

2 LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this chapter is to describe existing and planned land use in the Coastal Zone and present the policy framework that will guide the City on development decisions. The chapter includes the Land Use Diagram, land use classifications, standards for density and intensity, and limitations on development. The land use framework for each sub-area is then provided in greater detail. Guiding and implementing policies aim to define the Coastal Zone's physical development and reinforce the community's vision while supporting Coastal Act goals.

2.1 COASTAL ACT FRAMEWORK

The California Coastal Act establishes certain priorities for the location and type of new development along the coast. These may be summarized in three broader categories: concentration of development, prioritization of coastal-dependent, visitor and recreation uses; and provision of public services. Policies especially relevant to this chapter are below; refer to Appendix B for the full text of each Coastal Act policy.

Coastal Act Policies

Article 2: Public Access

- **Section 30213** Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities; encouragement and provision; overnight room rentals

Article 3: Recreation

- **Section 30221** Oceanfront land; protection for recreational use and development
- **Section 30222** Private lands; priority of development purposes

Article 6: Development

- **Section 30250** Location; existing developed area
- **Section 30252** Maintenance and enhancement of public access
- **Section 30254** Public works facilities
- **Section 30254.5** Terms or conditions on sewage treatment plant development; prohibition
- **Section 30255** Priority of coastal-dependent developments

Article 7: Industrial Development

- **Section 30260** Location or expansion
- **Section 30262** Oil and gas development
- **Section 30263** Refineries or petrochemical facilities
- **Section 30264** Thermal electric generating plants

2.2 CURRENT LAND USE PATTERN

Background

Originally visited by the Portola expedition in 1769, Pacifica remained primarily agricultural until after the San Francisco Earthquake in 1906. Land speculators, stimulated by the construction of the Ocean Shore Railroad in 1905, subdivided and developed a series of small coastside communities including Edgemar, Vallemar, and the areas now known as Sharp Park, Pedro Point, and Rockaway Beach. These communities, together with Pacific Manor, Westview, Fairway Park, and Linda Mar incorporated in 1957 as the City of Pacifica. The city grew rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s, and most of its current housing was built during those decades, primarily east of Highway 1. Growth slowed in the 1970s, and then slowed further in the following decades, owing to the scarcity of developable land and infrastructure constraints. The Pacifica Coastal Zone is described in more detail by land use type in the paragraphs that follow.

Current Land Use Pattern

Parks and Open Space

The Coastal Zone covers 998 acres, not including road rights-of-way. Nearly half (479 acres) of this land is preserved as open space. This includes Mori Point, the Northern Coastal Bluffs, and Pedro Point Headlands, current and likely future parts of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area; Sharp Park Golf Course; and Pacifica State and Sharp Park Beaches.

Residential

Residential use makes up 21 percent of the Coastal Zone and 69 percent of developed land¹ in the Coastal Zone, covering 206 acres. Most residential land in Pacifica's Coastal Zone (70 percent) contains single-family housing, but multi-family housing makes up a majority (57 percent) of housing in the Coastal Zone. Multi-family units are interspersed among single-family houses and commercial uses in the West Sharp Park neighborhood and concentrated along the coast in the West Edgemar-Pacific Manor neighborhood. The Coastal Zone also includes Pacifica's only mobile homes and most of the City's mixed use development, which account for 2 and 1 percent of housing units in the Coastal Zone, respectively.

Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed Use

The Coastal Zone includes 41 acres of commercial uses. Commercial land is located at Pacific Manor and Pedro Point shopping centers, and in commercial districts at Rockaway Beach, Palmetto Avenue, and Francisco Boulevard. Pacifica has a small amount of mixed-use development, along Palmetto Avenue in West Sharp Park, in Rockaway Beach, and in Pedro Point. Overall, West Sharp Park has the greatest mix of uses throughout the neighborhood. Hotels, along with most visitor-serving commercial uses, are primarily in the Rockaway Beach neighborhood. The Coastal Zone also has a small amount of industrial land (13 acres) located along Palmetto north of the West Sharp Park commercial area.

Public and Institutional Uses

Public, community, and institutional uses occupy 39 acres of land in the Coastal Zone, including Ingrid B. Lacy Middle School; the Calera Creek Water Recycling Plant; City Hall; the Sharp Park branch library; and other public administrative buildings.

Agriculture and Recreation

There are approximately nine acres of land with agricultural-related uses in the Coastal Zone, outside city limits, at Shamrock Ranch along Highway 1.

Undeveloped and Vacant Land

Vacant or undeveloped land covers 206 acres or 20 percent of land in the Coastal Zone. About 29 acres of this land is outside City limits. Undeveloped land is present along the Northern Coastal Bluffs, the Rockaway Quarry site, Rockaway Headlands, and Pedro Point Headlands. Smaller vacant "infill" lots are scattered in neighborhoods. Given environmental factors such as slope and sensitive species, there are constraints on the development potential of many of these sites.

Figure 2-2 maps the Coastal Zone land use pattern, while **Figure 2-1** charts the relative distribution of land by land use in the Coastal Zone.

¹ Developed land includes all land uses except for Open Space, Agriculture, or Vacant/Undeveloped.

Figure 2-1: Current Land Use Distribution in the Coastal Zone

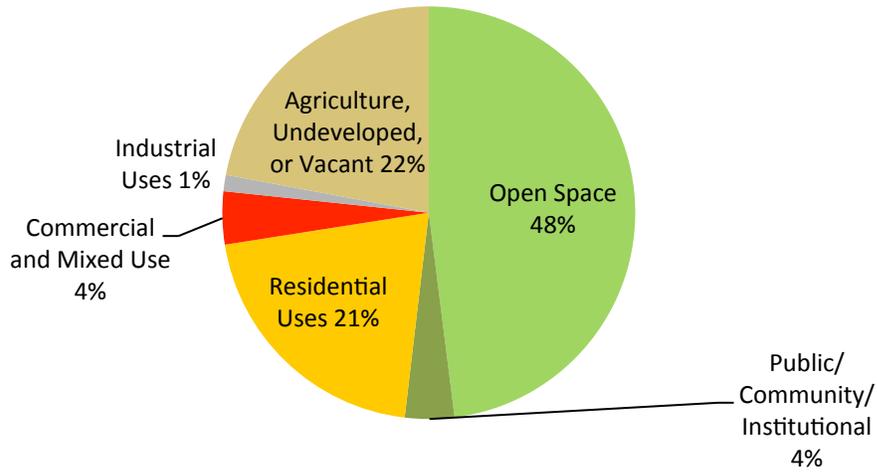
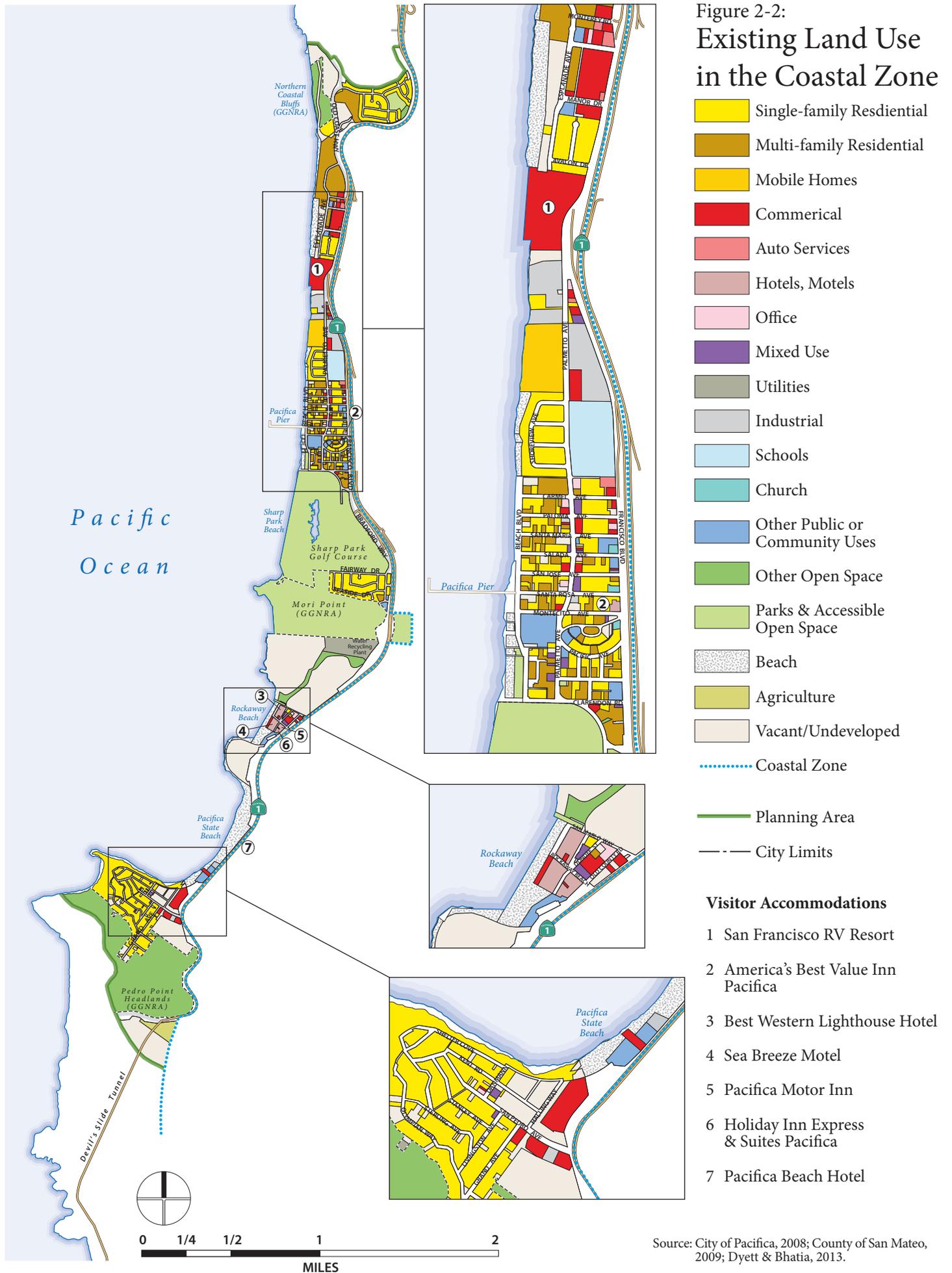


Figure 2-2:
Existing Land Use
in the Coastal Zone



Source: City of Pacifica, 2008; County of San Mateo, 2009; Dyett & Bhatia, 2013.

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2.3 LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The Land Use Diagram, (Figure 2-3) illustrates the community's vision for land use in 2035. It reflects the Coastal Act priorities presented in Chapter 1, as well as the planning themes laid out in the General Plan. The land use classifications depicted indicate the use and form of development. New development will be guided by Plan policies and programs for hillside and open space preservation; housing; and commercial and public facility development.

Land Use Diagram

The Land Use Diagram is a graphic representation of planned land use classifications; it will be used in conjunction with policies established in the Plan to review and approve, modify or deny proposed development projects. The Land Use Diagram includes a legend that shows land use categories whose densities and allowable uses are specified in the Land Use Classifications section.

Land Use Classifications

Land use classifications establish allowed uses, maximum density and intensity, and the type and character of development that is expected. Details on development standards are established in the zoning ordinance and Local Coastal Implementing Plan, and more than one zoning district may be consistent with a General Plan/LCLUP land use classification.

According to State law, the General Plan must establish standards of population density and building intensity for each land use classification. The General Plan and LCLUP stipulate residential densities in housing units per gross acre; population density can be obtained by applying average persons per housing unit¹ to the housing unit densities. For nonresidential uses, the Plan specifies a maximum permitted ratio of gross floor area to site area (Floor Area Ratio or FAR). Recommended density and intensity standards do not imply that development projects must be approved at the intensity specified for each use. Zoning regulations consistent with General Plan policies and/or site conditions may reduce development potential within the stated ranges. Table 2-1 shows gross density standards for residential categories and FAR standards for the other uses.

Residential

Pacifica's five residential classifications provide for a range of densities, consistent with neighborhood character and planned land use.

RESIDENTIAL/OPEN SPACE/AGRICULTURE

In the Residential/Open Space/Agriculture (ROSA) classification, residential, agriculture, and recreation uses are allowed at a gross density of up to one unit per five acres (or 0.2 acres per unit). The allowable density on a site will be determined by slope, geology, soils, access, availability of utilities, public safety, and open space values. The density assumed for buildout calculations is 0.15 units per gross acre.

VERY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

The Very Low Density Residential (VLDR) classification provides for clustered development of up to two units per gross acre. Residential care facilities, schools, and community uses are permitted. The density assumed for buildout calculations is 1.5 units per gross acre.

¹ Based on 2010 U.S. Census data, the number of persons per total housing units is 2.56.

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

The Low Density Residential (LDR) designation is intended for single-family housing development ranging from three to nine dwelling units per gross acre. Residential care facilities, schools, and community uses are permitted. Clusters of small-lot development as well as standard subdivisions will be allowed. Buildout is calculated at 6.5 units per gross acre.

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Medium Density Residential (MDR) is intended for a mix of housing types, including small-lot single family, attached single family, apartments, duplexes, townhomes and mobile home parks at densities of up to 15 units per gross acre. Residential care facilities, schools, and community uses are permitted. Buildout is calculated at 12.5 units per gross acre.

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

High Density Residential (HDR) is intended for multifamily apartments, condominiums and townhomes. in two to three story buildings located near shopping areas and transit. The density will be up to 21 dwelling units per gross acre. Residential care facilities, schools, and community uses are permitted. Buildout is calculated at 25 units per gross acre.

Mixed Use

The Plan provides three mixed use classifications to create areas where housing and active commercial uses may be integrated. Visitor-oriented commercial uses are allowed as-of-right in all mixed use areas within the Coastal Zone.

COASTAL RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE

The Coastal Residential Mixed Use (CRMU) designation is intended for sites in the Coastal Zone with residential mixed use development potential, including housing at a range of densities, mixed use with housing over retail, and/or small-scale visitor-oriented commercial uses such as vacation rental or time-share units. Hotels are not permitted. Coastal access and public open space must also be provided, and environmental resources must be evaluated and protected. Sites may be developed up to an overall density of up to 15 units per gross acre, with clustering and sensitive site planning. Non-residential development may have an FAR up to 0.5 FAR. The total FAR (residential and non-residential) cannot exceed 1.0. Buildout is calculated at 15 units per gross acre and 0.10 FAR of non-residential use.

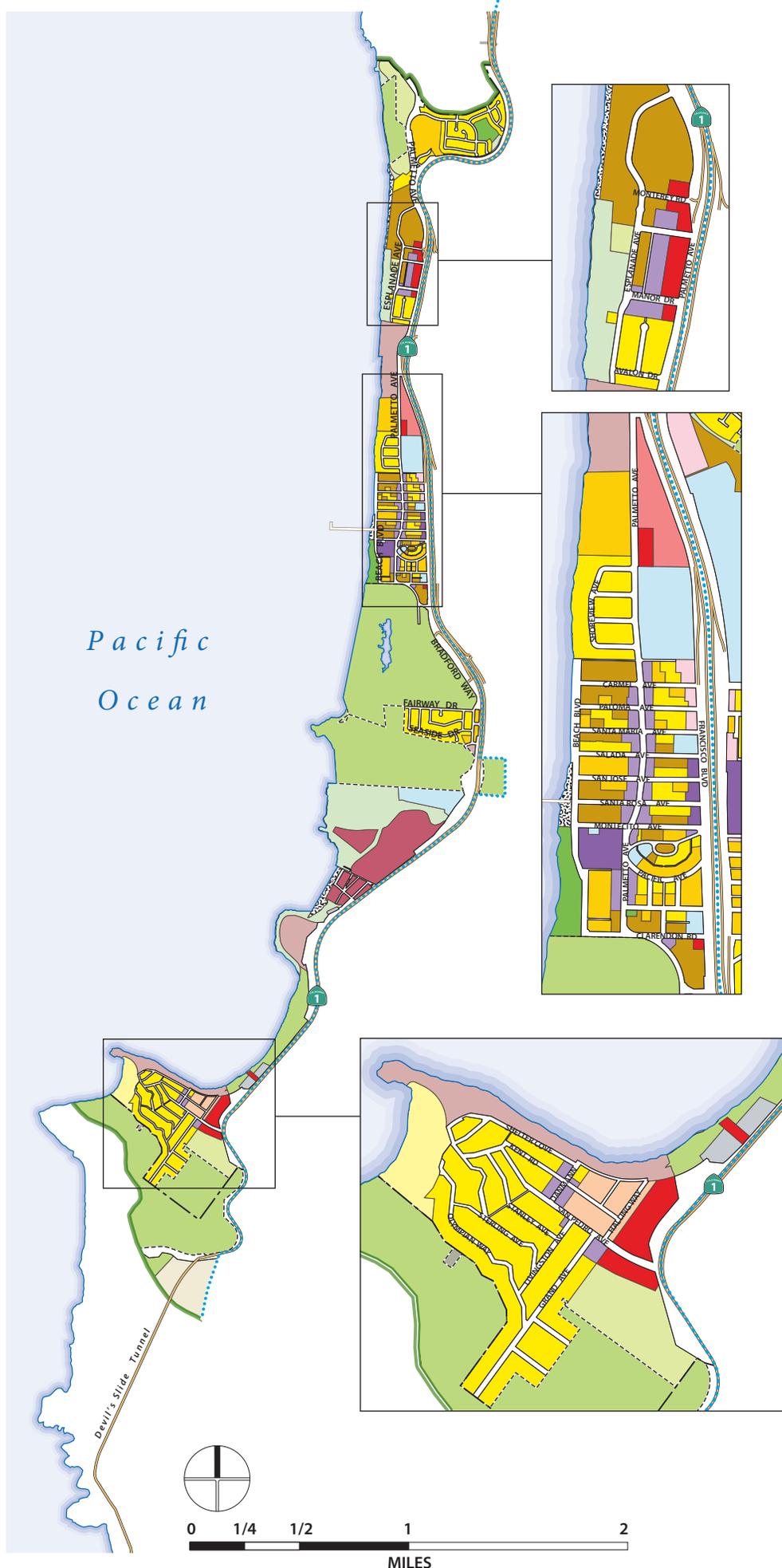
MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOOD

In the Mixed Use Neighborhood (MUN) classification, new development may include multi-family housing and building with ground-floor retail, restaurant or service uses and housing or offices above. Public or community uses and hotels may be permitted at appropriate locations. The MUN classification allows up to 26 units per acre and non-residential development with an FAR up to 1.0. The total FAR (residential and non-residential) cannot exceed 2.0. Buildout is calculated based on a 0.25 FAR for non-residential uses and 25 residential units per gross acre.

MIXED USE CENTER

The Mixed Use Center (MUC) classification is intended for high-density mixed use development, including public or community uses and hotels. Allowable uses include ground-floor retail, restaurant or service uses and housing or offices on upper levels. The MUC classification permits housing up to 50 units per acre and a 2.5 FAR of non-residential development provide the overall FAR not to exceed 2.5. Buildout is calculated at an FAR of 0.35 for non-residential uses and 25 units per gross acre for housing.

Figure 2-3:
Land Use Diagram



- Residential/Open Space/Agriculture (up to 0.2 units/acre)*
- Very Low Density Residential (0.2 -2.0 units/acre)*
- Low Density Residential (3 -9 units/acre)*
- Medium Density Residential (10 -15 units/acre)*
- High Density Residential (16 -21 or 31* units/acre)*
- Coastal Residential Mixed Use
- Mixed Use Neighborhood (16 -26 or 40* units/acre)
- Mixed Use Center (up to 50 units/acre)
- Retail Commercial
- Office/Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Visitor-Serving Commercial
- Low Intensity Visitor-Serving Commercial
- Public and Semi-Public
- Beach/Commuter Parking
- Utilities
- Park
- Conservation
- Sandy Beach
- Urban Reserve (Unincorporated)
- Transportation Corridor
- Coastal Zone
- Planning Area
- City Limits

*Senior or affordable housing may be developed at up to 1.5 times the maximum with the Density Bonus program.

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Commercial Uses

The General Plan and LCLUP establish five commercial classifications to accommodate a variety of potential commercial activities. Visitor-oriented commercial uses are allowed as-of-right in all commercial areas within the Coastal Zone.

RETAIL COMMERCIAL

The Retail Commercial (RC) classification is intended for retail, restaurant, and service uses, typically in single-or two-story buildings within shopping centers or on sites in the Highway 1 corridor. New development will be pedestrian- oriented. Offices may be located above the ground floor. The maximum FAR is 1.0 FAR. Buildout is calculated with an FAR of 0.25.

OFFICE/COMMERCIAL

The Office/Commercial (OC) classification permits offices as well as retail and service uses in buildings of two to three stories. The maximum FAR is 1.5; buildout is calculated with an FAR of 0.35.

SERVICE COMMERCIAL

The Service Commercial (SC) classification is for industrial and heavy commercial uses, such as auto repair, equipment rental, storage, and materials salvage. The maximum FAR is 0.6; buildout is calculated with an FAR of 0.25.

VISITOR-SERVING COMMERCIAL

The Visitor-Serving Commercial (VC) designation is intended to foster and protect areas that attract and cater to visitors, including hotels or a visitor attraction, such as an interpretive center or conference center, restaurants, retail and services, commercial recreation, or other compatible uses. The maximum FAR is 3.0 FAR. Buildout is calculated with an FAR of 0.35.

LOW-INTENSITY VISITOR-SERVING COMMERCIAL

The Low-Intensity Visitor-Serving Commercial (LIVC) district allows uses that create public access to the coastal setting and are adaptable to changing environmental conditions: campgrounds, rustic lodging, concession stands, warming huts, outdoor event sites, and similar uses. Existing permitted businesses that do not conform to the description of LIVC may remain. In these areas, the designation indicates the long-term goal of transition to recreation-oriented land uses. Development may occur at up to 0.20 FAR, but must have an overall very low-intensity character on sites of more than one acre. Buildout is assumed at 0.05 FAR, recognizing the large land areas and minimal building expected to support recreational uses.

Public and Community Uses

Designations for public uses such as schools, civic buildings, utilities, and public parking areas are designated on the Land Use Diagram, and summarized below. Public park land is covered separately in the following section.

PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC

The Public and Semi-Public (PSP) designation indicates public or private schools, libraries, police and fire stations, and other civic and community uses. In the case that public facilities are converted or sold for new uses, Plan land use classifications shall be updated. If a public school is discontinued, any proposed new use should be compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. The maximum FAR in this district is 1.0. Buildout is assumed at 0.35 FAR.

BEACH AND COMMUTER PARKING

The Beach and Commuter Parking (BCP) designation applies to areas where the priority use is public parking to serve beach visitors and/or transit users. Sites are located adjacent to Pacifica State Beach and at Crespi Drive and Highway 1. Beach parking at the City's Beach Boulevard property serving Pacifica Pier and Sharp Park should be conserved as part of development of that site.

UTILITIES

The Utilities (U) designation indicates the location of water tanks communications facilities including cellular facilities, and other utilities serving the City. The maximum FAR in this district is 1.0.

Parks and Open Space

Pacifica is defined by its extensive open space system, with extensive land preserved as public open space, or designated for conservation. These categories are detailed below.

PARK

The Park (P) designation is applied to public land either now developed for active recreation use or intended for future recreation development. The designation applies to City parks as well as to park or open space areas whose primary character is undeveloped and natural, or that is managed for use by residents of the larger region and beyond. The City does not have permitting authority on lands owned by other public agencies.

CONSERVATION

The Conservation (C) district takes the place of the Greenbelt district from the previous Plan. It applies to publicly- or privately-owned open areas not intended for development. These areas may include:

- Watershed lands;
- Land which is physically unsuitable for development due to geotechnical hazards, excessive steepness, or other environmental constraints, or lies within stream channels;
- Areas to remain undeveloped as a result of density transfer or clustered development, or covered by open space, recreational or scenic easements;
- Open areas providing a physical and visual buffer between developed or open areas; and
- Open space required as mitigation for environmental impacts.

SANDY BEACH

The Sandy Beach (SB) designation applies to properties that are fully on beaches or coastal dunes or bluffs. No physical development is appropriate on these sites.

Urban Reserve

The Urban Reserve (UR) designation is created to apply to private lands outside of City limits but within the Planning Area. The City does not have permitting authority in this area. The Pacifica General Plan and LCLUP intends for agriculture and residential development with a minimum site area of 5 acres per unit to be the predominant uses on land designated Urban Reserve. Actual density may be limited by the physical conditions of a site such as geological hazards, access, and potential habitat. For sites larger than 50 acres, the City should work with San Mateo County to ensure that subdivision and development be considered in the context of a Plan Update.

TABLE 2-1: LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS AND DENSITY AND INTENSITY STANDARDS

| Land Use ¹ | Residential Density (gross units per acre): Range ² | Non-Residential Intensity (FAR): Maximum ³ | |
|---|---|--|-----|
| Residential | | | |
| ROSA | Residential/Open Space/Agriculture | Up to 0.2 | |
| VLDR | Very Low Density Residential | 0.2 to 2 | |
| LDR | Low Density Residential | 3 to 9 | |
| MDR | Medium Density Residential | 10 to 15 | |
| HDR | High Density Residential | 16 to 21 | |
| Mixed Use | | | |
| CRMU | Coastal Residential Mixed Use | 10 to 15 | 0.5 |
| MUN | Mixed Use Neighborhood | 16 to 26 | 1.0 |
| MUC | Mixed Use Center | Up to 50 | 2.5 |
| Commercial | | | |
| RC | Retail Commercial | 1.0 | |
| OC | Office/Commercial | 1.5 | |
| SC | Service Commercial | 0.6 | |
| VC | Visitor-Serving Commercial | 3.0 | |
| LIVC | Low-Intensity Visitor-Serving Commercial | 0.2 | |
| Public and Community Uses | | | |
| PSP | Public and Semi-Public | 1.0 | |
| U | Utilities | 1.0 | |
| BCP | Beach and Commuter Parking | - | |
| Parks and Open Space and Urban Reserve | | | |
| P | Park | | |
| C | Conservation | | |
| SB | Sandy Beach | | |
| UR | Urban Reserve | | |

Notes:

1. All land use classifications are shown except those in the Parks and Open Space category. No development is projected in these areas.
2. Density ranges are rounded to the nearest whole number, except where less than 1 unit per acre. Senior or affordable housing may be developed at up to 1.5 times the maximum with the Density Bonus program.
3. For mixed use designations, the following maximum total FAR, including both residential and non-residential uses, is established:
CRMU: 1.0 FAR maximum; MUN: 2.0 FAR maximum; MUC: 2.5 FAR maximum

Source: City of Pacifica, Dyett & Bhatia, 2013.

Coastal Development Review

The City's zoning code features a Coastal Zone (CZ) Combining District, with development regulations based on Coastal Act goals. These include the provision of public access to the shoreline and recreational opportunities, the protection and enhancement of the coastal environment, and the prioritization of coastal-dependent and visitor-serving uses. The Coastal Zone requirements supplement the underlying zoning regulations and new development must obtain a coastal development permit on all property subject to the LCLUP. Pursuant to the Coastal Act, certain categories of development are exempt from coastal development permit requirements, including development improvements of less than ten percent increase in building height, bulk or floor area to existing single-family structures; improvements of less than ten percent increase for other structures, except in situations involving a risk of adverse environmental impact; and certain other categories. Lot line and boundary adjustments; small grading projects and minor public works improvements

are excluded from permit requirements, with certain exceptions. Following adoption of the LCLUP, the CZ District will be updated to be consistent with the new guidance provided here.

Policies

Implementing Policies

LD-I-1 **Zoning Consistency.** Update the Zoning Ordinance and zoning map and apply zoning to all land within the City, consistent with General Plan and LCLUP policies and land use designations.

LD-I-2 **Land Divisions in the Coastal Zone.** Continue to require coastal development permits for all land divisions within the Coastal Zone. Land divisions in the Coastal Zone shall be:

- Designed to minimize impacts to public access, recreation, and coastal resources.
- Designed to minimize site disturbance, landform alteration, and the removal of native vegetation for development or fire safety.
- Prohibited on properties that include any areas that are within or adjacent to an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) unless the resulting parcels can be developed without building or requiring vegetation clearance in the ESHA or ESHA buffer, or unless the resulting parcels are set aside for conservation.
- Permitted only in areas with adequate public services to serve development on the resulting parcels.
- Any land division that would result in a parcel that could not be developed in accordance with the policies of this LCLUP is not allowed.

LD-I-3 **Coastal Development Permit Findings.** For all development that requires a coastal development permit, continue to require written findings that it is consistent with all LCLUP policies and Implementation Plan provisions of the City’s certified Local Coastal Program.

If there is a conflict between a provision of this LCP and a provision of the General Plan, or any other City-adopted plan, resolution, or ordinance not included in the LCP, and it is not possible for the development to comply with both the LCP and such other plan, resolution or ordinance, the LCP shall take precedence and the development shall not be approved unless it complies with the LCP provision.

LD-I-4 **Coordinate with the County to protect the Urban Reserve.** Coordinate with the County to ensure that new development in unincorporated areas occurs at a maximum density of five acres per unit, and request that subdivision of 50 acres or more is subject to master planning and annexation as a condition of any urban development.

A General Plan amendment also will be required, and a LCLUP amendment will be required for land within the Coastal Zone.