CHAPTER 2.0

LAND USE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Government Code Section 65302(a) mandates local municipalities to include within their general plans a land use element as follows:

"The General Plan shall 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 standard of population density and building intensity recommended for the various districts and other territory covered by the plan. The land use element shall identify areas covered by the plan which are subject to flooding and shall be reviewed annually with respect to those areas...

The Land Use Element of the General Plan has the broadest scope of any of the required components of the General Plan. In addition to the requirements listed in the Government Code, above, it has also been established that, while the location of a particular land use may be expressed in general terms, a property owner must be able to identify the General Plan designation for his or her parcel from the land use diagram contained in the Land Use Element.

The City of Fountain Valley Land Use Element serves as the framework for the goals and policies contained in the other elements.

The primary implementation mechanism for the Land Use Element is the Zoning Ordinance. For this reason, State law requires that the Land Use Element and Map be consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and Map. (Section 65860 of the Government Code requires that local zoning ordinances be consistent with their General Plans.)

2.2 LAND USE: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Prior to beginning work on revising the City of Fountain Valley’s General Plan, an extensive effort was made to identify citizens’ concerns for the future of their City. Interviews of City decision makers and key department heads were conducted and the General Plan Citizen Advisory Committee devoted an entire meeting to defining the issues facing their City. All of these sources are reflected in the specific goals and policies of the General Plan elements; a summary of those issues which affect the Land Use Element follows:

- The City is primarily built out, with less than 2% of the City vacant. Approximately 3,040 acres, or 60% of the City is devoted to residential land uses; 361 acres, or 7%, to commercial uses; 450 acres, or almost 9%, represent industrial land uses; public facilities and schools represent 362 acres, or 7%; parks and open space make up 801 acres, or 15.5%.

- The City has made a successful effort to provide a wide range of housing units appropriate to a diversity of residents’ socio-economic requirements. In general, residents of the City believe there is a good balance of residential, commercial and industrial land uses.

- The City has two small unincorporated areas within its Sphere of Influence along the eastern boundary adjacent to the Santa Ana River.
CITY OF FOUNTAIN VALLEY GENERAL PLAN

- The City has adopted redevelopment plans for two areas within the City: the City Center and the Industrial Area, adjacent to the Santa Ana River Channel, these two areas combined total almost 700 acres.

- There are three areas of the City which are unique unto themselves; the Orange County Sanitation District property, the Fountain Valley Community Hospital with its adjacent vacant properties, and Southpark. These three sites, due to their unusual qualities, were best developed, redeveloped and/or intensified through the preparation of specific plans. The three adopted specific plans depict existing and future uses with detail and precision; and integrate the specific plan areas with the City as a whole within the context of the Land Use Element.

- In recent years, four schools and a school maintenance facility within the City have been closed. Three of these sites have been planned for development: Harper and McDowell Elementary School and the Lighthouse Lane property, which has in the past, been used for bus storage. Two other school sites are currently being leased, these include Fountain Valley and Nieblas Elementary Schools.

- There are a number of commercial sites which are considered to be underutilized or in need of revitalization or rehabilitation, ranging in size from small neighborhood convenience centers to larger centers.

- There are concerns about the changing demographics of the community as well, these concerns are more of a social nature - the "graying of the City", changes in cultural backgrounds, as well as the provision of housing for the disabled and the handicapped.

- With the General Plan Update, there are opportunities to prevent spot zoning and re-examine the zoning code and the uses allowed under the City’s current zoning.

- As discussed in greater detail in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element, the community is extremely fortunate to have the open space and recreational amenities that it has, with Mile Square Park, the City’s park to population ratio is over twelve acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents (five acres per 1,000 residents is considered the norm throughout the state). In addition, the Southern California Edison easement offers an important open space amenity and can be used in conjunction with adjacent parklands.

Land Use Constraints

The constraints on potential land uses within the City are divided between those that are a part of the City's natural endowment, and those which result from man-made structures and activities.

In the first category, natural features:

- Almost the entire City is within the flood hazard area, flooding of between one to three feet may be expected in extreme conditions in the event of a 100 year storm.

- Although there are no seismic faults within the City, nor are there any Alquist-Prinolo Zones, the City is subject to earthquake shaking, as are all cities within the Southern California region. There is a high liquefaction potential in those areas along the Santa Ana River and south of the I-405 Freeway.
Constraints resulting from man made structures and activities include the following:

- The San Diego (I-405) Freeway bisects the City presenting both opportunities and constraints for the City (opportunities in that the City has direct access from the freeway as well as visual freeway frontage for commercial and/or industrial users, with constraints being noise and the fact that the City is literally bisected). This Freeway provides the primary source of regional access to the city with interchanges at Magnolia/Warner Avenue, Brookhurst Street and Buclid/Hills Avenue.

- The Orange County Sanitation District Treatment Plant is located on Hills Avenue within the City. Constraints associated with the plant include the compatibility of adjacent land uses, use of hazardous materials, and odors emanating from the plant.

- The Southern California Edison easement which extends in a north/south direction in the westerly area of the City offers both opportunities and constraints as well. The easement provides an open space amenity and can be used in conjunction with adjacent parks to expand the park area. However, there are also concerns with regard to the safety of the overhead lines and the potential impacts associated with the electromagnetic field.

- There are some industrial and commercial businesses located throughout the City which are involved in the processing, storage, and/or manufacture of a wide variety of hazardous materials. The most vulnerable area of the City is the east side, from Warner Avenue, south to Garfield Avenue and along the Santa Ana River.

2.3 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The City of Pountain Valley General Plan Update Map displays land use designations which correspond closely to the land use categories contained in the City's Zoning Ordinance. The land use designations indicate the nature, intensity and density of development permitted for each land use category. The location and extent of land uses for each map designation is shown on the Pountain Valley General Plan Update Map, Figure 2-1.

**Residential Land Uses**

Table 2-1 shows the equivalent zoning categories for the residential land use designations. As indicated above, the zoning categories are found in the Pountain Valley Zoning Ordinance. Population densities shown in this Table are based on Pountain Valley's average household size of 2.98 persons per household as estimated in the 1990 U.S. Census. This figure is multiplied by the permitted number of dwelling units, then rounded to the nearest whole number to indicate the estimated population per acre in each of the land use designations or zoning categories. A description of each classification follows.

**Low Density Residential** provides for the use of single family dwellings of a permanent character and in permanent locations with densities of up to five dwelling units per net acre.

**Low-Medium Density Residential** allows for the development of smaller lot single family residences, two-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, and apartments. The maximum density within this land use category is up to 10.8 dwelling units per net unit acre.

**Medium Density Residential** provides for the development of duplexes and other attached and detached dwelling units up to fifteen dwelling units per net acre. Single family residential uses are also permitted in this zone, under the appropriate zoning district.
High Density Residential will allow for the development of multi-residential structures and other attached dwelling units up to a density of twenty dwelling units per net acre.

It should be noted that a Density Bonus under the General Plan, and as required by State Law, will allow up to a 25% density bonus when a project is inclusive of affordable housing. The City has a zoning designation of AH, Affordable Housing District, which incorporates a density bonus allowing 25% above the existing zoning. Adjustment to allowed densities will also be considered for special purpose residential uses including: senior citizen housing, institutional housing and convalescent housing.

Pursuant to State law mobile home parks are allowed in any of the City’s residential zones.

**Commercial Land Uses**

There are three commercial land use designations proposed in the Fountain Valley General Plan: Office Commercial, Local Commercial and General Commercial. Table 2-1 shows equivalent zoning categories for the commercial land use designations.

Office Commercial is established to accommodate low-scale professional office uses in areas where such development may serve as a buffer between two less compatible land uses. Businesses such as professional offices, medical offices and financial institutions are appropriate uses in this category. Permitted commercial uses are limited to those directly related to professional office operations. A maximum Floor-to-Area-Ratio (FAR) of 0.50 shall apply to all development within the Office Commercial areas.

Local Commercial provides for convenient, small-scale shopping and personal service uses in close proximity to residential neighborhoods. Permitted uses are limited to small commercial businesses which meet the immediate needs of local residents and which do not generate substantial volumes of vehicular traffic. Development intensity shall not exceed a maximum FAR of 0.35.

General Commercial allows for a wide range of retail and service commercial uses designed to serve county-wide and regional populations. Permitted uses include retail businesses, personal service uses, food and beverage establishments, hotels and motels, automotive sales and repair operations, as well as low intensity professional offices and financial institutions. A maximum FAR of 0.50 is established for any use within this category.

Required floor area ratio for new development in any commercial land use area may be adjusted according to the timing, extent and effectiveness of traffic mitigation measures required in accordance with the Congestion Management Act, Measure M or the Southern California Air Quality Management Plan.

**Industrial**

The industrial land uses proposed within the General Plan are classified as Commercial Manufacturing, as described below. Table 2-1 shows equivalent zoning categories for the industrial land use category.

Commercial Manufacturing is established to accommodate a mix of office and clean, light industrial and retail uses within an integrated development setting. Permitted uses include research and development facilities, administrative offices, corporate headquarters and limited amounts of light industrial development and related retail. Service and
retail uses incidental to and supportive of these primary uses are also allowed. The maximum FAR within the Commercial Manufacturing category is 0.60.

**Public Facilities**

The **Public Facilities** land use designation provides for a variety of public facilities which support the community. These facilities are designated on the General Plan Land Use Map as "Public Facilities" and are further defined on the Community Facilities Plan, Figure 2-2. Each public facility use is discussed below.

**Schools** include educational facilities, operations and related enterprises which serve as the foundation for allowable uses. The City of Fountain Valley works in close cooperation with the Fountain Valley Unified School District, as well as the Ocean View, Garden Grove Unified and Huntington Beach Union High School Districts, and Coastline Community College, in accommodating future educational needs.

**Hospitals** are those facilities which are either publicly or privately managed for purposes of providing medical treatment, and include patient beds, emergency room facilities and similar uses.

**Fire Stations** include the City’s two stations, one on Bushard Street and the other on Newhope Street.

**Civic Center** refers to the City’s Civic Center, located on Slater Avenue, near Brookhurst Street. The Civic Center consists of the City Hall, the Community Center, police headquarters, as well as similar accessory buildings. The Library found on Slater Avenue behind City Hall is also included in the Civic Center.

**Reservoirs**, there are two reservoirs within the City, one is located in Cordata Park and the second is located at the northwest corner of Euclid Street and Ellis Avenue.

**Parks and Open Space**

This land use category consists of two primary uses: Parks and Open Space, as described below.

Parks and Open space are those areas designated for recreational purposes, both active and passive, and/or areas which will preserve or enhance the natural environment.

Parks in the City of Fountain Valley consist of Neighborhood, Community or Regional Parks. *Neighborhood Parks* are those which are designed to serve primarily the neighborhoods in which they are located, while *Community Parks* serve a larger area and are typically larger themselves. The City has one Regional Park, that being *Mile Square Park*, which consists of 640 acres of County and City owned and/or maintained property. The City has jurisdiction over 55 acres of Mile Square Park which is known as the Fountain Valley Recreation and Cultural Center.

Open Space provides for passive recreation uses which are compatible with the natural amenities of these lands. The **Southern California Edison easement** is one of the city’s primary open space resources.

**Special Study Areas**

Special Study Areas are those areas which because of their nature require special design considerations in the development of the property; the designation of a Special Study Area serves as an overlay in addition to the General Plan land use designation. Special Study areas require site analysis, master planning, and the development of goals and policies to address the unique constraints, opportunities and features of each site and its related uses. There is now one Special Study Area in the City, located south of Tidal Avenue, west of Euclid Street, north of the Freeway access road, and east of the flood control channel.
Specific Plan Areas

California Planning and Zoning Law permits local governments to adopt specific plans:

"Section 65450. After the legislative body has adopted a general plan, the planning agency may, or if so directed by the legislative body, shall, prepare specific plans for the systematic implementation of the general plan for all or part of the area covered by the general plan."

The purpose of a specific plan is to provide detailed policies, standards and criteria for the development or redevelopment of the area it covers. Specific plans must be consistent with a community's general plan.

The City of Fountain Valley has three adopted specific plans covering the development of Southpark, the Orange County Sanitation District property, and the Fountain Valley Community Hospital and its adjacent vacant lands. As required by State law, these specific plans set forth detailed implementation programs, setting floor area ratios, and detailing the improvements necessary to serve this intensity of development without negative impact for the area or its environs.

Goals and Policies

Goals and Policies which relate to the City's flood hazard potential, seismic safety, and hazardous waste are found in the Safety Element. Goals and Policies which relate to the City's open space and recreational amenities are found in the Conservation and the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element. Other Goals and Policies which relate to the Land Use Element are found in the other Elements as well.

Goal

2.1 Maintain and enhance high quality development throughout the City.

Policies

2.1.1 Maintain and continue to enhance high quality mixed use development throughout the City.

2.1.2 Encourage variety, quality, consistency and innovation in land use practice.

2.1.3 Promote quality commercial and industrial development.

2.1.4 Ensure the transition of land use at the City's Maintenance Yard.

Goal

2.2 Assess opportunities for annexation of City Sphere of Influence areas.

Policies

2.2.1 Annexations should provide a direct fiscal benefit to the City.

2.2.2 Delay annexation until completion of all major public improvements, such as the Edinger Avenue Bridge.

Goal

2.3 Maximize benefits of future development of Special Study Areas.

Policies

2.3.1 Ensure that development within Special Study Areas is compatible with adjacent development.

2.3.2 Ensure that development within Special Study Areas does not adversely impact City facilities and services.

2.3.3 Ensure that Special Study Areas reach their maximum development potential.
Goal

2.4 Orderly transition of land use on surplus school sites.

Policies

2.4.1 Work in concert with local school districts to monitor closing of school sites to ensure the adequacy of school facilities.

2.4.2 Review school site development plans to ensure appropriate and compatible reuse and/or development.

2.4 COMMUNITY DESIGN

The intent of this section is to define the various requirements relating to the visual image of the community within the context of the Land Use Element. In addition, this section relates to the Housing, Conservation and Open Space and Recreation Elements. This section will set forth specific design criteria including: guidelines related to the physical characteristics of each land use, as well as guidelines for various design relationships between types of land uses. While the greater part of this Element establishes the general type, location and amount of each land use, this section determines the more detailed physical or visual characteristics of each use.

Goal

2.5 Protect and enhance the City's existing positive visual attributes.

Policies

2.5.1 Protect and enhance existing well maintained neighborhood areas.

2.5.2 Protect and enhance existing parks and open space areas.

Goal

2.6 Improve architectural quality of development within Fountain Valley.

Policies

2.6.1 Promote residential, commercial and industrial development which achieves harmony without monotony in the built environment.

2.6.2 Encourage planning and design which is people oriented, sensitive to the needs of visitors and residents and functionally efficient for its purpose.

Goal

2.7 Well designed new residential development.

Policy

2.7.1 Encourage creative site planning in residential development offering open space for semi-private, passive and active recreational uses.

Goal

2.8 Well designed commercial and industrial development.

Policy

2.8.1 Work with commercial center owners and tenants to improve the appearance and character of these developments.

Goal

2.9 Attractive streetscapes throughout the City.

Policies

2.9.1 Encourage landscaping to enhance streetscapes.
2.9.2 Identify City boundaries.

2.9.3 Fencing treatment shall be designed to be aesthetically pleasing.

2.9.4 Buildings shall present fully finished facades on all sides visible from freeways or streets.

Goal

2.10 Safe and attractive pedestrian facilities.

Policies

2.10.1 Provide pedestrian corridors for convenience and recreation.

2.10.2 Enhance pedestrian facilities in non-residential areas.

2.10.3 Provide for transit user safety and convenience.

Goal

2.11 Safe and attractive parking facilities throughout the City.

Policies

2.11.1 Minimize the visual impacts of commercial and industrial surface parking.

2.11.2 Improve the appearance and convenience of rear parking lots in commercial districts.

2.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Retail Sales Trends and Mix

The Fountain Valley economy has reached a level of maturity in which most components function productively and present a positive image. Newly completed retail centers along Brookhurst and in the Southpark section of the Industrial Redevelopment project have already made tremendous strides toward reducing previous deficiencies in the City's economic development. Economic development actions in the City over the past two decades have primarily revolved around the fine tuning of land use areas and infilling of vacant sectors on the local map.

In fiscal terms, the Fountain Valley economy rests on a foundation of retail and service purchases by local residents and non-resident workers in the City. Historically, that translated into a strength for convenience goods businesses such as grocers, drug stores, restaurants, and service stations. Yet, the community's location within the shadow of nearby retail shopping malls and auto dealerships has posed major constraints for other business sectors and on market opportunities. The City must determine how it can recapture retail and service business leakages.

The review of retail performance indicators and commercial land use arrangements suggested that local market demands still were not fully addressed in the apparel, general merchandise, appliance and automotive sectors. Some restaurant categories are also absent from Fountain Valley.

Income Profile

The City of Fountain Valley has a far stronger single-family orientation in the community than in any other area city or in Orange County as a whole. Today, nearly four-fifths of all housing within Fountain Valley consists of single family homes, a level unequaled in the County's south central section. The City also has a larger household size (2.98) than countywide (2.72). In addition one out of every six households in Fountain Valley is occupied by just one individual versus a one-in-four single person proportion for Orange County.

This housing mix and family emphasis in the City has an important bearing on area retail market potential. Couples with growing children tend to allocate large shares of their
income on such basic necessities as food, clothing and transportation. However, since most local neighborhoods are well established, they spend less on home improvements but regularly purchase capital goods associated with the dwelling unit, including furnishings and replacement appliances.

High housing values and the dominance of dual wage earner households produces a stronger local income pattern than the county averages. It is estimated that the average household median income in the City of Fountain Valley is $32,925, as compared to $40,588 of Orange County. There are an estimated 40.6% of Fountain Valley households with an annual income of over $60,000, compared with an estimated 17.8% countywide.

These income contrasts point to the upper middle income character of Fountain Valley. Yet some socio-economic diversity is evident as nearly one-fourth of the city's households have earnings below $20,000 per year. A majority of these consist of retirees with limited pensions, persons living alone, and young, single-parent families.

Jobs/Housing Balance

Fountain Valley has a strong jobs housing balance...146 jobs for every 100 housing units. As of 1987, approximately 25,400 jobs were located within the City. The major employment categories include retail trade, the number one employment category, followed by medical services, manufacturers, insurance services, and finally local government.

The amount and composition of future job growth in Fountain Valley will be driven by the pace of development in Southpark, any land use intensification in the industrial area south of Talbert and in office/health service job expansion. Regional forecasters have envisioned a job total of 31,900 for the City in the year 2010, a one-quarter increase above the present level. Regardless of the specific numbers in that employment expansion, Fountain Valley will maintain its role as a balanced community over the next two decades.

Goal

2.12 Enhance the City's economic base and business environment.

Policies

2.12.1 Assist in the preservation, improvement and intensification of existing commercial development.

2.12.2 Encourage and promote the entire City through a concentrated proactive outreach program.

2.12.3 Encourage the development of an Economic Marketing Plan.

Goal

2.13 Promote economic development through the use of the Redevelopment Agency's powers.

Policies

2.13.1 In cases where property acquisition is necessary for area improvement, the Redevelopment Agency shall proceed with amicable negotiations. Eminent domain proceedings shall be used only in extreme cases.

2.13.2 Coordinate redevelopment area public improvements with those in the City's capital improvement program.

2.13.3 The City shall use a portion of its redevelopment funds to sustain the staffing programs and outreach efforts of the Redevelopment Agency.

2.13.4 Emphasize development agreements which provide the Agency with equity participation opportunities to the greatest extent feasible.
2.6 QUALITY OF LIFE

The intent of this section is to define the objectives of a growth management strategy for Fountain Valley within the context of the Land Use Element, while Chapter 10, the Growth Management Element, is specifically structured to meet Orange County’s Measure M requirements, focused only on the issue of traffic congestion. This section also relates to the Circulation, Parks, Recreation and Open Space, and Air Quality and Growth Management Elements.

The term "growth management" should be taken literally, it is the management of growth, not the reduction or elimination of growth. The purpose of growth management is to enhance the quality of life in Fountain Valley, and to minimize Fountain Valley’s contribution to regional environmental problems such as air quality and traffic congestion. Quality of life relates to the City’s ability to adequately support development through the provision of community facilities and services, and the provision and maintenance of infrastructure. Given that Fountain Valley is virtually build-out, the City’s growth management efforts should primarily focus on the maintenance of facilities and service levels, with a secondary focus on managing growth in new development areas.

Those elements of quality of life which the City can most directly focus on are:

Community Facilities and Services
- Police
- Fire
- Libraries
- Schools
- Social Services
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Infrastructure
- Streets
- Water
- Sewer
- Storm Drainage
- Maintenance

The City may also want to participate in inter-agency attempts to mitigate regional growth impacts such as air quality and traffic congestion. Regional efforts to deal with these problems are represented by the Traffic Improvement and Growth Management Program (Measure M) developed by the Orange County Transportation Commission and the South Coast Air Basin Air Quality Management Plan.

Goal

2.14 Manage growth and development to insure the maintenance or improvement of the existing quality of life in Fountain Valley.

Policies

2.14.1 Meet community needs in the City for public safety, law enforcement, and fire prevention by providing adequate resources for prevention, detection, investigation and response to calls for service.

2.14.2 Work with water services, sewer and flood control agencies to ensure the adequate maintenance of infrastructure facilities and provision for future maintenance and possible replacement or repair of such facilities.

2.14.3 Maintain streets, sidewalks, alleys, storm drains and sewers in a clean, safe and operational condition.

2.14.4 Achieve an integrated, balanced, safe and efficient transportation system that accommodates the demand for movement of people, goods and services.

2.14.5 Participate in interjurisdictional planning forums to reduce cumulative regional traffic impacts, improve air quality and manage growth.
2.14.6 Insure proper disposal of solid waste.

2.14.7 Provide for sufficient park, recreation, and community service opportunities throughout Fountain Valley to meet the needs of existing and future residents and workers.
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1. Estimates based on 2.96 persons/households

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ZONING DEFINITIONS

A1 - "GENERAL AGRICULTURE" DISTRICT - allows for agriculture and horticulture uses.

R1 - "SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE" DISTRICT - permits single-family dwellings of a permanent character and permanent locations, minimum lot size 7,200 square feet.

NR - "NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL" DISTRICT - provides for the same uses permitted under the R-1 zone, except as otherwise permitted, minimum lot size 6,000 square feet.

R2 - "LOW DENSITY MULTIPLE DWELLING" DISTRICT - allows for the development of one-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, dwelling groups and apartment houses, minimum lot size 7,200 square feet.

R3 - "MEDIUM DENSITY MULTIPLE DWELLING" DISTRICT - provides for the development of two-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, dwelling groups and apartment houses, maximum density 15 dwelling units per acre.

R4 - "HIGH DENSITY MULTIPLE DWELLING" DISTRICT - permits the use of two-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, dwelling groups and apartment homes, maximum density 20 dwelling units per acre.

AH - "AFFORDABLE HOUSING" DISTRICT - provides a means of encouraging the construction of affordable housing within residential developments.

PC - "PLANNED COMMUNITY" DISTRICT - Allows for large scale community planning efforts in order to create superior environments.

GH - "GARDEN HOMES" DISTRICT - permits residential uses and supporting recreational and open space developments, maximum density 10.8 dwelling units per gross acre.

CP - "COMMERCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL OFFICE" DISTRICT - allows the development of administrative or professional offices, minimum lot size shall be 7,200 square feet.

C1 - "LOCAL BUSINESS" DISTRICT - provides for the development of various retail or personal service businesses, minimum lot size shall be 10,000 square feet.

C2 - "GENERAL BUSINESS" DISTRICT - allows for all uses permitted in the C1 zone in addition to various retail uses, no minimum lot size except as delineated on sectional district maps.

CM - "COMMERCIAL MANUFACTURING" DISTRICT - allows for a mix of commercial and manufacturing uses.