

4.8 LAND USE

4.8.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides a discussion of the existing land uses in the project area and evaluates the compatibility of the proposed General Plan Amendment/Zone Change (GPA/ZC) with surrounding land uses and relevant policy or planning documents. Where appropriate, mitigation measures are identified.

4.8.2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Rolling Hills Estates (City) is located in the Palos Verdes Peninsula approximately 23 miles south of Central Los Angeles. The City is almost fully urbanized, with lower density residential uses and scattered commercial land uses. The study area consists of approximately 91.82 acres of commercial uses. Major commercial uses within the project area include the Peninsula Shopping Center, the Avenue of the Peninsula Mall, the Village, Town and Country, and a number of other commercial uses.

Existing Land Uses in the Project area

The project area contains the greatest variety of land uses within the City, accommodating regional shopping needs, public uses, and office employment. For the purpose of this analysis the project area is divided into two sections, with Dry Bank Drive defining the shared boundary of these sections. Existing land uses within the project area east of Dry Bank Drive include retail, office, and restaurant uses along the north side of Little Silver Spur Road between Dry Bank Drive and Beechgate Drive; a regional shopping center (the Town and Country Shopping Center) bounded by Silver Spur Road, Deep Valley Drive, and Roxcove Drive; a multistory office building and vacant lot (former gas station) on the south side of Little Silver Spur, a public library, a church, and other commercial and office uses along the south side of Silver Spur Road; small retail shops, office buildings, and commercial centers with restaurant, retail, office, and service uses on both sides of Deep Valley Drive; and several office buildings fronting Crenshaw Boulevard.

Existing land uses within the project area west of Dry Bank Drive include the Avenue of the Peninsula Mall, comprising a city block bounded by Silver Spur Road, Crossfield Road, Indian Peak Road, and Dry Bank Road; the Peninsula Center (a big-box retail center), comprising a city block bounded by Crossfield Road, Silver Spur Road, and Hawthorne Boulevard; and several office and commercial uses on the north side of Hawthorne Boulevard between Silver Spur Road and Indian Peak Road as well as on the southwest corner of the Hawthorne Boulevard and Indian Peak Road intersection; the Norris Theatre and a fire station on the south side of Indian Peak Road where Crossfield Drive ends into Indian Peak Road.

Existing Land Uses in the Vicinity of the Proposed Overlay Zone

Land uses directly to the southwest of the project area are within City boundaries and consist of high-density residential uses. In contrast to the low-density residential uses and equestrian trails that characterize most of Rolling Hills Estates, high-density residential uses are concentrated within this area. Palos Verdes Peninsula High School is located on the northeast corner of the Silver Spur Road and Hawthorne Boulevard intersection. Upslope from Levitt Park, located at the northeast corner of Crenshaw Boulevard and Silver Spur, are low density residential uses within the City of Rancho Palos Verdes.

The City of Rancho Palos Verdes bounds the project area on the north, northeast, south, and southeast sides. The northeast side is comprised of low-density residential uses with vacant land providing a buffer between those uses and the commercial uses within the project area. Land uses along Crestridge Road, south of the project area are characterized by institutional uses including several senior assisted living facilities, a denominational preschool, Ridgecrest Intermediate School, several churches, and the Palos Verdes Art Center.

The City of Rancho Palos Verdes maintains an adopted Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) area on the vacant parcel along Crestridge Road extending to the southern boundary of the project area on the south side of Indian Peak Road to Crenshaw Boulevard (shown in Figure 4.3.1). The NCCP plan was prepared to maximize benefits to wildlife and vegetation communities, and to allow appropriate development and growth in Rancho Palos Verdes and the region, pursuant to the requirements of the NCCP Act of 1991.

Land uses to the southeast of the project area comprise low-density residential uses that are more characteristic of the Ranchos Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, and Rolling Hills Estates communities. Land uses directly to the east of the project area, within the City of Rolling Hills and unincorporated County land comprise low-density residential uses within a natural context of large open spaces and equestrian trails.

4.8.3 LAND USE POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

The main documents regulating land use within the project area are the City of Rolling Hills Estates General Plan, and Title 17 of the City of Rolling Hills Estates Municipal Code, also known as the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance of the City of Rolling Hills Estates. The consistency of the proposed GPA/ZC with non-land use policies contained in these documents (e.g., housing, noise and traffic) is addressed in the appropriate topical sections of this Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). Applicable land use policies and guidelines from each of the documents listed above are described below.

4.8.3.1 City of Rolling Hills Estates General Plan

The City of Rolling Hills Estates General Plan provides the goals, objectives, and policies that guide City decision makers in directing growth and development. According to Section 65302(a) of the California Government Code, General Plans are required to contain at least seven elements: Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Conservation, Noise, Open Space, and Safety. The City adopted its first General Plan in 1965 and most recently conducted a comprehensive update in 1992.

Land Use Element. At the heart of the General Plan is the Land Use Element. This element of the General Plan specifies the various districts that comprise the land use portion of the General Plan and provides a long-term land use vision for the City, with a focus on growth management rather than redevelopment.

The land use map indicates the location and extent of permitted development in the City. Land use categories contain standards for development intensity and population density. The reason for these standards is to ensure that citizens, staff, and decision makers clearly understand the implications of the land use plan in terms of both existing and future development. To fulfill this goal, the Land Use Element outlines goals and policies that indicate opportunities for growth and development while being sensitive to topography, earthquake faults, geology, flooding potential, availability of services, and infrastructure. The goals of the Land Use Element relevant to development of the project area are as follows:

- **Goal 1: Future Development.** Ensure that future development in the City is compatible with the existing character of the City and that this development will be sensitive to the local environment.
- **Goal 2: Residential Areas.** Growth in the City shall be limited, and the objective of future planning shall be directed toward preserving low density and the rural character of the City.
- **Goal 3: Commercial Areas.** Maintain and preserve the existing land area within the commercial district designated on the General Plan land use map so that the needs of area residents are served.

In addition, the General Plan provides for a number of Overlay Designations, which identify additional development standards that must be considered in future planning and development. These overlay designations are analogous to overlay zones commonly found in zoning ordinances in that they indicate additional development requirements above and beyond those included in the base General Plan land use designations and zone districts. The overlay designations included in the City of Rolling Hills Estates Land Use Element include:

- Cultural Resources Overlay
- Horse Overlay
- Scenic Corridor Overlay
- Parks Development Overlay
- Ecological Resource Overlay
- Multiuse Trail Overlay
- Hazards Management Overlay
- Mixed-Use Overlay

The Land Use Element identifies and develops land use policy for seven distinct planning areas within Rolling Hills Estates that correspond to the planning goals of the General Plan. The project area is located within the City's General Plan Land Use Policy, Planning Area 6, as shown in Figure 4.8.1. Planning Area 6 encompasses the entire project area as well as areas to the north

between Hawthorne Boulevard and Silver Spur Road, and areas south of Indian Peak Road. The Mixed-Use Overlay is a subset of Planning Area 6 and directly correlates with the boundaries of the proposed GPA/ZC.

Planning Area 6 contains the greatest variety of land uses compared to the rest of the City's Planning Areas. The majority of the planned residential developments within Planning Area 6 are designated as high-density residential, which accommodates a maximum density of 22 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). A small area in the northernmost portion of the planning area is designated as low-density residential. The Land Use Policy of Planning Area 6 provides for the conservation of the retail commercial uses in the Peninsula Center. Land uses allowed in Planning Area 6 include high-density residential, commercial, office, and institutional uses.

Designated across the entire project area, the existing Mixed-Use Overlay accommodates all uses under the General Commercial land use category (business and professional offices, retail stores, services, and public uses) while additionally permitting high-density residential uses to be located either above or adjacent to commercial retail and office uses. The purpose of the Mixed-Use Overlay is to integrate high-density residential uses within commercial areas while preserving the Peninsula Center's commercial vitality. It also establishes development design guidelines that encourage development compatibility with the existing built environment. As part of approval of the Mixed-Use Overlay District (MUOD) in 1997 as discussed below, the Mixed-Use Overlay allows for a development of up to 2,020 multifamily dwelling units within the project area.

Four additional overlay designations apply within the planning area including the Hazards Management Overlay, the Scenic Corridor Overlay, the Ecological Overlay Zone, and the Cultural Resources Overlay. The Hazards Management Overlay, as defined in the Public Safety Element of the Rolling Hills Estates General Plan, is located throughout the project area and the central portion of Planning Area 6 and signifies risks associated with the underlying presence of the Cabrillo Fault. Development constraints that apply in this overlay are analyzed in the Hazards and Hazardous Material section, Section 4.6, of this EIR.

Hawthorne Boulevard, Crenshaw Boulevard, and Silver Spur Road are all designated as Scenic Corridors, and all three streets bound the perimeter of the project area. The policies of this overlay, defined in the Conservation Element of the Rolling Hills Estates General Plan, apply to all properties abutting the designated roadways. The intent of this overlay is to preserve scenic views from the corridor and to protect or enhance the rural or urban character of the adjoining land uses. Development constraints that apply in this overlay are analyzed in the Aesthetic section, Section 4.1, of this EIR.

The Ecological Overlay Zone applies to a small portion along the southern boundary of the project site adjacent to Crenshaw Boulevard. Development constraints that apply in this overlay are analyzed in the Biological Resources section, Section 4.3, of this EIR.

The project area is also designated within the Cultural Resources Overlay as having low sensitivity. Development constraints that apply in this overlay are analyzed at length in the Cultural and Scientific Resources section, Section 4.4, of this EIR.

Figure 4.8.2 illustrates the existing General Plan land use designations for the project area and the surrounding area. Table 4.8.A summarizes General Plan designations, zoning, and existing land uses in the project area (east of Dry Bank Drive) and in the remaining commercial district (west of Dry Bank Drive).

Table 4.8.A: Existing Land Use and Zoning Designations

	General Plan	Zoning	Existing Land Use
East	Planning Area 6	Commercial General/Mixed-Use Overlay District	Commercial Retail, Institutional, Office
West	Planning Area 6	Commercial General/Mixed-Use Overlay District	Regional Commercial Retail

City of Rolling Hills Estates Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance

The Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance of the City of Rolling Hills Estates is the primary mechanism for the implementation of the General Plan land use policies. As required by State law, the Zoning Ordinance must be consistent with the General Plan. The existing Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance regulates all development in the City by designating areas where specific land uses and intensities are allowed and the standards that have to be observed in the establishment and operation of these land uses. These standards include but are not limited to zone-specific height limits, setback requirements, lot size, design criteria, public uses, parking ratios, and other development standards.

The entire project area is zoned as Commercial-General (C-G) with a Mixed-Use Overlay District (MUOD). An overlay zone indicates additional development requirements above and beyond those included in the underlying zoning.

Commercial-General District. The purpose of the C-G District is to serve the commercial needs of the City and adjacent cities on the Peninsula. Uses permitted in this zoning designation include a variety of retail, office, and service uses. Development standards under the C-G District include lot dimension, setbacks, lot size coverage ratios, building heights, commercial parking requirements, etc. Table 4.8.B defines those standards.

Table 4.8.B: C-G District Development Standards

Maximum Height	44 feet, or 3 stories, including parapet
Minimum Setbacks	5-foot minimum from property line
Front	15-foot average from street
Side	5-foot minimum, 20 feet if adjacent to Residential Use
Rear	5-foot minimum, 20 feet if adjacent to Residential Use
Lot Coverage	Maximum of 35%, or 45% if no surface parking or adjoining parking structure
Parking (Commercial or Office with Mixed Use)	1 space for each 200 sf of gross leasable area ¹

¹ Except as set forth for specific uses listed in Section 17.30.050G of the City of Rolling Hills Estates Municipal Code.

Mixed-Use Overlay District. The MUOD was established in 1997 and permits high-density residential development throughout the zone to be located above or adjacent to commercial retail and office uses. Some of the development standards that apply within the zone include the following:

- Maximum limit of 22 units per acre for residential development
- Minimum limit of 300 square feet (sf) of usable open space per dwelling unit
- Separate access for residential and commercial units

All other development standards that apply to the site such as lot dimension, setbacks, lot size coverage ratios, building heights, commercial parking requirements are set by the underlying C-G zoning designation. All development within the MUOD must also comply with the underlying C-G designation, and if there is conflict in standards between the zoning designations, the development must adhere to the stricter of the standards.

Precise Plan of Design Ordinance

The Precise Plan of Design (PPD) Ordinance regulates all nonresidential or mixed-use development in the City in an attempt to accomplish uniform policy for controlled, orderly growth as required within the City's General Plan. Among other things, the PPD must demonstrate that a development would not substantially depreciate property values or unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of property in the vicinity. More specifically, a development must demonstrate the following:

- Compliance with the other provisions of the zoning ordinance
- Avoidance of further traffic congestion
- Provision of pedestrian and traffic safety
- No adverse effects with regard to surrounding property (building height, setback, walls, landscaping, location of services, etc.)
- Consistency with the General Plan and the City's development standards
- That proposed development within the Peninsula Center is compatible with existing uses in the Peninsula Center with regard to height, setback, density, and architectural appearance and is consistent with the design standards and General Plan goals for the Peninsula Center

Nonresidential or mixed-use development in the City requires the approval of the PPD delineating a master plan of development for the entire site prior to the issuing of any other required permits.

4.8.4 METHODOLOGY

Land use impacts are assessed based on the physical effects related to land use compatibility (e.g., air quality, aesthetics, and circulation) and consistency with adopted plans and regulations. Specifically, this section of the EIR addresses the potential environmental impacts related to compatibility and/or consistency with regard to the following:

Land Use

- On-site land uses
- Adjacent land uses

Plans and Regulations

- City of Rolling Hills Estates General Plan
- City of Rolling Hills Estates Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance

Aerial photographs were used to obtain a general overview of the project site in relation to surrounding land uses. The imagery, combined with information obtained from multiple site visits, was used to analyze specific physical impacts of the proposed GPA/ZC for potential land use compatibility impacts.

The General Plan of the City of Rolling Hills Estates identifies the location, density, and intensity of land uses, the basic design and function of circulation, and policies regarding open space, infrastructure, recreation, and public service needs for the entire City. Together, the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance and planning area map identify specific types of land uses, intensity of uses, and development performance standards applicable to specific areas and parcels of land within the City.

4.8.5 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Thresholds for land use impacts, which are based on Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, have been adopted by the City. For the purpose of this analysis, the proposed GPA/ZC would have a significant impact on the environment if it:

- Conflicts 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;
- Results in an increase in density beyond that permitted in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance;
- Allows an architectural style or building materials that are substantially inconsistent with neighborhood compatibility requirements;
- Proposes a use that is incompatible with surrounding land uses because of the difference in the physical scale of development, noise levels, light and glare and traffic levels, or hours of operation; or
- Detracts substantially from the rural character, as defined in the Rolling Hills Estates General Plan.

4.8.6 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Proposed GPA/ZC Planning and Zoning Actions

The proposed GPA/ZC consists of the creation of a new Peninsula Village Overlay Zone within a portion of the City's main commercial core. The purposes of the Peninsula Village Overlay Zone are to provide for the orderly development of a mixed-use village in the city's main commercial area, to encourage a broad range of housing opportunities in conjunction with existing and future commercial/office uses, and to preserve regional shopping opportunities to meet the needs of the community. The existing MUOD would be rescinded over the entire project area, and the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone, which is comprised of four distinct development districts, would be implemented over the portion of the project area east of Dry Bank Drive. Important changes in land use of the Peninsula Village Overlay Zone include the concentration of residential development at increased densities in some designated districts, an increase in allowable lot coverage, reduction in setback requirements, and the implementation of design guidelines that intend to attenuate future development to a mixed-use, pedestrian oriented site context. A more detailed description of the proposed GPA/ZC, design guidelines, and streetscape plan can be found in Section 3.0, the Project Description.

Table 4.8.C compares the zoning parameters between the existing MUOD and the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone. Permitted residential densities within the proposed 34.21-acre Peninsula Village Overlay Zone would be a minimum of 15 du/ac and a maximum ranging from 35 du/ac to 40 du/ac in designated districts. The remaining 57.61 acres of the original MUOD would remain Commercial-General, the existing underlying zoning.

Less Than Significant Impacts

General Plan Consistency

The following discussion of the General Plan consistency with the General Plan Amendment (GPA) addresses the Land Use Element of the General Plan exclusively. The consistency with the policies in the Housing, Conservation, Open Space and Recreation, Noise, Public Safety, and Transportation elements of the General Plan are discussed in other sections of this PEIR that directly address those topics. A more thorough discussion on the General Plan consistency of those topics can be found in Sections 4.1 (Aesthetics), 4.2 (Air Quality), 4.3 (Biological Resources), 4.4 (Cultural and Scientific Resources), 4.5 (Geology), 4.6 (Hazards and Hazardous Materials), 4.9 (Noise), 4.10 (Population and Housing), 4.12 (Recreation and Open Space), and 4.13 (Transportation and Circulation).

Land Use Element Goals and Policies. The General Plan for the City is a comprehensive, long-range plan designed to guide its future development. As previously stated, the proposed Overlay Zone is located within Planning Area 6, as identified in the Land Use Element of the General Plan, which is currently designated as a Mixed-Use Overlay.

As defined in the Section 3.0, Project Description, the scope of the project is to amend the General Plan and implement a zoning change in order to maintain General Plan consistency with the proposed uses in the project area. Part of the proposed GPA would allow for an increase of residential densities in the project area east of Dry Bank Drive. The existing 22 du/ac maximum would increase to a

Table 4.8.C: Comparison of Existing MUOD with Proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone

	Existing MUOD	Proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone
Maximum Residential Units	2,020 du	900 du
Area Allowing Residential Uses	91.82 acres	34.21 acres
Allowable Residential Density	Maximum of 22 du/ac	Minimum of 15 du/ac; maximum of 40 du/ac (maximum of 35 du/ac in Districts 3, 3-A and 4); no residential in District 2
Maximum Height	44 feet (or three stories, including the parapet)	44 feet (54 feet in District 3-B)
Lot Coverage Ratio	45% maximum	75% maximum and 60% minimum in Districts 1 and 3; 50% maximum and 30% minimum in Districts 2 and 4
Minimum Setbacks	15 feet average from street, 5 feet from property line	No setback minimums in Districts 2, 4, or 3 Sub Area B; 8 feet for side yard in District 1; 8 feet from property line in District 3 Sub Area A; 8 feet front setback for all ground floor residential uses
Outdoor Open Space	300 sf per du	300 sf per du, with a 100 sf maximum per du of private balconies shall count toward requirement in Districts 1, 3, and 4.
Maximum Commercial Development	Approximately 5 million sf	Approximately 2.3 million sf

Source: General Plan, 1992, and Proposed Overlay Zone, 2005.

du = dwelling unit

du/ac = dwelling units per acre

sf = square feet

maximum of 35 units per acre in District 4, District 3, and District 3 Sub Area A, and a maximum of 40 du/ac in District 1 and District 3 Sub Area B. Residential uses would no longer be permitted in District 2 and within the project area west of Dry Bank Drive. Potential residential development would decrease from 2,020 dwelling units to 900 dwelling units under the proposed GPA. The increase in residential densities in portions of the project area would provide for construction of a range of housing options promoting a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use village while preserving the regional commercial areas where residential uses are no longer permitted. The GPA would eliminate any conflict between the uses and densities allowed under the proposed GPA and the existing General Plan designations. With approval by the City Council of the increase in residential densities as part of the GPA, there would be no conflict with the General Plan since approval of the GPA would permit higher residential densities.

The following analysis evaluates the consistency of the GPA/ZC with the relevant goals and policies of the General Plan Land Use Element:

Goal 1: Future Development. Ensure that future development in the City is compatible with the existing character of the City and that this development will be sensitive to the local environment.

Policy 1.1 Development that does not preserve and enhance the quality of the local environment will be discouraged.

Policy 1.2 Future development must be compatible with and comply with adopted land use plans and standards, traffic facilities, open space requirements, and neighborhood compatibility requirements.

Policy 1.3 Maintain the current balance of land uses (residential, commercial, institutional, and recreational) within the City.

Goal 1 Consistency Analysis. The portion of the project area east of Dry Bank Drive, the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone, is planned to be a mixed-use urban village combining high-density residences, office/service developments, and retail uses in a pedestrian-oriented environment. The land uses in this area are currently characterized by a mix of auto-oriented commercial office, institutional, and retail uses that lack cohesion in physical design. Included in the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone are development standards and design guidelines that aim to enhance the built form of the local environment. In encouraging compatibility of uses, heights, setbacks, proportions, landscaping, materials, etc. in the design of new development, the design guidelines are a measure that would lead to the enhancement of the local environment, which would promote the General Plan goal and policies for future development.

The proposed project is consistent with the planning goals for this area where the intent is to promote pedestrian movement and enhance economic vitality by providing a permanent population in the urban commercial core. Since the proposed project is a General Plan amendment, it mandates that all future projects in the area are in compliance with adopted land use plans and standards, open space requirements, and neighborhood compatibility requirements. Compared to the existing Mixed-Use Overlay designation, the proposed GPA/ZC would revise standards with regard to the allocation of open space, layout, and

allocation of parking facilities and architectural and site design compatibility. The development standards for usable outdoor open space would remain the same under the current zoning, which is 300 sf for each dwelling unit. Overall, the proposed project is continuing the current planning approach but over a reduced area with less residential units and at higher density.

As previously stated, the purpose of the proposed GPA/ZC is to provide for the orderly development of a mixed-use village in an existing commercial area while preserving regional commercial uses. There are currently no residential uses within the project area, while they are permitted throughout the existing Mixed-Use Overlay designation. The proposed project would continue to permit residential uses though over a reduced area, and at lesser numbers and higher densities than are permitted by the existing General Plan. Residential uses would no longer be permitted in the project area west of Dry Bank Drive or in District 2 east of Dry Bank Drive, preserving the existing regional commercial uses. Residential uses would be permitted in the remaining portion of the project area at densities greater than currently allowed under the existing zoning. As shown in Table 4.8.D, this would lead to a maximum of 900 allowable dwelling units under the proposed GPA/ZC, compared to the 2,020 dwelling units currently allowed in the project area upon full build out.

Table 4.8.D: Comparison of Existing Land Use Composition to the Maximum Permitted Under the Existing General Plan and the Proposed Project

Land Use	Existing Conditions	Existing General Plan	Proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone
Residential	none	2,020 dwelling units	900 dwelling units
Commercial	2,134,878 sf	5,044,519 sf	2,318,141 sf

Currently there are 2,134,878 sf of commercial uses in the project area, while the proposed project would allow a maximum of 2,318,141 sf of commercial uses. Thus, the total area of commercial uses would not change notably from the current conditions as the result of implementing the proposed project. However, as shown in Table 4.8.D, the existing Mixed-Use Overlay permits a maximum 5,044,519 sf of commercial area in the project area. Implementation of the proposed project would lead to a reduction of allowable commercial uses as compared to the permitted maximum under the existing General Plan.

The changes in the proposed GPA/ZC from the existing conditions would lead to some difference in composition of land uses in the project area; however, it would generally preserve existing commercial uses. Though residential uses do not currently exist in the project area, the inclusion of residential uses furthers the planning goals of maintaining the current balance of land use by promoting introduction of a residential population that would contribute to maintenance of the commercial vitality in the urban core albeit at higher densities than the current General Plan. Additionally, the design guidelines were developed in order to enhance the existing character of the project area by mandating design compatibility of the mixed-use commercial and residential development. The provision of residential units within the project area as proposed is consistent with the stated goals since

it implements the residential infill anticipated in the existing General Plan and includes design standards and guidelines that promote a comprehensive and cohesive manner for constricting future residential uses such that the quality of the community is enhanced.

Goal 2: Residential Areas. Growth in the City shall be limited, and the objective of future planning shall be directed toward preserving low density and the rural character of the City.

Policy 2.1 Ensure that the character and design of new residential development is consistent with existing development located nearby.

Policy 2.2 Limit development in areas where existing roads, infrastructure, schools, and public services will be adversely impacted.

Policy 2.4 New residential development, if any, shall be buffered from heavy traffic on major roadways whenever and wherever possible.

Policy 2.5 Encourage and work with other cities on the peninsula to promote the protection of the rural residential character of the area through policies in their General Plans, local coastal programs, and trail network plans.

Policy 2.6 Develop view preservation guidelines for use within the City and enforce height controls to lessen potential view impacts.

Policy 2.7 Continue to implement the City's Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance and any supporting guidelines and policies.

Policy 2.8 Implement the Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance and the Precise Plan of Design Ordinance for residences and businesses requiring that all roofing on a structure or multiple structures in the same development be compatible.

Goal 2 Consistency Analysis: The proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone would introduce residential uses at intensities and densities that are higher than currently allowed under the existing Mixed-Use Overlay. As stated above, the project area currently consists of auto-oriented commercial office and retail uses, including a regional mall that contrasts from the rural character found in the City's large-lot residential neighborhoods. Although the character and design of residential uses allowed in portions of the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone would contrast with the rural character of those neighborhoods, it would be consistent with the character and design of existing and future uses within the existing Peninsula Center businesses, the city's commercial core. Additionally, the majority of the City's high-density housing is concentrated to the southwest side of the project area along Highridge Road and would offer less of a contrast to the more urban character of residential uses proposed under the GPA/ZC.

Existing Infrastructure. The project area is currently built out with commercial and office uses, which demand and are served by existing roads, utilities, and infrastructure. The

project impacts to road infrastructure in the project area include traffic signal, parking, and access impacts and are discussed in Section 4.13, Transportation and Circulation. These impacts are reduced to below levels of significance with implementation of mitigation measures mentioned in Section 4.13. The project impacts related to infrastructure, schools, and public services are discussed in Section 4.11, Public Services and Utilities. The project-related impacts to fire protection, law enforcement, transit, solid waste, water, wastewater, storm water, electricity, natural gas, school and library services were found to be less than significant or reduced to less than significant levels through implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.11.

Traffic Buffer. The proposed development standards require that a fully landscaped 8-foot setback be provided where ground floor residential units abut a public street. All other residential units would be above the ground floor, thereby providing a vertical buffer from traffic along local streets. New development would be designed to meet interior and exterior noise standards, with required open space areas shielded from roadway noise as needed.

Character. The proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone would introduce uses at intensities and densities that are higher than currently allowed under the existing Mixed-Use Overlay. As stated above, the project area consists of auto-oriented commercial office and retail uses, including a regional mall that contrasts from the rural character found in the City's large lot residential neighborhoods. While the proposed GPA/ZC would introduce uses at greater lot coverage ratios and residential densities than either currently exist or are allowed by the existing General Plan, the proposed project would improve site compatibility by establishing minimum standards for future development within the commercial core that encourage compatibility of uses, heights, setbacks, proportions, landscaping, materials, etc., in the design of new development. With implementation of the proposed design guidelines and overlay zone text, the development associated with the proposed GPA would enhance the character of the surrounding commercial uses through implementation and enforcement of comprehensive development standards.

View Preservation. The maximum allowable building heights under the proposed GPA/ZC would remain the same as the existing General Plan and zoning, with the exception of District 3, Sub Area B, where maximum allowable building heights would increase to 54 feet. There are no public views of scenic resources, scenic corridors, or vistas from the vantage point of Indian Peak Road, where the height increases would occur in the project area. Height restrictions were developed in consideration of existing uses in the project area and the existing topography. View impacts have been analyzed in greater detail in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, which addresses view impacts from future development within District 3, Sub Area B, and determines that the increase in maximum building height would not obstruct any public views.

Neighborhood Compatibility. The Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance is a combination of design criteria and review processes aimed at preserving the established pattern of development within the existing residential neighborhoods. These criteria include façade treatment, building height, open space, building setbacks, roof design, appurtenance and landscaping compatibility, and the protection of views within existing residential neighborhoods.

While the design guidelines under the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone complement the provisions of the Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance, the provisions of the ordinance do not apply since design in the commercial district is regulated by the requirements of the Precise Plan of Design Ordinance. Project compliance with the Precise Plan of Design Ordinance is discussed below. However, the purpose of the Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance is to protect and maintain the established character of existing residential neighborhoods in the City and the implementation of the proposed GPA/ZC would increase the project area's compatibility with the neighborhood character. The existing auto-oriented commercial and office uses are in contrast to the rural character of the City's existing residential neighborhoods. Implementation of the proposed project would improve architectural and site compatibility by creating a more pedestrian-oriented design layout and establishing minimum standards for future development within the commercial core that encourage compatibility of uses, heights, setbacks, proportions, landscaping, materials, etc., in the design of new development.

Goal 3: Commercial Areas. Maintain and preserve the existing land area within the commercial district designated on the General Plan land use map so that the needs of area residents are served.

Policy 3.1 Continue to concentrate retail commercial uses in the Peninsula Center Commercial district and ensure that future commercial development reflects the rural character of Rolling Hills Estates. This development must reflect the City's rural character in terms of site plan design, architecture (use of wood, landscape buffering, etc.) and landscaping.

Policy 3.2 Ensure that commercial developments are compatible with and buffered from surrounding land uses that are sensitive to commercial development so that they are protected from potentially adverse impacts.

Policy 3.3 Nonconforming commercial and service uses shall be amortized. Strip developments will continue to be prohibited, and all commercial and service facilities will be controlled to benefit the general welfare with public needs considered before investment.

Goal 3 Consistency Analysis: The greatest concentration of commercial development in the City is found in the project area. A stated purpose of the proposed GPA/ZC is to preserve regional shopping opportunities in the Peninsula Center Commercial district. As mentioned above as shown on Table 4.8.D, the amount of maximum commercial area will be less than is currently permitted under the General Plan; however, the increase in residential uses would enhance vitality by providing a permanent population in close proximity to the commercial core. Additionally, the design guidelines under the GPA/ZC establish unifying themes that make the area more attractive for patrons. The design guidelines would also harmonize future

development with the City's rural character by producing a greater pedestrian orientation in design layout. Strip developments would continue to be prohibited under the proposed GPA/ZC. Therefore, impacts related to the commercial district are considered less than significant.

In providing for the orderly development of a mixed-use village in an existing commercial area while preserving regional commercial uses, the GPA furthers the goals and policies in the General Plan Land Use Element and would have no significant impact to the General Plan consistency.

Zoning Ordinance. As mentioned above, the project area is designated as an MUOD with an underlying C-G zoning designation. Under the GPA/ZC, the existing MUOD would be rescinded over the entire project area, and the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone would be implemented in the project area east of Dry Bank Drive. Changes to the existing zoning in the east portion of the project area include residential density, setback requirements, building heights, and lot coverage ratios.

Residential Density. As shown in Table 4.8.C the proposed project would allow for an increase of residential density in the project area east of Dry Bank Drive. The intent in the increase in residential density would be to support the commercial core while also creating a pedestrian-oriented area since the increased densities allow a concentration of people to live in close proximity to the retail areas without the necessity of driving. The existing 22 du/ac maximum would increase to a maximum of 35 du/ac in District 4, District 3, and District 3 Sub Area A and a maximum of 40 du/ac in District 1, and District 3 Sub Area B. Residential uses would no longer be permitted in District 2 and within the project area west of Dry Bank Drive. As mentioned above, the current project area would allow a total of 2,020 dwelling units upon build out of the current Mixed-Use Overlay District. Under the GPA/ZC, residential development would be restricted west of Dry Bank Drive. While the residential density would increase in the project area east of Dry Bank Drive, total allowable dwelling units upon build out (900 dwelling units) is less than what would be allowed under the existing MUOD for the entire project area. With approval of the GPA/ZC, there would be no conflict with density requirements, since it creates new standards.

Minimum Setbacks. Current setback requirements established by the C-G standards consist of a 15-foot average from the street and minimum of 5 feet from the property line. These setback requirements would remain in the west portion of the project area. Changes in setback requirements on the east portion of the project area differ with regard to Development District in the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone. As shown in Table 4.8.C setback requirements would be eliminated in Districts 2 and 4, District 3, and District 3 Sub Area B under the GPA/ZC. Setback requirements would be eliminated in District 1, with the exception of an 8-foot minimum side-yard setback. Minimum setback requirements in District 3, Sub Area A would be maintained at 8 feet for rear, side, and front setbacks. For developments where the front yard of a ground-floor residential use abuts a public street, there would be a minimum requirement of an 8-foot front setback in all Districts in the

proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone. The intent in the reduction in minimum setbacks under the GPA/ZC is to foster a shift from the auto-oriented character of the area to a more pedestrian-oriented character as it reduces distances from store fronts to pedestrian amenities.

Maximum Building Height. As shown in Table 4.8.D, the maximum allowable building height under the proposed GPA/ZC would remain the same as the existing MUOD, with the exception of District 3, Sub Area B where the maximum allowable building height would increase to 54 feet. The intent of the increase in building height in District 3 Sub Area B under the GPA/ZC is to provide a gradual decrease in building height from the Avenue of the Peninsula Mall into the remainder of the Peninsula Village Area.

Lot Coverage Ratios. As shown in Table 4.8.C, lot coverage ratios would be increased from a uniform standard of 45 percent absolute allowable maximum to a 75 percent allowable maximum in Districts 1 and 3 and 50 percent allowable maximum in Districts 2 and 4. Also, minimum standards would be set that would prohibit buildings that are less than 30 percent of their lot coverage in Districts 2 and 4, and 60 percent of their lot coverage in Districts 1 and 3. The intent of increasing lot coverage ratios under the GPA/ZC is to increase residential densities and to promote a pedestrian-oriented environment.

The Proposed GPA/ZC would require the City to approve the zoning change. Since part of the proposed project consists of a zoning change, future development that follows the above standards would maintain compliance with the zoning requirements in the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact with regard to zoning requirements in the project area.

Precise Plan of Design (PPD) Ordinance. As described above, all nonresidential development in the City is required to submit a PPD in order to demonstrate among other things that a development will have no adverse effect on surrounding properties and will comply with General Plan and zoning policies and all applicable design guidelines. The approval of the GPA/ZC and accompanying design guidelines would increase compliance with the provisions of the PPD Ordinance. Since the proposed action is a GPA/ZC, all developments that implement the standards set forth in the GPA/ZC and design standards would remain compliant with the City's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and applicable design guidelines.

In avoiding adverse effects to surrounding properties and maintaining design compatibility within the Peninsula Center, the GPA/ZC would improve architectural and site compatibility by creating a more pedestrian-oriented design layout and establishing minimum standards for future development within the commercial core that encourage compatibility of uses, heights, setbacks, proportions, landscaping, materials, signage, etc., in the design of new development. Currently, there is little uniformity in design styles within the project area, east of Dry Bank Drive. With few exceptions, building and lot configuration reflect auto-oriented office and retail developments that produce a fragmented design layout. The architectural and building materials found in the project area range from a spectrum of styles and do not convey a cohesive design layout. The existing MUOD consists of established design

guidelines that encourage compatibility of uses, heights, setbacks, proportions, landscaping, materials, etc. in the design of new development. The objective of the guidelines is to maintain functional compatibility of existing site conditions, functional and aesthetic relationships of buildings to each other, functional and aesthetic design of open space, and appropriate distribution and layout of parking. These objectives would be continued with the implementation of the proposed GPA/ZC, while the proposed GPA/ZC goes further in defining design objectives and corresponding guidelines that would work to achieve functional and physical compatibility in development design. The design guidelines specify provisions that seek to harmonize the architectural style and use of building materials for all new developments in the project area. In summary, the GPA/ZC would improve design compatibility with the Peninsula Center and surrounding properties.

The GPA/ZC would contribute to traffic congestion, though the impacts would be less in comparison to the full build out of the existing MUOD. Furthermore, Mitigation Measures described in Section 4.13, Transportation and Circulation, would reduce project impacts (except for the weekday impact at Crenshaw Boulevard/PCH in the existing plus project and in the 2025 Baseline Plus Project) to less than significant levels. The pedestrian and traffic safety would be improved under the GPA/ZC. The project would establish needed improvements to pedestrian facilities, way-finding opportunities, street-crossing treatment, sidewalk improvements, and other key elements needed to tie the districts together. The Streetscape Master Plan, as described in Section 4.13, Transportation and Circulation, would minimize the potential conflicts between, pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

Potentially Significant Impacts

Compatibility with Study Area and Surrounding Land Uses. As mentioned above, the residential uses surrounding the project area consist of high-density residential uses directly to the south and west; large-lot, low-density single family residential to the west; medium-density residential to the south, a large high school campus to the north, and a large vacant parcel directly to the south. With the exception of the rural type single-family residences, land uses surrounding the project area occur in greater densities and intensities than those that characterize the majority of uses in Rolling Hills Estates or the adjacent cities of Rolling Hills and Ranchos Palos Verdes. The parameters affecting the land use compatibility of the proposed GPA/ZC with surrounding land uses is discussed below.

Physical Scale. The land uses in the project area currently contrast with the surrounding land uses as regard to physical scale of development. Project area properties west of Dry Bank Drive consist of uses whose physical scale in building heights, footprints and lot coverage ratios, and adjoining parking facilities currently far exceed those of the surrounding uses. These uses include a large regional mall (the Avenue of the Peninsula Mall), which appears to be built up to the maximum allowable lot coverage and height dimensions (44 feet) and the Peninsula Center, a big-box retail complex that consists of a surface parking lot that is largely out of scale with the surrounding uses. In this portion of the project area the existing MUOD would be rescinded and reverted back to the underlying C-G zoning, and there would be no change as a result of the proposed project. Project impacts would remove the potential for high-density residential uses that are currently permitted and would continue to permit commercial and office uses of physical scales that are currently allowed by the existing zoning standards.

The physical scale of buildings within the project area east of Dry Bank Drive occur in a diverse range of building heights, footprints, and lot coverage ratios that currently contrast with the physical scale of uses surrounding the project area. Building configurations along the north side of Little Silver Spur Road between Dry Bank Drive and Beechgate Drive consist of smaller single-story buildings typical of fast food restaurants to three-story, multi-tenant office buildings. The single-story Town and Country Shopping Center, bounded by Silver Spur Road, Deep Valley Drive, and Roxcove Drive, has a large building footprint and surface parking lot area that combined comprise a city block. The building at 608 Silver Spring Road and the Peninsula Center Library are both multistory buildings with high lot coverage ratios. Some buildings in the project area currently disguise height by designing with the natural topography, such as the multistory office building complex on the south side of Deep Valley Drive, which has a multi-tiered configuration that slopes back into the hillside.

As shown in Table 4.8.C, changes under the proposed Peninsula Village Overlay Zone include increasing the allowable lot coverage ratios throughout the project area east of Dry Bank Drive. Lot coverage ratios, which are currently a uniform standard of 45 percent absolute allowable maximum would be increased to a 75 percent allowable maximum in Districts 1 and 3 and 50 percent allowable maximum in Districts 2 and 4. Also, minimum standards would be set that would prohibit buildings that are less than 30 percent of their lot coverage in Districts 2 and 4, and 60 percent of their lot coverage in Districts 1 and 3. These changes could, and would likely, result in site layouts that reflect a more compact built-up character, with building footprints encroaching upon areas that are currently allocated for landscaped setbacks and surface parking lots. However, the highest increases in allowable lot coverage ratios are mostly focused internally within the project area along Deep Valley Drive or are located on the edges where natural hillside barriers buffer these uses from the adjacent surrounding land uses. Properties in District 4, where maximum allowable lot coverage ratios would increase to 50 percent, are in closest proximity to surrounding land uses with low-density residential development located on the south side of Crenshaw Boulevard. The properties in this district slope severely down toward Deep Valley Drive, which acts as a barrier to development in portions of this District.

Maximum building heights would remain the same throughout the project area with the exception in District 3 Sub Area B, where maximum allowable building heights would increase to 54 feet. This Sub Area is on the edge of the project area and is visually buffered from residential uses due to the distance to the area and the topographic position that slopes upwards to the south of the Sub Area, thereby minimizing the compatibility impact of height increases to these surrounding uses.

Light and Glare. The potential light and glare effects of the proposed GPA/ZC is summarized in Section 4.1 of this EIR. The project area is built out with exterior lighting and windows that generate light and glare. The reduction of allowable commercial area when compared to the existing Mixed-Use Overlay would reduce the potential amount of lighting associated with commercial/office uses. The proposed increase in allowable residential density would not create a new source of substantial light or glare affecting day or nighttime views in the area because standard exterior lighting similar to what is existing would be used for these areas. Development Standard 17.35.040 and Design Guideline B-6 would reduce the potential impact of light and glare to the project area by stipulating that all exterior lighting be downcast and by avoiding white

building colors. The designated development standards and design guidelines applicable to building materials would also not allow excessive reflective building material to create a substantial glare on adjacent areas. Furthermore, the proposed PVOZ requires that lighting not necessary for security purposes be extinguished by 10:00 pm or in the case of lighted signage, at the close of business. Therefore, the proposed project including the design guidelines and PVOZ would have beneficial impact on light and glare, and no mitigation is required.

Traffic. The potential traffic impacts of the proposed GPA/ZC are summarized in Section 4.13, Transportation and Circulation, of this PEIR. In 2025, 8 of the 18 local intersections are forecast to operate at level of service (LOS) D or worse with addition of the proposed project in the a.m. and/or p.m. peak hours. One of the six Congestion Management Plan intersections on State facilities is forecast to operate at LOS F during the a.m. and/or p.m. peak hours with the addition of the proposed project. Eight of the 18 local intersections are forecast to operate at LOS D or worse with addition of the proposed project in the Saturday midday peak hour. Mitigation Measures 4.13-3 through 4.13-9 in Section 4.13, Transportation and Circulation, would be implemented to reduce impacts to below levels of significance. However, the significant weekday impact at Crenshaw Boulevard/PCH in the existing plus project and in the 2025 Baseline Plus Project conditions would remain because feasible mitigation is not available.

Noise Levels. The potential noise effects of the proposed GPA/ZC are summarized in Section 4.9, Noise, of this EIR. These include traffic noise impacts to new commercial and residential development, short-term noise impacts from construction activities, and long-term noise impacts associated with stationary sources including parking lot traffic; doors slamming; vehicle engine start-ups; truck loading and unloading activities; heating; ventilation; and air-conditioning equipment; and people conversing. Mitigation measures described in Section 4.9 would reduce potential project impacts related to traffic noise and construction noise to less than significant levels. All other potential project impacts related to noise would be less than significant.

Hours of Operation. Currently, the balance of commercial and office uses determine the existing hours of operation within the project area that result in slightly offset business patterns. While office uses conduct standard workday operating hours, the commercial retail establishments conduct standard business operating hours, which typically stagger behind those of the office uses and include weekend hours.

The proposed GPA/ZC could lead to changes in the balance of land use patterns that would ultimately change the hours of operation when people would occupy the area. The proposed GPA/ZC would allow a maximum of 900 dwelling units of residential use in the project area. While notably less than the 2,020 dwelling units currently allowed under the existing Mixed-Use Overlay, it is an introduction of a land use that does not currently exist in the project area. The introduction of residential uses would likely change the balance of operating hours within the project area, as most residents would presumably be occupying the site during the off working hours schedule of weekday evenings and weekends. This introduction of residential uses would most likely create new demand for service and commercial retail, which could result in lengthening of business hours of some of the existing and future establishments in the study area.

Though this would change the balance of operating hours within the study area, the greatest changes would occur in Districts 1, 2, and 3. Of these, District 1 is closest to residential uses, which are located up a steep slope from the commercial district. The inclusion of residential uses may work to increase compatibility with surrounding uses, as they would occupy the area during the same hours. This may also benefit the surrounding residential areas, as they may derive some utility from increased hours of operation of some of the commercial establishments. Due to the distance between the project area and the surrounding residential uses, the potential change in hours of operation would not adversely impact the surrounding community and might provide a benefit. No mitigation would be required.

In summary, the project area functions as the commercial core of Rolling Hills Estates, and the land use characteristics as they currently exist are in contrast to the residential character of the surrounding area in regard to physical scale of development. The changes in lot coverage ratios and building height as a result of the GPA/ZC would have a minimal impact on surrounding uses since the majority of changes would occur internal to the project site vicinity and where the natural topography provides a natural barrier to surrounding uses. The hours of operation of the project area would change with the introduction of residential uses though the effects will increase conformance with the surrounding area. Traffic and noise impacts to the surrounding area would be potentially significant, though the inclusion of mitigation measures described in Sections 4.9 and 4.13 would reduce those impacts to less than significant levels.

4.8.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

As defined in Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines, cumulative impacts are the incremental effects of an individual project when viewed in connection with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects within the cumulative impact area for land use. The cumulative impact area for land use for this project would be the proposed GPA/ZC and adjacent areas.

The proposed project area is an infill development context of the City of Rolling Hill Estates, which is largely built out. As shown in this PEIR, four projects within the City have recently been approved, and eight are undergoing review. Table 4.A in Section 4.0 shows the approved and proposed projects within the City; eight of the proposed or approved projects within the City are in the project area. Approved developments within the project area are consistent with the proposed PVOZ as they provide mixed-use development at or below 22 du/ac. Projects outside the project area are being implemented consistent with the General Plan and zoning and would be constructed at a density compatible with surrounding uses. Development within the project area would focus higher-density residential only within the downtown commercial core and would not alter land use patterns or intensities in other areas of the City and would not contribute to cumulative land use impacts to the City's land use patterns and character. Therefore, the contribution of the proposed project to potential cumulative land use compatibility impacts (aesthetics, noise, air quality, and traffic and circulation) in the study area is considered less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures.

4.8.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The project-related impacts to General Plan and zoning consistency were found to be less than significant and no mitigation is required. The project-related impacts to the compatibility with

surrounding land uses were found to be potentially significant as they relate to traffic and noise impacts, though with the implementation of mitigation measures described in Sections 4.9 and 4.13 of this PEIR, those impacts would be reduced to below levels of significance.