



Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting for the Laguna Niguel General Plan Update Program Environmental Impact Report

DATE: May 8, 2025

TO: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation State Clearinghouse, State Responsible Agencies, State Trustee Agencies, Other Public Agencies, Interested Organizations, Members of the Public, and the County Clerk

FROM: City of Laguna Niguel Community Development Department, 30111 Crown Valley Parkway, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

PROJECT TITLE/SUBJECT: Laguna Niguel General Plan Update – Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

NOTICE OF PREPARATION REVIEW PERIOD: May 13, 2025 – June 11, 2025

IN-PERSON SCOPING MEETING: May 21, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter, at the Laguna Niguel City Hall Community Room (30111 Crown Valley Parkway, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Laguna Niguel (City), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has prepared this Notice of Preparation for the Laguna Niguel General Plan Update (referred to as the “General Plan Update”, “Project” or “proposed Project”) and has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required. The EIR will be prepared under the terms and requirements of CEQA. The purpose of this Notice of Preparation is (1) to serve as the Notice of Preparation of an EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, (2) to advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR, and (3) to notice the public scoping meeting. Since the City has determined that an EIR is required for the project, pursuant to Section 15060(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, preparation of an Initial Study is not required and, therefore, one has not been prepared.

PROJECT LOCATION: Laguna Niguel is located in south Orange County near the Pacific Ocean (refer to Attachment 1, Regional Location Map). The City is approximately 14.7 square miles in land area and surrounded by several local jurisdictions including the City of Dana Point to the south; the City of San Juan Capistrano to the east; the County of Orange (Aliso and Woods Canyon Regional Park) and the City of Laguna Beach to the west; and the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, and Mission Viejo to the north. The General Plan Update “Planning Area” encompasses the City limits (approximately 9,464 acres) (refer to Attachment 2, General Plan Planning Area).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The City of Laguna Niguel is preparing a comprehensive update to its existing General Plan. The General Plan Update addresses State law requirements and relevant items addressed in

Government Code Section 65300 et seq. The General Plan Update will guide the City's development and conservation through land use objectives and policy guidance. The General Plan is intended to be an expression of the community's vision for the City and constitutes the policy and regulatory framework by which future development projects will be reviewed and public improvements will be implemented.

The General Plan Update includes a comprehensive set of goals and policies, organized into the following new elements, including a revised Land Use Map (refer to Attachment 3, General Plan Update Land Use Map).

- Land Use
- Mobility
- Resource Management
- Public Facilities and Services
- Public Safety
- Noise
- Economic Development

The City of Laguna Niguel is not required to include an environmental justice element because there are no identified disadvantaged communities within the City, and the City's 2021-2029 Housing Element was certified by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on February 22, 2024, and is not part of this General Plan Update.

The goals and policies provide guidance to the City on how to direct change and manage growth, infrastructure, and natural resources over a 20-year planning horizon. The following objectives have been identified for the update to the General Plan:

1. Preserve, protect, and enhance Laguna Niguel's existing residential neighborhoods;
2. Promote residential growth that includes a diverse range of housing development options and densities, ensuring that residents across income levels, age groups, and those with special needs can live within the community;
3. Promote redevelopment in Opportunity Areas that provide economic and community benefits through job creation, enhanced retail and restaurant spaces, and the incorporation of public gathering spaces;
4. Advance economic development policies that support existing local businesses, attract new businesses, promote job growth, and avoid vacant buildings or underutilized commercial sites;
5. Ensure new developments incorporate well-designed site planning, high-quality architecture, and functional outdoor spaces, while ensuring they are compatible with the surrounding setting in terms of land uses, scale, and aesthetics;
6. Ensure new development provides positive fiscal benefit to the City and contributes to new and existing infrastructure;
7. Preserve, protect, and enhance an integrated network of natural and man-made parks and open spaces that supports conservation of natural resources and recreational opportunities;

8. Maintain adequate, reliable, and essential public infrastructure and facilities, including transportation and utilities to support both existing and future development;
9. Maintain a Circulation Plan that fosters a safe and efficient roadway network by minimizing congestion and providing acceptable operation and level of service for vehicles at intersections and roadways; and
10. Maintain and enhance the City's active transportation network to facilitate walking, bicycling, and public transit, improving multimodal connectivity throughout the City.

The General Plan EIR will evaluate the development that could occur within the Planning Area. The General Plan Update identifies three Opportunity Areas—the Marketplace at Laguna Niguel, the Chet Holifield Federal Building (CHFB), and the Town Center—each serving a distinct role that complements the broader community vision. These Opportunity Areas are targeted for considerable growth through the establishment of area-specific overlays. These “Opportunity Area Overlays,” which may be applied through separate legislative action, provide a pathway for potential redevelopment flexibility in exceedance of the maximum growth permitted by each base land use designation. The buildout analysis assumes a 20-year planning horizon, with 2045 as the theoretical full buildout year of the General Plan (the point at which all parcels in the City are developed according to their General Plan land use designation and buildout limit). Therefore, the General Plan EIR analyzes theoretical full buildout of the General Plan, including application of the Opportunity Area Overlays, and the potential demolition of the existing CHFB and full redevelopment of the site. Table 1, General Plan Update Growth Assumptions, provides a statistical summary of the growth potential associated with the General Plan Update.

Table 1
General Plan Update Growth Assumptions

	Existing Conditions	Proposed General Plan Update Growth Potential	Net Change (Proposed General Plan Update compared to Existing Conditions)
Residential Units	27,660	31,124	3,464
Managed Care Facility Units	520	520	0
Population	67,734	76,151	8,418
Commercial Square Footage	5,762,761 ¹	6,862,257	1,099,496
Public Institutional Square Footage	401,658	401,658	0
Hotel Rooms	33	590	557
Jobs¹	13,800 ²	19,267	5,467
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jobs account for citywide Maximum Development Intensities (MDI) for hospitality (e.g., hotels), public institutional, and managed care uses. 2. The “Existing Conditions” jobs total reflects partial occupancy of CHFB at 200,000 square feet of building area consistent with historic usage. 			

PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVALS: The City Council is the final decision-making body for the General Plan Update. Before the City Council considers the proposed project, the Planning Commission will review it and make recommendations to the City Council. While other agencies may be consulted during the General Plan Update process, their approval is not required for adoption of the General Plan Update. However, subsequent development under the General Plan Update may require approval of state, federal and responsible trustee agencies that may rely on the programmatic EIR for decisions in their areas of expertise.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The City has determined that a full-scope EIR is required in connection with the Project, so an Initial Study has not been prepared. An EIR will be prepared for the Project in accordance with the requirements of the CEQA Statute and Guidelines, as amended. The following environmental impact categories and their associated impact thresholds will be examined in the Program EIR.

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture/Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

NOTICE OF PREPARATION: The City is soliciting comments on the scope of the EIR for a period of 30 days, beginning May 13, 2025 and ending at 5:00 p.m. on June 11, 2025. The EIR will evaluate the Project's potential environmental effects, identify any potentially significant impacts, propose feasible mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate those impacts, and discuss potentially feasible alternatives that could meet the Project's basic objectives while lessening or avoiding significant environmental effects.

Please address all comments in writing to: Starla Barker, General Plan Update Consultant, City of Laguna Niguel, Community Development Department, 30111 Crown Valley Parkway, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677, or by email to generalplaninfo@cityoflagunaniguel.org. Please include "Laguna Niguel General Plan Update" in the subject line.

Pursuant to CEQA Statute Section 21080.4, Responsible Agencies must submit any comments in response to this notice no later than 30 days after receipt. Please also provide the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project. In the event that the City does not receive a response or request for additional review time from any Responsible or Trustee Agency by the end of the review period, the Lead Agency may presume that the Responsible Agency or Trustee Agency has no response to make. (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b)(2)).

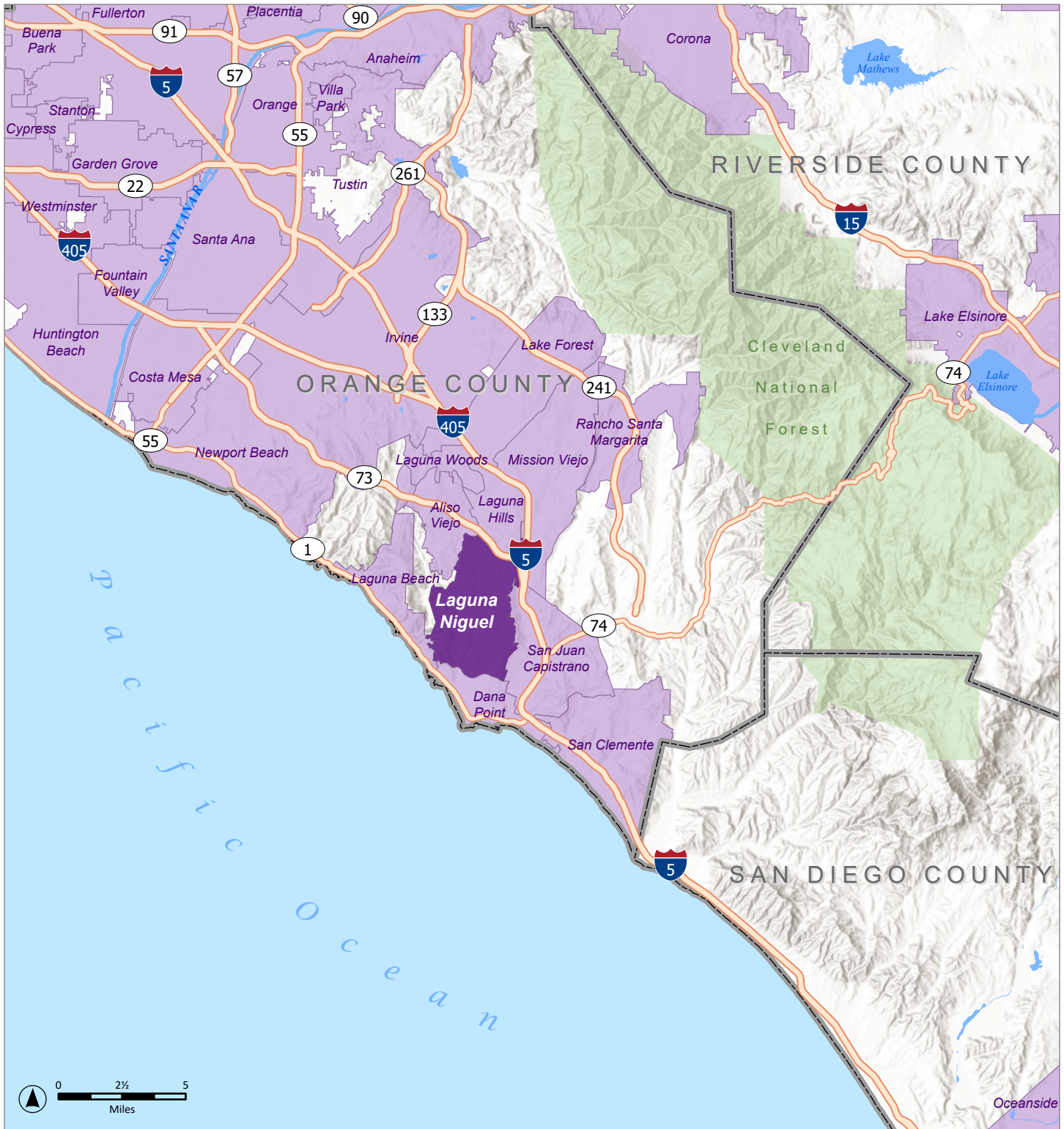
NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING: The City will hold a public scoping meeting in order to receive public comments on the scope of the EIR. The meeting will be held on May 21, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter, at the Laguna Niguel City Hall Community Room (30111 Crown Valley Parkway, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677).

Attachments:

- 1 Regional Location Map
- 2 General Plan Planning Area
- 3 General Plan Update Land Use Map

Marissa J. Asistin, CMC, City Clerk

Published in Laguna Niguel News, Posted on City Website, and Emailed to Interested Parties: 5/8/25

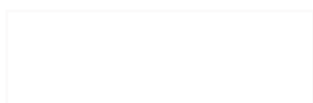


Data sources: California State Geoportal; USGS Transportation.

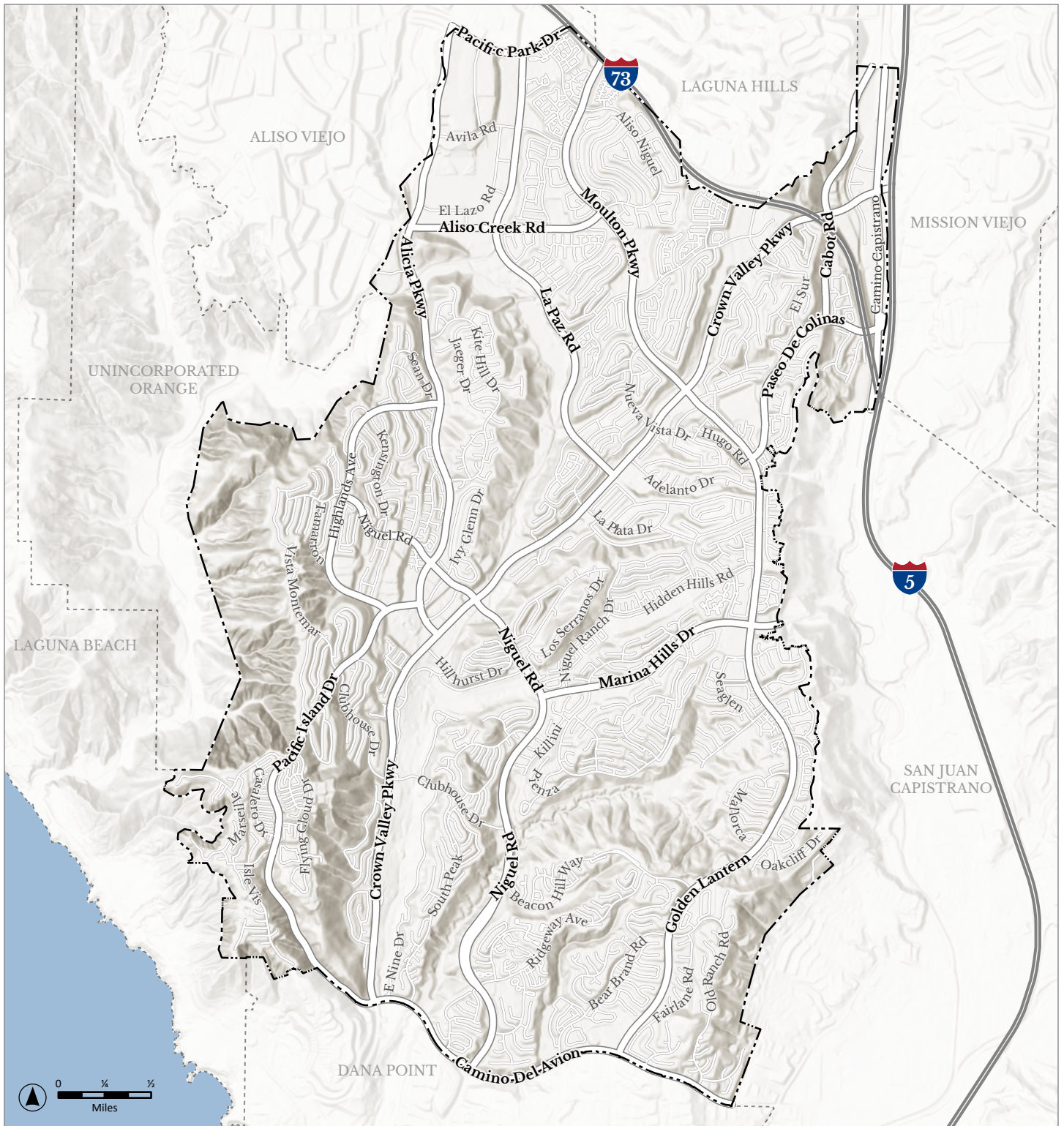
Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group
March 13, 2025

LEGEND

- City of Laguna Niguel
- Other Incorporated Areas
- National Forest
- County Boundary



Attachment 1 Regional Location Map



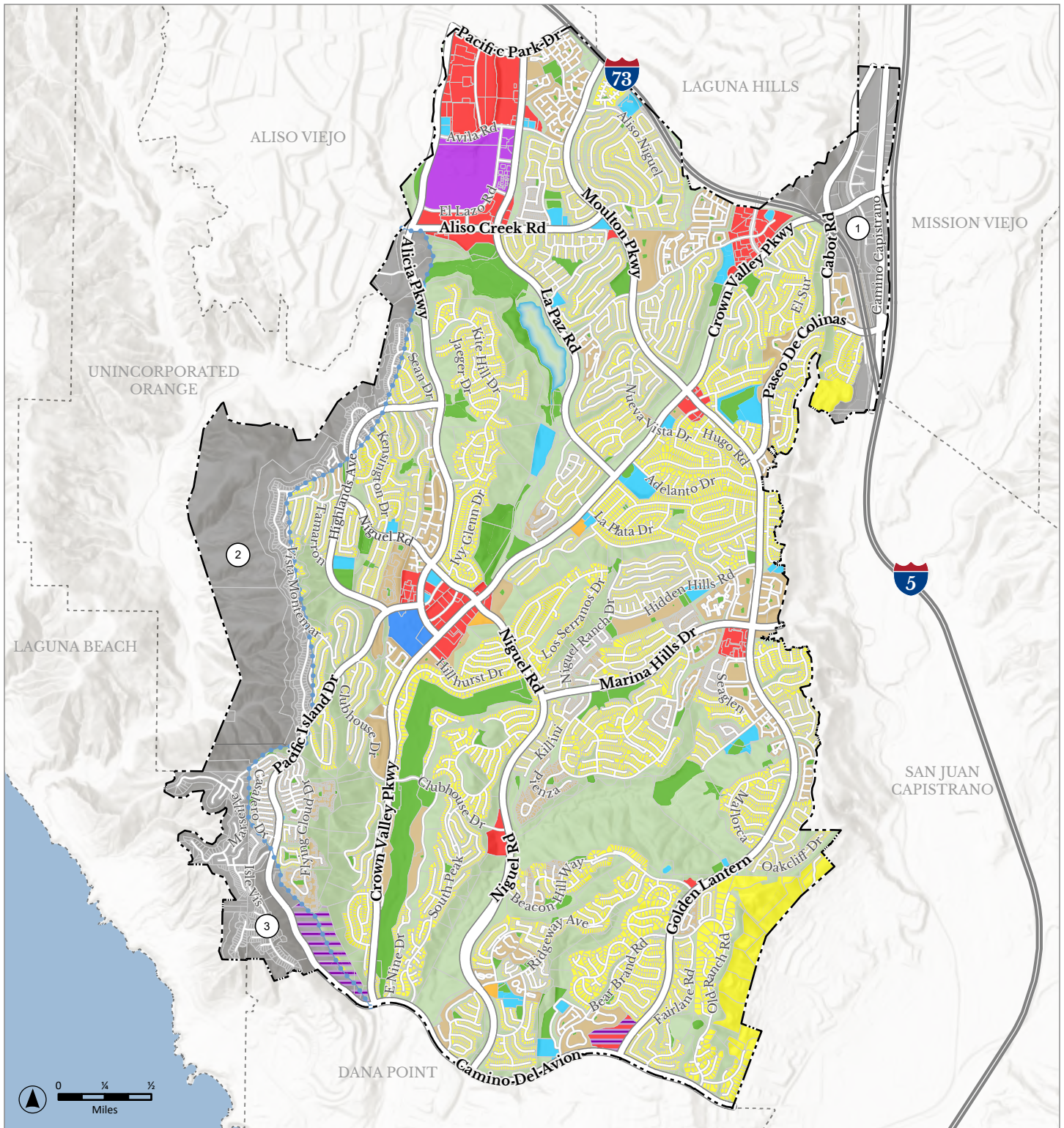
Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group
March 13, 2025.

LEGEND

- Laguna Niguel City Boundary
- Other Jurisdictions





Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel Official General Plan Map, 9-11-2023; Orange County GIS.

Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group
April 15, 2025.

LEGEND

Laguna Niguel City Boundary

Laguna Niguel Lake

Coastal Zone Boundary

General Plan Land Use

RD: Residential Detached

RA: Residential Attached

GC: General Commercial

BP: Business Park

MCF: Managed Care Facility

PR: Parks and Recreation

OS: Open Space

PI: Public Institutional

CC: Civic Center

SP: Specific Plan

1. Laguna Niguel Gateway Specific Plan

2. Aliso Creek Specific Plan/Local Coastal Program

3. South Laguna Specific Plan/Local Coastal Program

Overlays

Opportunity Area Overlay 1

Opportunity Area Overlay 2

Opportunity Area Overlay 3

Hospitality Overlay