

Land Use Element



June 25, 1990

LAND USE ELEMENT

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LAND USE ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The City of Rolling Hills enjoys the advantages of being located on the San Pedro Hills of the Palos Verdes Peninsula, including cool sea breezes and low concentrations of smog in the summer months, more sunshine due to its elevation above much of the coastal fog, and commanding views of the Pacific Ocean and Los Angeles Basin. Due to its coastal location, Rolling Hills has been able to avoid many of the air quality and traffic problems associated with growth in the Los Angeles area. However, geologic hazards have greatly affected properties within Rolling Hills and have forced the City to examine development policies within certain areas of the community.

This Land Use Element describes official City policy for the location of land uses and their orderly growth and development. It serves as a guide for public officials and citizens to determine the best uses of lands within the City. To the private citizen, the Land Use Element will set forth the type of neighborhood he or she can expect to live in, the location and type of public facilities available, and the time and distance required for travel to necessary activities. Public officials will use the Land Use Element as a guide for placement of public facilities and services, and for directing new development. The Element also serves as a basis for definition of short-range and long-range capital improvement programs.

Purpose of the Element

The intent of the Land Use Element is to describe present and projected land use activity within Rolling Hills. The Element also addresses crucial issues concerning the relationship between land uses and environmental quality, potential hazards, and social and economic objectives.

In accordance with the State of California General Plan Guidelines, the Land Use Element serves the following purposes:

- Identifies land use issues;

- Provides a statement of land use policies and proposals, distinguishing, when appropriate, between short, middle and long-term periods of fulfillment;
- Describes land use density and land use intensities provided for under the Plan, including the relationships of such uses to social, environmental and economic goals and objectives;
- Provides for standards and criteria for physical development within each use area with consideration for land capacity; and
- Describes and depicts land use patterns provided for under the Plan.

Relationship to Other Elements

A major goal in this General Plan Update is to achieve internal consistency throughout the various General Plan elements. Since the Land Use Element regulates how land is utilized, it integrates and synthesizes most of the issues and policies contained in the other Plan elements.

Specifically, the Land Use Element relates to the Housing Element by defining the extent and density of future residential development in the City. The Land Use Element is also coordinated with the Open Space/ Conservation Element in that open space resources are designated on the Land Use Policy Map, and environmental factors are considered in the location of land use types. The Land Use Element also relates to the Safety and Noise Elements by integrating their broad land use recommendations into detailed policies which apply to specific geographic locations. Finally, the Circulation and Land Use Elements are interrelated in that specific land use decisions depend upon traffic routes and circulation patterns.

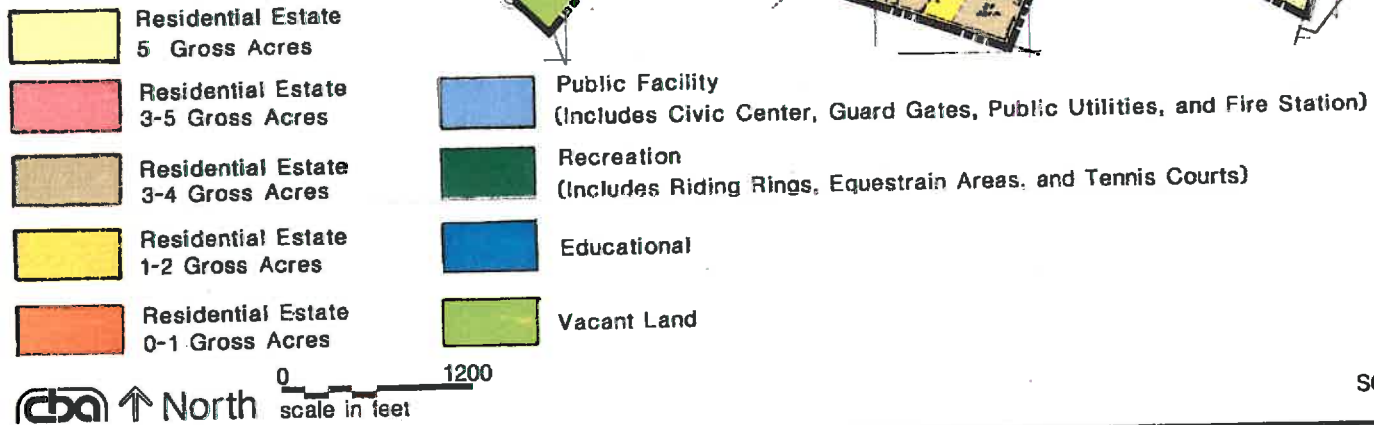
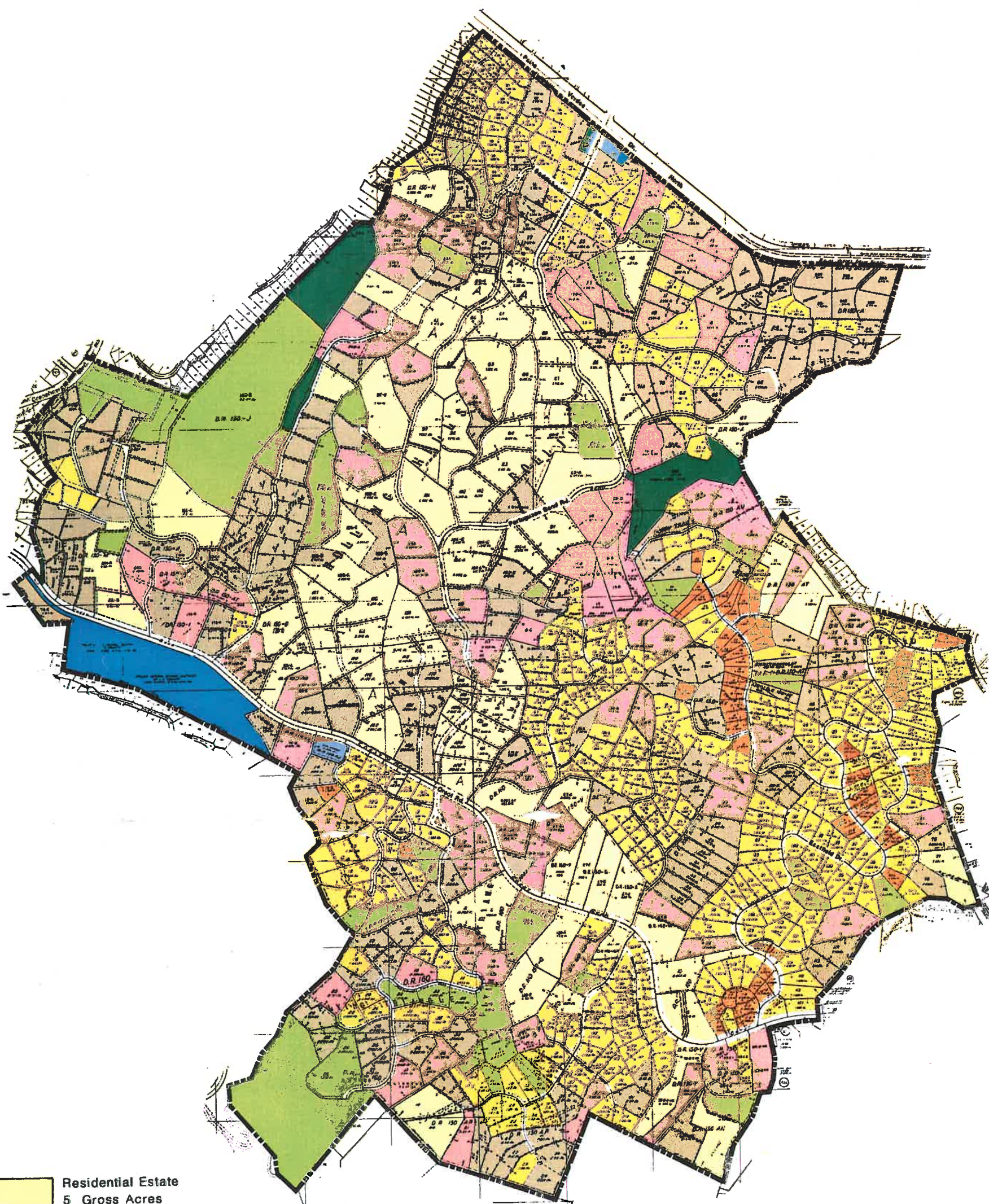
EXISTING LAND USE

The City of Rolling Hills is an entirely residential community of large one+ acre parcels on 2.98 square miles of land. The land use pattern was established with the original subdivision and sale of parcels which began in 1936. Situated astride the San Pedro Hills of the Palos Verdes Peninsula, Rolling Hills is characterized by white, single-story California ranch style homes with three-rail fences and an abundance of equestrian facilities. Landscaping which was located as parcels developed has matured, rendering the Rolling Hills area a heavily wooded setting. Lot sizes range from a minimum of one acre to several acres in size. Many lots contain a buildable ridge and steep arroyos. The City's zoning allows for one and two acre lots with most lots exceeding these minimum requirements.

Rolling Hills was created by A.E. Hanson and the Palos Verdes Corporation in 1936 following a generally unsuccessful attempt to sell 10 to 50 acre parcels as "dude ranches" to residents of Los Angeles and Beverly Hills. The concept was modified to offer one to five acre parcels to residents of closer-by communities attracted to the cleaner, cooler air, sunshine and absence of congestion. One of Rolling Hills' unique features is the set of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions which have assured the maintenance and uniformity of properties throughout the years. Buildings are limited to one story in height with three-rail fences surrounding the properties. Residences are strongly encouraged to be of a ranch style, and are required to be painted white. All properties provide easements which are primarily utilized for equestrian trails. The CC&Rs are enforced through the Rolling Hills Community Association. Through the association, fees are levied which are used for maintenance of the roads and recreational facilities.

Beginning in 1938, the 150-acre area known as the Flying Triangle was added to the development's original 600 acres. The Flying Triangle area has, in recent years, been subject to major landslides resulting in building moratoriums for parts of the area that are known to be at risk.

A comprehensive land use survey was undertaken by City staff and the consultant in September 1989 to identify the extent of existing land uses in the community. Figure LU-1 illustrates existing land uses in Rolling Hills; a 1:800 scale colored existing land use map is



SOURCE: City of Rolling Hills, October 1989.

Figure LU-1
Existing Land Use

JUNE 25, 1990



also on file at City Hall. Table LU-1, Existing Land Use Inventory, quantifies the acreage dedicated to the various land uses present in Rolling Hills. The table is divided into five residential density categories and categories for Public Facility, Education, Recreation and Vacant Land. The following sections describe the nature of each of these land uses in Rolling Hills.

Residential

Rolling Hills is comprised almost exclusively of ranch style residential homes. The City's zoning ordinance provides two residential districts. The first requires single-family homes on one acre minimum lots and the second allows single-family homes on two acre minimum lots. Large setback requirements and lot sizes, as well as topographic constraints on many lots provide significant amounts of open space on developed parcels that give the overall community a sense of openness. Many of the lots are large enough to support horses, and many have stables as accessory structures.

In recent years, the character of residential development in Rolling Hills has changed substantially. Many homes are now being constructed to maximize the building area on the lot. The increasing building size has also fostered a tendency for more grading to prepare many of the steeper properties for a structure. Increases in grading practices have had a significant effect on the natural environment and viewsapes. These combined trends have significantly altered the community's character and affect surrounding properties. The results of the Community Attitude Survey indicate a high level of concern among residents related to residential development and design compatibility issues. The City has recently adopted a site plan review ordinance. This type of legislation is new to the City and the General Plan encourages such legislation to preserve and enhance the community's character.

In addition to the changes in community character, increased building size and related grading may have contributed to the instability of soil in the area of the City known as the Flying Triangle. Combined with several winters of heavy rainfall, increases in water discharged from septic systems and increased grading are believed to have contributed to soil destabilization. Except for repairs to existing structures, the City has not permitted any development in this area since 1980 pursuant to provisions of the Building Code which do not permit construction in geologically unstable areas. In order to define the range of existing residential

**TABLE LU-1
CITY OF ROLLING HILLS
EXISTING LAND USE INVENTORY
January 1989**

Land Use	Acreage	DUs
SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL		
0-1 acre	49.6	
1-2 acres	436.4	
2-3 acres	430.5	
3-5 acres	317.3	
5+ acres	403.0	
Total Residential	1,636.8	683
PUBLIC/ASSOCIATION-OWNED FACILITIES	5.5	
EDUCATION	30.3	
RECREATION	33.3	
VACANT LAND	203.1	
Total Non-Residential	272.2	
TOTAL ACREAGE	1,908.9 (2.98 sq.miles)	

Source: City of Rolling Hills
compiled by Cotton/Beland/Associates, Inc.

land use, five density ranges were arrived upon. The five categories include parcels of 0-1 acres, 1-2 acres, 2-3 acres, 3-5 acres and 5+ acres. As illustrated in Table LU-1, approximately three percent of the City's developed residential acreage consists of parcels less than one acre in size, 20 percent consists of parcels between 3-5 acres, with 1-2 acre parcels, 2-3 acre parcels, and 5+ acre parcels each comprising 25 percent of the City's developed acreage. A total of 683 single-family dwelling units have been developed in Rolling Hills on 1,636.8 acres of land.

Public/Association-Owned Facilities

Public facilities owned by the City of Rolling Hills and private facilities owned by the Rolling Hills Community Association provide for the needs of the community. The City owns the Rolling Hills Administrative Building which houses the offices of the City of Rolling Hills and the Rolling Hills Community Association. The City also owns a maintenance building, three tennis courts and two equestrian riding rings.

The Community Association owns roadway easements and the guard gates. The Palos Verdes Water Company owns two water tanks and several antenna towers adjacent to and accessed through Rolling Hills. A major radar installation site is contiguous to the City's eastern boundary that is operated by the Federal Aeronautic Administration. Finally, the Los Angeles County Fire Protection District owns and operates a Fire Station within the City. Table LU-1 shows facilities owned by the City, other public entities, and the Community Association. These facilities comprise a total of 5.5 acres within the community.

Education

The Palos Verdes Peninsula School District owns a site of 30.3 acres which is located south of Crest Road along the City's western boundary. The site is home to the Rancho Del Mar Continuation High School which serves the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District. The high school serves the communities of Rolling Hills, Rancho Palos Verdes, Palos Verdes Estates and Rolling Hills Estates. The continuation high school program provides students an opportunity to complete required academic courses of instruction and a program which offers an occupational orientation. Enrollment in the Rancho Del Mar Continuation High School has a capacity of 125 students. Due to the unique nature of the school, enrollment

) varies substantially and quickly as students can graduate at any time. The site is also used for the storage and maintenance of school district vehicles and equipment. Access to the school district property is via Crest Road outside the City.

Recreation

The City contains 33.3 acres of recreational open space. Opposite the City administration building are three City-owned tennis courts which are operated and maintained by the Rolling Hills Community Association. The courts are open to Association members and their guests and are operated from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Also contained within the City are two riding rings and a series of trails. The trails are an extensive network laced throughout the City affording hikers and equestrians alike varied opportunities within the community's boundaries. Also available for recreational use within Rolling Hills is an 8.01 acre parcel on the north end of Storm Hill which was dedicated through provisions of the Quimby Act. The property is open to City residents for use as an open equestrian area.

Vacant Land

) Of the numerous vacant properties in Rolling Hills, many are constrained from future developments. The area within the Flying Triangle which is subject to landslides is under a moratorium and will not likely be buildable into the foreseeable future due to building code requirements which do not permit construction in geologically unstable areas. Other properties exist which are constrained due to excessive slopes on the property. It is estimated that there are 203.1 acres of vacant, residentially zoned land within the City. Of that total, 172.75 acres are unconstrained (either located outside the Flying Triangle and/or not constrained by slope) and, subject to site plan review requirements, may accommodate a maximum of 59 additional residential units.

SIGNIFICANT LAND USE ISSUES

The following list is a summary of issues and opportunities relating to land use that have been identified in Rolling Hills from the Community Attitude Survey and through discussions with the General Plan Advisory Committee. These issues are addressed in the Goals and Policies of this Land Use Element.

- The landslide area within the Flying Triangle has rendered a large amount of land within the City's southwest area unsuitable for residential development, and is subject to ongoing changes in topography.
- Due to the constraints of the landslide area within the Flying Triangle, a large amount of open space remains open to alternative uses such as recreation or study of such geologic hazards.
- The City's topography renders large parts of many parcels constrained, thus leaving smaller areas available for development. Recent residential construction has maximized lot coverage through extensive grading.
- Grading of individual lots have significantly altered the topography and drainage patterns on many lots thus eliminating certain viewsapes and diminishing of the natural character of the City.
- New residential development within the community has changed significantly in character from the original residential developments, thus generating an increasing degree of incompatibility between adjacent uses.
- The increasing size and bulk of recent residential developments within Rolling Hills and the surrounding area have substantially reduced the natural, rural environment which has characterized Rolling Hills in the past.
- The use of private septic systems within the City may have contributed to soil instability. While lot size does not mandate a conversion to a common sewage system, the City may facilitate such a conversion.

OVERVIEW OF LAND USE PLAN

The Rolling Hills Land Use Policy Map is presented in Figure LU-2. The Map provides a graphic representation of the General Plan's development policies and indicates land uses as they are designated and for which policies and standards have been formulated. The major goal of Rolling Hills' General Plan Update is to maintain and foster the community's rural and residential environment while ensuring that new development is in conformance with established community standards.

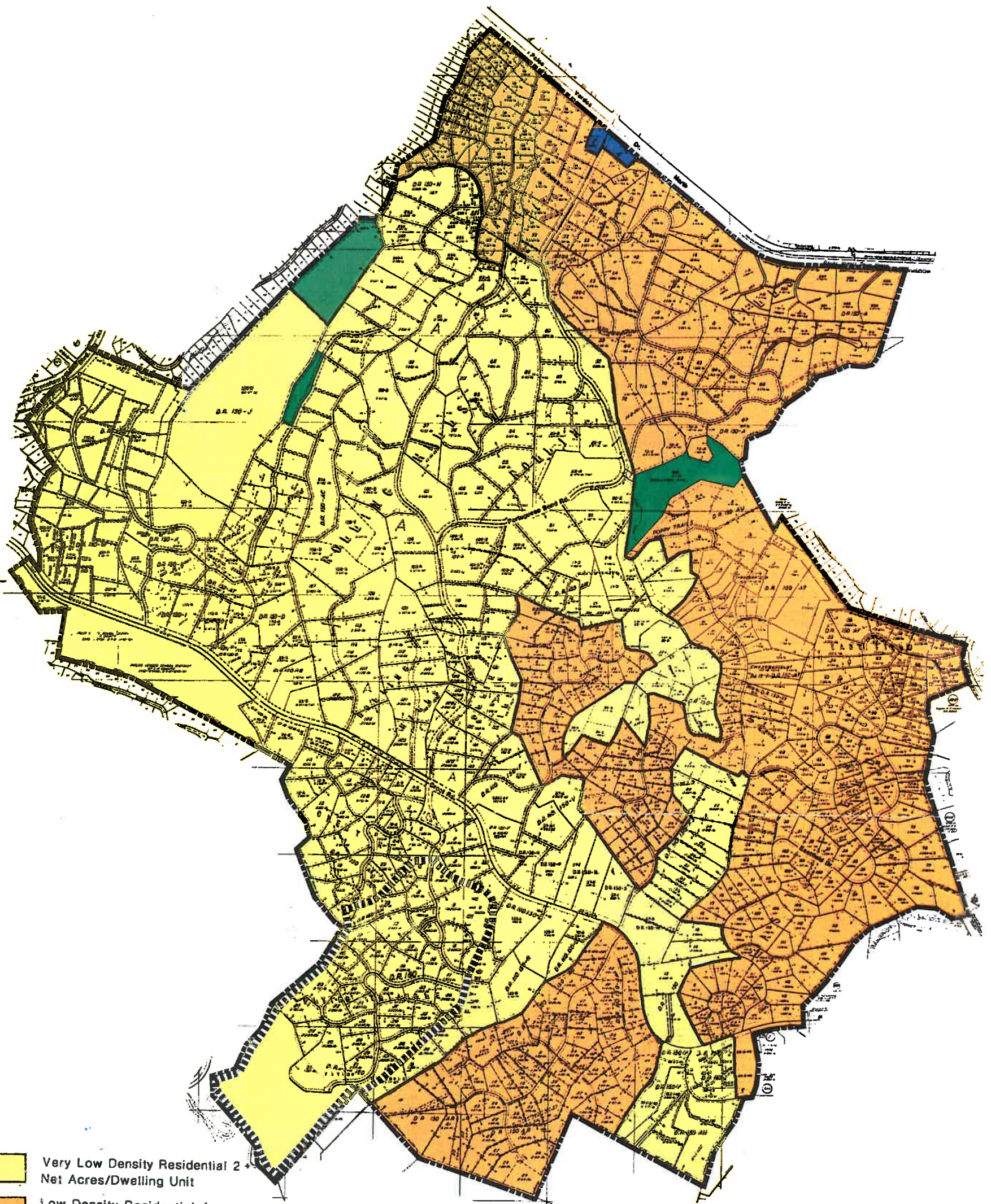
The land use classifications designated by the General Plan provide for the development of the community's limited vacant properties in a manner that is consistent with established and approved development patterns. The land use classifications established by this General Plan Update reflect a system that is different but generally consistent with the previous land use classifications. The dominance of a low density single family land use pattern clearly continues to be the policy of the City of Rolling Hills. Table LU-2 presents the list of updated General Plan land use categories, their general development standards and characteristics. The following discussion will elaborate on the location and intent of the General Plan land uses.

Residential Land Uses

The Plan continues the City's two existing single-family residential land use categories - Low Density and Very Low Density. The former mandates one net acre minimum lot sizes per dwelling unit and the latter mandates two net acre minimum lot sizes per dwelling unit. Through these two classifications, the City will be able to ensure that the remaining undeveloped properties throughout Rolling Hills will be developed at densities that are compatible with existing residential development.

Civic Center

The Civic Center designation has been added to the Land Use Policy Map to specify the 1.3 acre area that is currently used by the City for its administrative offices. The Civic Center land use category has been created to accurately reflect uses that exist within the City, and to provide consistency between the General Plan Land Use Policy Map and the Zoning Map.



- Very Low Density Residential 2 +
Net Acres/Dwelling Unit
- Low Density Residential 1 +
Net Acres/Dwelling Unit
- Civic Center
- Publicly Owned Open Space
- Landslide Hazard Overlay

cbn ↑ North

0

1200

scale in feet



Figure LU-2
Land Use Policy Map

**TABLE LU-2
CITY OF ROLLING HILLS
GENERAL PLAN LAND USE CATEGORIES**

Designation	Development Standards	Development Characteristics
Residential		
Very Low Density	2+ net acres/dwelling unit, single story	Single-family homes on large lots, usually custom designed. Parcels often contain varied topography and canyon areas.
Low Density	1-2 net acres/dwelling unit, single story	Single-family homes on large lots, often custom designed.
Public		
Civic Center	Single story	City Hall and associated facilities.
Publicly-Owned Open Space	Development prohibited	Equestrian riding rings and undeveloped open space areas owned by the City.
Landslide Hazard Overlay	Development prohibited unless landslide hazard is mitigated	Active landslide areas requiring mitigation of geologic hazards prior to development.

Publicly-Owned Open Space

While the majority of recreational open space within the community is maintained by the Rolling Hills Community Association, a limited amount of open space is also owned by the City. Areas of publicly-owned open space lie at the northern end of Storm Hill where a parcel of eight acres was dedicated to the City through the provisions of the Quimby Act. Also included as publicly owned open space are the two equestrian riding rings owned by the City. The purpose of separating out publicly-owned open space is to identify lands that are owned and maintained by the City and will remain as open space. In addition, this land use category could also be utilized in the future for any additional open space land purchased by the City.

Landslide Hazard Overlay

A Landslide Hazard Overlay classification has been created to address the landslide hazards present in Rolling Hills. Landslide hazards have occurred most notably in the Flying Triangle area beginning in 1980. The reasons for the onset of landslide activity are multiple and are addressed in detail in the Safety Element.

The Landslide Hazard Overlay classification has been developed to further establish the City's continuing policy which prohibits development in areas which are known to be subject to active landslides, specifically the Flying Triangle. Establishing this policy in the General Plan provides the framework for the inclusion of specific criteria in the Zoning Ordinance. Residential development will be permitted pursuant to the underlying zoning, only where evidence can be provided that establishes such development as posing no hazard to the property or adjacent properties. This evidence will be formed on a case by case basis upon review of geologic and soils information and hydrologic and topographic analyses. The Rolling Hills Zoning Ordinance, upon revision, will specify development constraints in overlay areas.

Implications of Land Use Policy

The Land Use Element provides for the continued residential emphasis of the Rolling Hills community. The General Plan ensures that this growth will take place in a way that promotes compatibility with adjacent properties, preserves the existing rural residential character, and is environmentally sensitive. The amount

of additional growth that can be accommodated under this General Plan is presented as Table LU-3. As this table illustrates, the Plan only provides for the expansion of residential uses.

**TABLE LU-3
CITY OF ROLLING HILLS
ESTIMATED GENERAL PLAN BUILDOUT
NET INCREASE IN DEVELOPMENT**

Residential	Acres	Dwelling Units	Population
Very Low Density	148.50	49	156.8
Low Density	24.25	10	32.0
Totals	172.75	59	188.8

Based on an average household size of 3.2 persons.

Source: City of Rolling Hills
Cotton/Beland/Associates, Inc.

The Plan accommodates a maximum net increase of 59 single-family dwelling units, representing an approximate nine percent increase over the City's existing (1989) 683 dwelling units. The majority of this growth would occur on the properties under the Very Low Density classification, residential development on 2+ acre parcels accounting for 83 percent of the City's additional growth. Growth in the residential areas will occur under different circumstances. Some property will be subdivided from vacant property. This will account for 28 additional units in the Very Low Density classification. An additional 12 units in the Very Low Density classification will be allowed on subdividable property which already contains at least one dwelling unit. The remaining new development will take place on individual lots which are currently vacant. This will account for 10 additional units in the Low Density classification and nine units in the Very Low Density classification.

The population of Rolling Hills as of January 1, 1989 was 2,092. Over the City's 2.98 square miles the population density is 702 persons per square mile. Based on Department of Finance estimates of an average 3.2 persons per household in Rolling Hills, an additional 189 persons could reside in the City under General Plan buildout. This would result in an ultimate population density of 765 persons per square mile.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals and policies contained in the 1973 General Plan were reviewed with the General Plan Advisory Committee as part of the General Plan update process. The following goals and policies contain revisions and additions to those previous goals and policies. These goals and policies reflect current land use issues affecting the community of Rolling Hills and will serve as a guide to future policy decisions made for the City.

GOAL 1: Maintain Rolling Hills' distinctive rural residential character.

Policy 1.1: Maintain the City's one and two acre minimum lot size requirements.

Policy 1.2: Maintain the City's one story height limitation to preserve scenic viewsheds.

Policy 1.3: Require the use of landscaping which is compatible with the City's rural character.

Policy 1.4: Require that development conform with the City's existing low-profile, ranch style architecture.

Policy 1.5: Preserve a natural twilight environment at night by prohibiting street lighting and uplighting of landscaping and minimizing driveway lighting.

Policy 1.6: Evaluate the City's existing requirement for minimum stable size to assess its appropriateness and effectiveness.

GOAL 2: Accommodate development which is compatible with and complements existing land uses.

Policy 2.1: Evaluate the City's lot coverage standards to assess their effectiveness in providing for development which is compatible with adjacent uses.

Policy 2.2: Require that lighting of residential properties not adversely affect adjacent residences.

Policy 2.3: Maintain and provide regulations for sufficient setbacks and easements to provide buffers between residential uses.

Policy 2.4: Ensure the siting of buildings maintain and preserve viewscales from adjacent structures through the site review process.

GOAL 3: Accommodate development that is sensitive to the natural environment and accounts for environmental hazards.

Policy 3.1: Establish a Landslide Overlay classification to reflect the more stringent development standards the City has applied to development in active landslide areas.

Policy 3.2: Maintain strict grading practices to preserve the community's natural terrain.

Policy 3.3: Require the use of native, naturally fire resistant landscape materials in development.

Policy 3.4: Maintain the City's open space requirement to preserve natural vegetation and wildlife habitat.

Policy 3.5: Facilitate the preservation and restoration of viewscales through the removal of obstructions.