



City of Westminster

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INTERIM CITY MANAGER

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Date: February 22, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor
City Council Members

From: *Christine Cordon*
Christine Cordon
Interim City Manager

Strategic Plan Goal #2:

Develop and Implement Specific Plans for Little Saigon, the Downtown District, and the West Side.

Strategic Plan Objective:

Verify consistency of Specific Plans for Little Saigon, the Downtown District, and the West Side with the General Plan adopted in 2016 and report results to the City Council.

On January 17, 2022, the City of Westminster hosted a strategic planning workshop. The workshop was facilitated by Marilyn Snider of Snider and Associates. Participation in the workshop took place via Zoom. In attendance were members of the council, select city leadership, and members of the public. The purpose of the workshop was to develop the City of Westminster's first-ever Strategic Plan. The plan defined the following three-year goals:

- Goal #1 – Achieve Financial Stability
- Goal #2 – Develop and Implement Specific Plans for Little Saigon, the Downtown District, and the West Side
- Goal #3 – Attract, Develop, and Retain Well Qualified Staff Members

To advance the delivery of each goal, a series of six-month objectives were developed during the workshop. This strategic plan update addresses the first six-month strategic objective for Strategic Plan Goal #2 which is, *“Verify consistency of Specific Plans for Little Saigon, the Downtown District, and the West Side with the General Plan adopted in 2016 and report results to the City Council.”*

This assessment is a first step in assisting the City Council in developing a strategy for the possible development of one or more specific plans. In addition, this assessment describes the relationship between the city's General Plan and potential specific plans, while also identifying specific plans that have previously been adopted and completed or underway.

Specific Plan Overview

A specific plan is a planning and zoning tool used by local jurisdictions to address desired land uses and development standards within a specific geographic area. For example, some cities have adopted specific plans for their downtowns or cultural districts and some communities have used specific plans to reimagine former military bases or shopping malls. Government Code §65450 establishes the relevance of a specific plan and the actual contents of a specific plan are further explained in §65451(a). Adopting and amending a specific plan is considered a legislative act, similar to amending a general plan or zoning ordinance. As a result, public hearings are required by both the Planning Commission and the City Council. Specific plans must address permitted land uses; infrastructure such as sewage, water, and drainage; public and private improvements; financing; and phasing and implementation measures. In addition, every specific plan must explain how it is consistent with a city's general plan.

Westminster General Plan's Vision

In adopting the city's General Plan in 2016, the City Council set forth a bold forward-thinking vision for the city that recognizes new economic growth and opportunities for future housing that would need to come primarily from "mixed-use" development. With little remaining vacant land and an abundance of older underperforming commercial strip centers, mixed-use allows property owners and investors with an incentive for investing in the city. Mixed-use is a mix of residential and commercial uses on the same site. In some instances, residential units are built above street-level commercial units (vertical mixed-use), and in other instances, residential units and commercial units are adjacent to one another (horizontal mixed-use).

The General Plan's vision for mixed-use development also recognizes that specific plans are an effective and appropriate zoning tool for creating mixed-use standards that can deliver well-designed projects, while also providing development standards that are more suitable for a particular site or district. The General Plan Land Use Plan identifies the six mixed-use land use districts called for in the city's General Plan. An illustration of the General Plan Land Use Plan is included in this update as an attachment. These districts are identified as 1 through 6 in the legend and each of these areas are labeled on the plan:

- District 1 – Mixed-Use Civic Center
- District 2 – Mixed-Use Westminster Boulevard/Downtown
- District 3 – Mixed-Use Corridor
- District 4 – Mixed-Use Westminster Mall
- District 5 – Mixed-Use Little Saigon
- District 6 – Mixed-Use Northwest

Below is a brief description of each of these six general plan mixed-use districts and how one or more specific plans may be the appropriate strategy to facilitate mixed-use development.

District 1 – Mixed-Use Civic Center

The general plan area designated as “Mixed-Use Civic Center” encompasses approximately 100 acres of land and includes the city-owned parcels in the Civic Center. Page 2-12 of the General Plan states, *“A comprehensive specific plan or other master planning mechanism for the future development of the Civic Center area is desired to create customized development standards, integrate special public uses and gathering places, evaluate infrastructure needs, and provide detailed design guidance (alternatively, the land use designation can be implemented through conventional zoning).”*

District 2 – Mixed-Use Westminster Boulevard/Downtown

The general plan area designated as “Mixed-Use Westminster Boulevard/Downtown” encompasses approximately 63 acres of land, mostly along Westminster Boulevard between Hoover Street on the east and Willow Lane (near the 405 freeway) on the west. The Westminster Center is not included in this land use category and is not currently identified in any district. Page 2-13 of the General Plan states, *“A specific plan or series of multiple specific plans may be the most appropriate implementing tool to facilitate transitions in land use within this area.”*

District 3 – Mixed-Use Corridor

The general plan area designated as “Mixed-Use Corridor” encompasses approximately 42 acres of land along Beach Boulevard, near the intersection of Westminster Boulevard, while extending westward to Hoover Street. The Mixed-Use Corridor is adjacent to the Mixed-Use Civic Center to the east and the Mixed-Use Westminster Boulevard Downtown to the west. While the General Plan does not specifically require or suggest that a specific plan be adopted for this district, a specific plan would be an effective tool to allow for the mixed-use development envisioned by the General Plan.

District 4 – Mixed-Use Westminster Mall

The general plan area designated as “Mixed-Use Westminster Mall” includes the nearly 100-acre mall site at the northwest corner of Bolsa Avenue and Goldenwest Street. A city-initiated specific plan for this land use district is underway. Page 2-15 of the General Plan states, *“A specific plan or other master planning mechanism for Westminster Mall is required to guide future development.”*

District 5 – Mixed-Use Little Saigon

The general plan area designated as “Mixed-Use Little Saigon” includes approximately 180 acres along Bolsa Avenue. The western boundary of the district is near Magnolia Street, while the eastern boundary of the district is near Brookhurst Street. Both the 20-acre Moran Street Specific Plan and the 5-acre Bolsa Row Specific Plan are within this district. While the General Plan does

not specifically require or suggest that a specific plan be adopted for this district, a specific plan or a series of specific plans that address individual sites would be an effective tool to allow for the mixed-use development envisioned by the General Plan.

District 6 – Mixed-Use Northwest

The general plan area designated as “Mixed-Use Northwest” includes approximately 88 acres near the junction of state route 22 and the 405 freeway. Page 2-17 of the General Plan states, “A conceptual master plan is required for future development of the Northwest District to ensure the area is well integrated with nearby uses and is easily accessed from the freeways. After approval of a master plan, a specific plan may be required to outline specific density and intensity ranges for proposed projects.”

Current Status of Specific Plans in Westminster

There are two adopted specific plans and a third specific plan is underway:

Specific Plan 1 – Moran Street Specific Plan

The Moran Street Specific Plan was initiated by the city and adopted by the City Council in 2012. It includes the Asian Garden Mall and properties to the east along Moran Street between Bolsa Avenue and Bishop Place. The plan encompasses 22 acres and provides a walkable mixed-use vision for the area, which includes a multi-level parking structure.

Specific Plan 2 – Bolsa Row Specific Plan

The Bolsa Row Specific Plan was adopted by the City Council in 2018. It includes the five areas of land located at the southeast corner of Brookhurst Street and Bolsa Avenue. The Bolsa Row Specific Plan was the first specific plan to be adopted following the adoption of the city’s General Plan in 2016.

Specific Plan 3 – Westminster Mall Specific Plan

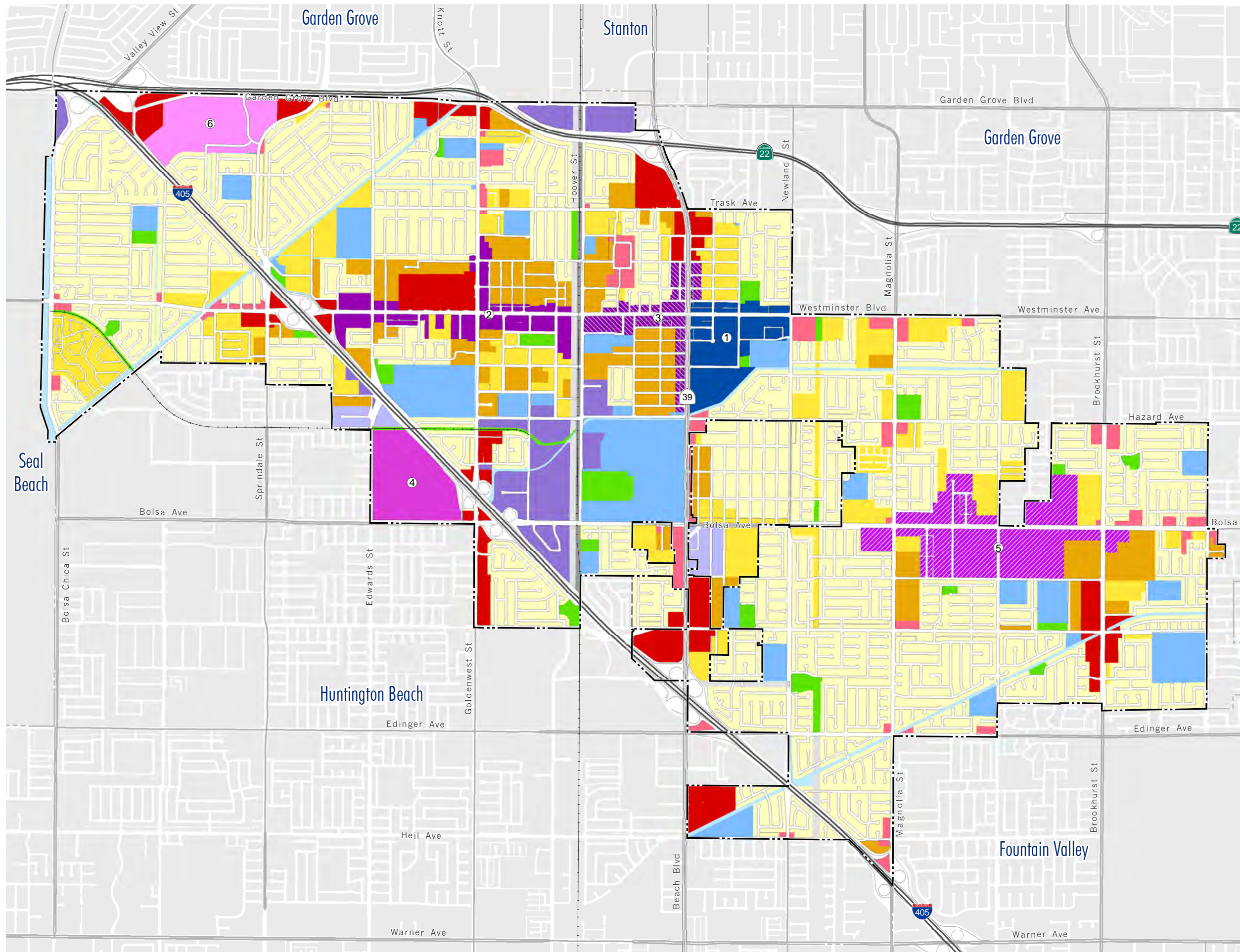
Currently in progress, the Westminster Mall Specific Plan will encompass the approximately 100-acre Westminster Mall site and is designated in the Westminster General Plan as “Mixed-Use – Westminster Mall.” The Westminster Mall Specific Plan is the first city-initiated and city-funded specific plan implemented as part of the 2016 General Plan. The city has conducted numerous community meetings and stakeholder meetings to ensure that the specific plan successfully guides the redevelopment of the mall site.

Specific plans are an effective tool to reinvigorate areas of the city, provide economic growth by allowing mixed-use, and implement the City Council’s bold vision for the city as provided in the General Plan. In considering potential city-initiated specific plans, thought should be given to three factors: cost, time, and staff resources. Specific plans require a significant investment in all three of these areas. In 2018, the City Council approved an allocation of \$326,000 for the Westminster Mall Specific Plan, which is a multi-year effort.

Conclusion

Staff confirms that “Strategic Plan Goal #2 – Develop and Implement Specific Plans for Little Saigon, the Downtown District, and the West Side”, is consistent with the General Plan adopted in 2016. The next strategic objective of Strategic Plan Goal #2 is to “[c]reate a priority list of plans that combines those listed in the General Plan and those recommended as part of the Strategic Planning Workshop and present findings to the City Council.” This will be presented to the City Council at a regular meeting on March 23, 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Adolfo Ozaeta, Interim Assistant City Manager.

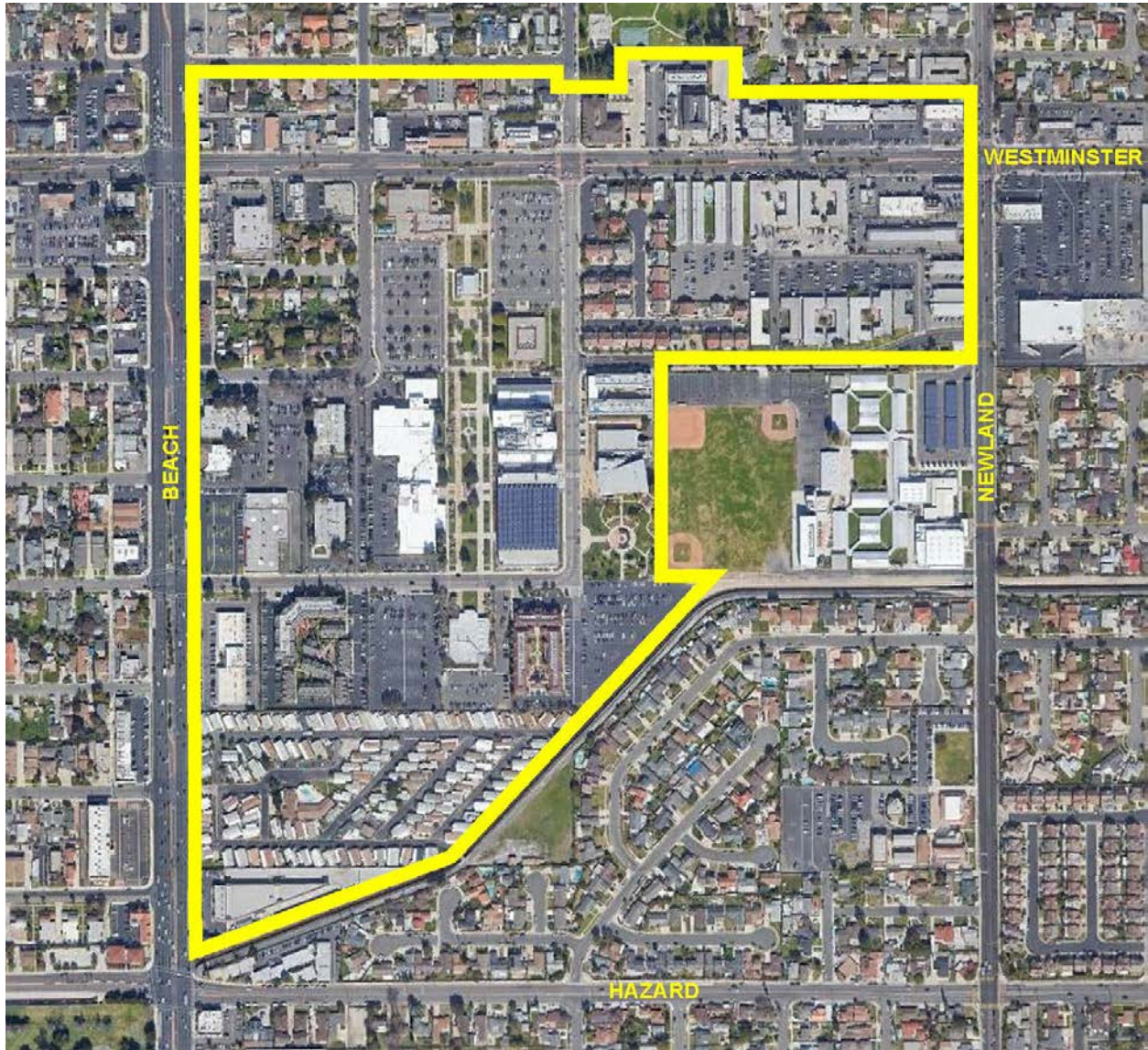


Land Use

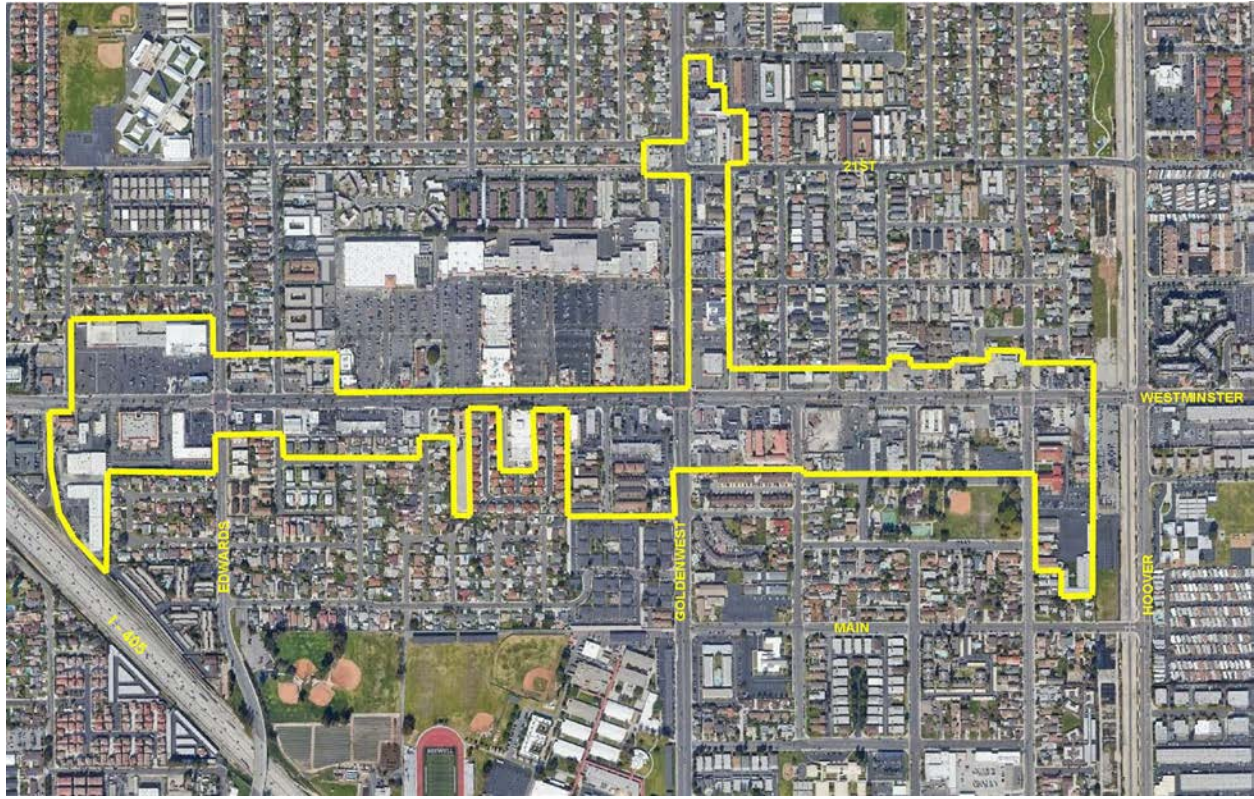
Figure 2-2
Land Use Plan

- City of Westminister Boundary
 - City of Westminister Sphere of Influence
 - Other City Boundaries
- Land Use Designation
- Residential Low Density
 - Residential Medium Density
 - Residential High Density
 - Neighborhood Commercial
 - Regional Commercial
 - 1) Mixed Use Civic Center
 - 2) Mixed Use Westminister Blvd/Downtown
 - 3) Mixed Use Corridor
 - 4) Mixed Use Westminister Mall
 - 5) Mixed Use Little Saigon
 - 6) Mixed Use Northwest District
 - Industrial
 - Urban Industrial
 - Public / Semi-Public Facilities
 - Park / Open Space
 - Flood Control Channel
 - Public Utility Corridor
 - Railroad R.O.W.

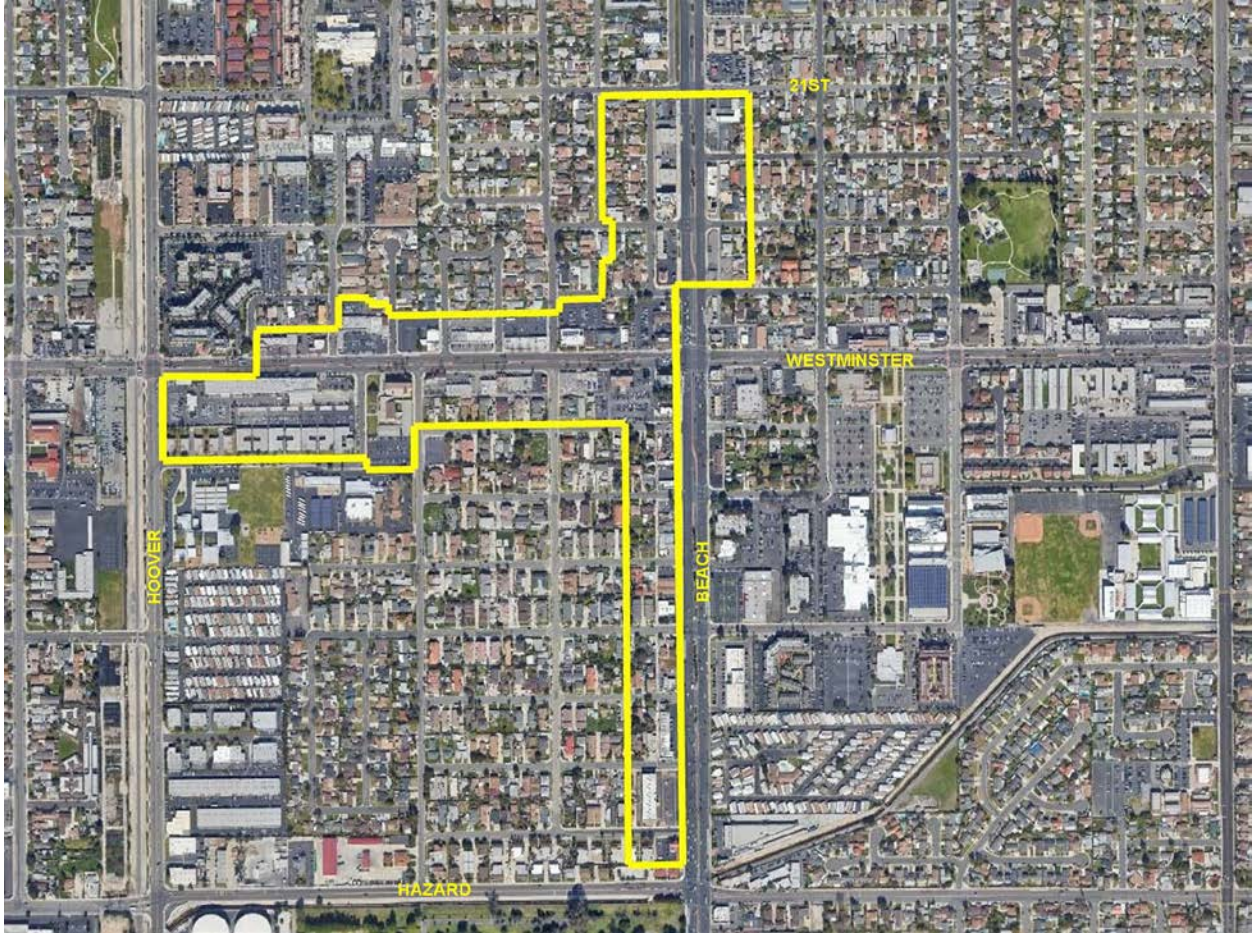
District 1 – Mixed-Use Civic Center



District 2 – Mixed-Use Westminster Boulevard Downtown



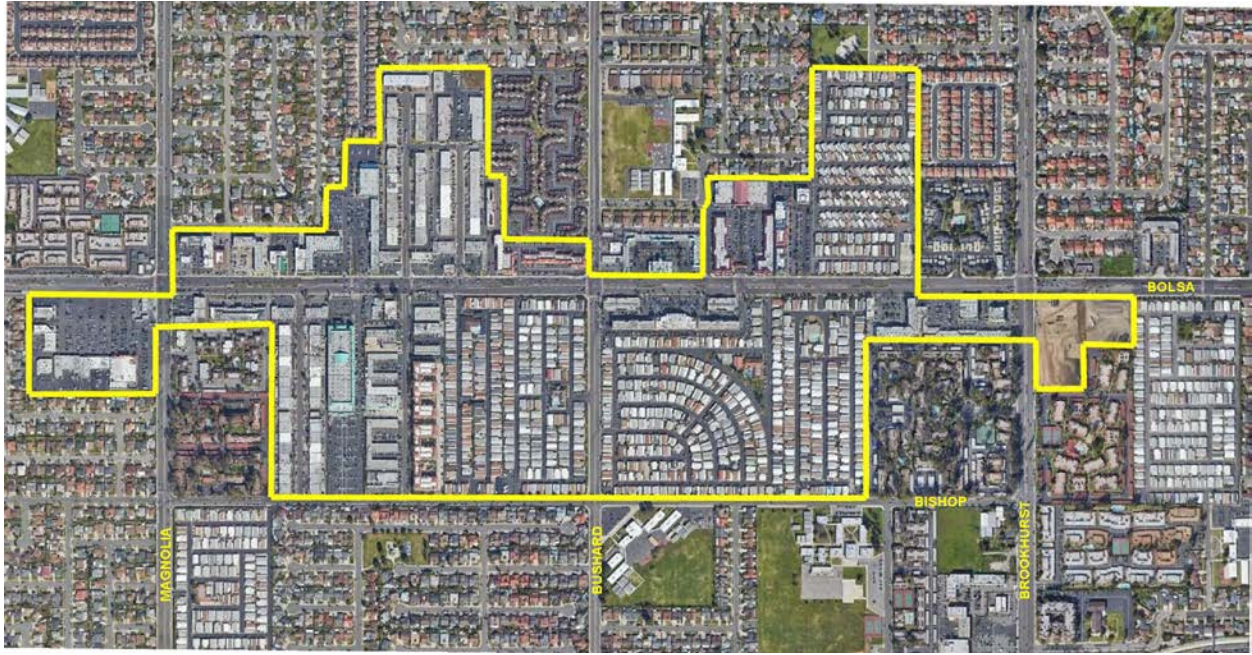
District 3 – Mixed-Use Corridor



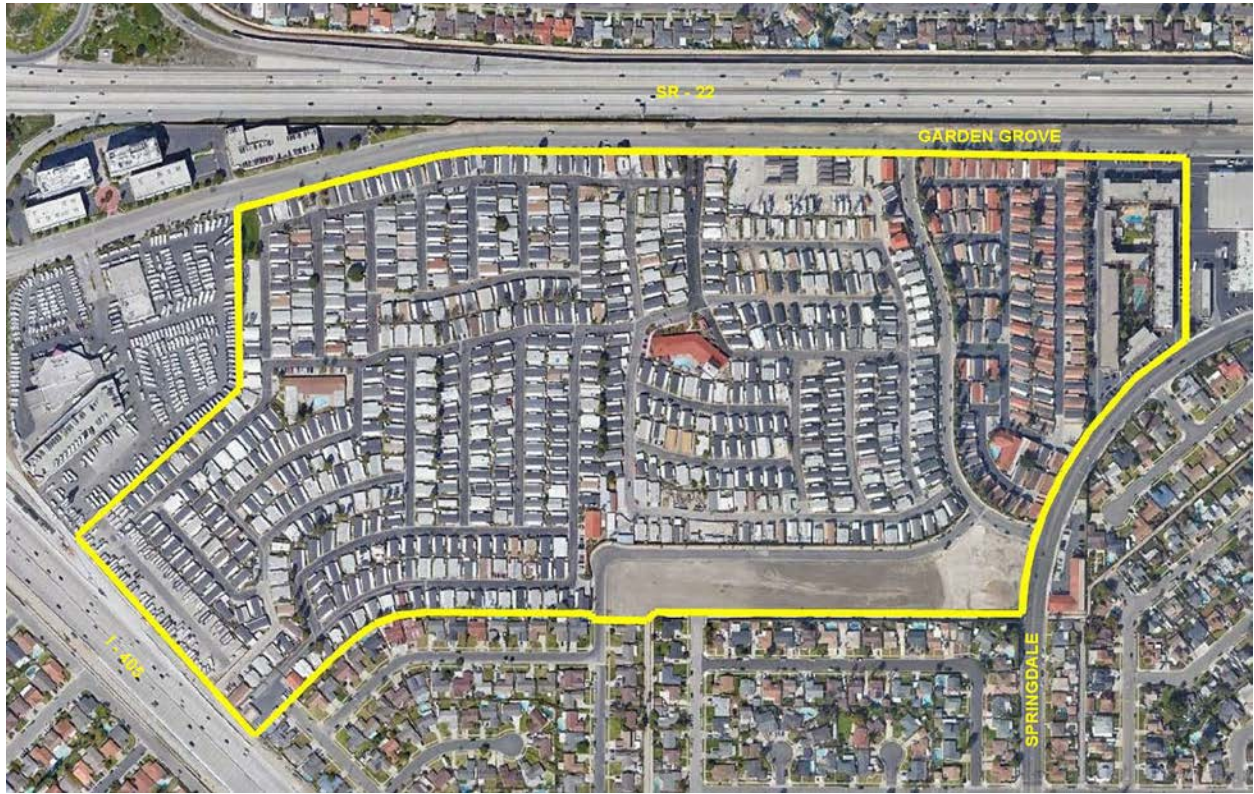
District 4 – Mixed-Use Westminster Mall



District 5 – Mixed-Use Little Saigon



District 6 – Mixed-Use Northwest



Specific Plan 1 – Moran Street Specific Plan



Specific Plan 2 – Bolsa Row Specific Plan



Specific Plan 3 – Westminster Mall Specific Plan

