Plan designation of Mixed Use-Vertical Integration of Housing, the intensities/densities of structures vertically integrating housing and commercial uses would be determined by a combination of FAR and units per net acre. The maximum allowable total building floor area ratio for the site is 1.5 and structures could be fully developed with commercial uses, or combined with housing at a maximum density of 25 units per net acre. While proposed development within Area A precludes the development of housing on this 13.0-net acre portion of the overall project site, the proposed 159,000 square foot Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse and 9,000 square foot restaurant would be consistent with the proposed zoning designation for the project site of CG (General Commercial). Development of Area A would employ a maximum of 175 employees associated with the Lowe's facility and approximately 30 to 35 total employees associated with the proposed neighborhood sit-down restaurant, thereby providing employment opportunities close to existing residential neighborhoods. In addition, proposed development within Area A would not hinder the City's intent to conserve and improve existing affordable housing in Huntington Beach, as Area A does not contain residential uses. Development of the proposed project within Area A is therefore consistent with the applicable goal included in this element and no impacts are anticipated.

As part of future program development within Area B1 (new development would not occur within Area B2), a total of nine residential units comprising approximately 10,700 square

feet would be removed to accommodate commercial development. As described in Policy HE.1.1.12 of the Housing Element (2000), which supports Goal HE 1 – Conserve and Improve Existing Affordable Housing in Huntington Beach, the City requires that the displacement impacts that would occur as a result of residential demolition shall be mitigated through unit replacement or relocation of tenants. While removal of any existing residential units would need to be evaluated at the time that specific development proposals for projects located within Area B1 are introduced, the City maintains a Replacement Housing Program as described within the Housing Element that requires a housing replacement plan for all redevelopment projects that result in displacement of residents. The housing replacement plan requirement for those projects that would result in the conversion or demolition of residential units occupied by persons and families of low or moderate income is a Standard City Condition of Approval. Therefore, the loss of nine residential units is not expected to result in a significant impact related to inconsistency with the goals of the Housing Element with implementation of the standard condition. Refer to Section IV.H. Population and Housing for a complete discussion of potential housing impacts associated with the proposed project.

Economic Development Element

Commercial development associated with Area A and Areas B1 and B2 of the proposed project site is anticipated to improve fiscal stability and provide economic opportunities for the City, and is therefore consistent with the goals included in this element. No impacts are anticipated.

Growth Management Element

The proposed project would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts related to traffic and circulation. The applicant would be required to contribute Traffic Impact Fees (proportional to the trips generated by the project) to be used to implement area-wide circulation improvements based on the City's priority list and to be monitored on an annual basis. However, no feasible mitigation exists to reduce the significant impacts that would occur at the intersections of Warner Boulevard/B Street and Warner Boulevard /Rotterdam Lane. Refer to Section IV.K. Traffic/Transportation for a complete discussion of potential transportation and circulation impacts associated with the proposed project.

Although the project would not support the Growth Management goal to reduce traffic congestion, project contribution of Traffic Impact Fees and implementation of feasible mitigation measures would mitigate impacts to the extent possible. Furthermore, other existing public facilities and public services are adequate to serve the project. The proposed project, therefore, is generally consistent with this element and significant General Plan consistency impacts are not anticipated.

Circulation Element

As detailed in Section IV.K. Traffic/Transportation, the planned roadway capacities have been evaluated based on proposed land uses and amended as required to accommodate ultimate projected traffic from both existing and proposed development in the region. The applicant would be required to contribute Traffic Impact Fees (proportional to the trips generated by the project) to be used to implement area-wide circulation improvements based on the City's priority list and to be monitored on an annual basis. Although the applicant would also be required to provide necessary improvements, the proposed project would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts related to traffic and circulation. Refer to Section IV.K. Traffic/Transportation for a complete discussion of potential transportation and circulation impacts associated with the proposed project. This would result in a significant unavoidable impact related to inconsistency with the goals and policies of the Circulation Element.

Despite the significant traffic impacts that would occur, the project would support Circulation Element goals to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, achieve a balance between economic development and the preservation of established residential neighborhoods (project development in Area B1 would actually remove incompatible remnant residential uses), and provide sufficient, well-designed, and convenient parking facilities. Therefore, the project would be generally consistent with the Circulation Element, and significant impacts relating to consistency with the General Plan would not occur.

Public Facilities and Public Services Element

As detailed in Sections IV.I. Public Services and IV.L. Utilities, the proposed project would be supported by adequate public services and utilities, and therefore would be consistent with the goals outlined in this element. No impacts are anticipated.

Recreation and Community Services Element

As detailed in Section IV.J. Recreation, the proposed project would eliminate approximately 6 acres of recreational open space; however, it is not directly in conflict with the Recreation Goals of the General Plan. The OVSD and the City of Huntington Beach have entered into an Agreement to relocate the six existing on-site Ocean View Little League fields to Park View/Murdy Park. Therefore, the recreational activities that would be displaced by the project would be provided for at an alternative location. Implementation of this agreement together with the mitigation measure provided below would reduce potential impacts associated with the loss of recreation uses to less than significant levels. No General Plan consistency impacts are anticipated.

Utilities Element

As detailed in Section IV.L. Utilities, the proposed project would require minor extension of local utilities and infrastructure to serve the project. The costs of these improvements would be the responsibility of the applicant, and the improvements would not adversely affect surrounding land uses. The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan goals within this element.

Environmental Resources/Conservation Element

There are no significant plant or wildlife species, habitats, or wetlands on the project site. However, development of Area A of the project site would result in inconsistencies with the Environmental Resources/Conservation Element. Development of the Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse would occur on land currently occupied by athletic fields (open land), resulting in the loss of public open space. Although the formalized uses associated with ballfield play would be relocated to other fields in the City, a loss of open land would nonetheless occur and, therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

Development of the proposed project would be consistent with the energy conservation goal and policy of this Element, as further described in Section IV.L.1 Electricity and Natural Gas.

Air Quality Element

The proposed project would provide employment available to local residents, thereby facilitating a more efficient jobs-housing balance. The number of vehicle trips contributed by the project, however, is estimated to be greater than the project's contribution to employment (compared to the regional average). As detailed in IV.B. Air Quality, based on this comparison, the project would significantly impact regional air quality. The long-term project-related air emissions are also projected to exceed the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) significance thresholds for carbon monoxide, reactive organic compounds, and nitrogen oxides. The proposed project, therefore, is inconsistent with the General Plan goals to improve regional air quality.

Environmental Hazards Element

The proposed project would be designed to meet Uniform Building Code (UBC) criteria for the seismic zone in which it is located. With adherence to UBC requirements, any potential for earthquake-induced settlement is not anticipated to result in a significant impact to project development. The project site is not within areas characterized by tsunamis, methane hazard, or

flood hazards. Development of the site as proposed would, therefore, be consistent with General Plan goals within the Environmental Hazards Element.

Noise Element

Project noise sources would include short-term construction activities and long-term operational activities, which would include noise associated with increased traffic and truck unloading operations within Area A. The increase in traffic-generated noise along area roadways would be below the threshold of perception for most people and is not considered significant. Construction-related noise impacts would not be significant provided the developer complies with the restricted hours stipulated by the City's Noise Ordinance. Of particular concern is the proximity of residences to noise that would be generated by delivery trucks in Area A. As detailed in Section IV.G. Noise, truck-related noise, however, can be mitigated to a less than significant level, and as mitigated, resultant impacts would not exceed the standards in the City's Noise Ordinance. The project is, therefore, consistent with the General Plan goals within the Noise Element.

Hazardous Materials Element

The proposed project would not use, store, transport, generate, or dispose of substantial quantities of hazardous materials. Construction activities would involve the use of commonly used potentially hazardous materials, including paint, adhesives, surface coatings and other finishing materials, vehicle fuels, oils, and transmission fluids. Operation of the proposed uses would likely involve the use and storage of small quantities of potentially hazardous materials in the form of cleaning solvents and pesticides for landscaping. Additionally, the proposed Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse within Area A could store potentially hazardous products on-site as store inventory. All potentially hazardous materials would be contained, stored, and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and handled in compliance with other applicable standards and regulations. The project, therefore, would be consistent with the General Plan goals within the Hazardous Materials Element.

(b) Land Use Element Issues and Policies

(i) Project and Program Level Impacts

As described previously, the City has identified a need to establish distinct commercial and mixed use centers within the City and recycle existing uses in a manner that does not adversely disrupt existing neighborhoods. With appropriate and compatible design and landscaping, development of the 159,300 square foot Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse retail facility and the 9,000 square foot restaurant within Area A, in conjunction with ultimate redevelopment to occur in Area B1, would assist in establishing a recognizable, defined

commercial theme for Subarea 6B, while ensuring that the existing neighborhoods surrounding the project site are not adversely disrupted.

The following describes the proposed project's consistency with specific policies for Commercial Development identified in the General Plan:

The project site is located along Beach Boulevard and Warner Avenue, which are main arterials in the City of Huntington Beach. In order to promote the use of public transit, the project proposes bus turnouts and drop-offs along Warner Avenue. **(LU 10.1.3)**

Without mitigation, the proposed project could create incompatible noise, traffic, and visual impacts. As detailed within the respective sections of this EIR, however, noise, traffic, and visual impacts can be mitigated to a less than significant level. **(LU 10.1.5, 10.1.6)**

The proposed project would introduce a diversity of uses. In addition to the "big box" retail anchor and the restaurant associated with Area A, the project also proposes to ultimately redevelop Area B1 with commercial uses that complement the retail anchor and provide for a cohesive commercial area in support of the City's General Plan. **(LU 10.1.11)**

The proposed project will be reviewed by the City's Design Review Board to assure that the project would achieve a high level of architectural quality, distinctive character, and compatibility. **(LU 10.1.4, 10.1.12)**

(c) Land Use Designations

(i) Project Level Impacts

As part of the project, screening walls, fencing, and landscaping would be provided. A 10-foot wide landscape area is proposed along Warner Avenue and B Street. Surface parking would be provided to the west of the Lowe's building, and planter islands with deciduous trees would be located throughout the parking lot. Primary access to Lowe's would be provided via one access point along Warner Avenue, with a signalized entrance at a location along Warner Avenue midway between Rotterdam Lane and the existing Warner Avenue/B Street intersection. Secondary access to Lowe's from Warner Avenue would be provided via a full access-in and right only-out access point located at the corner of Rotterdam Lane and Warner Avenue. Two secondary full access drives would be located on B Street. Primary access to the proposed restaurant would be from the Warner Avenue/Rotterdam Lane full access-in and right only-out access point located at the corner of Rotterdam Lane and Warner Avenue, with secondary access from a minor right in/right out driveway at the southeast edge of Area A.

As described previously, the General Plan Land Use Element designates the project site as Mixed Use-Vertical Integration of Housing (MV-F10-d-a), which applies to areas in the City with single use structures containing CN and CG uses. Each of the uses proposed within Area A would be consistent with the current land use designation of the site. In addition, the project site is located in Subarea 6B, as designated in the General Plan Land Use Element. As uses within the Subarea 6B designation include commercial and community-serving uses permitted by the CG land use category, the proposed uses would be consistent with this designation. The Lowe's portion of Area A development would have an FAR of 0.311, and the restaurant site would have an FAR of 0.15, both of which would be well below the maximum Subarea 6B FAR of 1.5. The project would also fall well within the permitted building height limitations. Moreover, although Lowe's is considered a "big box" retail center, architectural elements and facade articulations would be introduced to break up building massing and provide visual interest (refer to Section IV.A. Aesthetics/Light and Glare for further discussion of building design). Therefore, the proposed project would support the intent of the Subarea 6B designation.

(ii) Program Level Impacts

It is reasonable to assume that potential future development within Area B1 would occur in conformance with the MV, CG, and Subarea 6B land use designations. It is also likely that such future development would be generally compatible with the Area A development, and that together, the two areas would promote the Subarea 6B intention to create a unified character, using compatible or complementary architectural styles and articulated facades and building masses, and siting buildings around common or pedestrian areas. Although future project designs would need to be evaluated at the time a specific proposal is introduced, significant impacts would not be anticipated.

Future development would not occur within Area B2, and the existing Ocean View School District Bus Maintenance Facility would remain in operation. Therefore, land use impacts would not be expected within this Area.

(d) Resolution No. 96-57

(i) Project and Program Level Impacts

In consideration of the proposed commercial development proposed on the existing Rancho View School site, compliance with Resolution No. 96-57 would occur. This EIR and the accompanying public review process is part of this compliance. As decision-making bodies, the Planning Commission and City Council would review the EIR, public input, and staff recommendations to determine the extent to which potential impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods can be mitigated.

(2) City of Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance

(a) Project Level Impacts

The proposed project would require a Zoning Map Amendment to change the existing zoning designation of Public/Semipublic (PS) to General Commercial (CG). The land uses proposed in Area A, including the Lowe's store and the proposed restaurant, would be consistent with the uses permitted within the CG zone. A CUP would be necessary for the proposed outdoor display area in front of the Lowe's building, and temporary use approval would be required for seasonal sales. In addition, with approval of the requested amendment, the CG zoning for the site would be consistent with its MV General Plan land use designation.

The project also would comply with CG development standards. The 47.33-foot Lowe's building height would meet the maximum 50-foot limitation, and the proposed FARs for the Lowe's property and the proposed restaurant would fall well below the maximum permitted FAR of 1.5. Proposed setbacks would exceed zoning requirements, with a 24-foot setback established along Warner Avenue and a 482-foot setback (parking) along B Street. Proposed landscaping would also exceed zoning requirements, with approximately 10 percent of the Lowe's site and approximately 17 percent of the restaurant parcel dedicated to landscaping. Furthermore, the project would meet applicable zoning requirements regarding the screening of mechanical equipment, refuse storage, fences and walls, and off-street loading. As well, in accordance with the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance, the project would be subject to review by the Design Review Board and the Planning Commission. The current design of the Lowe's facility proposes a total of 647 parking stalls, which results in a shortage of 9 spaces when compared to current code which requires a total of 656 parking stalls. The applicant is requesting a parking variance to allow for the shortage in parking. With approval of the parking variance, the project would be consistent with the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and no impacts would occur.

(b) Program Level Impacts

It is reasonable to assume that potential future development within Area B1 would occur in conformance with applicable zoning requirements, and that any necessary CUPs or associated approvals would be obtained. Although future development would need to be evaluated at the time a specific proposal is introduced, significant zoning impacts would not be anticipated.

Future development would not occur within Area B2, and the existing Ocean View School District Bus Maintenance Facility would remain in operation. Therefore, zoning impacts would not be expected within this Area.

(3) Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide

(a) Project and Program Level Impacts

The proposed project is consistent with the RCPG land use-related goals. The development would be "infill," thereby relying on existing infrastructure and facilities. Minimal infrastructure extensions (i.e., wastewater and water systems) would be required to serve the site. The project may also reduce vehicle trip lengths for some shopping trips that currently travel out of the City, resulting in better use of existing facilities. As such, significant impacts would not occur.

(4) Land Use Compatibility

(a) Project Level Impacts

The proposed project represents general retail, commercial, and restaurant uses, and as such, is not anticipated to be incompatible with existing commercial uses located west, northwest and southwest of the project site. The extent to which the proposed project is compatible with residential uses located to the north, south and east would primarily depend upon traffic, noise, air quality, visual, and lighting impacts. Potential impacts relating to traffic, noise, air quality, aesthetics, and lighting are addressed in detail in the respective sections of this EIR and summarized below.

As discussed in Section IV.A. Aesthetics/Light and Glare, the proposed project design, architectural treatments, and landscaping would enhance the visual character of the site. Building size and massing, proposed signage, and lighting would conform with applicable standards and requirements. Furthermore, project design would be sensitive to surrounding uses. Compatibility impacts would be less than significant.

As discussed in Section IV.B. Air Quality, the proposed project would exceed regional air quality thresholds established by the SCAQMD. The project therefore would result in inconsistencies with the Air Quality Element goals to improve regional air quality.

As discussed in Section IV.G. Noise, project traffic noise would be below the threshold of perception and would not be considered significant. Construction-related noise impacts would not be significant provided the developer complies with the City's Noise Ordinance and implements proposed mitigation. Therefore, significant land use compatibility impacts related to noise would not occur.

As discussed in Section IV.K, Traffic/Circulation, the applicant would be required to contribute Traffic Impact Fees (proportional to the trips generated by the project) to be used to implement area-wide circulation improvements based on the City's priority list and to be monitored on an annual basis. Although the applicant would also be required to provide necessary improvements, the proposed project would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts related to traffic and circulation. As no feasible mitigation exists to reduce the significant impacts that would occur at the intersections of Warner Boulevard/B Street and Warner Boulevard /Rotterdam Lane, the project would mitigate impacts to the extent possible.

In addition, implementation of the project would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of any established community. Therefore, no significant land use impacts would occur.

(b) Program Level Impacts

As previously discussed, it is reasonable to assume that potential future development within Area B1 would occur in conformance with the site's land use designation and applicable zoning requirements. Any new retail, commercial, or office uses would likely be compatible with existing surrounding commercial uses. The extent to which development in this area would be compatible with surrounding residential uses would depend primarily upon traffic, noise, air quality, visual, and lighting impacts. In addition, although development of Area B1 would necessitate the removal of nine existing residences, such uses represent remnant development that no longer meets current land use and zoning standards. As such, the removal of these uses would not constitute a significant disruption of a cohesive, established community. Furthermore, relocation assistance would be provided. Future development would need to be evaluated at the time a specific proposal is introduced, however significant compatibility impacts would not be anticipated.

Future development would not occur within Area B2, and the existing Ocean View School District Bus Maintenance Facility would remain in operation. Therefore, land use compatibility impacts would not be expected within this area.

4. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The proposed project in conjunction with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects will incrementally contribute to the cumulative impact of development and loss of open space in the area due to the conversion of public schools to private land uses. This process involves removal of public lands and typically recreational facilities and open space from the City's inventory. Development of the Home Depot project at the former Wintersburg Continuing

High School at the southeast corner of Goldenwest Street and Warner Avenue and the Wal-Mart project near the intersection of Talbert Avenue and Beach Boulevard at the former Crestview School has resulted in a net loss of open space and play fields.

The disposal of surplus school sites has been in accordance with State Laws and City policies. Moreover, although the Ocean View School District (OVSD) has negotiated a long-term lease on the Crestview School site and intends to do the same on the Rancho View School site, the overall objective of the OVSD property management plan is to retain the balance of their closed sites in short-term leases to allow future public use. Therefore, the cumulative land use impact of school property conversions to private land uses is not considered significant. However, the cumulative loss of open space is considered significant and unavoidable.

5. STANDARD CITY POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Compliance with development standards in accordance with the City's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and design review process for the project site, as described within this chapter, would serve to mitigate several land use-related impacts of the proposed project. Development of certain uses within CG districts require Conditional Use Permits and review by the City's Design Review Board and the Planning Commission. Specific standards and City requirements which would mitigate traffic, noise, air quality, and visual impacts of the project (which combine to affect land use compatibility), as addressed in the respective sections of this EIR, would be implemented to reduce impacts to the extent feasible.

6. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION

Development of Area A would not result in inconsistencies with the Land Use, Urban Design, Housing, Economic Development, Public Facilities and Public Services, Recreation and Community Services, Utilities, Environmental Hazards, Noise, and Hazardous Materials Elements. Approval of the proposed Zoning Map Amendment will bring the proposed uses into compliance with land use designations. However, development in Area A would result in inconsistencies with the Environmental Resources/Conservation Element due to the loss of public open space. The project would also result in inconsistencies with the Air Quality Element due to the increase in local and regional emissions and the Circulation Element due to significant unavoidable traffic impacts.

The proposed project in conjunction with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects would incrementally contribute to the cumulative impact of development and loss of open space in the area due to the conversion of public schools to private land uses.

Development of Area B1 would not result in inconsistencies with the Land Use, Urban Design, Housing, Economic Development, Public Facilities and Public Services, Recreation and Community Services, Utilities, Environmental Resources/Conservation, Environmental Hazards, Noise, and Hazardous Materials Elements. However, this development would result in inconsistencies with the Air Quality Element due the increase in local and regional emissions and the Circulation Element due to significant unavoidable traffic impacts.

Cumulative traffic and air quality impacts would be significant without mitigation, but do not represent significant project-related land use impacts.

7. MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures related to land use compatibility include proposed measures to reduce noise, traffic, and air quality. These measures are included in the respective sections in this EIR. No additional specific land use mitigation measures are recommended.

8. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Development of Area A would not result in inconsistencies with the Land Use, Urban Design, Housing, Economic Development, Public Facilities and Public Services, Recreation and Community Services, Utilities, Environmental Hazards, Noise, and Hazardous Materials Elements. However, development in Area A would result in inconsistencies with the Environmental Resources/Conservation Element due to the loss of public open space. This impact remains significant and unavoidable. The project would also result in inconsistencies with the Air Quality Element due the increase in local and regional emissions. This impact remains significant and unavoidable.

The proposed project in conjunction with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects would incrementally contribute to the cumulative impact of development and loss of open space in the area due to the conversion of public schools to private land uses. This cumulative impact remains significant and unavoidable.

Development of Area B1 would not result in inconsistencies with the Land Use, Urban Design, Housing, Economic Development, Public Facilities and Public Services, Recreation and Community Services, Utilities, Environmental Resources/Conservation, Environmental Hazards, Noise, and Hazardous Materials Elements. However, this development would result in inconsistencies with the Air Quality Element due the increase in local and regional emissions. This impact remains significant and unavoidable.