

CHAPTER 3 **Land Use Element**



development in achieving consistency with the goals and policies of the General Plan. A Town Center will typically contain one or more of the following:

- Pedestrian-oriented commercial area
- Mixed-use development: residential, retail, and office/professional uses
- Higher-density residential developments
- Community-serving private and public facilities

Transit Nodes typically encompass lands within walking distance—approximately one-half mile—of future rapid transit stations and should be located within a Village. These may be planned as diverse, mixed-use areas with a range of residential, commercial, and where appropriate, employment-generating land uses (e.g., office/professional or industrial) as well as parks and civic spaces. However, planning must be consistent with the type and quantity of ridership expected of the node as well as the surrounding community. Potential Transit Node locations are based on long-range transit plans and include rail stations as well as express bus stops that feed into rail systems.

SEMI-RURAL

The Semi-Rural category identifies areas of the County that are appropriate for lower-density residential neighborhoods, recreation areas, agricultural operations, and related commercial uses that support rural communities. Semi-Rural areas often function as a transition between the Village and Rural Lands categories, providing opportunities for development, but without the intensity and level of public services expected in Villages and with design approaches that blend the development with the natural landscape. Semi-Rural residential densities are derived in consideration of the physical conditions, community character, and availability of public services, roads, and other infrastructure. Higher densities within the allowable range should be located near Village areas, while lower densities should be located near Rural Land areas. Site design methods that reduce on-site infrastructure costs and preserve contiguous open space or agricultural operations are encouraged.



Semi-rural development patterns in Bonsall community



View of the Cuyamaca Reservoir and rural community

RURAL LANDS

The Rural Lands category is applied to large open space and very-low-density private and publicly owned lands that provide for agriculture, managed resource production, conservation, and recreation and thereby retain the rural character for which much of unincorporated County is known. Rural areas are not appropriate for intensive residential or commercial uses due to significant topographical or environmental constraints, limited access, and the lack of public services

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

or facilities. Further, the undeveloped nature of Rural Lands benefits all of San Diego County by doing the following:

- Preserving the County’s rural atmosphere
- Protecting land with significant physical or environmental constraints or hazards
- Preserving open space, farmland, and natural resources
- Providing open space buffers and a visual separation between communities
- Preserving and providing land for agricultural opportunities
- Preventing sprawl development, which reduces vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions

NO JURISDICTION

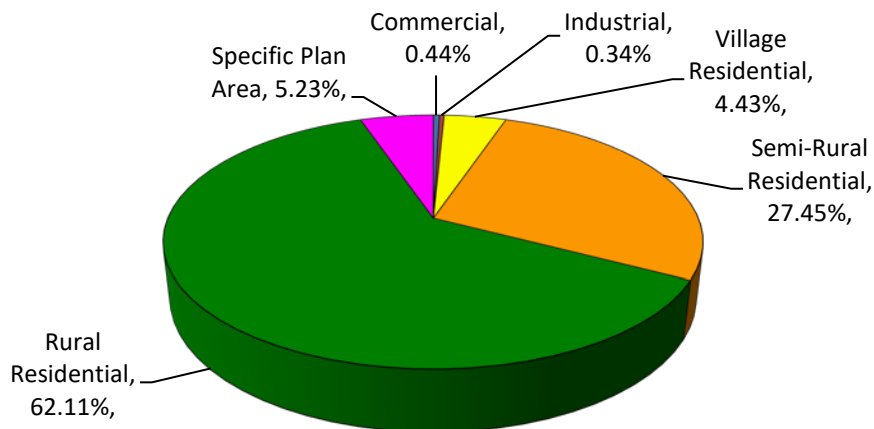
The No Jurisdiction Regional Category is applied to those areas where the County does not have land use planning jurisdiction, including lands under state or federal jurisdiction and tribal reservations.

Land Use Designations

Where the Regional Categories represent a broad framework for the form and organization of development, the Land Use Designations are property specific and identify the type and intensity of land uses that are allowed. The Land Use Designations are defined by the land use type—Residential, Commercial or Industrial—and the maximum allowable residential density or nonresidential building intensity. The designations are applied throughout the County, as shown on Land Use Maps, which are located in the Land Use Maps Appendix. More specific standards may be established for each Land Use Designation to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan, through such tools as the Zoning Ordinance, to address impacts related to specific land uses or the needs of an individual community.

Assignment of the land use designations to lands in the County is guided by the goals and policies contained in this element, which reflect the Guiding Principles presented in Chapter 2. A general summary of the designations is shown on the Land Use Maps in the Land Use Maps Appendix. The pie chart shown below depicts how the privately owned lands are designated.

Land Use Designations for Privately Owned Lands in the Unincorporated County





Development within **Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Specific Plan Areas**, and **Public/Semi-Public** General Plan land use designations is regulated through either a maximum residential density or building intensity. **Residential density** is expressed as a maximum number of dwelling units per gross acre (exclusive of public road rights-of-way). **Nonresidential building intensity** is expressed as a maximum floor-area ratio (FAR). A **floor-area ratio** (FAR) is the ratio of the gross building square footage on a lot to the net square footage of the lot or parcel (listed in Table LU-1 [Land Use Designations and Compatible Regional Categories]). For example, on a lot with 10,000 net square feet of land area, an FAR of 1.00 will allow 10,000 square feet of gross building area, regardless of the number of stories in the building. When combined with height and setback standards in the Zoning Ordinance, a maximum FAR can also be clearly translated into limits on building mass and bulk. In addition to density/intensity standards, some land use classifications also stipulate allowable building types, such as single-family residential, to respect the character of certain existing and planned neighborhoods.



Multifamily housing in 4S Ranch



Single-family residential at 7.3 dwelling units per acre

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Seventeen residential land use designations provide for a full range of housing types, from village multi-family development to rural single-family housing. As noted previously, residential densities are stated as a maximum number of housing units per gross acre with the provision that at least one dwelling unit may be built on each existing legal lot designated for residential use. The stated maximum residential density may or may not be achievable in a given area due to local site conditions and constraints. In addition to these primary residential designations, residential uses are also permitted in certain commercial designations as specified in the Zoning Ordinance.

Second dwelling units are allowed pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance and are in addition to the maximum densities otherwise permitted.

VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

Nine residential land use designations are applied within the Village regional category ranging from two to 30 dwelling units per gross acre. Village residential densities are not subject to density reductions based on slope. The residential densities permitted within Village areas typically require water and wastewater service and can support a range of housing types including single-family and multifamily housing. Generally, residential densities of 10.9 dwelling units per gross acre or higher require multi-family development. Typically, multi-family development is characterized as attached apartments or condominiums that are two to three stories in height. The higher densities may require structured or underground parking.

Table LU-1 Land Use Designations and Compatible Regional Categories					
Designation	Maximum Density ^b	Maximum FAR ^a	Compatible Regional Category ^f		
			Village	Semi-Rural	Rural Lands
Village Residential					
Village Residential 30 (VR-30)	30 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 24 (VR-24)	24 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 20 (VR-20)	20 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 15 (VR-15)	15 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 10.9 (VR-10.9)	10.9 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 7.3 (VR-7.3)	7.3 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 4.3 (VR-4.3)	4.3 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 2.9 (VR-2.9)	2.9 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 2 (VR-2)	2 units per gross acre	—	X		
Semi-Rural					
Semi-Rural 0.5 (SR-0.5)	1 unit per 0.5, 1, or 2 gross acre	—	X	X	
Semi-Rural 1 ^c (SR-1)	1 unit per 1, 2, or 4 gross acres	—	X	X	
Semi-Rural 2 ^c (SR-2)	1 unit per 2, 4, or 8 gross acres	—	X	X	
Semi-Rural 4 ^c (SR-4)	1 unit per 4, 8, or 16 gross acres	—	X	X	
Semi-Rural 10 ^c (SR-10)	1 unit per 10 or 20 gross acres	—	X	X	
Rural Lands					
Rural Lands 20 (RL-20)	1 unit per 20 gross acres	—	X	X	X
Rural Lands 40 (RL-40)	1 unit per 40 gross acres	—	X	X	X
Rural Lands 80 (RL-80)	1 unit per 80 gross acres	—	X	X	X
Commercial					
General Commercial (C-1)	— ^e	0.45 or 0.70 ^a	X	X	
Office Professional (C-2)	— ^e	0.45 or 0.80 ^a	X	X	
Neighborhood Commercial (C-3)	— ^e	0.35 or 0.65 ^a	X	X	
Rural Commercial (C-4)	2 units per gross acre	0.35 or 0.60 ^a	X	X	X
Village Core Mixed Use (C-5)	30 units per gross acre ^d	0.70 ^d	X		
Industrial					
Limited Impact Industrial (I-1)	— ^e	0.60	X	X	
Medium Impact Industrial (I-2)	0	0.50	X	X	X
High Impact Industrial (I-3)	0	0.35	X	X	X
Other - with the exception of Specific Plan Area, the following designations are compatible with the No Jurisdiction Regional Category (see page 3-7)					
Tribal Lands (TL)	— ^f	—			
Public Agency Lands	— ^{f, h}	—			
Specific Plan Area (SPA) ^g	refer to individual SPA	—	X	X	X
Public/Semi-Public Facilities (P/SP)	— ^h	0.50	X	X	X
Open Space—Conservation (OS-C)	0	—	X	X	X
Open Space—Recreation (OS-R)	1 unit per 4, 8, or 16 gross acres ⁱ	—	X	X	X

- a. Maximum floor area ratio is provided based on regional categories to guide intensity of development. Community Plans may specify specific areas where these FARs may be exceeded such as areas with shared parking facilities or mixed uses, areas in or around town centers or transit nodes, or when other special circumstances exist.
- b. The General Plan land use densities for emergency shelters shall not apply to the County of San Diego, or lands that they control, during, immediately following, or throughout the recovery efforts authorized by the County of San Diego, related to an emergency declared by the Governor of the State of California and/or the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego.
- c. The maximum density for lands designated as Semi-Rural is based on the slope of the site (see Table LU-2).
- d. This denotes the upper range for each component, but there is no expectation that this would be achieved when each component is applied in the same area. The maximum FAR in the Village Core Mixed Use Designation is 0.7 unless offsite parking or underground parking is provided in conjunction with the proposed development. In that case, the maximum FAR could be up to 1.3.
- e. Maximum residential densities are applied per the Zoning Ordinance.
- f. The reflection of existing land uses on the Land Use Map results in some land use designations that are not consistent with the compatibility set forth in this table. This exception is available to existing land uses only.
- g. This designation solely reflects those designations retained from the former General Plan. New SPAs will not be shown on the Land Use Map under the SPA designation, rather these areas will retain their underlying land uses.
- h. Refer to Policy LU-1.6
- i. Residential uses would not occur within this designation unless the proposed development has been carefully examined to assure that there will be no significant adverse environmental impacts, and erosion and fire problems will be minimal.



SEMI-RURAL RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

Five residential land use designations are applied within Semi-Rural regional category (refer to Table LU-1). Semi-Rural densities range from one dwelling unit per 0.5 acre to one dwelling unit per ten gross acres. Residential development within Semi-Rural areas is not typically served by municipal sewer systems, but is often served by municipal water systems especially where water-intensive crops such as avocado and citrus are common.



Examples of semi-rural residential at one to two dwelling units per acre

In an effort to balance the allowance of reasonable use of property on lands constrained by steep slopes, the maximum allowable residential densities for the five Semi-Rural designations are reduced according to Table LU-2 (Density Formula for Slope-Dependent Lands).

Table LU-2 Density Formula for Slope-Dependent Lands			
Land Use Designation	Slope less than 25%	Slope 25% to less than 50%	Slope 50% or greater
Semi-Rural 0.5	2 du/gross acre	1 du/gross acre	1 du/2 gross acres
Semi-Rural 1	1 du/gross acre	1 du/2 gross acres	1 du/4 gross acres
Semi-Rural 2	1 du/2 gross acres	1 du/4 gross acres	1 du/8 gross acres
Semi-Rural 4	1 du/4 gross acres	1 du/8 gross acres	1 du/16 gross acres
Semi-Rural 10	1 du/10 gross acres	1 du/20 gross acres	1 du/20 gross acres

Density calculations shall be based on a topographic map with 10-foot contour intervals or less. To calculate maximum density for a property the acreage of the property should be divided into the above three categories (<25%, 25–50%, >50%), each total should be multiplied by the associated density, and then the resulting yields combined.
 du = dwelling unit

RURAL LANDS RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

Four residential land use designations are applied within the Rural Lands regional category. The densities provided by these designations are the lowest in the unincorporated County—ranging from one dwelling unit per 20 gross acres, to one dwelling unit per 80 gross acres—and are intended to reflect and preserve the rural agricultural, environmentally constrained, and natural “backcountry” areas of the County (see Table LU-1). Residential development within the Rural Lands category is typically not served by either municipal water and or municipal sewer systems.



House on a large lot in a rural area of County