

NOTICE OF PREPARATION
of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the
Downey 2045 General Plan Update and Zoning Text and Map Amendment

DATE: March 12, 2026

TO: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Interested Parties

FROM: City of Downey
Community Development Department
11111 Brookshire Avenue
Downey, CA 90241

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the City of Downey 2045 General Plan Update and Zoning Text and Map Amendment

PROJECT TITLE: City of Downey 2045 General Plan Update and Zoning Text and Map Amendment (project)

PROJECT LOCATION: Entire incorporated boundary of Downey

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Downey (City), as Lead Agency, has determined, in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15060 that an EIR is required for the proposed project to comply with CEQA. The City has further determined that in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, the EIR should be a Program EIR (PEIR) since the project will be implemented over time. Because the City determined an EIR is clearly required in accordance with CEQA Guidelines 15060(d), an Initial Study has not been prepared.

We are interested in your agency's views as to the appropriate scope and content of the PEIR's environmental information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities related to the project. Please include the name of a contact person for your agency in your written response. Also, we would like to be informed of environmental topics or issues that you believe should be included in the PEIR. The proposed project, its location, and its probable environmental effects are described below. The City welcomes public input during the Notice of Preparation (NOP) review period. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21092 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b), your response must be sent not later than 5 PM on April 13, 2026. If no response is received by the end of the review period, the City will presume that you have no response.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION REVIEW PERIOD: March 13, 2026 to April 13, 2026

Please send your comments to:

Attn: Swati Meshram, PhD, AICP, Deputy Director of Community Development-Planning
City of Downey Community Development Department
11111 Brookshire Avenue
Downey, California 90241
generalplan2045@downeyca.org
(562) 904-7154

SCOPING MEETING:

This project is considered a project of statewide, regional or areawide significance pursuant to Section 15206 of the CEQA Guidelines. Therefore, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(c) the City will hold a Scoping Meeting. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to solicit comments of adjacent cities, responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and interested parties requesting notice as to the appropriate scope and content of the Draft PEIR. The public scoping meeting will be held on Thursday April 2, 2026 at 3 p.m. The meeting will include a brief presentation of the project, the EIR process, and the topics to be analyzed in the EIR. Following the presentation, attendees will be given the opportunity to offer their views concerning what environmental issues should be included in the PEIR.

The Public Scoping Meeting will be a web-based video conference that can be accessed at the following link during the aforementioned date and time:

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81496807995>

Meeting ID: 814 9680 7995

Passcode: 016377

To allow for mailing, receipt, and CEQA- required public review of this NOP, the comment period closes at 5 PM on April 13, 2026.

Swati Meshram, Deputy Director of Community Development - Planning

Date

PROJECT LOCATION:

The City of Downey encompasses approximately 12.8 square miles and is located in southern Los Angeles County, approximately 8.5 miles southeast of Downtown Los Angeles, and approximately 10.4 miles north of the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach (see Figure 1, Regional Context Map). The City of Downey is bordered by the Cities of Bellflower and Paramount to the south; the City of South Gate to the West; the Cities of Commerce, Bell Gardens and Pico Rivera to the north; and the Cities of Santa Fe Springs and Norwalk to the east.

EXISTING GENERAL PLAN:

Each city and county in California must prepare a comprehensive, long-term General Plan to guide its future. The land use element of the General Plan establishes the basic land uses and density of development within the various areas of the City. Under state law, the General Plan elements must be internally consistent, and the City's zoning must be consistent with the General Plan. Downey last comprehensively updated its General Plan in 2005 and has a planning horizon year of 2025. *Downey Vision 2025* is organized into nine elements, which present an integrated and internally consistent set of goals, policies, and implementation measures. Table 1, Existing General Plan Land Use Designations (2005), below provides a general description of each designation along with allowable uses. Figure 3, Existing General Plan Land Use (2005), shows the twelve land use designations of the current General Plan.

Table 1
Existing General Plan Land Use Designations (2005)

Land Use Designation	Acres Total	Percent of Total
Low Density Residential	3,122.6	52.3%
Low/Medium Density Residential	222.5	3.7%
Medium Density Residential	457.3	7.7%
Office	32.5	0.5%
Neighborhood Commercial	72.6	1.2%
General Commercial	280.4	4.7%
Commercial Manufacturing	81.2	1.4%
Manufacturing	245.4	4.1%
Public	492.0	8.2%
Open Space	533.8	8.9%
School	408.9	6.9%
Private School	27.0	0.4%
Total	5,966.2	100%

Existing Land Use

Figure 4, Existing Land Use (2025), graphically depicts existing land use distribution in Downey as of 2025. Existing land use reflects the current condition of the built environment in a city, which may not always align with the zoning code and map. Downey comprises roughly 22,408 parcels, covering approximately 5,966.2 acres, not including transportation and utility rights-of-way. Most development within the Planning Area is residential (3,802.4 acres). There are an estimated 37,160 dwelling units within the Planning Area. The Planning area also has an estimated population of 111,326 persons.

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS:

The City of Downey 2045 General Plan Update succeeds the last comprehensive general plan adopted in 2005. The General Plan Update is intended to achieve the land use, transportation, housing, and other goals of the City that reflect the community's growth over the long-term.

General Plan Elements

The 2045 General Plan Update incorporates statutory requirements for general plans and guidance provided in the 2017 General Plan Guidelines; coordinates future development and policies with regional planning efforts; and serves as the City's fundamental guide in developing strategies to address greenhouse gas reduction, climate change, and climate planning. The EIR incorporates the goals, policies, and objectives of each of the Element listed below. These goals, policies, and objectives are utilized to maintain various potential environmental effects of the project at levels that are less than significant and is considered when evaluating the potential environmental impacts of implementing the General Plan. The Housing Element was updated for the 6th cycle in 2022 and planned developments identified in the Land Use Element accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Assessment goal of 6,525 housing units. The 2045 General Plan rewrites all elements except the recently adopted Housing Element and adds a new Environmental Justice Element. The elements are organized as follows:

- 1. Land Use Element.** Guides how land is used and developed to support a balanced mix of housing, jobs, and community amenities.
- 2. Circulation Element.** Plans for safe and efficient movement of people and goods via streets, transit, walking, and biking. Plans for safe, reliable, and capacity-adequate water, wastewater, stormwater, communications, and solid waste/recycling infrastructure.
- 3. Conservation Element.** Promotes the responsible use and protection of natural resources, including water, energy, and air quality.
- 4. Environmental Justice Element.** Aims to prevent disproportionate impacts on vulnerable communities and promote a more inclusive, healthy, and equitable city.
- 5. Safety Element.** Reduces risks from natural and human-made hazards such as earthquakes, flooding, and climate impacts.
- 6. Noise Element.** Minimizes the impact of noise on residents, schools, and sensitive uses through planning and design.
- 7. Open Space Element.** Protects and enhances parks, recreational areas, and natural spaces for public enjoyment and ecological health.
- 8. Housing Element.** Addresses current and future housing needs through policies that support housing production, affordability, and equity. The Housing Element was adopted in 2022 and will not be updated as part of this effort.
- 9. Design Element.** Encourages high-quality architecture, public spaces, and streetscapes, and cultural and historic resources that contribute to a vibrant and welcoming city.
- 10. Economic Development Element.** Supports a diverse, resilient economy by attracting investment, expanding job opportunities, and strengthening local businesses.

Proposed Land Use Plan

The 2045 General Plan Update would establish 4 new land use designations for a total of 16 land use designations. The new set of designations clearly distinguish the land uses allowed and set forth maximum development density and intensity standards. Table 2 compares existing and projected 2045 land use and development capacity for the City of Downey. Figure 5, Proposed General Plan Land Use, illustrates the 2045 General Plan land use plan. The 2045 planning horizon for the Planning Area is estimated to result in increases of approximately 10,350 dwelling units and 2.7 million square feet of non-residential space. An estimated increase of approximately 31,483 residents and 6,649 jobs is projected for the 2045 horizon year.

Table 2
General Plan Update: Comparison of 2025 and 2045

			Existing Conditions (Base Line) - 2025	Future Conditions (Build Out) - 2045	Change	
					Number	Percent
Residential (Housing and Population)	Dwelling Units	Single Family	22,500	22,572	72	0.3%
		Accessory	813	2,888	2,075	255.2%
		Multi-Family	13,847	22,050	8,203	59.2%
	Total	Dwelling Units	37,160	47,510	10,350	27.9%
		Population	111,326	142,809	31,483	28.3%
Non-Residential (Building Square Feet and Employees)	Commercial	Building Sq. Ft.	13,093,300	14,265,913	1,172,613	9.0%
		Employees	12,927	15,942	3,015	23.3%
	Hotels	Rooms	657	957	300	45.7%
		Employees	729	1,179	450	61.8%
	Office	Building Sq. Ft.	3,226,500	3,692,564	466,064	14.4%
		Employees	8,528	9,606	1,078	12.6%
	Medical	Building Sq. Ft.	3,576,700	3,673,000	96,300	2.7%
		Employees	9,301	9,524	223	2.4%
	Industrial	Building Sq. Ft.	3,954,000	4,489,700	535,700	13.5%
		Employees	4,242	5,553	1,310	30.9%
	Public Facilities	Building Sq. Ft.	6,817,000	7,241,250	424,250	6.2%
		Employees	8,976	9,548	572	6.4%
	Total	Building Sq. Ft.	30,667,500	33,362,427	2,694,927	8.8%
		Employees	44,703	51,351	6,649	14.9%

Zoning Text and Map Amendment

The project includes an amendment to the Zoning Map to expand the City's Housing Overlay target areas along commercial corridors where additional housing would be allowed through a newly created Residential Corridor Overlay. The Zoning text amendment will create the Residential Corridor Overlay designation within the Zoning Code. In addition, the project includes targeted updates to the specific parcels to maintain consistency between their General Plan Land Use Map, use, and Zoning designation.

PEIR SCOPE:

The EIR for the project will describe existing environmental resource areas and conditions in The City. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15125, existing conditions will be described as they exist when this NOP is circulated based on the most recent available data and information. The EIR is intended to be a program-level document that will analyze the broad environmental effects of the project, considering broad alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant environmental impacts of implementing the proposed General Plan Update and Zoning Amendment and will evaluate whether there are feasible mitigation measures that may lessen or avoid identified significant impacts. No specific development projects are being considered. Rather, the analysis will focus on the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect physical environmental effects compared to existing conditions that could result from adoption and implementation of the General Plan Update and Zoning Amendment.

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a), the City did not prepare an Initial Study, but advises that the EIR will evaluate potentially significant environmental effects on each of the environmental topics outlined in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. The topics to be analyzed in the EIR include the following:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forest Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

In addition, the EIR will address cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and other issues required by the CEQA Guidelines. Anticipated potentially significant environmental effects of the project include air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and transportation.

INTENDED USE OF THE PEIR:

The programmatic planning framework proposed in the 2045 General Plan Update would not result in the immediate construction of any new development nor entitlement of any new project. All new development within the City would continue to be subject to the City's permitting, approval, and public participation processes. Elected and appointed officials along with City Staff would review subsequent project applications for consistency with the General Plan, applicable Specific Plans, and the Zoning Code, and would prepare appropriate environmental documentation to comply with CEQA and other applicable environmental requirements.

Pursuant to Section 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this EIR is a Program EIR as it relates to the 2045 General Plan Update. The goals, policies, land use designations, implementation programs, and other substantive components of the General Plan comprise the "program" evaluated in this Program EIR. Subsequent activities undertaken by the City and project proponents to implement the General Plan will be examined and consider this Program EIR to determine the appropriate level of environmental review required under CEQA. Subsequent implementation activities may include but are not limited to the items listed below.

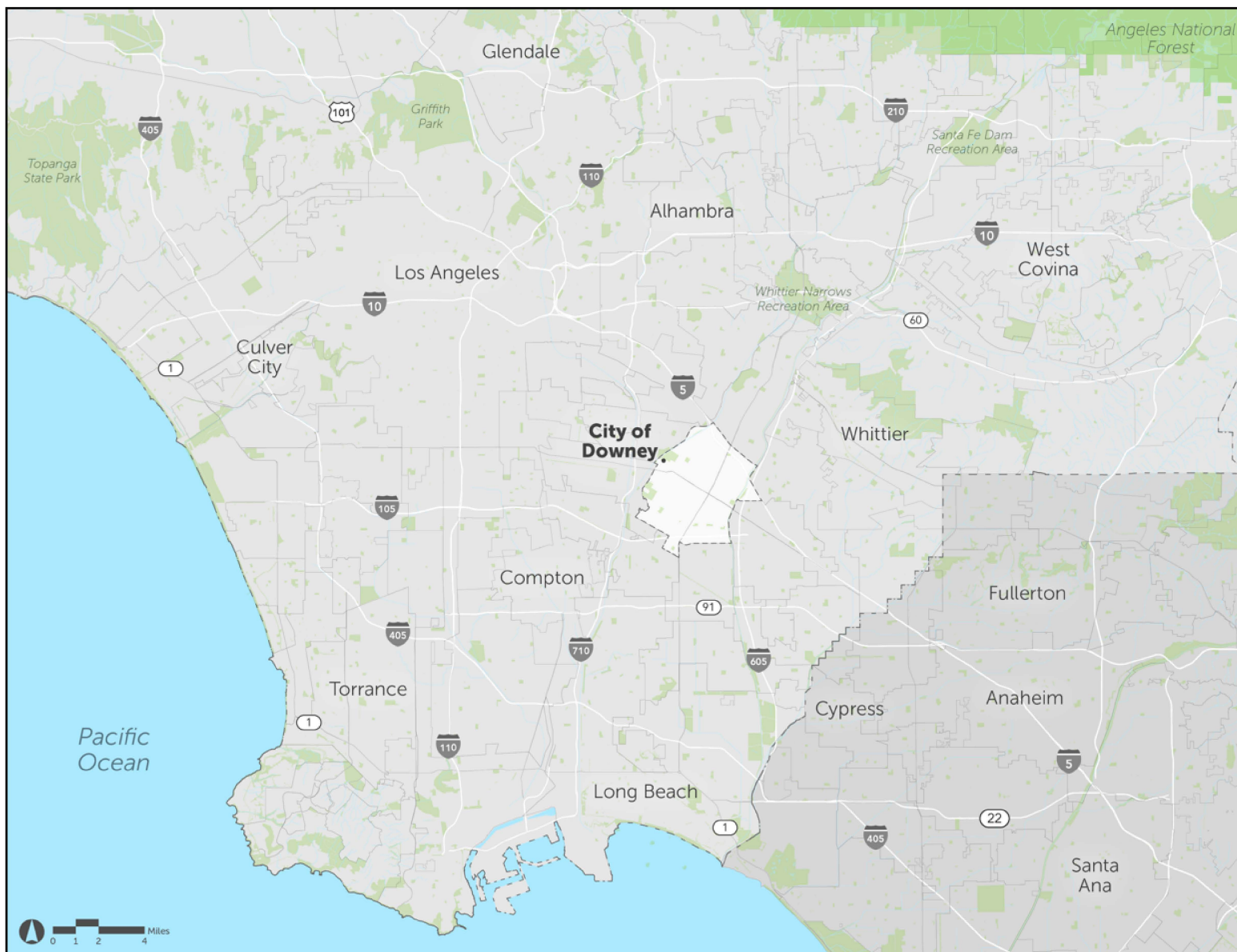
- Rezoning properties to achieve consistency with the General Plan.
- Updating and approval of Specific Plans and other development plans and planning documents.
- Review and approval of general plan amendments, specific plans, and zone changes.
- Approval of annexations, tentative maps, variances, conditional use permits, street vacations, and other land use permits and entitlements.
- Approval of development agreements.
- Approval of facility and service master plans and financing plans.
- Approval and funding of public improvement projects.
- Approval of resource management plans.
- Issuance of permits and other approvals needed for implementation of the General Plan.
- Issuance of permits and other approvals needed for public works and private development projects.

PUBLIC CIRCULATION AND REVIEW OF THE DRAFT PEIR:

After the Draft PEIR has been completed, it will be available for review and comment during a 45-day public review period. Notice of the availability of the Draft PEIR will be released at a later date and will also be available on the City's website. Following that, a Final PEIR will be prepared that includes responses to all comments received during the public review period. Following the release of the Final PEIR, the Planning Commission and City Council will hold public hearings on the PEIR and the project.

QUESTIONS

Please contact Swati Meshram, Deputy Director of Community Development - Planning, at generalplan2045@downeyca.org or (562) 904-7154 for information about the project or if you have any questions regarding this notice.



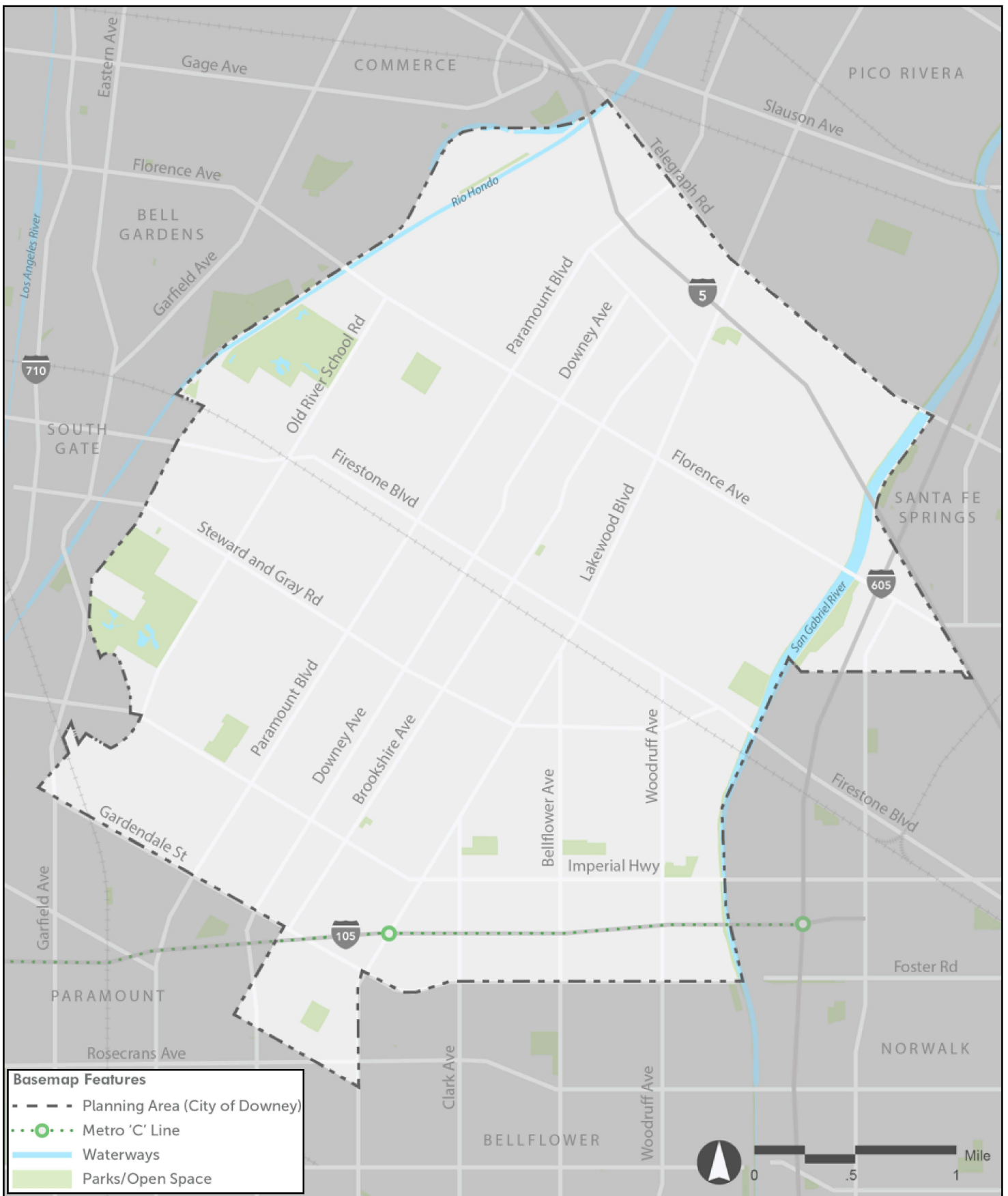
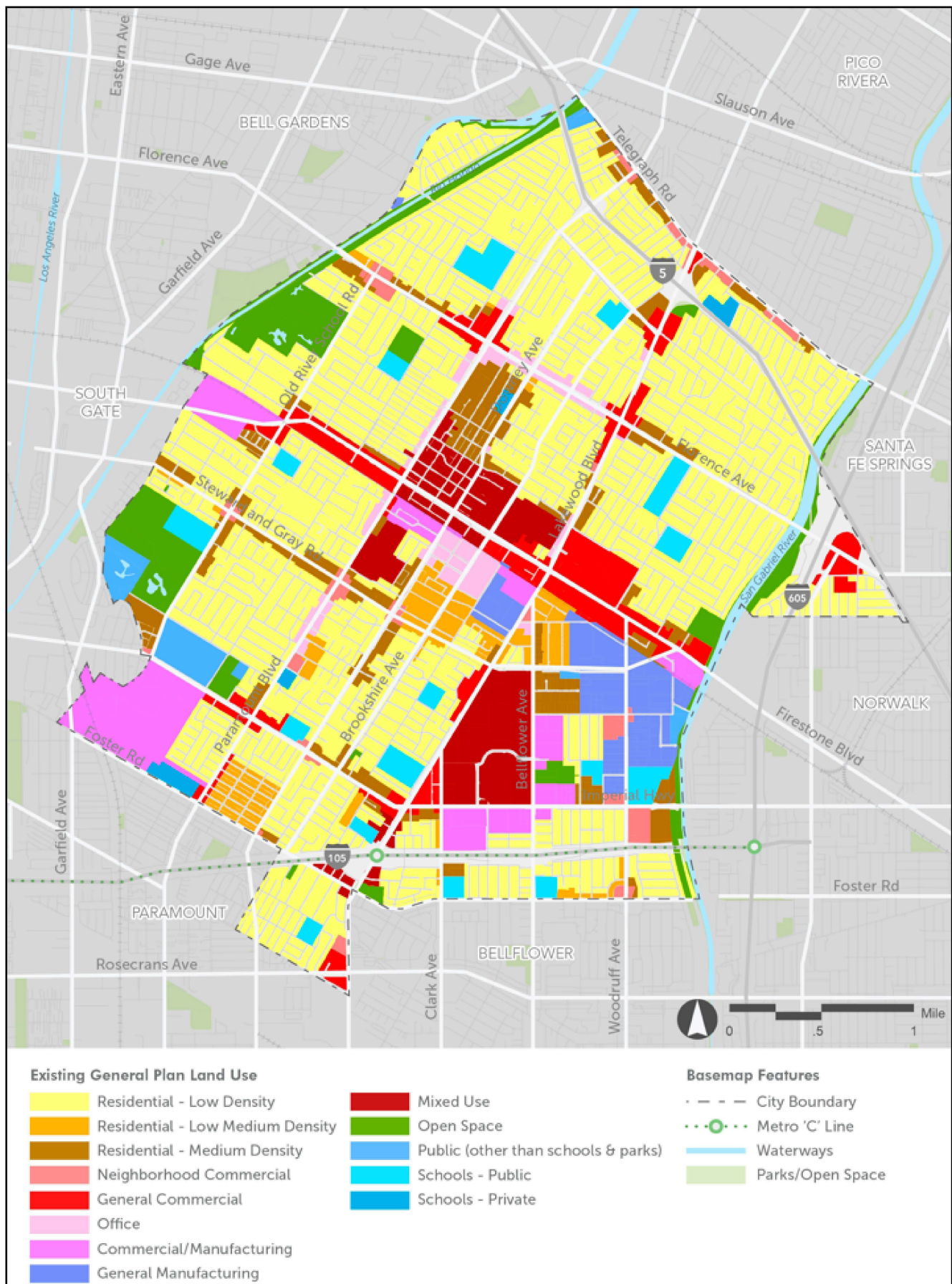


Figure 2 Planning Area Map



<http://www.migcom.com> • 951-787-9222

Figure 3 Existing General Plan Land Use Map (2005)

Downey 2045 General Plan Update and Zoning Map Amendment
Downey, California



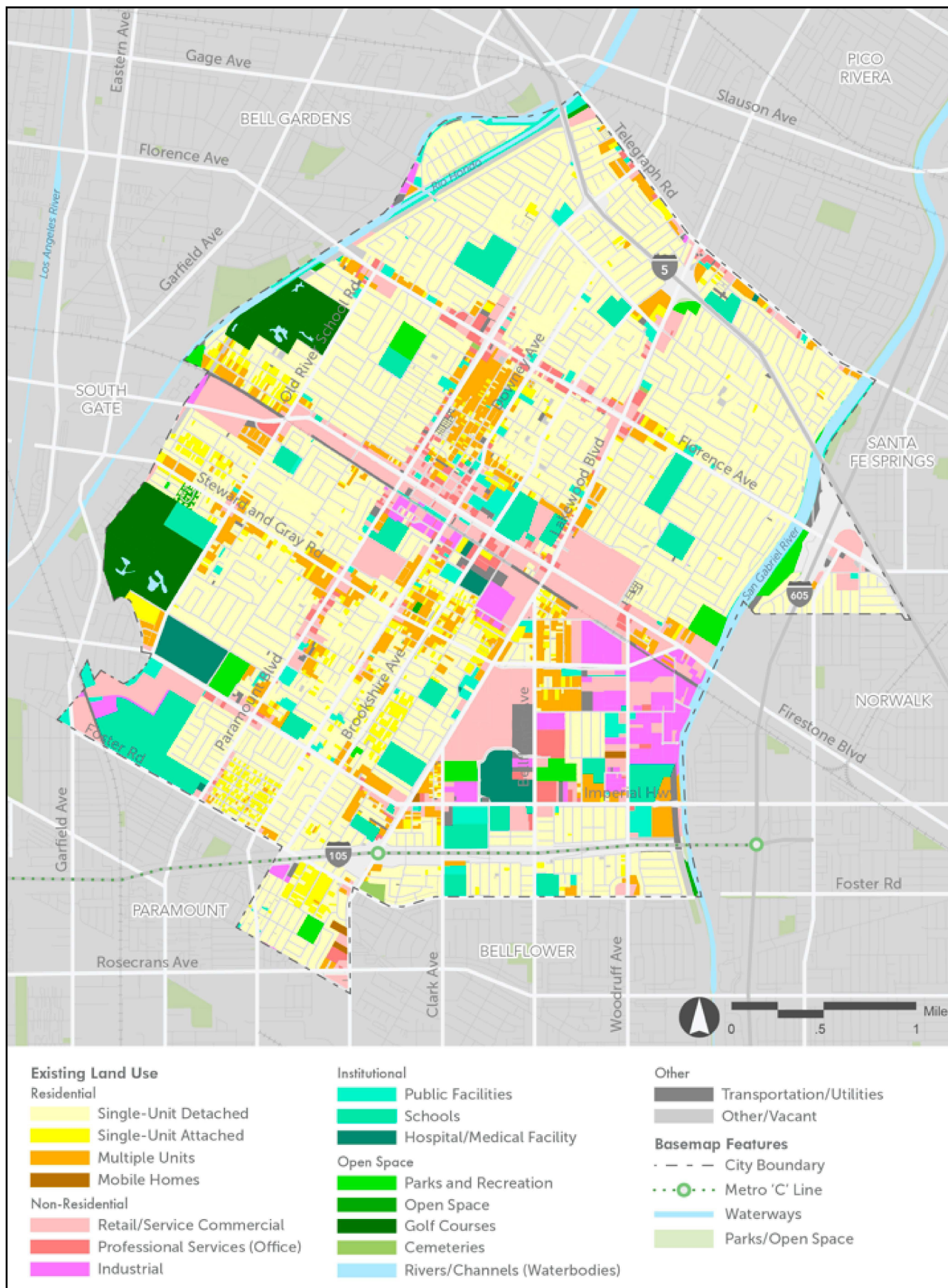


Figure 4 Existing Land Use (2025)

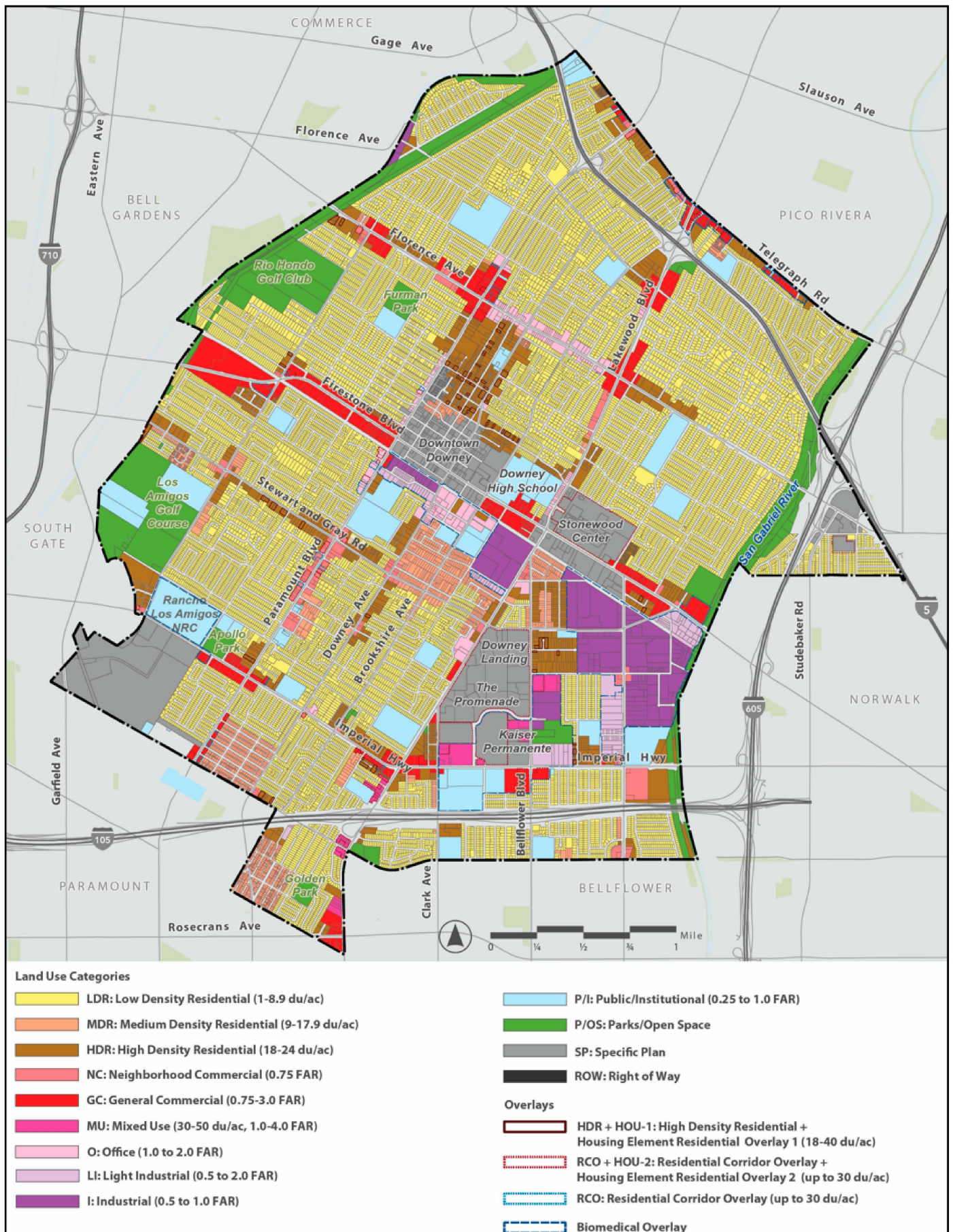


Figure 5 Proposed General Plan Land Use Map

Downey 2045 General Plan Update and Zoning Map Amendment
Downey, California

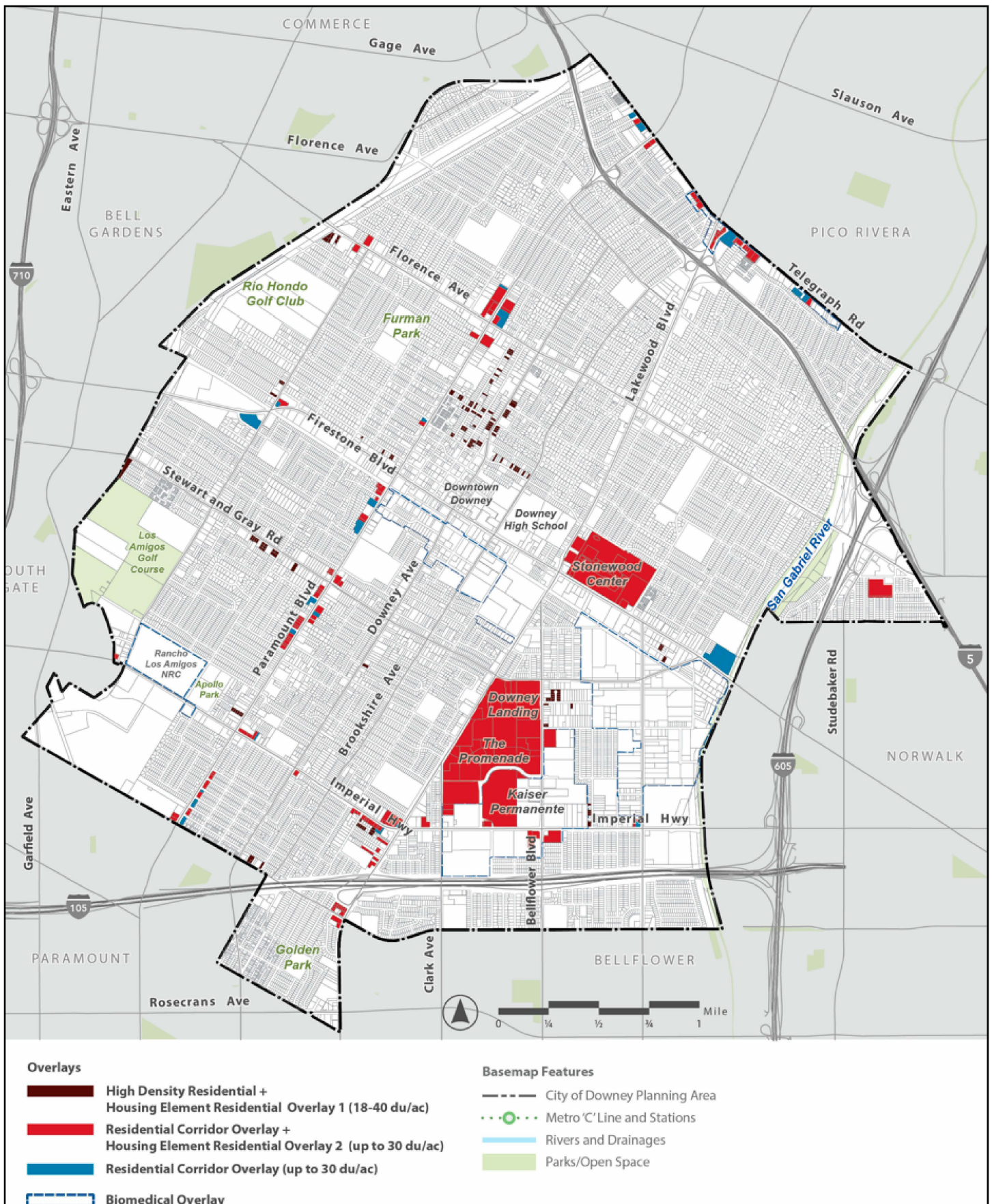


Figure 6 Housing Overlays