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# City of Imperial

## **Draft** Land Use Element

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## LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element is a key element in a General Plan, having one of the most direct impacts to growth in a community and the greatest guidance for its users. This Land Use Element provides the primary policy foundation for the entire General Plan, as it establishes the desired vision for future land use decisions in the City of Imperial. The Element directs development patterns by identifying and describing, through diagrams and text, the location and distribution of existing and future land uses throughout the City.

### I. INTRODUCTION

This Element describes land use designations and identifies the geographic distribution of land uses within the ICLAFCo (Imperial County Local Agency Formation Commission) approved Sphere of Influence (planning area) that will help guide future growth and change, consistent with the City's vision. The Land Use Map is a graphical representation of the City's official land use policy, providing the primary policy guidance for future land use decision-making to support a population of 26,923, which is the projected population in 2035 (using a conservative figure), and up to 62,541 at full build-out within the entire planning area. This Element further maps "Character Areas" for policy focus, due to the areas respective and unique characteristics that extend diverse opportunities. The Land Use Element articulates City goals and policies that address future growth and guide community character and identity, preservation, and economic development.

#### A. Authority for the Element

California Government Code Section 65302(a) requires that the General Plan include:

*"...a Land Use Element which designates the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space including agriculture, natural resources, recreation and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities and other categories of public and private uses of land. The Land Use Element shall include a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various districts and other territory covered by the plan."*

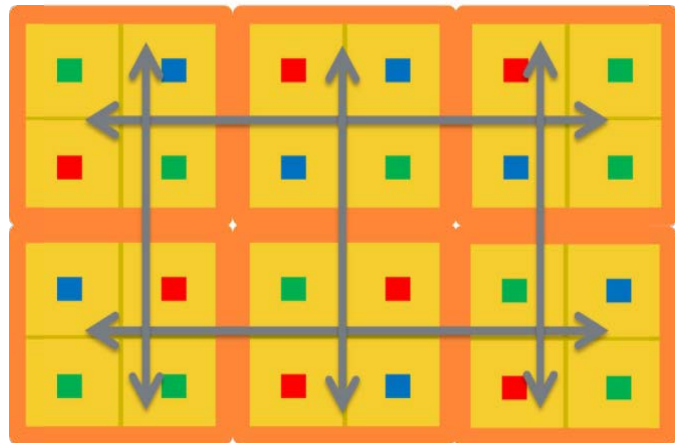
#### B. Use and Organization of the Element

It is the intent of the City that this Land Use and Community Character Element be actively used and implemented and become a transformative vision for the community of Imperial. This Element incorporates numerous documents and exhibits to guide day to day planning decisions and is organized into the following sections:

- Identification of Community Goals
- Land Use Designations
- Character Areas
- Goals, Policies and Actions

### C. Building Blocks Vision

This Land Use and Character Element aims to develop a connected system of neighborhoods and villages that serve as building blocks for future development. Each neighborhood is compact and includes a gathering center (park, school, shopping, and/or services) that are within walking distance to residents, requiring less



energy for daily living and encouraging residents to interact with their neighbors, consistent with Specific Plan Areas. A collection of these walkable neighborhoods comprise a village. Villages and neighborhoods are connected via walkable streets, trails, bikeways, and transit. These are the “building blocks” that will be the foundation for Imperial’s development pattern.

## II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### A. Historical Growth

The nature of land use in the City of Imperial today is linked to Imperial County's agricultural industry. Historically, Imperial began as a small, isolated farming community over a century ago. Incorporated in 1904, the City maintained a gradual but constant growth rate and had a population of 7,560 people in the year 2000. By 2015 Imperial had reached a population of 17,313 and continues to grow at a rapid rate with new development occurring throughout the City and proposed annexation areas. The City of Imperial held the highest population growth rate in Imperial County at 12.94 percent from 1990 to 2010. The City successfully attracts many families due to the community's diverse housing opportunities, reputable school district, and low crime rates. In an annual list compiled by The SafeWise Report, the City of Imperial was ranked #2 on the 50 Safest Cities in California for 2015 due to its commitment to the safety and security of its residents. Residents boast a great sense of community identity with a "home-town" feeling.

With this rapid development, infrastructure has come to function at maximum capacity and often requires repair and/or expansion thus land use patterns must maximize the convenience and efficiency of available and planned facilities. Housing construction somewhat halted with the fall of the economy in 2008 leaving some neighborhoods that were constructed, in disconnected blocks. However, as the economy continues its recovery, new developments are moving forward. **Table I-1** provides an overview of household and population data since 2000.

**Table II-1 Population and Housing**

Year	Households	Population
2000	2,308	7,560
2010	4,405	14,758
2015	5,168	17,313

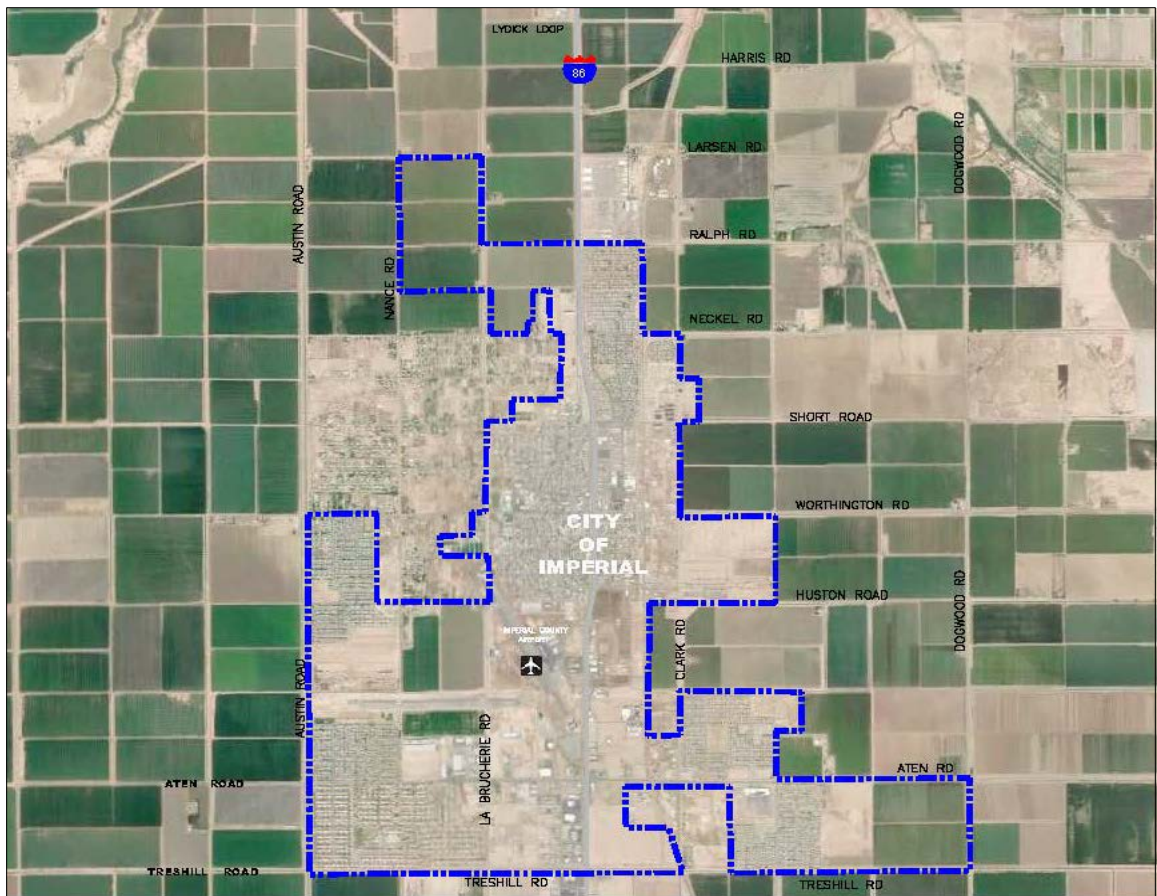
Source: U.S. Census Bureau for 2000 and 2010 statistics. Imperial Building Permit records were used to estimate 2010-2015 households and population growth at 3.35 pphh

### III. REGIONAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

#### A. Regional Setting & Planning Area

The City of Imperial encompasses approximately 5.85 square miles and is centrally located between the Cities of El Centro and Brawley in the Imperial Valley. The City is surrounded on all sides (except south) by agricultural land which is the predominant land use outside of the City Limits but within the planning area as noted in the aerial below. Although no large parcels are under agricultural production within the City Limits, several agricultural operations are located within the incorporated areas.

Figure 1



#### B. Regional Factors

There are a number of key facilities that highly influence land use patterns and designations for future growth. The planning areas and regional planning considerations influencing land use patterns and policies, within the City's Sphere of Influence and beyond, are noted below.

## 1. Highway 86 Corridor

The City of Imperial, especially the heart of downtown, is located along Highway 86, the main arterial roadway for the City and a primary path for regional travelers. The average daily traffic counts for Highway 86 were noted as high as 21,800 ADT in 2014 (Caltrans 2014 Traffic Counts). With an abundance of vacant land along the highway, there is much opportunity to capitalize on the potential sales tax revenue of businesses along this corridor. This highway is the main thoroughfare through the City as there are no other complete north-south roadways within the City (refer to the Circulation Element for further detail).

## 2. Imperial County Airport

The Imperial County Airport was activated in 1940 and is a county-owned public-use airport.<sup>2</sup> According to the Federal Aviation Administration Passenger Boarding (Enplanement) and All-Cargo data for U.S. Airports, the Imperial County Airport (IPL) is recovering from a decrease in airplane travel between 2008 and 2011, which is reflective of current economic trends within the market. Calendar year 2014 showed a continued decrease of passengers to 2,470, with a corresponding 15,120 annual aircraft operations. This Element considers that the Imperial County Airport will continue to be a viable airport facility through the year 2035. The Land Use Plan does not anticipate any expansion or enlargement of the existing airport, but does take into account the land use restrictions that are imposed within protected zones. Please refer to **Table III-2** for Airport Land Use Compatibility standards and the corresponding overlay zones.

*Table III-1 Imperial County Airport Passenger Data*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Average Annual Passengers</i>
<i>2008</i>	7,061
<i>2009</i>	5,641↓
<i>2010</i>	4,752↓
<i>2011</i>	6,136↑
<i>2012</i>	5,491↓
<i>2013</i>	2,660↓
<i>2014</i>	2,470↓

*Source: Federal Aviation Administration Airport Data & Contact Information and Federal Aviation Administration Passenger Boarding (Enplanement) and All-Cargo data for U.S. Airports. Available at*

[http://www.faa.gov/airports/planning\\_capacity/passenger\\_allcargo\\_stats/passenger/.](http://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/passenger_allcargo_stats/passenger/)

The following exhibits are obtained directly from the Imperial County Airport Land use Compatibility Plan which provides land use and density guidelines. The Plan itself suggests that the land use criteria is performance oriented rather than list

oriented. That is, the criteria contains standards that are to be achieved (occupancy limits) rather than list of permitted uses.

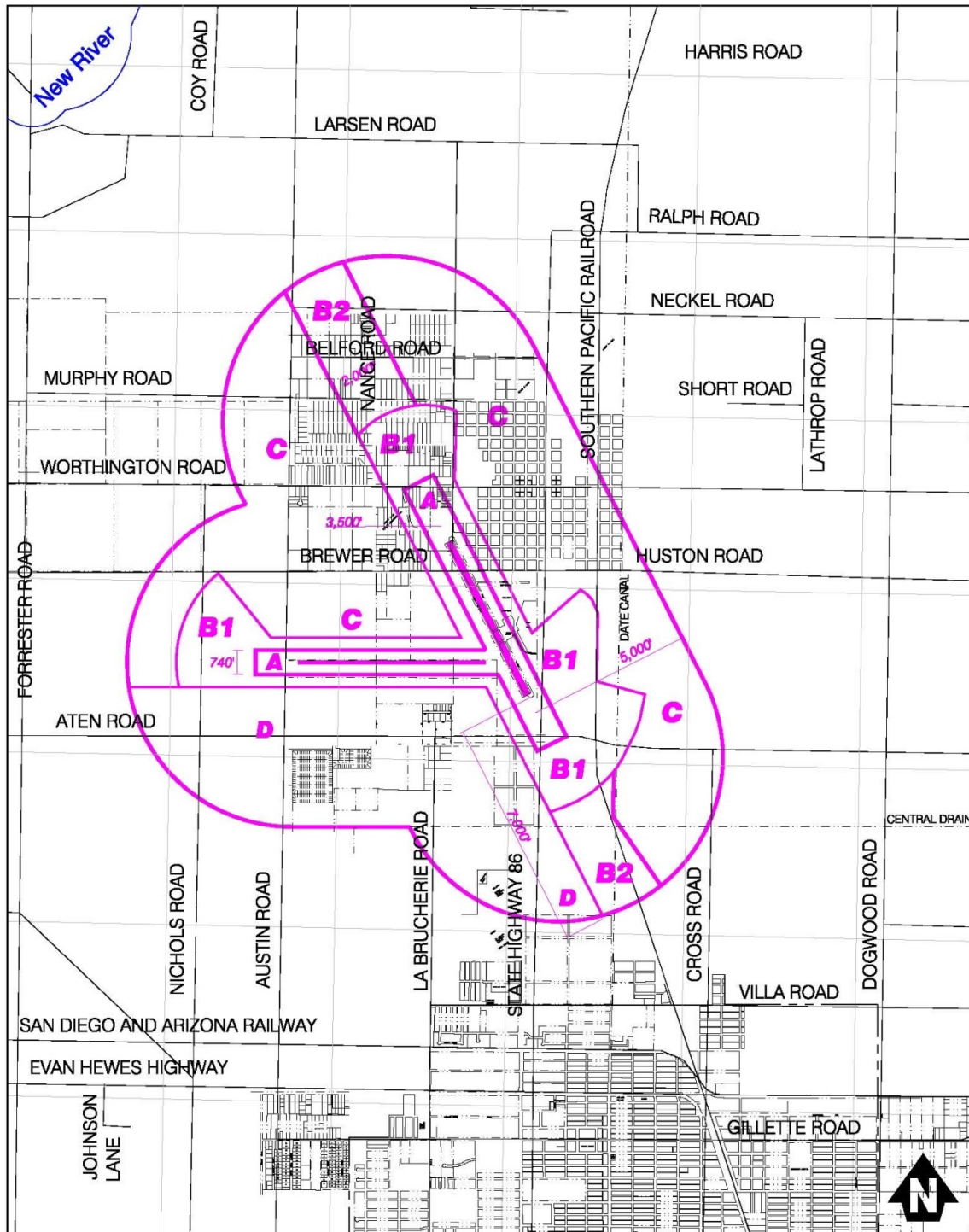
**Table III-2  
Compatibility Criteria**

Imperial County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

Zone	Location	Impact Elements	Maximum Densities		Required Open Land <sup>3</sup>
			Residential (du/ac) <sup>1</sup>	Other Uses (people/ac) <sup>2</sup>	
A	Runway Protection Zone or within Building Restriction Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High Risk</li> <li>High noise levels</li> </ul>	0	10	All Remaining
B1	Approach/Departure Zone and Adjacent to Runway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substantial risk – aircraft commonly below 400 ft. AGL or within 1,000 ft. of runway</li> <li>Substantial noise</li> </ul>	0.1	100	30%
B2	Extended Approach/Departure Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant risk – aircraft commonly below 800 ft. AGL</li> <li>Significant noise</li> </ul>	1	100	30%
C	Common Traffic Pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited risk – aircraft at or below 1,000 ft. AGL</li> <li>Frequent noise intrusion</li> </ul>	6	200	15%
D	Other Airport Environs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negligible risk</li> <li>Potential for annoyance from overflights</li> </ul>	No Limit	No Limit	No Requirement

Zone	Additional Criteria		Examples	
	Prohibited Uses	Other Development Conditions	Normally Acceptable Uses <sup>4</sup>	Uses Not Normally Acceptable <sup>5</sup>
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All structures except ones with location set by aeronautical function</li> <li>Assemblages of people</li> <li>Objects exceeding FAR Part 77 height limits</li> <li>Hazards to flight<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedication of aviation easement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aircraft tiedown apron</li> <li>Pastures, field crops, vineyards</li> <li>Automobile parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heavy poles, signs, large tree, etc.</li> </ul>
B1 and B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools, day care centers, libraries</li> <li>Hospitals, nursing homes</li> <li>Highly noise-sensitive uses</li> <li>Above ground storage</li> <li>Storage of highly flammable materials</li> <li>Hazards to flight<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locate structures maximum distances from extended runway centerline</li> <li>Minimum NLR<sup>7</sup> OF 25 dBA in residential and office buildings</li> <li>Dedication of aviation easement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses in Zone A</li> <li>Any agricultural use except ones attracting bird flocks</li> <li>Warehousing, truck terminals</li> <li>Single-story offices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential subdivisions</li> <li>Intensive retail uses</li> <li>Intensive manufacturing or food processing uses</li> <li>Multiple story offices</li> <li>Hotels and motels</li> </ul>
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools</li> <li>Hospitals, nursing homes</li> <li>Hazards to flight<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedication of overflight easement for residential uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses in Zone B</li> <li>Parks, playgrounds</li> <li>Low-intensity retail, offices, etc.</li> <li>Low-intensity retail, offices, etc.</li> <li>Low-intensity manufacturing, food processing</li> <li>Two-story motels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large shopping malls</li> <li>Theaters, auditoriums</li> <li>Large sports stadiums</li> <li>Hi-rise office buildings</li> </ul>
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hazards to flight<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deed notice required for residential development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All except ones hazardous to flight</li> </ul>	





### Compatibility Map Imperial County Airport

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UPDATED: September 15, 2004 - Map Correction on compatibility outlines.

airport land use compatibility plan





**3. Mid-Winter Fairgrounds**

The California Mid-Winter Fairground is located just south of downtown Imperial along Highway 86 across the highway from the Imperial County Airport. The Fairgrounds are operated by the 45th District Agricultural Association, Board of Directors and are estimated to bring as many as 100,000 visitors each season (Source: Imperial Valley Press). Currently, the Mid-Winter Fair is held every March while many other events are held throughout the year including car shows, livestock and 4-H shows, bridal and quinceañera expos, and truck driving school. The fairground facilities have been going through much needed repairs and upgrades.

**4. Specific Plan Areas**

Since approximately 2007, the City has annexed large tracts of land as specific plan areas. Specific Plans were adopted for these areas to ensure consistency with the General Plan and to ensure that the (horizontal) mixed-use projects are human-scaled and walkable. Generally, these Specific Plans ensure that open space and park areas are within ¼-mile of all homes and small commercial zones provide neighborhood-serving commercial uses (small market, dry cleaners, etc.) to all homes within a ½-mile radius. Table I-2 provides a listing of Specific Plan Areas. Please see Service Area Plan for more information.

**Table III-2  
Specific Plan Area and Status of Completion**

<b>Constructed (Partial or Fully)</b>	<b>Not Constructed (Under Review or Approval)</b>
Sunset Ranch	
Morningside	Bella Luna
Bratton	Estrella
Paseo Del Sol Dos	Western Developments
Morningstar	West Neckel
Imperial Business Park	Crown Commercial
Monterrey Park	Barioni Lakes
Sky Ranch	McFarland Ranch
Haas Commercial	Sanchez Ranch
Hoffner	Andalusa
Mayfield Ranch	Bougainvillea
Paseo Del Sol	Regional Park
Victoria Homes	Encanto Estates
Victoria Ranch	
Springfield	
Savanna Ranch	
La Fuente Senior	
Sandalwood Glen	
Wildflower	
Villas Pacifica	

Source: City of Imperial Subdivision Summary and Service Area Plan

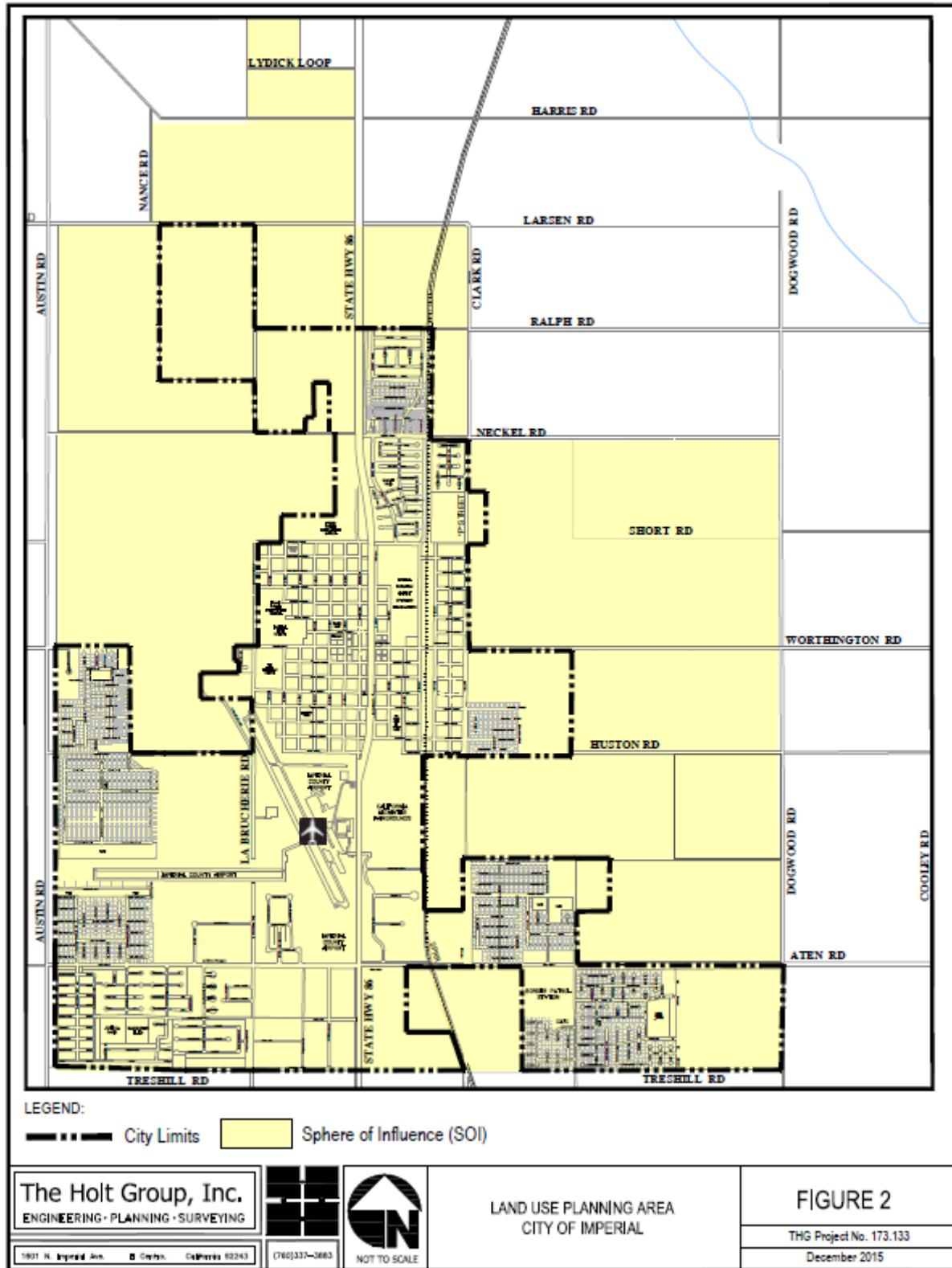
## 5. Sphere of Influence

The City's current Sphere of Influence includes County land outside of the City's boundaries. Land within the Sphere of Influence could be annexed into the City in the future. Most of the vacant or agricultural land within the Sphere of Influence is east of the City. Many Specific Plans for development have been approved in these areas. All the aforementioned facilities are within the City's adopted Sphere of Influence thus the planning area for this Element. Please refer to **Figure 2** Land Use Planning Area Map.

## 6. Imperial Valley College

Imperial Valley College is the major higher learning institution within the Imperial Valley. Although the College was not within the adopted 2015 Sphere of Influence, it is anticipated that the planning areas will extend east to incorporate the facility. Located approximately 3 miles east of the City, this facility provides educational services to approximately 7,000 students on an annual basis. Many of the programs and courses focus on job training and vocational skills that prepare Imperial Valley residents to enter the workforce.

Figure 2 - Land Use Planning Area



## IV. LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan for Imperial is one of the most important documents for the control of the direction of development that the City has. It serves as a graphic summary of land use designations and restrictions depicting the provisions of each of the elements and illustrating the arrangement of land uses at full development of the City; referred to as "ultimate build-out". The Land Use Plan does not establish specific time frames for the phasing of future development. Land use policies and the like are fully detailed in the text of the Plan. The Plan has further identified "Character Areas" for policy focus. Many of these are areas that the City anticipates will have the highest likelihood of change through redevelopment and new development over the life of the General Plan. Both Character Areas and Land Use Designations are the framework established by the community and City leadership to guide future development.

### A. Character Areas

For planning purposes and to ensure the community has unique and distinct areas, the City of Imperial is divided into eleven (11) character areas. Each Character Area has unique characteristics and opportunities that are addressed in the General Plan's policies. These areas are summarized below providing an overview of the existing conditions and desired vision. Please refer to Figure 3 for geographic distribution of these character areas. Additional information and graphics are found under Section B-Desired Character and Urban Forms.

#### 1. Gateway North Character Area

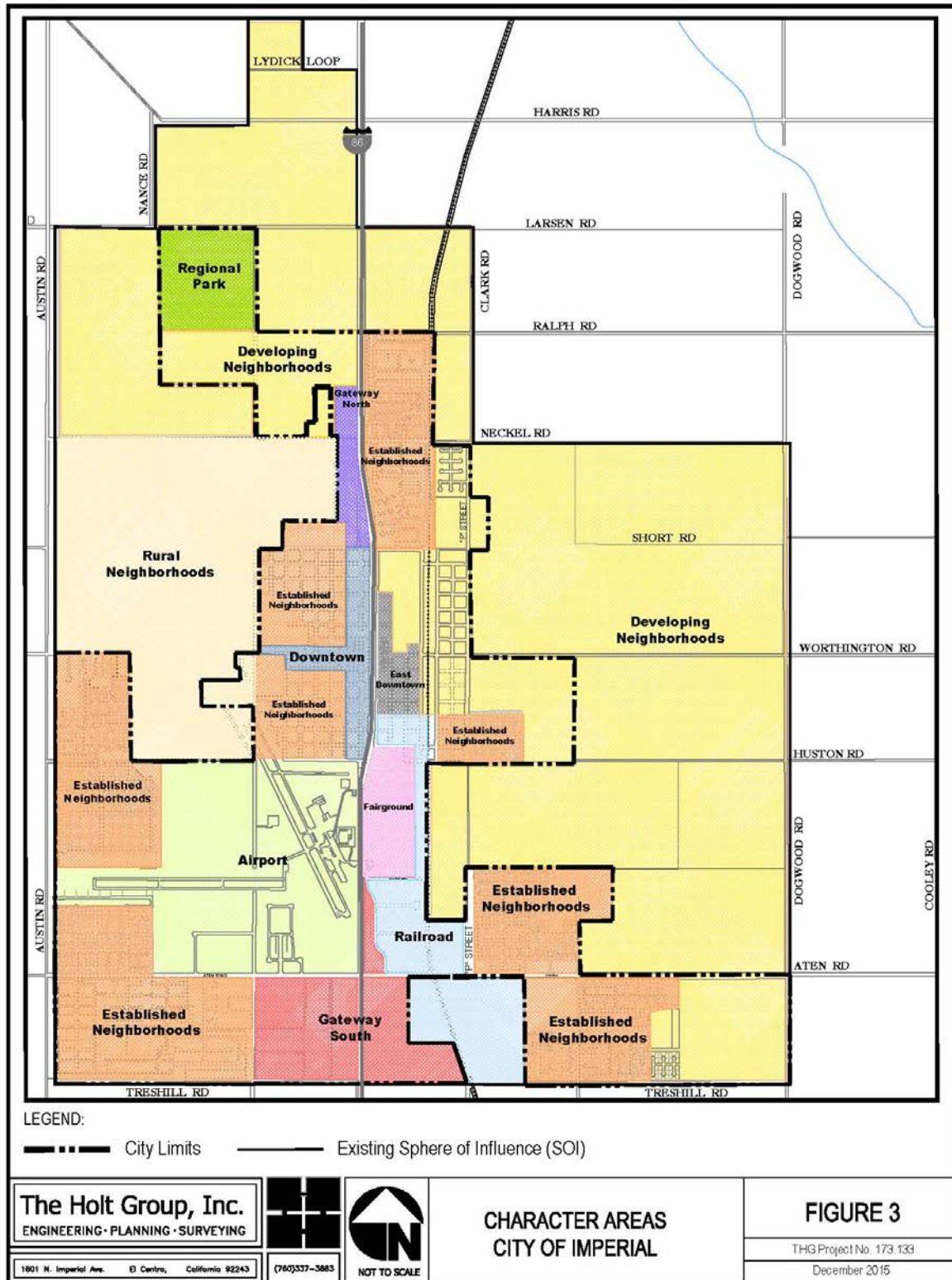
This character area is located at the northern entryway to the City along the west side of Highway 86. The area is anticipated to accommodate neighborhood commercial land uses. This character area is adjacent to vacant land west of Highway 86 where residential developments are planned and/or approved (Barioni Lakes). The Vision for the Gateway North Character Area is intended to:

- Create a signature look as the northern gateway into the City
- Provide auto-oriented and neighborhood-serving commercial and office
- Define identity via roadway beautification along Highway 86

#### 2. Central Downtown Character Area

As the Downtown Imperial Master Plan is implemented, the Downtown is becoming the civic, social and commercial center of the City. The pedestrian-friendly Downtown will offer a mix of locally-owned retail and restaurants, provide unique cultural experiences, and support higher density mixed use developments. The vision for the Downtown Character Area is intended to follow the vision set forth in the Imperial Downtown Plan as follows:

Figure 3 Character Areas



- Create strong sense of place and provide unique cultural experiences
- Support higher density mixed use development
- Include a multi-use trail along Hwy 86 and enhanced pedestrian crossing at Barioni Boulevard
- Provide a mixture of housing options and shopping opportunities

### **3. East Downtown Character Area**

This area, located on the east side of Highway 86 north and south of Barioni Boulevard, provides an opportunity to serve as an extension of Downtown. It is envisioned to offer commercial diversity, while still providing an attractive image for drivers. The vision for the East Downtown Character Area is intended to:

- Provide for franchise or chain stores and restaurants
- Maintain street frontage with parking in the rear.
- Pursue shared parking options
- Provide link to Downtown core

### **4. Airport Character Area**

This area includes the Imperial County Airport and its environs. This hub has the potential to increase jobs and revenues within the City. The vision for the Airport Character Area intends to serve as an economic hub via the following:

- Provide a mixture of industrial and locally-serving commercial uses
- Foster research and development activity
- Increase City's tax revenue
- Attract businesses and industry

### **5. Fairgrounds Character Area**

This character area includes the California Mid-Winter Fairgrounds. With private investment and/or a public-private partnership, this area has the potential to redevelop and create a new economic and job center for the City in the future. The Vision for the Fairgrounds Character Area is to:

- Maximize year round uses on site
- Allow sub-leases for commercial uses along SR-86
- Foster mixed use and office-commercial
- Encourage hotel development on site (allowable at fairgrounds by food and agriculture)

### **6. Established Neighborhoods**

The City of Imperial is home to numerous established neighborhoods that foster its strong sense of community, including Sky Ranch, Victoria Ranch, and Wildflower Subdivisions. These and other neighborhoods should be



protected and enhanced with future growth and development in the City. Some of the established neighborhoods are still under construction. The vision for the Established Neighborhoods Character Area is intended to encourage re-investment to:

- Ensure well-maintained roads, landscaping, and sidewalks
- Protect neighborhood character and safety through traffic calming
- Incorporate unique identities through entry features and streetscape amenities
- Utilize alleys and cul-de-sacs to enhance pedestrian connections and circulation

### **7. Developing Neighborhoods**

With the build-out of existing Specific Plan communities such as Mayfield and Morningside, and the development of new residential neighborhoods to the north and east, Imperial is well-poised to grow in the coming years. This new development is envisioned as a connected series of villages that support the overall existing character of the City. This character area includes the areas east of Highway 86 and the railroad extending up to Dogwood Road within the City's Sphere of Influence. The vision for the Developing Neighborhoods Character Area is intended to:

- Provide a variety of residential densities and housing types
- Include neighborhood-serving commercial centers and attractions
- Offer ample parks, open space, trails and amenities.
- Foster pedestrian, transit and bicycle circulation

### **8. Rural Neighborhoods**

Rural neighborhoods are an essential part of the City's character. This area includes the mature neighborhoods within Imperial County, not currently within City limits, south of Neckel Road and east of Austin Road abutting the City of Imperial. The vision for the Rural Neighborhoods Character Area intends to:

- Annex adjacent County neighborhoods into the City, while preserving the rural character of the established communities
- Encourage large lot residential and small-scale agriculture
- Incorporate open space and rural trails
- Provide and update infrastructure where needed

### **9. Gateway South**

This area includes the area along Highway 86, south of the airport and fairgrounds. Commercial centers in this area include east of Hwy 86: Crown Commercial, Haas Commercial; and west of Hwy 86: Imperial Business Park. This area has the potential to enhance the local economy, provide needed

services and employment opportunities, and serve as a gateway to the City. The Gateway South Character Area is intended to:

- Provide distinctive architecture and attractive streetscape
- Provide a mixture of retail commercial shopping opportunities
- Permit large format retail
- Foster job growth through light industrial and professional office

#### **10. Railroad Corridor**

The railroad corridor runs parallel with Highway 86 through the City of Imperial. While providing an unparalleled industrial benefit, it also poses a challenge for connecting the east and west portions of the City. Imperial Irrigation District (IID) headquarters are located within this character area. The Railroad Corridor Character area vision intends to:

- Foster heavy and railroad serving industrial
- Provide at grade crossings where appropriate to facilitate east-west connections
- Adequately buffer adjacent residential

#### **11. Regional Park & Equestrian Area**

The Regional Park and equestrian center is to be located along the northern part of the City Limits in an area bound by Larsen Road to the north, Ralph Road to the south and Nance and La Brucherie Roads at the respective west and east boundaries. The vision for the Regional Park and Equestrian Center Character area intends to:

- Support equestrian and recreational activities at a regional level.
- Adequately buffer agricultural lands under production to the north.
- Spur economic development through tourism that will draw visitors from outside the region
- Support recreational travel via RV park, open space recreation, and commercial developments.

### **B. Land Use Designations**

The Land Use Plan includes several land use categories – Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Agricultural, and Public Facility categories. Public and quasi-public uses such as City Hall, the California Mid-Winter Fairgrounds, existing parks, the Imperial Irrigation District Headquarters, and existing schools are included in the Public Facility category. Additionally, the Land Use Plan can also accommodate specific plan areas. While terms like “residential,” “commercial” and “industrial” are generally understood, State law requires a clear and concise description of each land use. Full descriptions can be found in the preceding **Table IV-1-Land Use Designations**. Future development areas are designated according to the planned

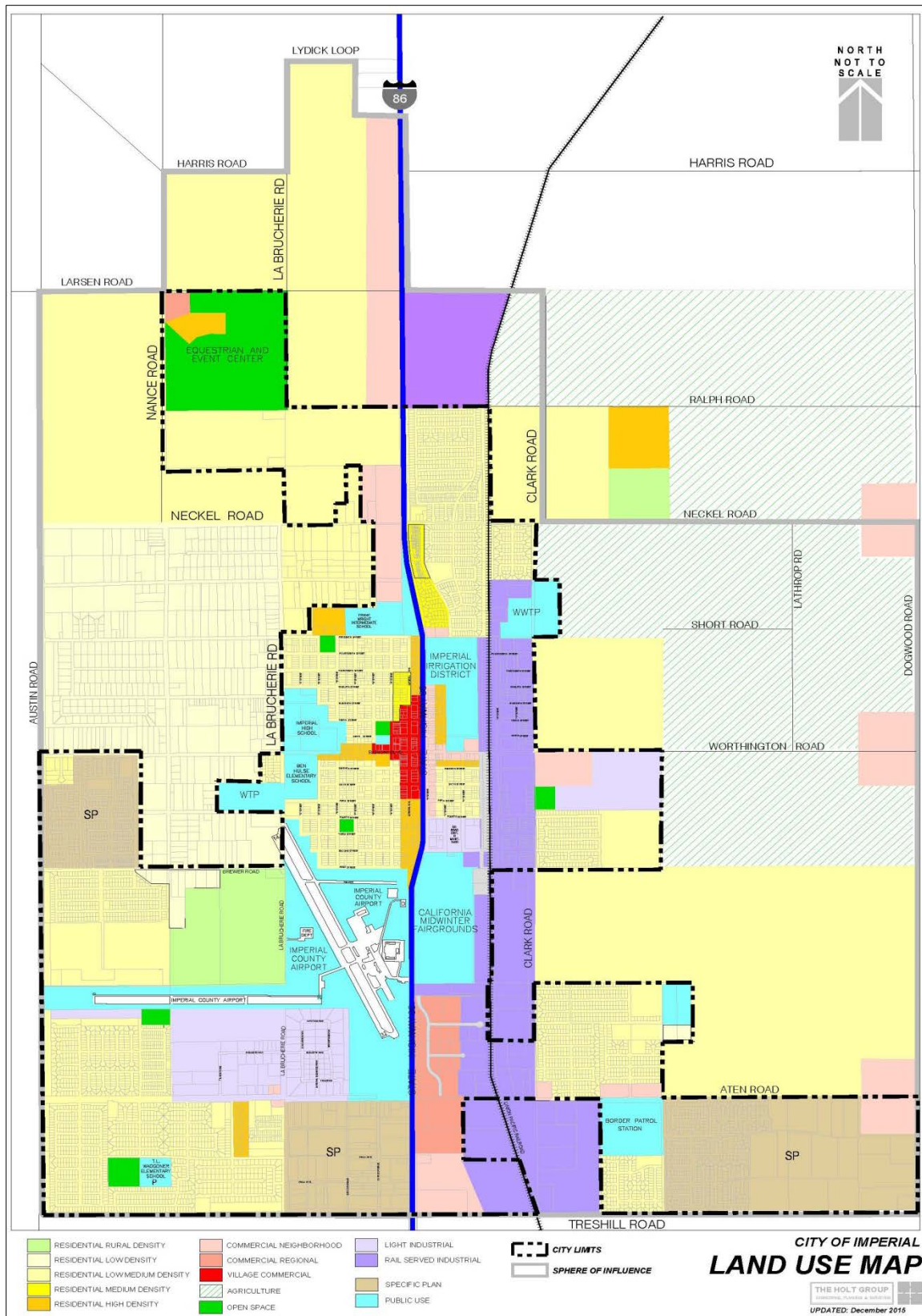
land use for the area as depicted in **Figure 4-Land Use Map** on page 15 of this element.

**Table IV-1  
Land Use Designations**

<b>Residential Land Uses</b>	
<b>Residential Rural</b>	The Residential Rural designation provides for very low density single-family detached homes on large parcels that may include agricultural activities (farming and livestock). The density of this category is 0.5 to 1 dwelling unit per acre.
<b>Residential Low</b>	The Residential Low Density designation provides a transitional area between the Rural Residential use and other higher density residential uses. The density of this category is 1 to 2 dwelling units per acre.
<b>Residential Low Medium</b>	The Residential Low Medium designation is the primary residential land use designation within the City. A majority of the residential uses within the City are located within this designation. The density of this category is 2 to 5 dwelling units per acre.
<b>Residential Medium</b>	The Residential Medium designation provides for small-lot single family detached residences and single family attached residences. This designation is anticipated to accommodate condominium and townhome developments. Units within this category are generally developed as an attached product with densities ranging from 5 to 20 dwelling units per acre.
<b>Residential High</b>	The Residential High designation provides for multi-family attached residences. Developments within this designation are anticipated to be apartments and high density condominiums. This category has a density range from 20 to 30 dwelling units per acre.
<b>Commercial Land Uses</b>	
<b>Commercial Neighborhood</b>	The Commercial Neighborhood designation provides for local community serving commercial uses like grocery stores, drug stores, and ancillary uses that support residential neighborhoods within a half mile radius.
<b>Commercial Office</b>	The Commercial Office designation provides for uses such as offices, restaurants, theaters, health clubs, and ancillary retail commercial mainly within areas of the City close to the Downtown Core area.
<b>Commercial Village</b>	The Commercial Village designation provides for restaurant, retail, and business uses located within the Downtown Core area. Mixed Use residential will continue to be encouraged.
<b>Commercial Regional</b>	The Commercial Regional designation provides for uses that draw customers from areas outside of the City (i.e. neighboring Cities and County areas). Typical uses include major retail users (big-box), automobile dealerships, and other commercial retail users that serve customers at a regional scale.

<b>Industrial Land Uses</b>	
<b>Light Industrial</b>	The Light Industrial designation provides for uses that include industrial office parks, research and development facilities, incubator industrial developments, and warehousing/ distribution centers. These uses are anticipated to be located in close proximity to other industrial uses as well as the Airport and as buffer between Rail Served Industrial and Downtown Core area.
<b>General Industrial</b>	The General Industrial designation provides for uses that include the same uses as the Light Industrial designation, and in addition, industrial uses that involve fabrication, assembly, packaging, processing, and storage in conjunction with limited retail activities. The General Industrial category is generally proposed to be located around the airport or abutting rail served industrial.
<b>Rail-Served Industrial</b>	The Rail Served Industrial designation provides for Industrial/ agricultural uses that require rail access. These uses will be focused within areas along the existing railroad right-of-way or in close proximity to this facility.
<b>Agricultural Land Uses</b>	
<b>Agriculture</b>	The Agriculture designation allows active agricultural and farming activities within the City. These activities may include farming, grazing, livestock rearing, and limited agricultural processing.
<b>Public Land Uses</b>	
<b>Public Facility</b>	The Public Facility designation allows for uses that are typically publicly owned or serve a public purpose. School and park sites as well as other City owned and operated facilities are located within this land use designation. In addition, other publicly owned facilities such as the Imperial County Fairgrounds and Imperial Irrigation District offices and grounds are included in this designation.
<b>Specific Plan Areas</b>	
<b>Specific Plan Area</b>	The Specific Plan designation provides for unique projects that require special development standards, involve development of uses in a comprehensive manner, and/or necessitate development regulations that are not currently allowed under the City's current policies and regulations.

Figure 4- Land Use Map



**C. Land Use Compatibility**

The relationship within the Imperial General Plan land use designations and between the Imperial General Plan and Zoning designation as of the date of this General Plan is important for orderly development. Land Uses must be arranged for compatibility with abutting land uses and properties should be zoned to be consistent with the land use policy map. Additionally, land uses within the airport land use compatibility plan area would require additional consideration per Appendix A.

**Table IV-2  
Land Use Compatibility Matrix**

	Residential Rural	Residential Low	Residential Low Medium	Residential Medium	Residential High	Mobile Home Park	Commercial Neighborhood	Commercial Office	Commercial Village	Commercial Regional	Light Industrial	General Industrial	Rail-Served Industrial	Agriculture	Public Facility	Specific Plan Area
Residential Rural		C	C	C	I	I	P	P	P	P	I	I	I	C	C	
Residential Low	C		C	C	I	I	P	P	P	P	I	I	I		C	
Residential Low Medium	C	C		C	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		C	
Residential Medium	C	C	C		P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		C	
Residential High	I	I	P	P		C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		C	
Mobile Home Park	I	I	P	P	C		C	C	C	C	C	C	C		C	
Commercial Neighborhood	P	P	P	P	C	C		C	C	C	C	C	C		C	
Commercial Office	P	P	P	P	C	C	C		C	C	C	C	C		C	
Commercial Village	P	P	P	P	C	C	C	C		C	C	C	C		C	
Commercial Regional	P	P	P	P	C	C	C	C	C		C	C	C		C	
Light Industrial	I	I	P	P	C	C	C	C	C	C		C	C		C	
General Industrial	I	I	P	P	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		C		C	
Rail-Served Industrial	I	I	P	P	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C			C	
Agriculture	C										C				C	
Public Facility	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Specific Plan Area															C	

*C = Compatible*

*I = Incompatible*

*P= Potentially Compatible/May be found compatible based upon provision established through a Conditional Use Permit.*



## V. BUILDING TYPES

All complete cities have a wide variety of types of buildings that vary depending on the use, location and intended intensity of development. While there are a large number of building types, the following are the type of buildings that will help implement the City's vision for the established character areas. The proceeding information on building types provides a general description of the building type and general rules of thumb on the density/intensity and lot size for each type of development. These summaries are meant to be guidelines rather than standards. Other building types may be used as long as they conform to the vision and character defined in this General Plan.

### A. RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

#### Residential Rural (RR)

- **Country Home Sites** are low density single-family detached homes on large parcels that may include agricultural activities (farming and livestock). Typical lot size is 1 acre. The maximum density is 0.5 to 1 unit per acre.



#### Residential Low Density (RL)

- **Ranch Homes** represent a transitional area between the Rural Residential use and other higher density residential uses. Typical lot size is 20,000 square feet, and maximum density is 1 to 2 units per acre.



#### Residential Low Medium (RLM)

- **Single Family Homes** are the primary residential land use designation within this category and within the City. Typical lot size is 6,000 square feet. A majority of the residential uses within the City are located within this designation. The density of this category is 2 to 5 units per acre.



### **Residential Medium Density (RM)**

- **Condominiums-** Building or group of buildings in which units are owned individually, but the structure, common use areas, and facilities are owned by all owners on a proportional, undivided basis. The density of this category is 5-20 units per acre. Typical lot areas are approximately 7,500 square feet.
- **Townhomes-** A building of attached dwellings arranged side by side, with above grade to provide rooms and unit access from the street. The building is located at the front of the property, with the garage at the rear, ideally separated by a rear yard. The density range is generally between 5-15 units per acre with typical lot areas of 7,500 square feet.
- **Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex-** A building with two or more dwellings surrounded on all four sides by setbacks and may contain dwelling units and/or commercial uses as allowed by the zone. Onsite open space is provided through a rear yard for all the dwellings or through individual yards for each dwelling. The density range is generally between 5 and 10 units per acre. Lot areas are typically 7,500 square feet.



### **Residential High Density (RH)**

- **Apartments-** A structure containing three or more attached dwelling units for the use of individual households. These structures are typically owned by a single-owner, with individual units leased to the occupants. The maximum density of these structures is 30 units per net acre.
- **High Density Condominiums-** Similar to high density apartments, the maximum density of these structures is 30 units per net acre, generally developed as an attached product that is sold to individual owners.
- **Mobile Home Parks** are not an independent category, but rather allowed under the High Density Residential land use. Mobile Homes Parks will not be designated to specific areas for the exclusive development of mobile home units. Parks are typically equipped with shared facilities for recreation, laundry and storage. Density in this category ranges from 5 to 8 dwelling units per acre. Total area should be at least 4,000 square feet per unit space.





**B. COMMERCIAL LAND USES**

**Commercial Neighborhood (CN)**

- Community-serving commercial uses like grocery stores, drug stores, and ancillary uses that support residential neighborhoods within a half-mile radius. Lot areas are generally at least 6,750 square feet. These lots have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.



**Commercial Regional (CR)**

- **Offices-** Located within areas of the City close to the Downtown Core area or in business parks. Lot areas are generally at least 6,000 square feet. These lots must have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.



- **Restaurants-** This designation provides for restaurants either close to the Downtown Core or in business parks. Lot areas are generally at least 6,000 square feet. These lots must have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.



- **Retail-** Located within areas of the City close to the Downtown Core area or in business parks. Lot areas are generally at least 6,000 square feet. These lots must have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.



### **Commercial Regional (CR)**

- **Major Retail ("Big-box" Stores)-** Draws customers from areas outside of the City (i.e. neighboring Cities and County areas). Lot areas are generally over 100,000 square feet. These lots must have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.
- **Automobile Dealerships-** Draws customers from areas outside of the City (i.e. neighboring Cities and County areas). Lot areas are generally between four and five acres. These lots must have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.



### **Village Commercial (VC)**

- **Restaurants-** Located within the Downtown Core area. Intended as the social and civic heart of the City of Imperial with a vibrant, pedestrian friendly and family-oriented atmosphere. These lots have a maximum lot coverage of 40% and minimum area of 2,500 square feet.
- **Retail-** Located within the Downtown Core area. Intended as the social and civic heart of the City with a vibrant, pedestrian friendly and family-oriented atmosphere. These lots have a maximum lot coverage of 40% and minimum area of 2,500 square feet.



## C. INDUSTRIAL

### Industrial Light (IL)

- **Business Parks-** Light industrial use, located close to other industrial uses as well as the Airport, and act as a buffer between Rail Served Industrial and Downtown Core area. These lots have a maximum lot coverage of 60% and are generally over 10,000 square feet in lot size.
- **Research/Development Facilities-** Light industrial use, located close to other industrial uses as well as the Airport that generate employment opportunities. Lot areas are generally at least 10,000 square feet and have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.
- **Incubator Facilities-** Located close to other industrial uses as well as the Airport, and support business start-ups and small business operations. Lot areas are generally at least 10,000 square feet and have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.
- **Warehousing and Distribution Facilities-** Located close to other industrial uses and the Airport. Lot areas are generally at least 10,000 square feet and have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.





**Industrial Light (IL)**

- **Processing Facilities-** Can include fabrication, assembly, packaging, or other processing. These lots tend to be larger in size. Lot areas are generally at least one acre and have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.
- **Storage Facilities-** Facilities for storage range from business operational storage to storage services available to the general public and are generally located next to rail industrial and light industrial. Lot areas are generally at least one acre and have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.



**Industrial Rail-Served (IR)**

- **Freight Facilities** and similar uses are focused within areas along the existing railroad right-of-way or in close proximity to this facility and typically rely on the use of rail services for transport of goods. Lot areas are generally over 150,000 square feet and have a maximum lot coverage of 60%.



## D. AGRICULTURAL

### Agriculture (AG)

- **Farm Operations-** Allows active agricultural and farming activities within the City. These activities may include farming, grazing, livestock rearing, and limited agricultural processing. These lots have a maximum density of 1 unit per 2.5 acres.



## E. PUBLIC

### Public Use (PU)

- **Public Facilities-** Public offices, educational facilities and recreational areas are all considered public uses allowed within this land use. It can include special public districts, including the Imperial Irrigation District Headquarters. These areas tend to have wide open space areas.
- **Recreational Areas –** Regional public attractions like the fairgrounds which is a publicly-owned 100 acre multi-use event facility, which hosts the annual California Mid-Winter Fair. The Imperial Equestrian Center & Recreational Park would also be considered a regional public attraction. These areas require vast areas of open space.



**F. OPEN SPACE**

**Open Space (OS)**

- **Community Park & Recreation Facilities-** Recreational areas for use of general public and maintained by Community Facility Districts, the City of Imperial, or other public entities.



- **Stormwater Detention Facilities**  
– Areas that may serve a dual purpose or be strictly reserved for the management of stormwater runoff during storm events. These are typically privately owned facilities or facilities maintained through a Community facility District.



## VI. DENSITY AND INTENSITY STANDARDS

General Plan Land Use Designation descriptions are further supplemented by a quantification of the type and intensity of development allowed in each Land Use Designation. These standards are established for population density and non-residential building intensity.

### A. Standards for Population Density

The standards for population density within the Imperial General Plan area are expressed in terms of numbers of persons per acre for each of the residential and agricultural land use categories defined in the General Plan. Some areas within the City will have a greater population density than others. Population densities tend to have a direct correlation to the number of dwelling units per acre. In all types of housing, including both single family and multi-family, it was found that the average household size is 3.35 persons per household, according to the California Department of Finance 2012 Population and Housing Estimates for the City of Imperial. Therefore, when referenced in terms of persons per acre, the following units per acre for each of the residential land use designations can be expressed in terms of persons per acre as outlined below. As noted in the outlined data in the table below, the maximum density of 102 persons per acre would only occur in the Residential High land use designation.

**Table VI-1  
Standards for Population Density**

Land Use Category	Units per Acre	Persons per Acre
Residential Rural	.50 to 1.0	2 to 4
Residential Low	1 to 2	4 to 6
Residential Low Medium	2 to 5	6 to 16
Residential Medium	5 to 20	16 to 62
Residential High	20 to 30	62 to 93
Agricultural	1 per 2.5 acre	1 to 3

### B. Standards for Building Intensity

The standards for building intensity within the Imperial Planning Area and as designated in this General Plan are expressed in terms of the maximum percentage of a lot or parcel that may be covered by buildings and accessory structures, and

by the maximum height of buildings and accessory structures allowed within each land use designation as outlined in **Table VI -2-Standards for Building Intensities**. Additionally, height limits in the vicinity of the Imperial County Airport are restricted by FAA Part 77 requirements which in turn affects intensities for these areas.

**Table VI -2  
Standards for Building Intensities**

<b>Residential Rural</b>	35%	35 FT
<b>Residential Low</b>	35%	35 FT
<b>Residential Low Medium</b>	50%	35 FT
<b>Residential Medium</b>	50%	35 FT
<b>Residential High</b>	60%	35 FT
<b>Mobile Home Park</b>	55%	35 FT
<b>Agricultural</b>	35%	35 FT
<b>Commercial Neighborhood</b>	60%	35 FT
<b>Commercial Office</b>	60%	35 FT
<b>Commercial Village</b>	40%	35 FT
<b>Commercial Regional</b>	35%	35 FT
<b>Light Industrial</b>	60%	35 FT
<b>General Industrial</b>	60%	35 FT
<b>Rail Served Industrial</b>	60%	35 FT

## VII. GENERAL PLAN LAND USE BUILD-OUT

The Land Use Plan describes the distribution of designated land uses to accommodate development housing, population, and non-residential land uses. This section provides a breakdown of land uses with the Imperial Planning Area and applies the aforementioned densities and intensities for the purpose of identifying the effective development capacity of the Land Use Plan for both residential units/population and non-residential units via square footage.

### A. General Plan Buildout Projections

Based on the proposed land uses and anticipated development within the City of Imperial, it is estimated that over 15,000 dwelling units would be located within the current City and City's Sphere of Influence at buildout. In addition, approximately 42 million square feet of commercial and industrial uses could provide valuable services and jobs to residents within the City and surrounding communities.

**Table VII -1  
General Plan Buildout Projections**

Land Use	Acres (City Limits)	Acres (SOI)	Density	Intensity	Total DU	Total SF
Agriculture	0	1,132	0.40	0.35	453	
Commercial Neighborhood	84	140	N/A	0.60	N/A	9,757,440
Commercial Office	60	0	N/A	0.60	N/A	2,613,600
Commercial Regional	19	67	N/A	0.35	N/A	3,746,160
Commercial Village	4	0	12.5	0.40	50	174,240
General Industrial	100	0	N/A	0.60	N/A	4,356,000
Light Industrial				0.60		
Rail Served Industrial	150	355	N/A	0.60	N/A	21,997,800
Public Use	50	0	6.00	NA	300	
Residential High	8	0	20.00	0.60	160	NA
Residential Low Density	0	811	2.00	0.35	1,622	NA
Residential Low Medium	263	2,050	5.00	0.50	11,565	NA
Residential Medium	0	0	20.00	0.50	0	NA
Residential Rural	129	0	1.00	0.35	129	NA
Specific Plan Areas	185	0	6.00	NA	1,110	NA
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,058</b>	<b>4,555</b>				
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5,613</b>				<b>15,421</b>	<b>42,645,240</b>



## **B. General Plan Population Projections**

Population growth is largely influenced by land use restrictions. The previous sections provided an overview of the City's land use restrictions and developable acreage by land use both in number of dwelling units for residential land uses and in anticipated acreage for non-residential uses. In this section, growth projections are calculated for residential land uses.

### **1. Maximum Land Use Densities**

The prior build-out projections assume the maximum densities allowed. Population projections will need to apply an 80% realistic maximum development ratio. This discounted density is a conservative calculation in order to discount for land areas that will not have residential use because those areas more than likely that will be used for public improvements such as roadways, parks, retention basins, and other similar facilities that impact the developable land ratio. These factors are consistent with the City's adopted Service Area Plan.

### **2. Residential Growth Projections**

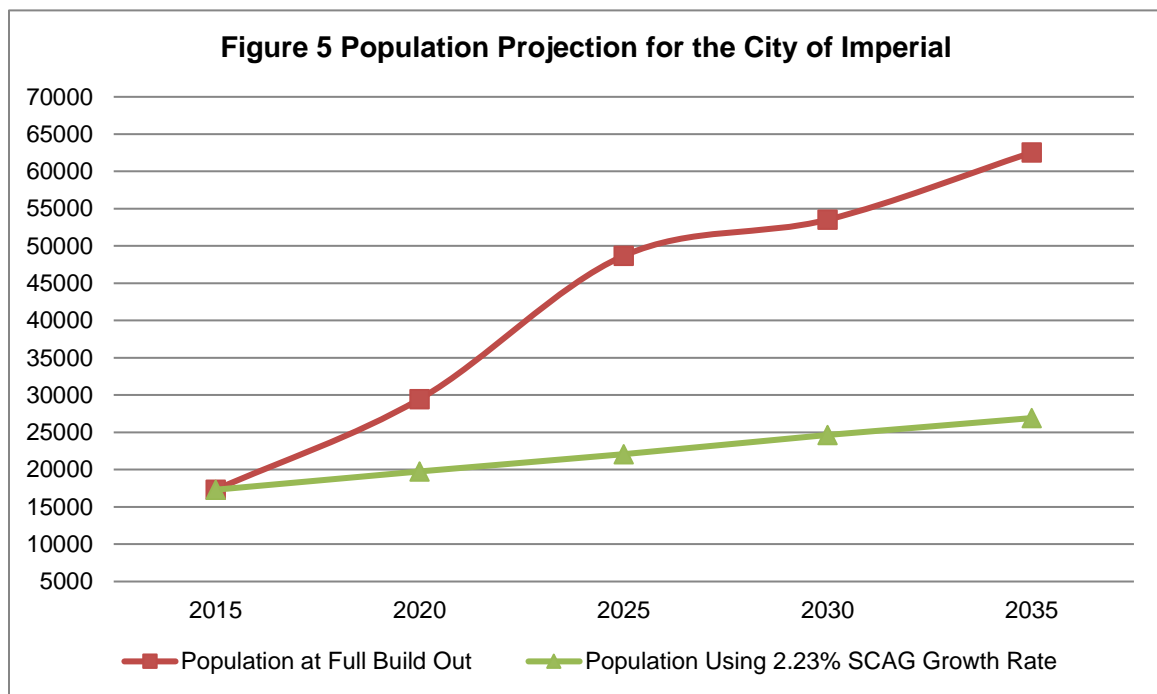
The residential growth projections provide the anticipated future residential development within the planning area based on the most current land use designations and their allowable densities as previously discussed. The land use designations for the City and Sphere of Influence are based on the designation as shown in the **General Plan Land Use Map**. An average household size of 3.35 persons per household was used to calculate population projections from any given total number of dwelling units. Base information was obtained from assessor parcel maps, the City of Imperial Service Area Plan, an on-site land use survey, the California Department of Finance and building permit information through December 2014.

The City of Imperial may experience a gradual population growth of 2.23 percent that would reasonably place the Imperial population at 26,923 at the 20 year mark and compares it to population growth at full General Plan Build-out. The City may reach 62,541 residents at the end of the twenty year plan period if full build-out is achieved as noted in Table VI-2 that follows and further compared in Figure 5.

**Table VII -2  
Population Projections for City of Imperial at Build-Out**

Year	Population at 2.23 % Growth Rate	Population With Approved Development	Total Dwelling Units
2015	17,313	17,313	5,168
2020	19,766	29,476	8,799
2025	22,072	48,692	14,535
2030	24,648	53,533	15,980
2035	26,923	62,541	18,669

**Figure 5-Population Projections**



*"Population at Full Build-Out" calculated by determining realistic number of dwelling units from Planning Area and multiplying by 3.35 person per household.*

**C. General Plan Economic Growth**

Non-residential projects largely impact economic growth. Non-residential development include commercial operations, industrial, business/office use, and quasi-government facilities and services. Non-residential development is calculated in square footage. The methodology for obtaining existing and future non-residential square footage is similar to that of the residential projections in that a coverage factor is assigned.

Table VII -3 Non-Residential Development

City Limits Land Use	Existing Development Within City	Future Development Within City	Build-Out Development City Limits
Village Commercial	172,225	40,066	212,291
Neighborhood Commercial	417,276	951,463	1,368,739
Commercial Regional	328,329	525,623	853,952
Commercial Office	1,078,720	1,559,012	2,637,732
General Industrial	660,369	5,495,219	6,155,588
Rail Served Industrial	1,159,978	1,925,544	3,085,522
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4,179,951</b>	<b>10,133,873</b>	<b>14,313,824</b>

Annexations Land Use	Existing In Annexation Areas	Future In Annexation Areas	Buildout In Annexation Areas
Neighborhood Commercial	11,260	1,881,900	1,893,160
Commercial Regional	33,242	2,885,676	2,918,918
General Industrial	0	0	0
Rail Served Industrial	403,374	6,441,881	6,845,255
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>447,876</b>	<b>11,209,457</b>	<b>11,657,333</b>

<b>TOTAL SF in SOI</b>	<b>4,627,827</b>	<b>21,343,330</b>	<b>25,971,157</b>
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#### D. Planning for the Future

The City of Imperial envisions moderate growth within the next 20 years. Lands within the City are limited and its build out will likely see changes in the character of development, largely influenced by the market and consumer demand. The type and intensity of residential development may change in the future, as the City's demographic profile changes and people look for different housing options, whether because of aging, changing lifestyles, or employment choices. The mix of land use designations and the character preferences will enable the City to development detailed standards in the Zoning Ordinance to meet all the land use needs of the community and enhance the quality of life for all residents, businesses and visitors. In this venue, this Land Use Element includes policies and programs to address anticipated development trends in the future. Periodic review of the Land Use Map and the policies and programs in this Element will assure that the City is able to meet the needs in response to changing times and demands.

## VIII. GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

Future land use changes in the City of Imperial are centered around the development of new commercial uses, both in the City Center/Village area and on the existing outskirts of the City adjacent to Highway 86 and Aten Road, the development of a new auto mall, and the continuing development of new industrial uses adjacent to the airport. New residential developments are, and will continue to be, important in the future, when existing agricultural land is converted to urban uses. The Land Use Plan anticipates the growth of Imperial through the year 2035 and incorporates the following goals, policies and objectives, to meet the growing demands.



### GOAL #1 GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

To implement the successful transformation of the City from a small town into a medium, full service City while maintaining its rural character via planned and orderly development.

**Policy 1.1** The City shall review its Sphere of Influence on a periodic basis to ensure that anticipated growth within the City can be accommodated and planned for with proper services and facilities.

**Action 1.1.1** Review the Sphere of Influence boundaries in conjunction with any Housing Element Updates and modify boundary to the logical extension of the areas needed to accommodate the anticipated growth.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** At least every five years

**Action 1.1.2** The City shall maintain current information concerning the capabilities of the public services and facilities it provides via a periodic Municipal Service Review update.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Every five years

**Policy 1.2** Expansion of the Sphere of Influence boundaries shall take into consideration and preserve and enhance the rural character of Imperial through the encouragement of land uses and development that is consistent with a rural lifestyle and image.

**Action 1.2.1** Active agricultural use should be promoted for the areas located outside of the City limits, within the Cities Planning Boundary and Sphere of Influence as interim land use.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Action 1.2.2** Discourage premature conversion of agricultural land to urban uses within the City's Sphere of Influence and potential areas of annexations and encourage agricultural production of vacant lands as an interim use until development occurs.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Policy 1.3** Land use patterns and development densities shall be consistent with the capabilities of existing and planned public services and facilities.

**Action 1.3.1** New development shall construct new facilities, or increase the capacity of existing facilities, if the existing facility capacity is unable to meet the new demand.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department/Developers

**Funding Sources:** Impact Fees/Developers

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as projects are proposed

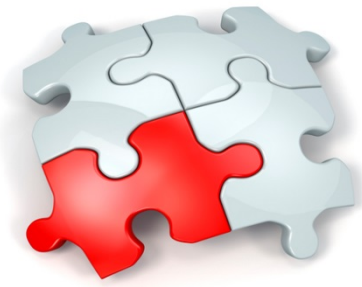
**Policy 1.4** Specific Plans shall be required for projects proposing flexible development standards that differ from the zoning ordinance.

**Action 1.4.1** Changes and variations in the Zoning Ordinance in a Specific Plan shall be offset by high quality design, amenities, and mix of land uses.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** Developers

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as projects are proposed



## GOAL #2 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

To achieve land use compatibility throughout the City and promote character areas, where appropriate.

**Policy 2.1** Appropriate densities/intensities shall be established for new development projects and increased within the appropriate character areas to accommodate a variety of land use and development types.

**Action 2.1.1** Periodically update the City of Imperial Zoning Ordinance Standards, consistent with this Land Use Element, and in response to any increased demand in project densities and intensities.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund/Developers (as requested)

**Implementation Schedule:** At least every five (5) years

**Policy 2.2** The Land Use Map, and thus the Zoning Map, shall compliment the goals and policies of all General Plan Elements.

**Action 2.2.1** Maintain consistency between the Land Use Map and Zoning Map, consistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Matrix

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department and IC ALUC

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Review Zoning Ordinance Bi-Annually

**Action 5.1.1** Maintain Floodways and Fault Zones free and clear of any structures and ensure zoning designations are consistent with the construction restrictions identified in the Safety Element.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** Permit Fees for Site Plan Reviews

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as Development is Proposed

**Policy 2.3** New Development (urban or rural) shall prioritize compatibility with surrounding land uses, when developing adjacent to existing uses and where land use conflicts exist, they shall be addressed through the use of adequate buffering, setbacks, or construction measures.



**Action 2.3.1** Review all development proposals for compatibility and where conflicts exist, conditions shall be incorporated to mitigate any potential impacts

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department and Planning Commission

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as projects are proposed.

**Action 2.3.2** Review all development proposals within close proximity to the Imperial County Airport for compatibility with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and incorporate conditions to mitigate any potential impacts.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department and Planning Commission

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as projects are proposed.



### GOAL #3 QUALITY OF LIFE

Availability of adequate public services and facilities for all existing and proposed development and create an aesthetically pleasing, full service community with an excellent quality of life.

**Policy 3.1** Strive to create multi-generational, family-friendly public spaces throughout the developed community that are widely used by everyone and to maximize existing infrastructure.

**Action 3.1.1** Continue to invest in libraries, recreation centers, parks, and recreational facilities.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Parks & Recreation Department/City Council

**Funding Sources:** General Fund, Impact Fees, Grants

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Action 3.1.2** Continue to encourage youth participation in the planning process of art in public places and development of recreational facilities and amenities.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Parks & Recreation Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund, Impact Fees, Grants

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Action 3.1.3** Continue to create opportunities for leisure and venues to ensure that teens and young adults have safe ways to enrich their lives.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Parks & Recreation Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund, Impact Fees, Grants

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Policy 3.2** Encourage the provision of a high-level of community amenities and design features as a way of balancing increased density for a very high quality, amenity rich livable community.

**Action 3.2.1** The City shall incorporated density bonus provisions in all developer agreements for the discretionary consideration of developers.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department/City Council

**Funding Sources:** General Fund, Developers

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as projects are proposed

**Policy 3.3** Achieve and maintain a high standard of appearance of land and buildings consistent with the community character.

**Action 3.3.1** The City shall encourage beautification in existing and developing areas via art in public places and landscaped areas.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund, Developers

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as projects are proposed

**Action 3.3.2** Commercial Development along Highway 86 and particularly at the north and south gateways shall be encouraged to be of high architectural quality and provide for gateway monumentation at key intersections.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning & Building Department

**Funding Sources:** Property Owners, General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as opportunities arise

**Action 3.3.3** The City shall maintain and expand programs to prevent the deterioration of existing residential and commercial areas.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** Grant Resources, Property Owners

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as projects are proposed



## GOAL #4 ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Achieve a balanced and varied economic base which provides a broad range of goods, services, and employment to the City's residents and the region in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing and consistent with the character areas.

**Policy 4.1** Commercial land use designations shall allow a full range of retail, office, service and institutional businesses within close proximity to and for the convenience of residents.

**Action 4.1.1** Encourage the integration of a wide range of support services at employment centers/business parks including child care, fitness facilities, and convenience retail shops via the Zoning Ordinance.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Evaluate zoning within 5 years of General Plan Land Use Element Update adoptions

**Action 4.1.2** Support and promote prime agricultural business operations within the City Limits and Sphere of Influence to strengthen the economic return to the City while preserving the City's rural character.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department and Chamber of Commerce

**Funding Sources:** Imperial Chamber of Commerce and City of Imperial

**Implementation Schedule:**

**Action 4.1.2** Allow home based businesses within existing residential uses to increase economic activity within the character area.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Policy 4.2** Development along Highway 86 frontage shall be encouraged to not only attract regional sales but to serve as strong character identification and gateway to the City.

**Action 4.2.1** City of Imperial should market and subsidize, as feasible, large commercial retailers within the north and south character areas and along Highway 86 to serve the broader region and establishment of community gateways.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department/City Council  
**Funding Sources:** Property Owners, General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as opportunities arise

**Action 4.2.2** Regional commercial uses such as big-box retailers, auto dealerships, restaurants, financial institutions, supermarkets, drug stores, discount stores, and highway oriented retail stores shall be encouraged within the along Highway 86 to draw a regional sales tax base.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as opportunities arise

**Policy 4.3** Imperial Avenue shall be designated as the primary commercial area for the City that focuses new development into the Downtown and encourage vitality with the continued use and promotion as the civic and social hub of the community.

**Action 4.3.1** Promote locally-owned pedestrian friendly retail, services and restaurants along Imperial Avenue.

**Responsible Agency:** Imperial Planning Department and Chamber of Commerce  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Action 4.3.2** Encourage residential and commercial mixed use development within the Downtown with an emphasis on development that integrates commercial and residential uses of all densities for a mutual benefit.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Policy 4.4** Industrial uses shall be diverse, well designed and include functional buildings that meet market demands while providing local economic and supportive benefits.

**Action 4.4.1** Encourage aesthetically pleasing, adequately screened, and include design elements that reduce glare, noise, dust, and vibrations for harmonious co-existence of industrial land uses and existing adjacent developments.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Evaluate zoning within 5 years of General Plan Land Use Element Update adoptions

**Action 4.4.2** Industrial park developments should be zoned to allow for a high mix of light industrial uses including office and administration facilities, research and development laboratories, warehousing, as well as support for commercial services.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department/City Council

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Evaluate zoning within 5 years of General Plan Land Use Element Update adoptions

**Action 4.4.3** Promote redevelopment and revitalization of the industrial areas east of Highway 86 to further support the existing and potential adjacent industrial developments.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department and Chamber of Commerce

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Action 4.4.4** Encourage general industrial land uses for manufacturing, assembly, packaging, processing, fabrication, and storage to locate along or near the rail operations. Retail sales should be limited to 25 percent of overall floor area.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial

**Funding Sources:** Private Developers

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Policy 4.5** New development adjacent to the Imperial County Airport shall be compatible with the facility, and provide additional opportunities for economic investment and expansion of jobs within the region.

**Action 4.5.1** Encourage properties located in the vicinity of the Airport to develop airport oriented uses and provide additional opportunities for office, manufacturing, and service commercial uses that support airport operations and create employment opportunities.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department and Chamber of Commerce

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Policy 4.6** The economic activity surrounding the Imperial Valley Fairgrounds shall be increased and through private investment or public-private partnership.

**Action 4.6.1** Coordinate with Imperial County on increasing the use of the Fairgrounds facility and improving amenities within the site to accommodate greater use and economic return.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial and County of Imperial

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Action 4.6.2** Promote the development of complementary uses in areas adjacent to the Fairgrounds, such as hotels, restaurants, service commercial establishments, and other hospitality related uses.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial

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**Funding Sources:** Private Investment

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as opportunities arise

**Action 4.6.3** Develop a Fairgrounds Master Plan that includes future development/ expansion plans and modernization improvements to accommodate future needs of the facility.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial and County of Imperial

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Within 8 Years of General Plan Adoption



## GOAL #5 RESIDENTIAL DIVERSITY

Create neighborhoods and housing opportunities that provide housing diversity for all economic segments of the community and take into account the safety and welfare of its residents while encouraging healthy lifestyles.

**Policy 5.1** The Land Use Plan shall accommodate the Housing Element goals and objectives for an adequate housing balance that meets the regional housing needs assessments.

**Action 5.1.1** Ensure that there is enough undeveloped land to meet the housing needs that have been identified for the City of Imperial

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Concurrent with Housing Element Updates

**Action 5.1.2** Mobile homes certified under the provisions of the National Mobile Home Construction and Safety Standards Act may be allowed on permanent foundations in any zone where single-family residential homes are allowed and mobile home parks may be permitted in any R-4 Zone subject to the adopted development standards.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Action 5.1.3** Promote and encourage development of medium density residential land uses in close proximity to the Downtown and within established neighborhoods of varying density.



**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Policy 5.2** New residential development shall incorporate recreation and pedestrian improvements that enhance safety and mobility and provide connections to recreational amenities and services and to encourage healthy lifestyles.

**Action 5.2.1** New residential subdivisions should provide bikeways, trails, and other opportunities for community interaction and connectivity with other established neighborhoods.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as Development Reviews are Initiated

**Action 5.2.2** Multi-family residential projects should provide sufficient open space, recreational uses and activities (playgrounds, picnic areas, and pools), adequate parking, and adequate access to existing and proposed pathways, trails and roadways.

**Responsible Agency:** Developers, City of Imperial Planning Department  
**Funding Sources:** Developers, General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as opportunities arise

**Policy 5.3** Residential Neighborhoods should protect and promote the existing rural lifestyle and character of the City of Imperial including low noise levels, limited motorized traffic, and natural open spaces.

**Action 5.3.1** Encourage neighborhood commercial properties located within low density residential or vicinity to cater to the rural lifestyle of the residents via accommodation of organic produce stands, homegrown products, and similar business operations.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department and Imperial Chamber of Commerce  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as opportunities arise.

**Action 5.3.2** Strategically zone areas rural residential, not just as a temporary transition zone but as a permanent land use that can serve as green belts and accommodate small scale agricultural operations (farming, livestock, etc.).

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Review periodically

**Action 5.3.3** Protect residential development from any excessive noise levels that can disrupt lifestyles by requiring Noise Studies from new proposed

residential development wishing to develop within close proximity to Imperial County Airport, Highway 86, Union Pacific Railroad and other stationary noise sources and ensure any recommendations for noise mitigation are strictly adhered to.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** Developers

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing as projects are proposed

**Action 5.3.4** De-emphasize automobile access along roadways and neighborhood parks where increased pedestrian and bicycle activity is preferred, consistent with the Circulation Element.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** Developer Site Plan Review Fees

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Policy 5.4.1** Multi-family residential developments of varying types and densities shall be encouraged where compatible with existing land uses and the provision of public services is highest.



## GOAL #6 REGIONAL PLANNING

Lead the coordination of land use planning programs among the local, regional, state, and federal agencies that have a local impact.

**Policy 6.1** The City shall make every attempt to encourage land uses decisions that are not controlled at a local level but that have significant local impacts.

**Action 6.1.1** Support and participate in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) regional land use and circulation plans and programs.

**Responsible Agency:** SCAG and City Imperial Planning Department

**Funding Sources:** General Fund

**Implementation Schedule:** Ongoing

**Action 6.1.2** Encourage the County of Imperial to construct a new regional airport in an outlying area of the County where environmental impacts from noise will not affect existing urban areas and reduce pressures for expansion of the Imperial County Airport facility.

**Responsible Agency:** County of Imperial and City of Imperial  
**Funding Sources:** General Funds and Grant Resources  
**Implementation Schedule:** Within the next 10 Years

**Action 6.1.3** Evaluate and coordinate the land use planning programs of neighborhood jurisdictions when considering changes to the City's land use planning programs.

**Responsible Agency:** City of Imperial Planning Department  
**Funding Sources:** General Fund  
**Implementation Schedule:** Concurrent with General Plan Updates