

## LAND USE

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# LAND USE

## Introduction

The Land Use Element serves as a comprehensive blueprint for the physical development of Laguna Niguel. It establishes a framework for the location, character, and intensity of both existing development and future strategic growth, shaping where people live, work, play, and shop.

By outlining a long-term vision of the City through the General Plan horizon year (2045), the Land Use Element seeks to ensure thoughtful land use planning and community design that foster vibrant, well-connected places while preserving neighborhood character and ensuring compatibility with Laguna Niguel's distinctive identity. The Land Use Element supports the community's vision of a thriving community and resilient local economy, providing a dynamic land use strategy that reflects the needs of residents, catalyzes targeted growth areas throughout the City, and accommodates a blend of appealing commercial spaces, entertainment options, and complementary residential offerings.

This Land Use Element includes all information required by state law, including California Government Code Section 65302(a), to the extent that these topics exist in Laguna Niguel, except that areas subject to flooding are addressed in the Public Safety Element. The Land Use Element consists of narrative text, goals and policies, a Land Use Map, and

other supporting figures. It also includes land use designations that describe the uses shown on the Land Use Map and sets General Plan buildout limits for residential and non-residential development. These components work in tandem and serve as a key resource for City decision-makers and the public, offering guidance on the types and intensities of development permissible in various parts of the City. For effective implementation, the text, data tables, and maps should be reviewed collectively when evaluating project approvals or considering future amendments.

## Organization of Element

The Land Use Element goals and policies address each of the following topics as they relate to Laguna Niguel:

- Land Use Planning
- Community Design and Placemaking
- Opportunity Areas
- Neighborhood Preservation



## Background

Laguna Niguel consists of approximately 9,500 acres, or 14.7 square miles, and is located in south Orange County near the Pacific Ocean. The City is bounded by the cities of Dana Point, San Juan Capistrano, Mission Viejo, Laguna Hills, Aliso Viejo, and Laguna Beach. Regional access to the City is mainly provided by Interstate 5 (I-5 Freeway), the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor (State Route 73), and Pacific Coast Highway (State Route 1).

### Developed Land Area

Most of Laguna Niguel's existing development occurred between the 1960s and early 2000s. Table LU-1 summarizes the land uses in the City's existing built environment.

**Table LU-1 Existing Built Environment**

Land Use Type	Acres	Percent of Total Acres
Single Family Residential	2,793.98	29.5%
Multi-Family Residential	704.80	7.4%
Commercial	475.72	5.0%
Industrial	61.07	0.6%
Public and Institutional	175.91	1.9%
Parks and Open Space <sup>1</sup>	3,595.81	38.0%
Right-of-Way <sup>2</sup>	1,656.46	17.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,463.77</b>	<b>100%</b>

1. Parks and Open Space includes El Niguel Golf Course and residential common open space areas.

2. Right-of-Way includes major streets, rights-of-way, and other remaining land in the City.



## RESIDENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The majority of the City's developed land consists of detached single-family homes, although townhomes, condominiums, and apartments also play an important role in the City's housing inventory. Residential uses account for 37% of the City's total land area, with single-family detached homes representing approximately 80% of that share. Most of the residential neighborhoods are concentrated in well-defined areas linked together by parks, greenbelts, and landscape-lined streets. As of January 1, 2025, the City contains a total of approximately 27,660 residential units.

## NON-RESIDENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The City features over 5.7 million square feet of commercial uses including a mix of restaurant, retail, service, office, and light industrial uses which collectively represent approximately 6% of the total land area. Laguna Niguel currently lacks a traditional "downtown" district. Instead, commercial uses are concentrated along major arterial roads such as Crown Valley Parkway, Golden Lantern, Alicia Parkway, and La Paz Road, as well as within the Gateway Specific Plan area near the I-5 Freeway. Smaller neighborhood-serving centers are also interspersed throughout the City.



## Open Space and Parks

A defining characteristic of Laguna Niguel is its dedicated open space and park areas, which make up 38% of the City's land area (3,595.81 acres). This extensive network of open space corridors, local parks, trails, and regional parks, such as Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park, Laguna Niguel Regional Park, and Salt Creek Corridor Regional Park, offer abundant opportunities for outdoor recreational enjoyment and environmental conservation.

# Balancing Preservation and Targeted Growth

## Community Profile and Sub-profile Areas

Consistent with the 1992 General Plan, the Land Use Element separates Laguna Niguel into 14 Community Profile Areas, as shown in Figure LU-1. The delineation of the 14 Community Profile Areas was based upon factors such as land use type, planning area boundaries, major street boundaries, natural features, homeowners' association boundaries, and the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) regional transportation modeling system.

The 14 Community Profile Areas and their respective Sub-profile Areas (Figures 2.1 through 2.14) establish the baseline General Plan buildout limits, hereafter referred to as Maximum Development Intensities (MDIs). As detailed in Tables LU-2 through LU-15, MDIs are provided by Sub-profile Area, categorizing residential development by

type (maximum detached or attached dwelling units) and maximum density, as well as commercial development by maximum square footage and maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Additional land use specific MDIs are also provided for public institutional, hospitality, and managed care uses. The Community Profile Area totals are for statistical purposes only. MDIs may not be transferred between Sub-profile Areas.

It is important to note that beyond MDIs, various factors influence parcel development. These include, but are not limited to, a parcel's physical characteristics, compatibility with surrounding uses, market conditions, infrastructure and access constraints, and historical development trends.

**Table LU-2**      **Community Profile Area 1**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	426,000	41.24	0.24
B	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	335,921	31.10	0.25
C	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	1,050,580	88.28	0.27
D	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	491,570	15.03	0.75
E	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	161,261	12.83	0.29
F	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	228,341	12.52	0.42
G	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	133,690	14.56	0.21
H	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
I	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	350,626	39.42	0.20
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>3,177,989</b>	<b>254.98</b>	<b>0.29</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:  
Sub-profile 1C: Chet Holifield Federal Building Mechanical Equipment

**Table LU-3** **Community Profile Area 2**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	392	19.02	20.61	0	0.00	0.00
B	0	0.00	372	15.19	24.49	0	0.00	0.00
C	0	0.00	243	12.24	19.85	0	0.00	0.00
D	0	0.00	311	29.88	10.41	22,506	3.97	0.13
E	327	37.68	185	15.30	9.66	0	0.00	0.00
F	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
G	113	9.92	0	0.00	11.39	0	0.00	0.00
H	939	119.55	0	0.00	7.85	0	0.00	0.00
I	110	16.44	0	0.00	6.69	0	0.00	0.00
J	303	30.93	0	0.00	9.80	0	0.00	0.00
K	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	34,985	3.78	0.21
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,792</b>	<b>214.52</b>	<b>1,503</b>	<b>91.63</b>	<b>10.76</b>	<b>57,491</b>	<b>7.75</b>	<b>0.17</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile D: Up to 1,440 sf OCFA Fire Station #39; up to 10,111 sf Chabad Jewish Center

Sub-profile E: Up to 21,000 sf AT&T Substation; Laguna Niguel Elementary School Capacity – up to 546 students

Sub-profile F: Up to 21,060 sf Sea Country Senior & Community Center

Sub-profile H: MNWD Water Storage Tank

**Table LU-4** **Community Profile Area 3**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	489,111	34.24	0.32
B	320	54.68	0	0.00	5.85	0	0.00	0.00
C	539	118.50	192	29.11	4.95	0	0.00	0.00
D	0	0.00	264	21.87	12.07	0	0.00	0.00
E	174	37.06	30	2.45	5.16	0	0.00	0.00
F	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	24,467	3.19	0.18
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,033</b>	<b>210.24</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>53.43</b>	<b>5.76</b>	<b>513,578</b>	<b>38.43</b>	<b>0.31</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses

Sub-profile A: MNWD Water Storage Tank; Niguel Hills Middle School Capacity – up to 1,499 students

**Table LU-5** Community Profile Area 4

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	76,480	3.10	0.57
B	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	323,200	19.65	0.38
C	0	0.00	220	36.02	6.11	121,968	*	0.08
D	0	0.00	709	9.87	71.83	0	0.00	0.00
E	0	0.00	1,118	18.48	60.50	126,463	*	0.00
F	0	0.00	142	2.14	66.36	173,900	5.24	0.76
G	0	0.00	142	15.28	9.29	247,639	*	0.37
H	0	0.00	663	38.53	17.21	404,400	*	0.24
I	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	138,740	16.90	0.19
J	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	141,860	25.81	0.13
K	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	58,150	3.07	0.43
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2,994</b>	<b>120.32</b>	<b>24.88</b>	<b>1,812,800</b>	<b>73.78</b>	<b>0.56</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile B: SDGE Substation

Sub-profile D: Watermark Laguna Niguel Managed Care Facility – up to 110 units

Sub-profile H: Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo Metrolink Transit Station; up to 200-room hotel

Sub-profile K: Up to 150 hotel rooms, including 33-room existing hotel

\*Acreage is recorded under “Residential Attached”; commercial uses are allowed and the FAR is calculated based on the “Residential Attached” acreage identified

**Table LU-6** Community Profile Area 5

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	423	19.98	21.17	0	0.00	0.00
B	0	0.00	1,090	56.97	19.13	0	0.00	0.00
C	233	31.87	0	0.00	7.31	17,082	1.70	0.23
D	151	13.25	92	0.00	18.34	0	0.00	0.00
E	0	0.00	176	15.80	11.14	0	0.00	0.00
F	488	55.42	0	0.00	8.81	12,100	1.80	0.15
G	210	27.89	0	0.00	7.53	0	0.00	0.00
H	280	49.54	29	1.32	6.08	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,362</b>	<b>177.97</b>	<b>1,810</b>	<b>94.07</b>	<b>11.66</b>	<b>29,182</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>0.19</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile C: Up to 27,662 sf Mission Lutheran Church

Sub-profile F: Marian Bergeson Elementary School Capacity – up to 698 students

Sub-profile H: SDG&E Metering Station

**Table LU-7** **Community Profile Area 6**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
B	629	120.02	0	0.00	5.24	0	0.00	0.00
C	94	5.28	0	0.00	17.80	0	0.00	0.00
D	200	23.70	0	0.00	8.44	0	0.00	0.00
E	0	0.00	77	15.97	4.82	0	0.00	0.00
F	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
G	204	46.25	0	0.00	4.41	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>195.25</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>15.97</b>	<b>5.70</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, &amp; Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile A: MNWD Regional Sewage Treatment Plant

Sub-profile F: Up to 48,000 sf Crown Valley Park – Community Center; up to 30,460 sf Crown Valley Park – YMCA

**Table LU-8** **Community Profile Area 7**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	186	33.38	0	0.00	5.57	0	0.00	0.00
B	322	48.71	48	4.75	6.92	0	0.00	0.00
C	0	0.00	358	35.16	10.18	0	0.00	0.00
D	0	0.00	416	29.88	13.92	0	0.00	0.00
E	374	67.54	170	0.00	8.05	0	0.00	0.00
F	126	18.30	0	0.00	6.89	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,008</b>	<b>167.93</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>69.80</b>	<b>8.41</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, &amp; Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile A: Up to 27,600 sf Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Sub-profile E: Up to 24,388 sf Laguna Niguel Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Sub-profile F: Moulton Elementary School Capacity – up to 788 students

**Table LU-9      Community Profile Area 8**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	255	17.02	14.98	0	0.00	0.00
B	138	21.43	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
C	150	39.57	0	0.00	3.79	0	0.00	0.00
D	11	2.66	165	8.04	16.45	0	0.00	0.00
E	441	67.71	0	0.00	6.51	0	0.00	0.00
F	40	7.36	389	31.11	11.15	0	0.00	0.00
G	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>138.73</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>56.17</b>	<b>8.15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:  
Sub-profile A: MNWD Storage Tank

**Table LU-10      Community Profile Area 9**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	263	72.29	130	9.18	4.82	0	0.00	0.00
B	30	7.96	0	0.00	3.77	0	0.00	0.00
C	251	61.06	0	0.00	4.11	0	0.00	0.00
D	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	18,144	2.95	0.14
E	66	10.55	319	30.48	9.38	0	0.00	0.00
F	311	63.26	0	0.00	4.92	0	0.07	0.00
G	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	51,587	9.90	0.12
<b>Totals</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>215.11</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>39.66</b>	<b>5.38</b>	<b>69,731</b>	<b>12.92</b>	<b>0.12</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:  
Sub-profile A: Crestavilla Managed Care Facility – up to 224 units  
Sub-profile B: Includes portions of the 18-hole El Niguel Country Club  
Sub-profile E: Includes portions of the 18-hole El Niguel Country Club  
Sub-profile E: Includes portions of the El Niguel Racquet Club

**Table LU-11** **Community Profile Area 10**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	910	212.54	34	2.20	4.44	0	0.00	0.00
B	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	45,562	6.97	0.15
C	120	16.97	176	10.17	10.90	0	0.00	0.00
D	751	92.23	0	0.00	8.14	0	0.00	0.00
E	316	71.24	0	0.00	4.44	0	0.00	0.00
F	90	7.46	189	10.78	15.29	0	0.00	0.00
G	0	0.00	344	18.16	18.95	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,187</b>	<b>400.45</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>41.31</b>	<b>6.63</b>	<b>45,562</b>	<b>6.97</b>	<b>0.15</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile A: Up to 42,270 sf Saint Timothy's Church; up to 11,312 sf Grace Church; Crown Valley Elementary School Capacity – up to 1,288 students (leased by Community Roots Academy Charter School; OCASA Charter School); Griffin Managed Care Facility – up to 108 units; Childcare Preschool – up to 72 students

Sub-profile B: Up to 8,286 sf Christian Science Church & Reading Room; McDowell Elementary Private School Capacity – up to 90 students

Sub-profile G: Hidden Hills Elementary School Capacity – up to 607 students

**Table LU-12** **Community Profile Area 11**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	1,287	51.42	25.03	0	0.00	0.00
B	200	40.99	128	18.07	5.55	0	0.00	0.00
C	617	141.19	144	65.13	3.69	0	0.00	0.00
D	0	0.00	192	8.97	21.40	166,992	15.22	0.25
E	30	10.75	950	52.46	15.50	0	0.00	0.00
F	206	48.05	0	0.00	4.29	0	0.00	0.00
G	707	93.76	647	13.15	12.66	0	0.00	0.00
H	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
I	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	11,607	1.70	0.16
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,760</b>	<b>334.73</b>	<b>3,348</b>	<b>209.20</b>	<b>9.39</b>	<b>178,599</b>	<b>16.92</b>	<b>0.24</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile E: Up to 10,000 sf OCFA Fire Station #49; George White Elementary School Capacity – up to 728 students

Sub-profile H: MNWD Water Storage Tank

**Table LU-13      Community Profile Area 12**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	135	207.96	0	0.00	0.65	0	0.00	0.00
B	54	7.01	114	8.20	11.05	0	0.00	0.00
C	266	45.89	0	0.00	5.80	0	0.00	0.00
D	412	116.32	0	0.00	3.54	0	0.00	0.00
E	574	107.16	290	41.43	5.81	0	0.00	0.00
F	36	5.54	136	0.00	31.07	0	0.00	0.00
G	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
H	317	47.21	105	10.57	7.30	0	0.00	0.00
I	0	0.00	371	34.04	10.90	0	0.00	0.00
J	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	205,620	17.13	0.28
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,794</b>	<b>537.08</b>	<b>1,016</b>	<b>94.24</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>205,620</b>	<b>17.13</b>	<b>0.28</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile F: Malcolm Elementary School Capacity – up to 728 students

Sub-profile G: Aegis Managed Care Facility – up to 78 units

Sub-profile I: Electrical Substation; Saint Anne's Catholic Private School Capacity – up to 790 students, including 104 preschool students

Sub-profile J: The Hospitality Overlay facilitates the potential development of a high-quality hotel at Ocean Ranch Village, subject to a General Plan Amendment (including update of the Sub-profile MDI), a Zone Change, and a Specific Plan

**Table LU-14      Community Profile Area 13**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	172	47.82	253	33.84	5.20	0	0.00	0.00
B	114	14.34	626	73.99	8.38	0	0.00	0.00
C	192	35.04	0	0.00	5.48	0	0.00	0.00
D	1	4.50	0	0.00	0.22	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>101.70</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>107.83</b>	<b>6.48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile A: MNWD Storage Tank

Sub-profile B: MNWD Storage Tanks (2)

Sub-profile D: The Hospitality Overlay facilitates the potential development of up to a 120-room high-quality hotel, subject to a General Plan Amendment, a Zone Change, and a Specific Plan

**Table LU-15      Community Profile Area 14**

Subprofile	Maximum Development Intensities							
	Residential Detached Units	Acreage	Residential Attached Units	Acreage	Density	Commercial SF	Acreage	FAR
A	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	296,430	29.10	0.23
B	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	164,727	20.57	0.18
C	0	0.00	275	*	9.73	160,590	28.27	0.00
D	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	92,596	11.60	0.18
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>9.73</b>	<b>714,343</b>	<b>89.54</b>	<b>0.18</b>

Maximum Development Intensities for Public Institutional, Hospitality, & Managed Care Land Uses:

Sub-profile A: Up to 14,400 sf South County Post Office; up to 38,814 sf Laguna Niguel Presbyterian Church

Sub-profile C: Up to 41,000 sf Laguna Niguel City Hall; up to 16,300 sf Laguna Niguel Library; up to 7,555 sf OCFA Fire Station #5

\*Acreage is recorded under "Commercial Square Footage," which includes City Hall (4.15 acres) and OCFA Fire Station #5

## Opportunity Areas and Overlays

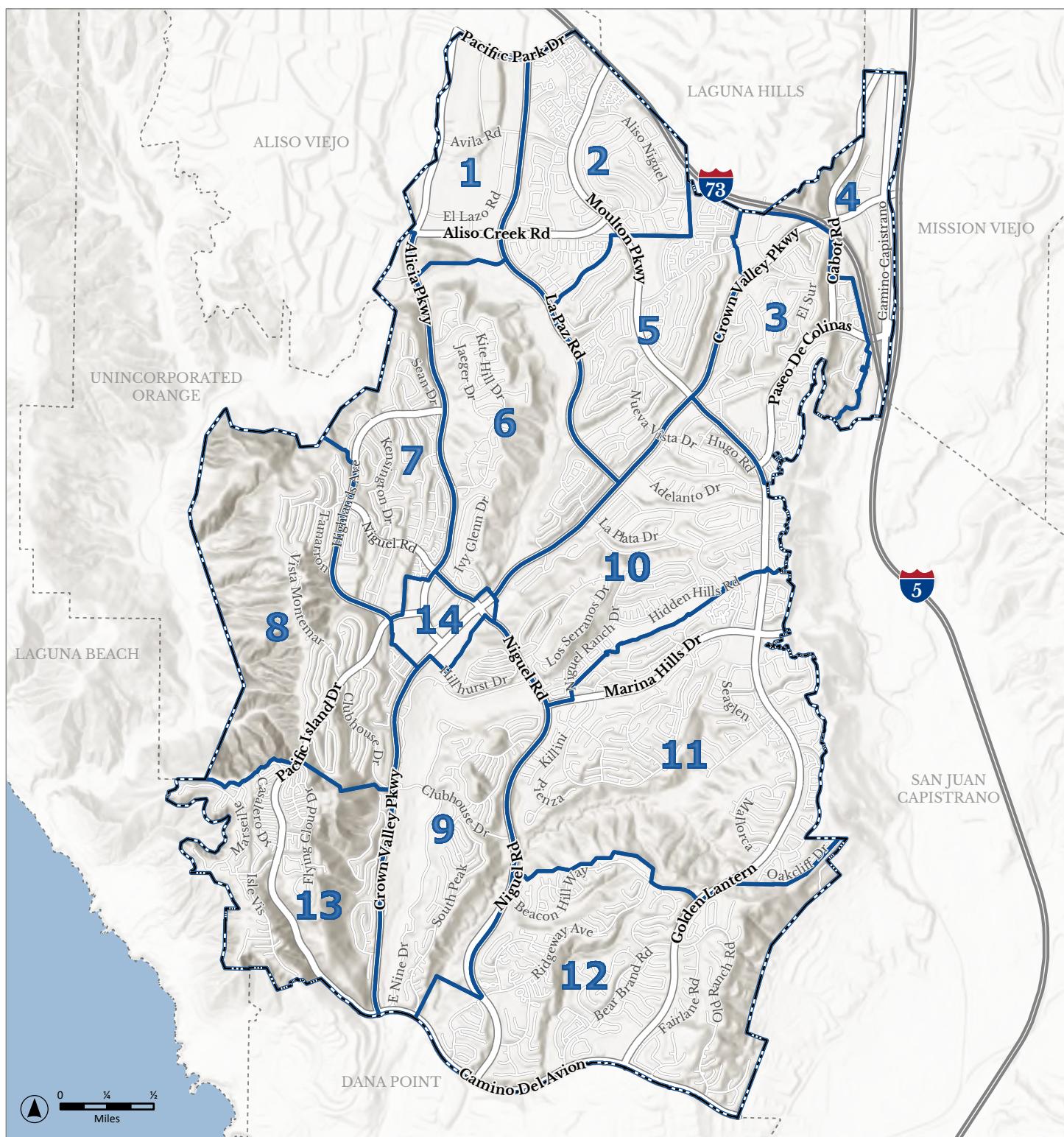
Laguna Niguel is predominantly built-out, with limited vacant developable land remaining, which primarily focuses future growth through the redevelopment of certain areas of the City. The Land Use Element emphasizes preserving Laguna Niguel's established neighborhoods while accommodating the residual baseline growth permitted in accordance with Sub-profile Area MDIs. Additionally, three "Opportunity Areas" (Figure LU-4) are targeted for considerable growth through the establishment of area-specific overlays. These "Opportunity Area Overlays," which may be applied through separate legislative action, provide a pathway for potential redevelopment flexibility in exceedance of applicable MDIs. As envisioned, such redevelopment would address evolving community priorities, market dynamics, and demographic changes. Geographically, the noted Opportunity Areas are similar to those designated in the 1992 General Plan with a few exceptions.<sup>1</sup>

## Hospitality Overlay

The Hospitality Overlay encourages the development of high-quality hotels in key areas of the City. The Hospitality Overlay supports economic growth goals by supporting development that would generate increased tax revenues (e.g., transient occupancy, property, and sales taxes from guest spending) and serve as a draw for tourists, business travelers, and attendees for regional youth sporting events, elevating Laguna Niguel's profile as a desirable destination.

1. As part of the 2025 comprehensive General Plan update, the Opportunity Area for Community Profile Area No. 1 was reduced in geographic area and bifurcated. This adjustment is an outgrowth of the development that has occurred since 1992 and the unique development potential for two distinct sites, The Marketplace at Laguna Niguel and Chet Holifield Federal Building site. Additionally, adoption of the Laguna Niguel Gateway Specific Plan and subsequent redevelopment rendered the Opportunity Area designation for Community Profile Area No. 4 unnecessary. Lastly, the Opportunity Area for Community Profile Area No. 14 remains largely intact, except for the exclusion of Sub-Profile Area C where application of the Civic Center land use designation sufficiently defines the land use plan.

## Figure LU-1 Community Profile Areas



Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

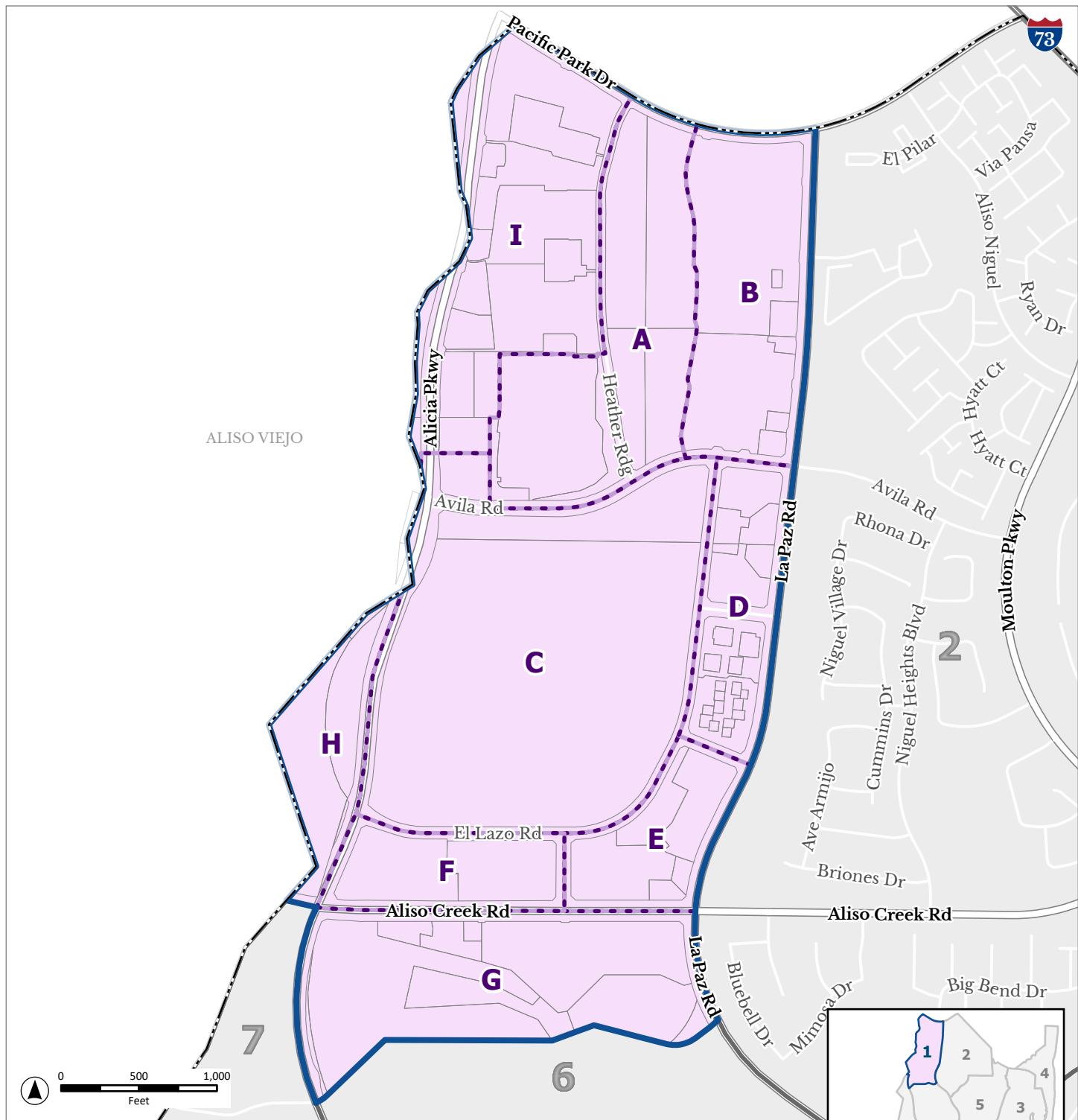
Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group  
May 5, 2025.

Laguna Niguel City Boundary

Other Jurisdictions

Community Profile Areas

## Figure LU-2.1 Community Profile Area 1 Sub-Profile Areas

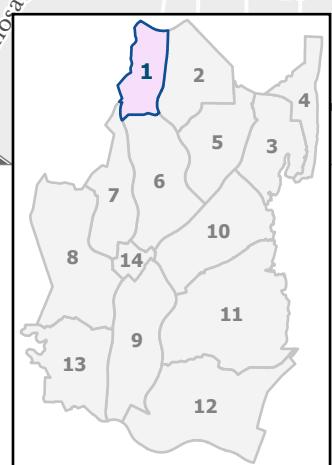


Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

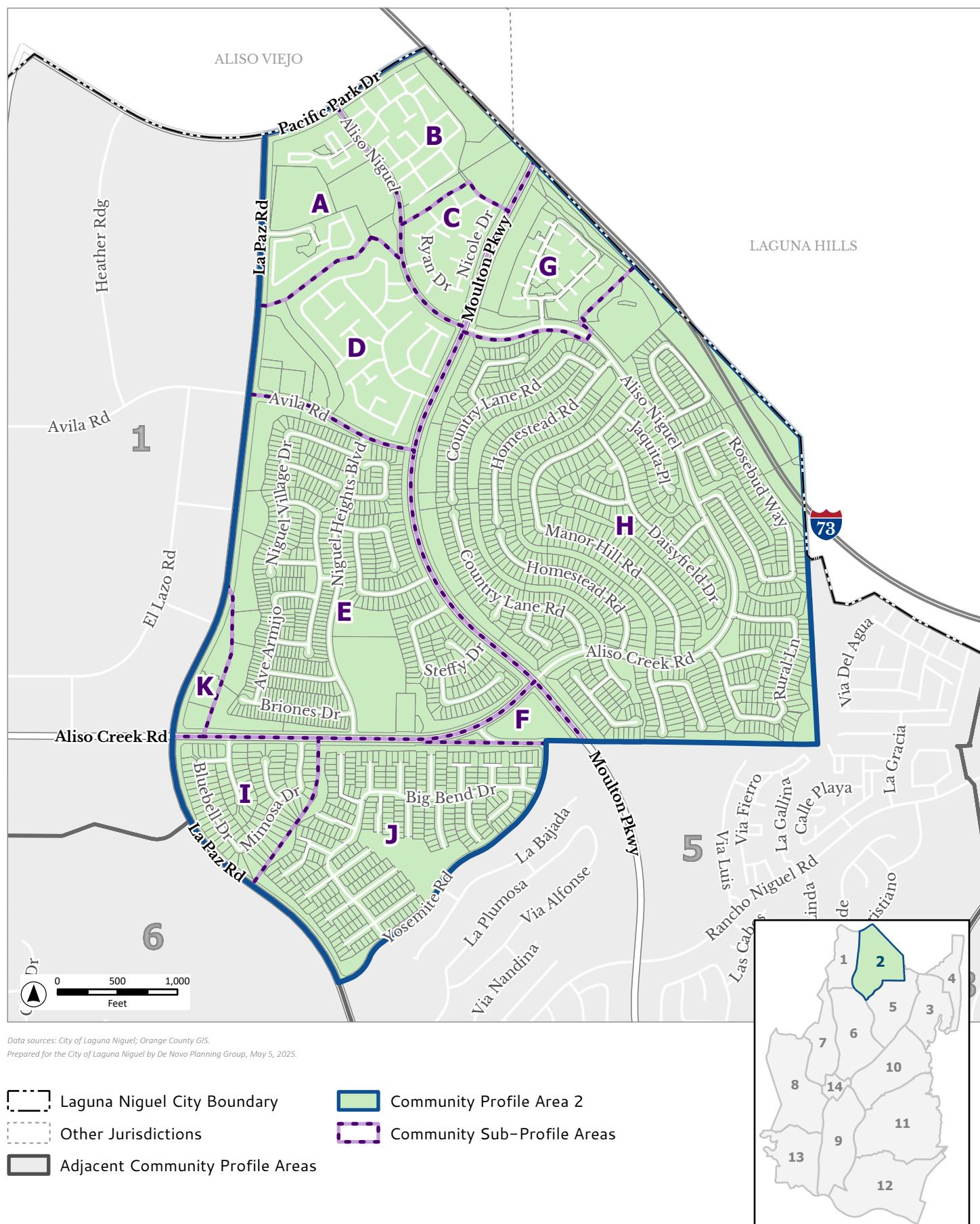
Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

- Laguna Niguel City Boundary:** Indicated by a dashed line.
- Other Jurisdictions:** Indicated by a dashed line.
- Adjacent Community Profile Areas:** Shaded in gray, including areas 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13.

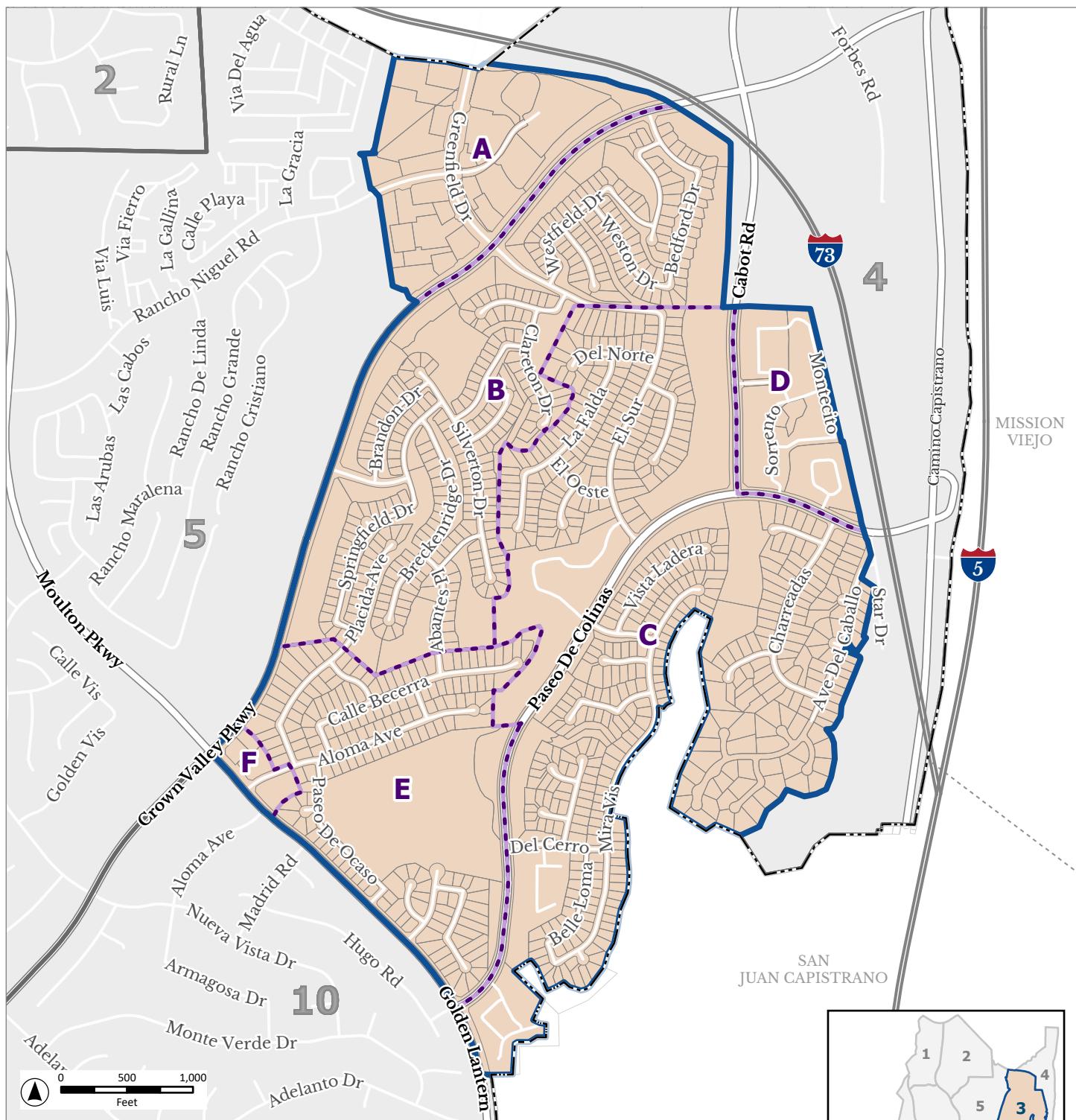
- Community Profile Area 1:** Shaded in light blue.
- Community Sub-Profile Areas:** Indicated by a dashed line.



## Figure LU-2.2 Community Profile Area 2 Sub-Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.3 Community Profile Area 3 Sub-Profile Areas

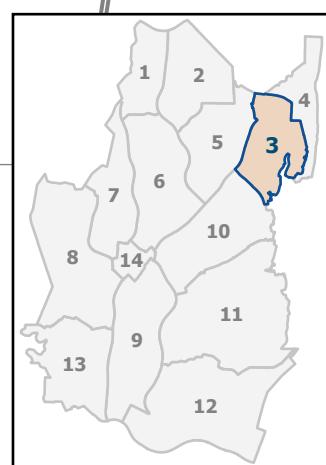


Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

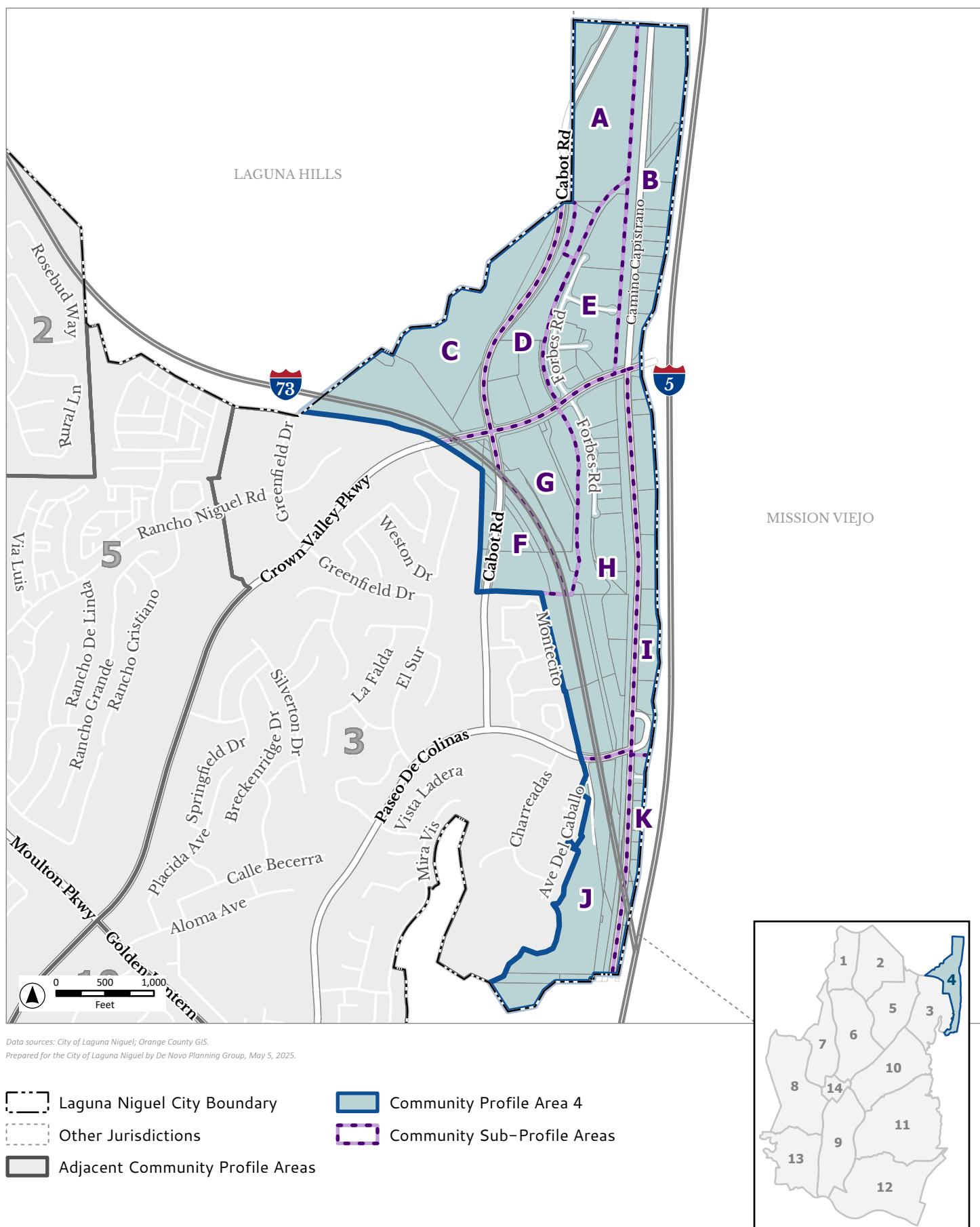
Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

- Laguna Niguel City Boundary
- Other Jurisdictions
- Adjacent Community Profile Areas

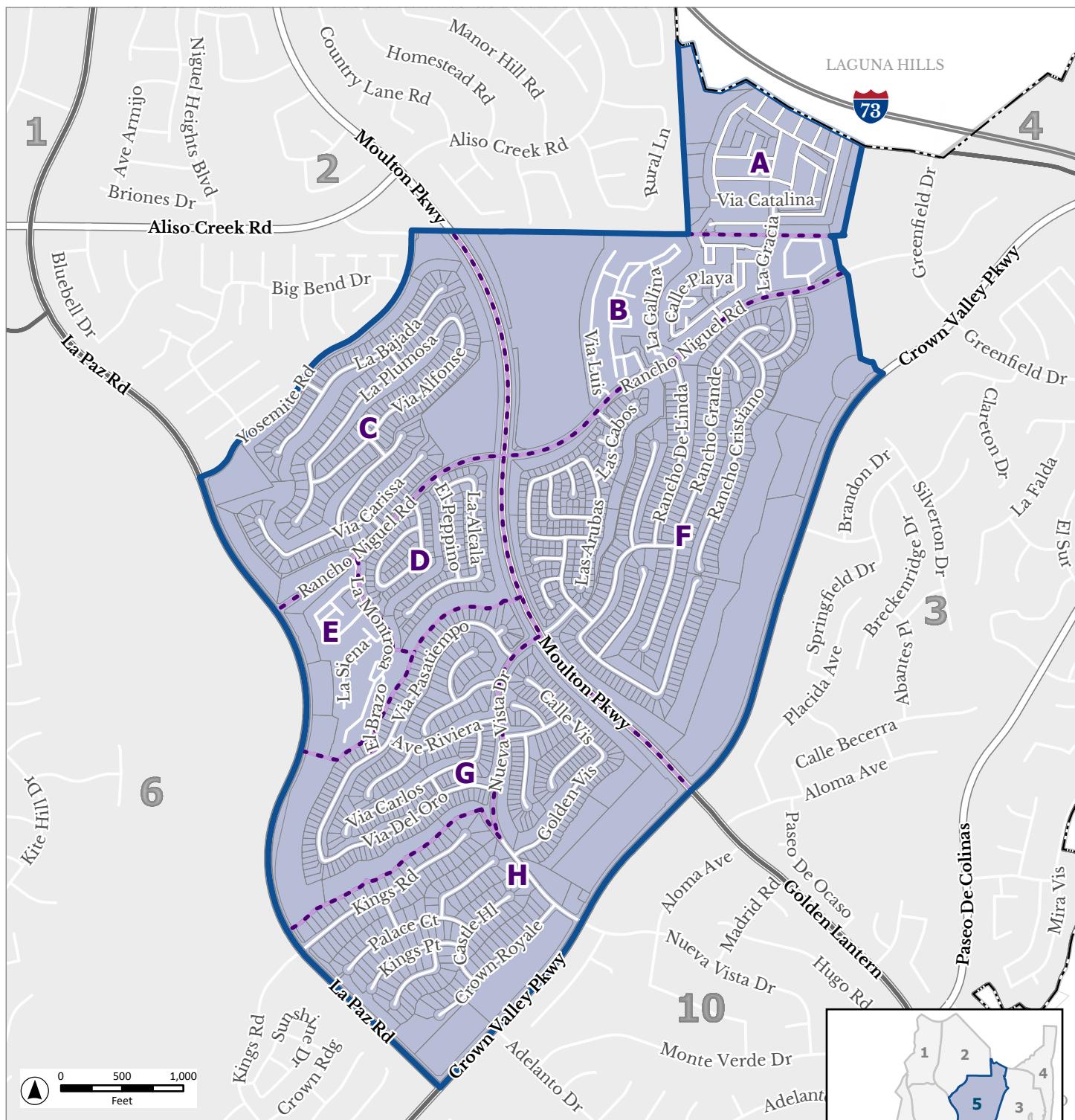
- Community Profile Area 3
- Community Sub-Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.4 Community Profile Area 4 Sub-Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.5 Community Profile Area 5 Sub-Profile Areas



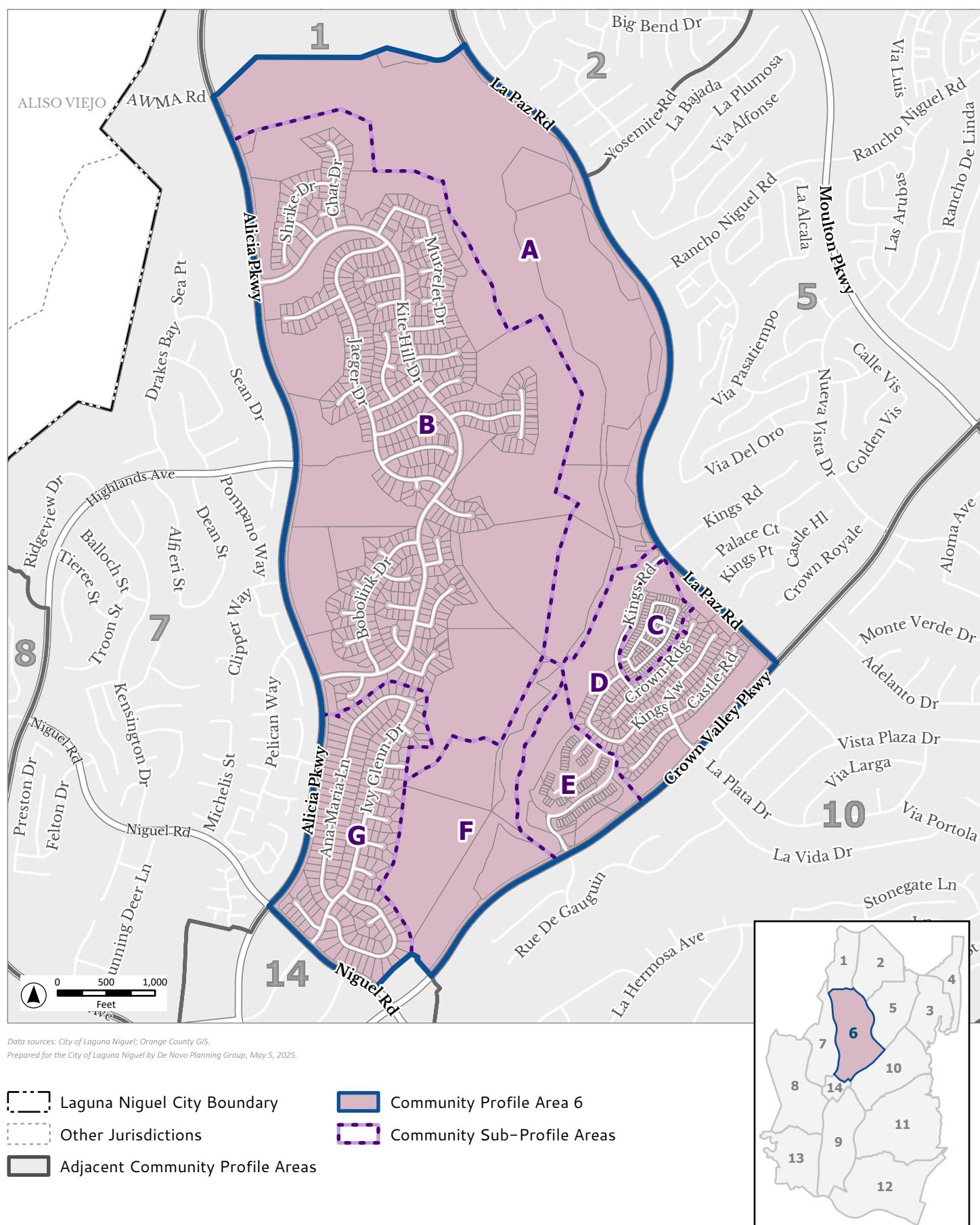
Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

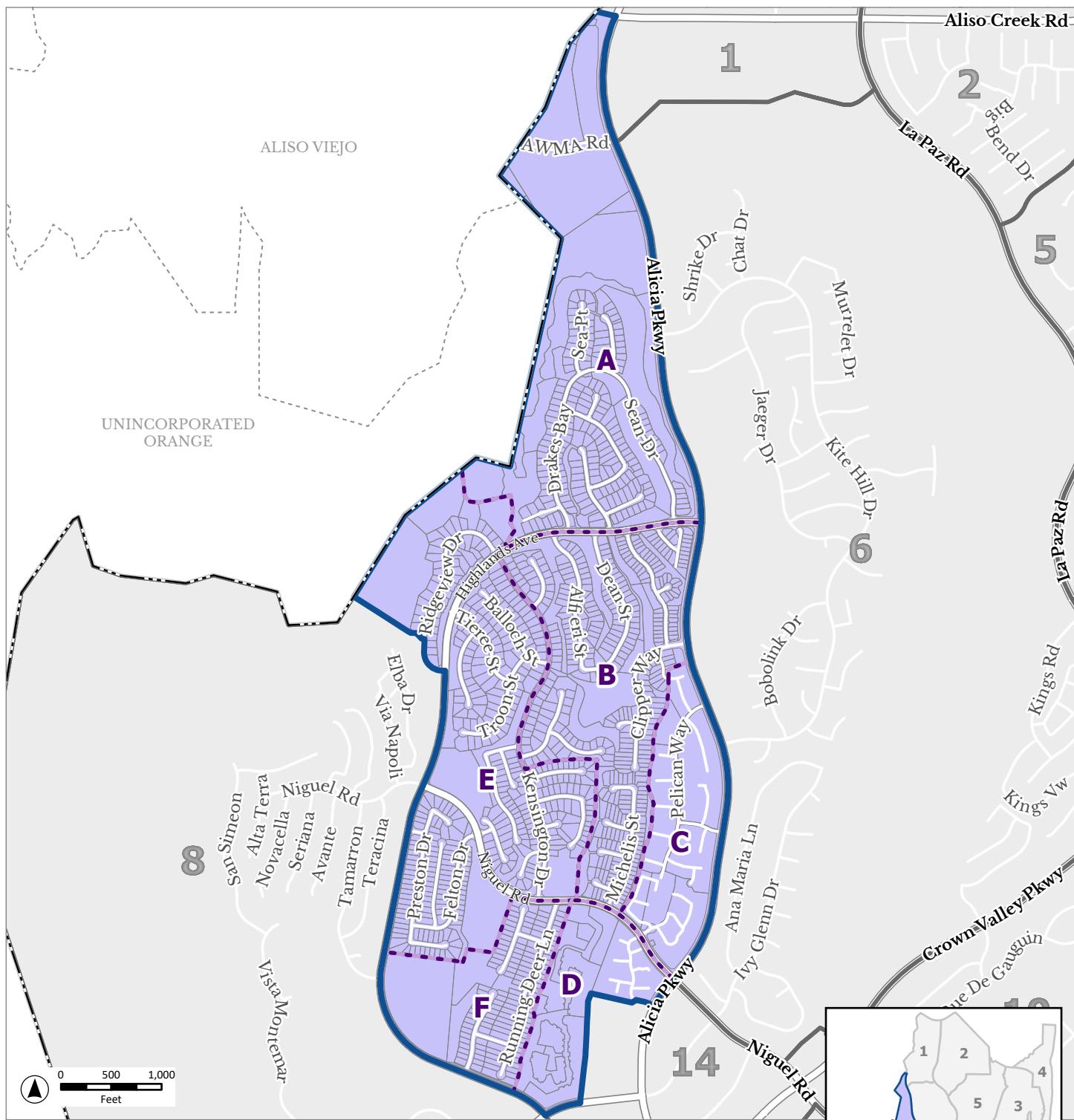
- Laguna Niguel City Boundary
- Other Jurisdictions
- Adjacent Community Profile Areas

- Community Profile Area 5
- Community Sub-Profile Areas

## Figure LU-2.6 Community Profile Area 6 Sub-Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.7 Community Profile Area 7 Sub-Profile Areas

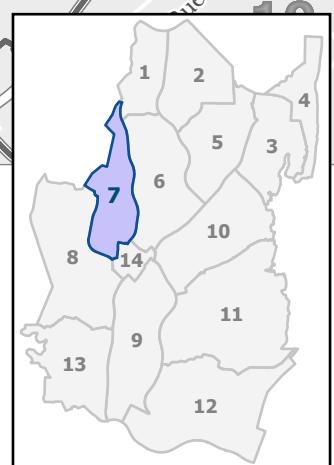


Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

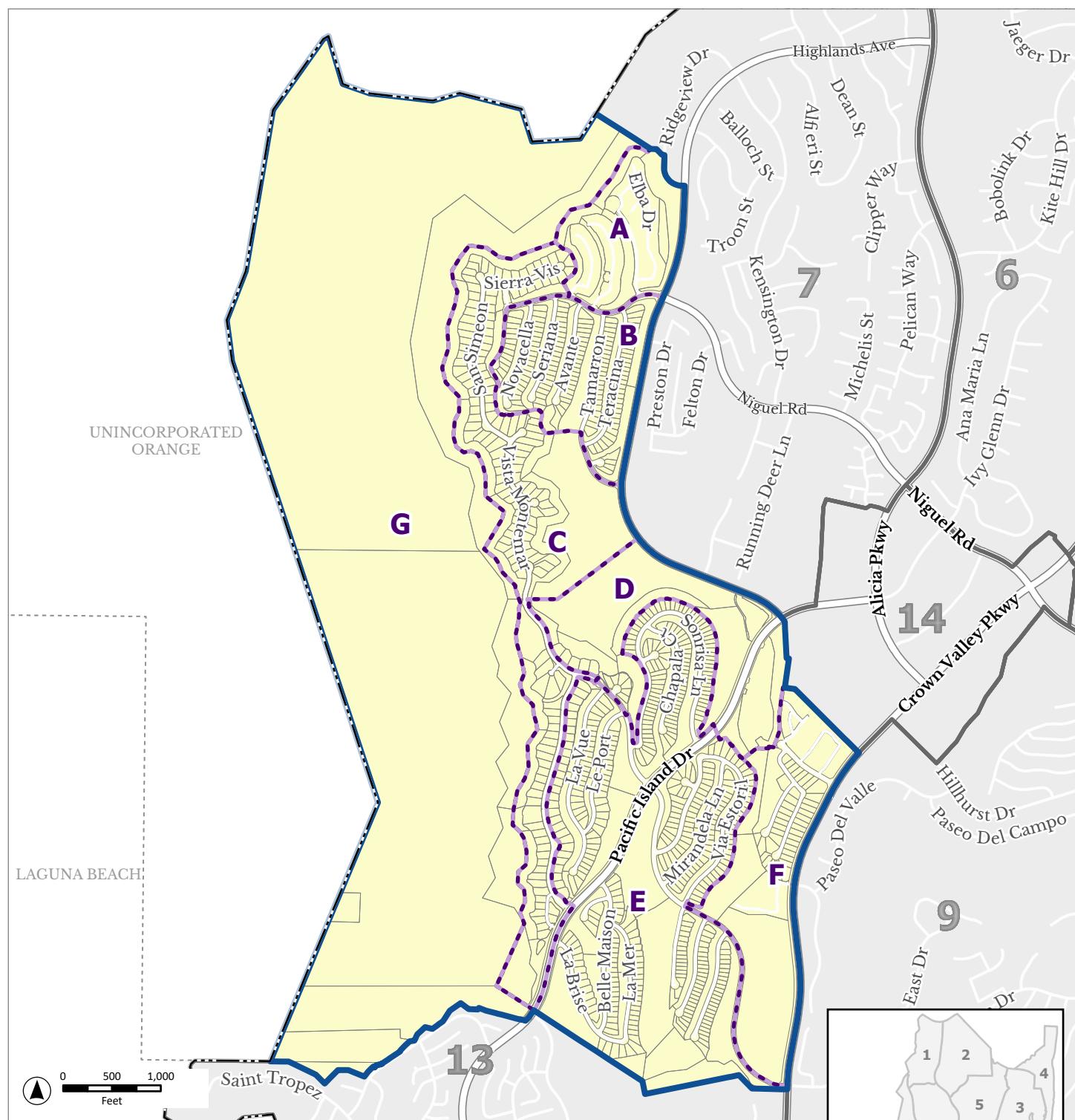
Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

- Laguna Niguel City Boundary
- Other Jurisdictions
- Adjacent Community Profile Areas

- Community Profile Area 7
- Community Sub-Profile Areas

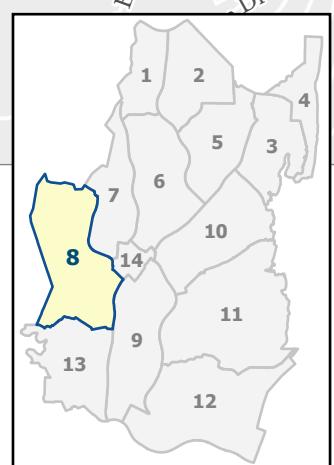


## Figure LU-2.8 Community Profile Area 8 Sub-Profile Areas

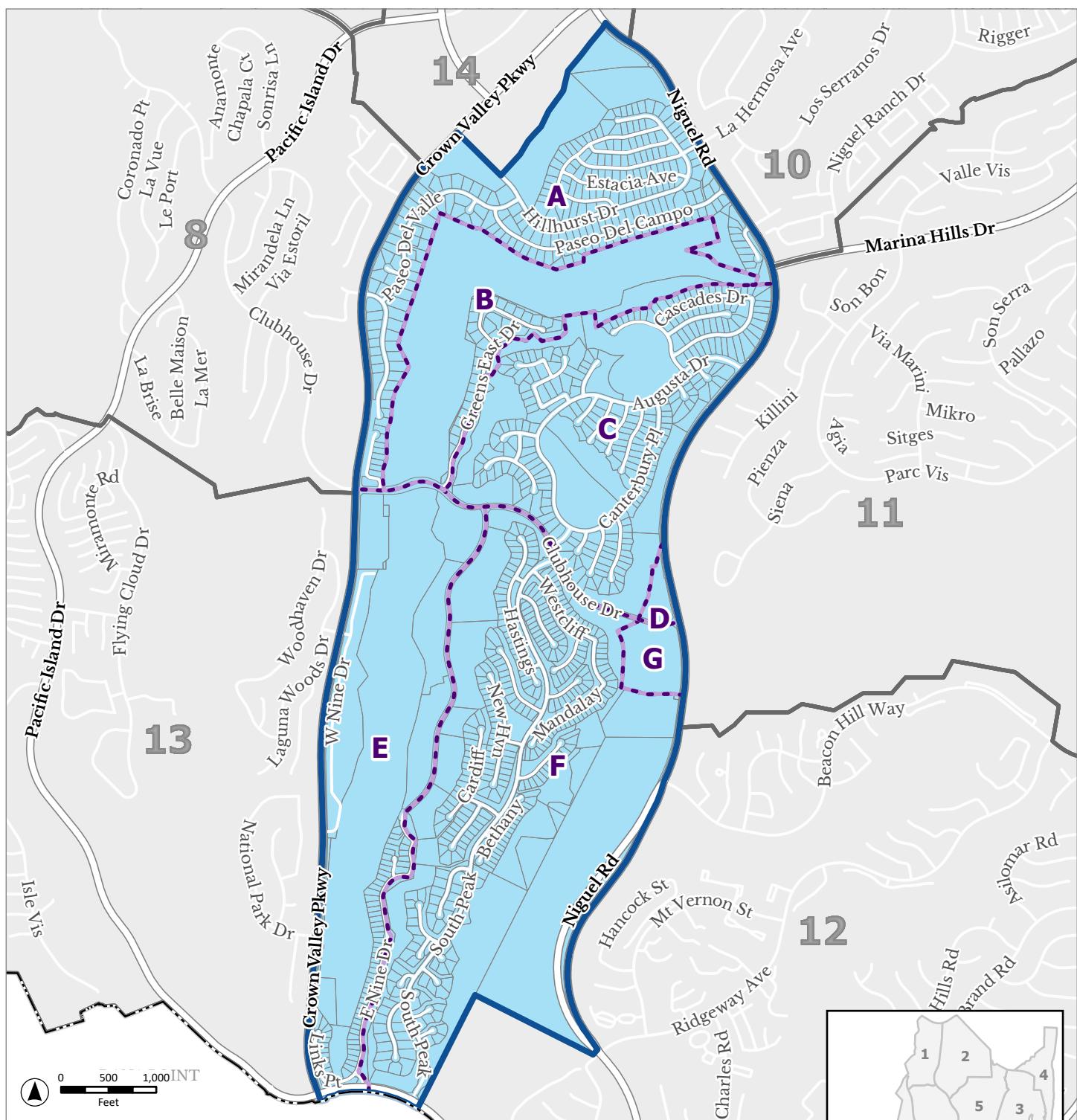


Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, April 9, 2025.



## Figure LU-2.9 Community Profile Area 9 Sub-Profile Areas

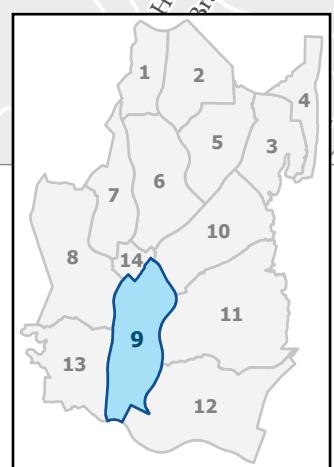


Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

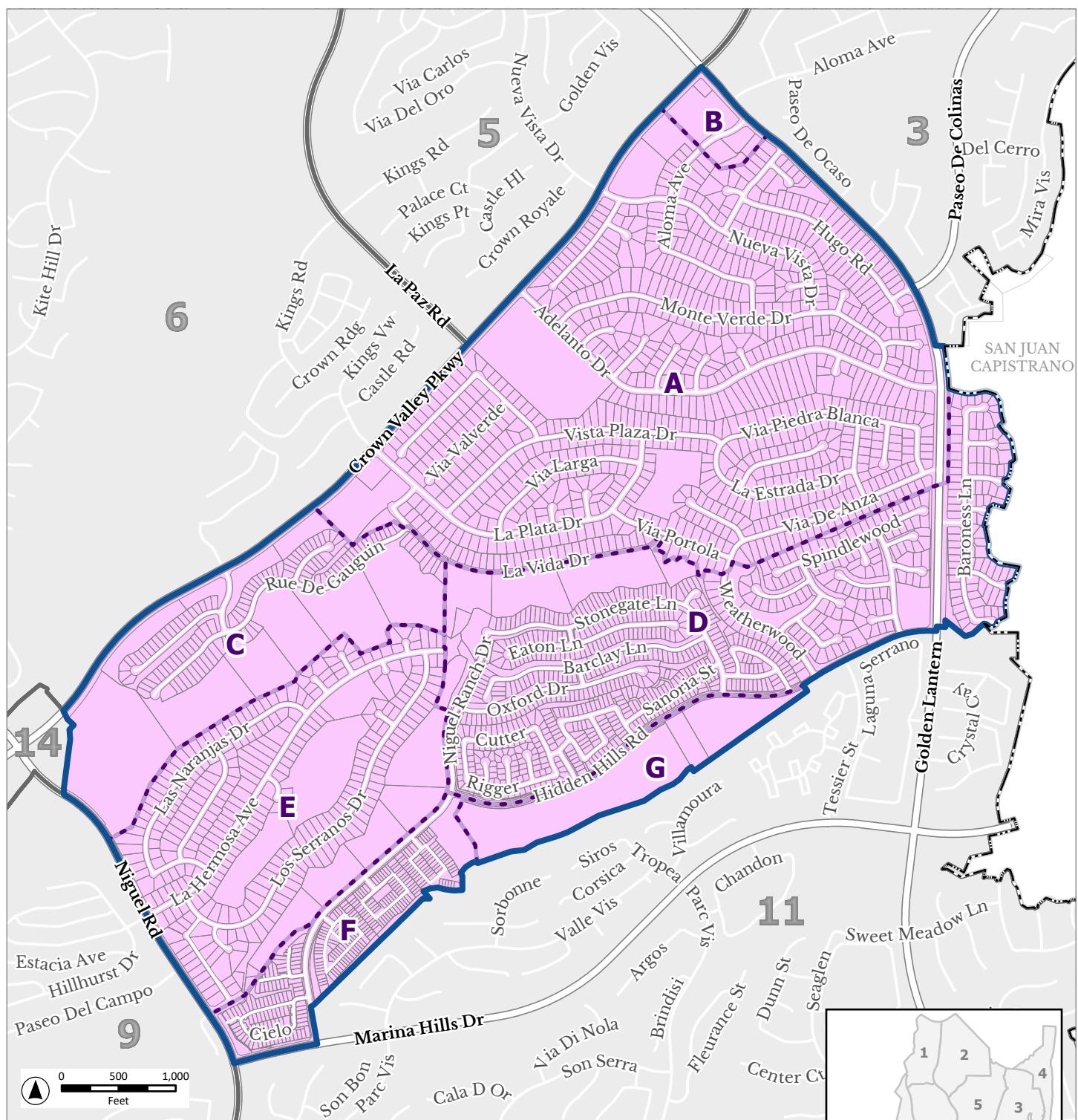
Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

- Laguna Niguel City Boundary
- Other Jurisdictions
- Adjacent Community Profile Areas

- Community Profile Area 9
- Community Sub-Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.10 Community Profile Area 10 Sub-Profile Areas

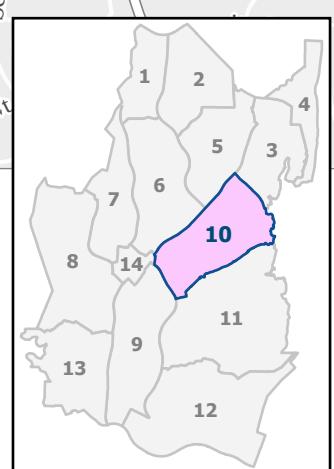


Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

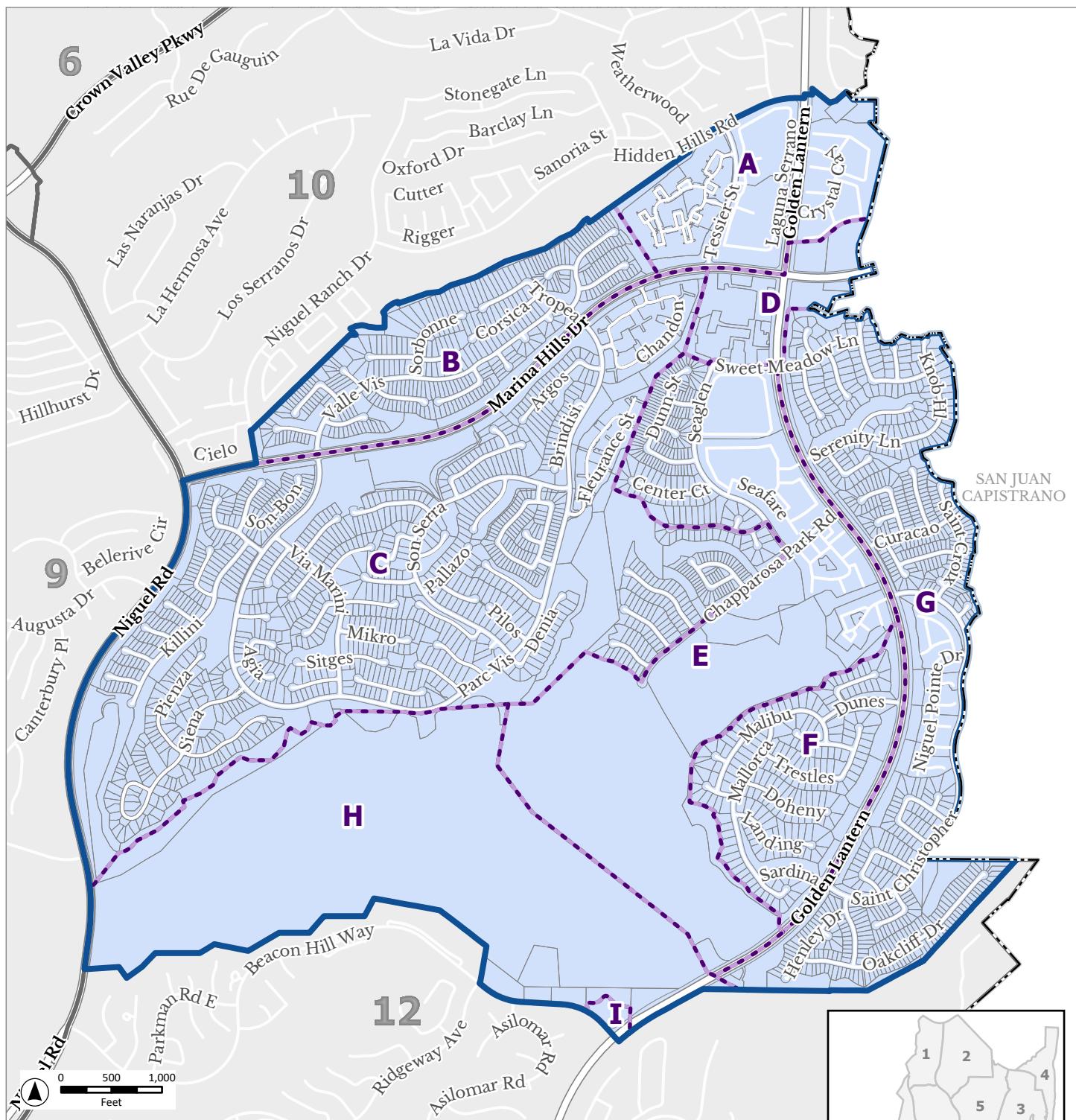
Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

- Laguna Niguel City Boundary
- Other Jurisdictions
- Adjacent Community Profile Areas

- Community Profile Area 10
- Community Sub-Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.11 Community Profile Area 11 Sub-Profile Areas



*Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.*

Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

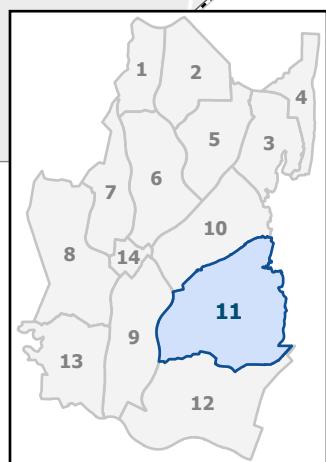
 Laguna Niguel City Boundary

## Community Profile Area 11

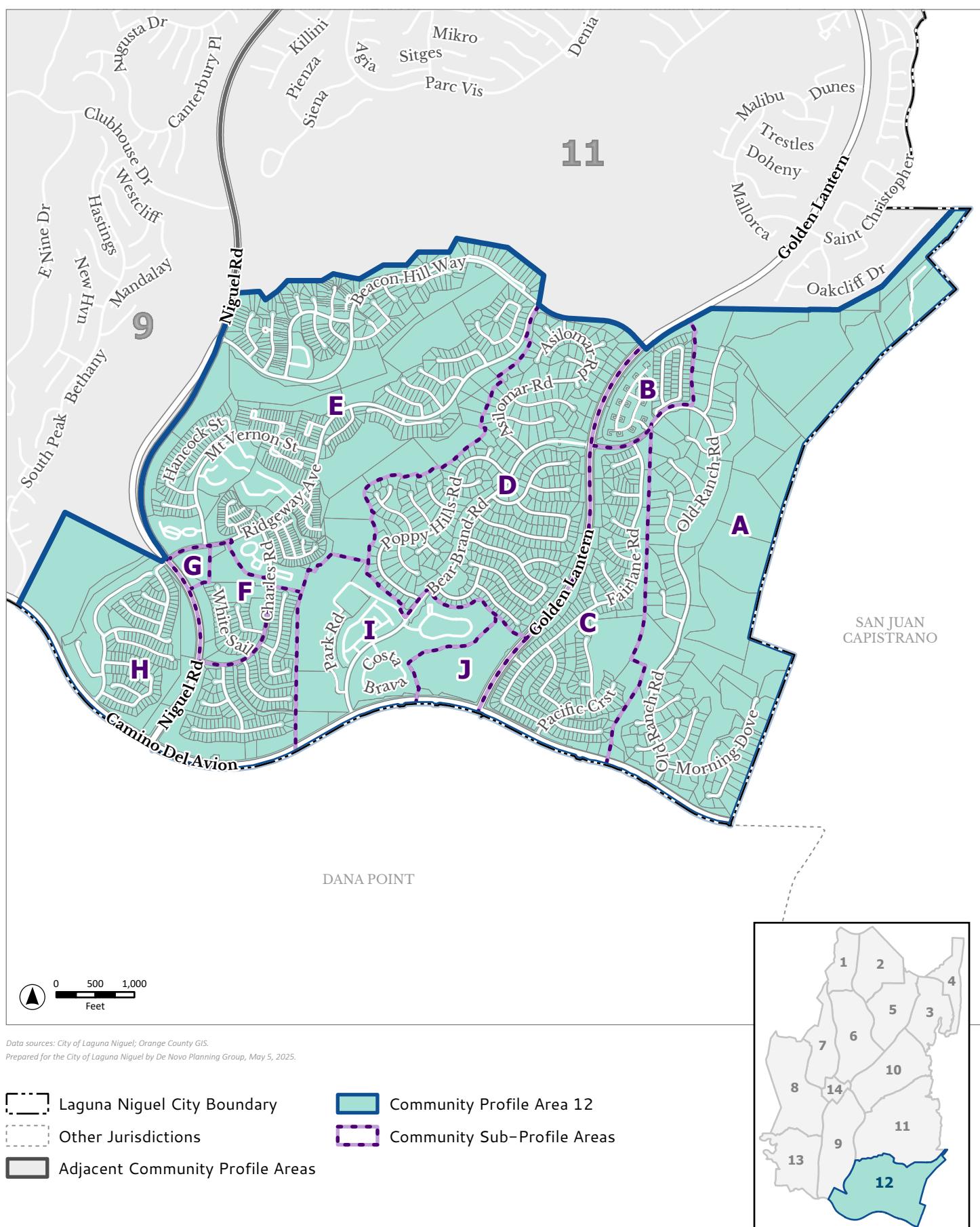
## Community Sub-Profile Areas

## Other Jurisdictions

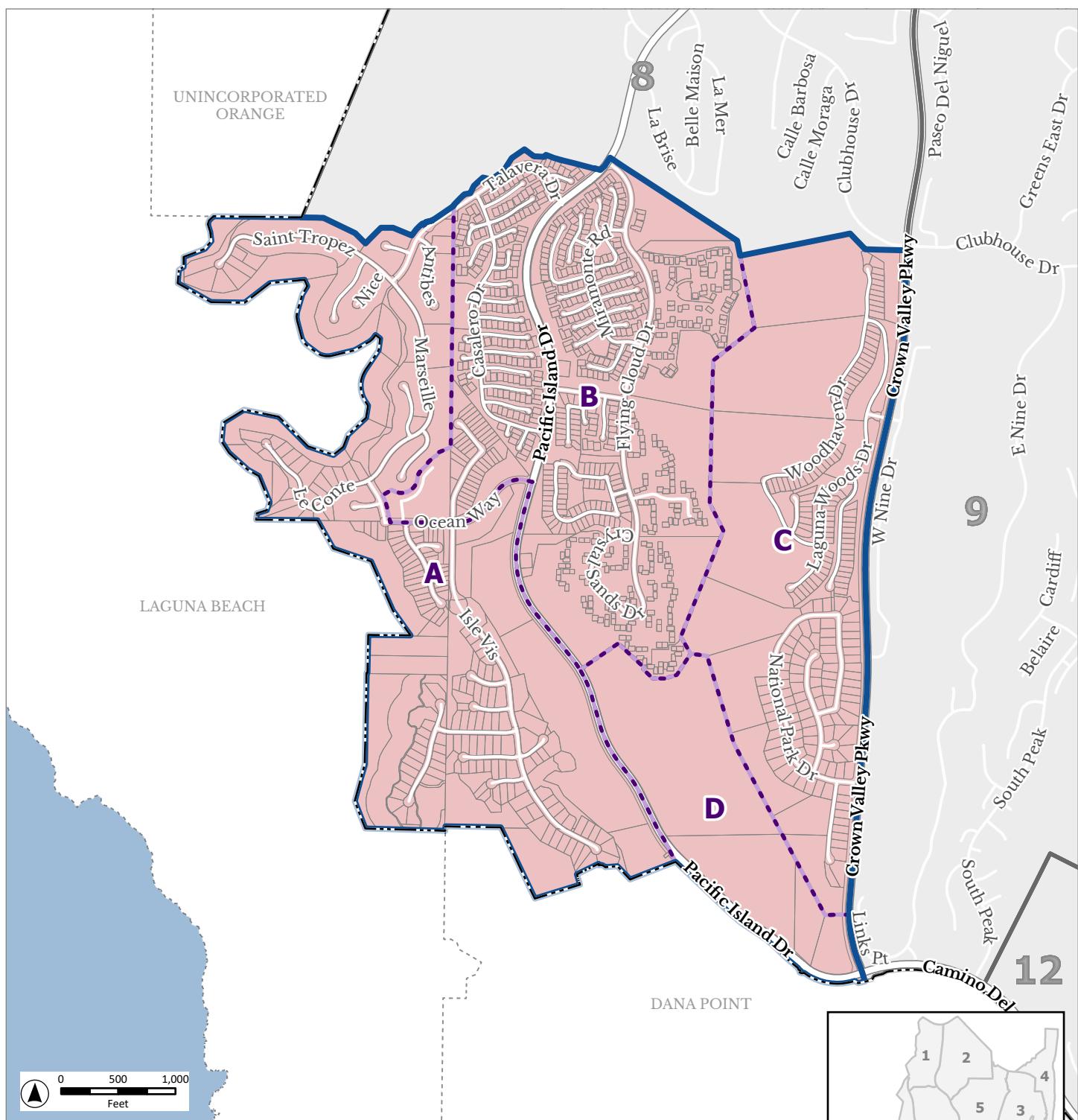
## Adjacent Community Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.12 Community Profile Area 12 Sub-Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.13 Community Profile Area 13 Sub-Profile Areas

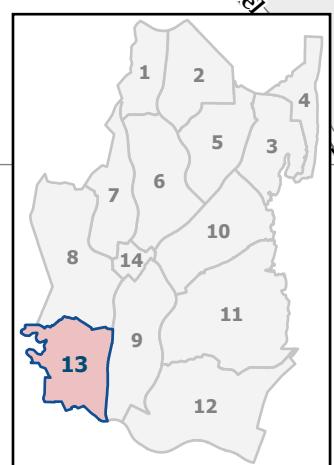


Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

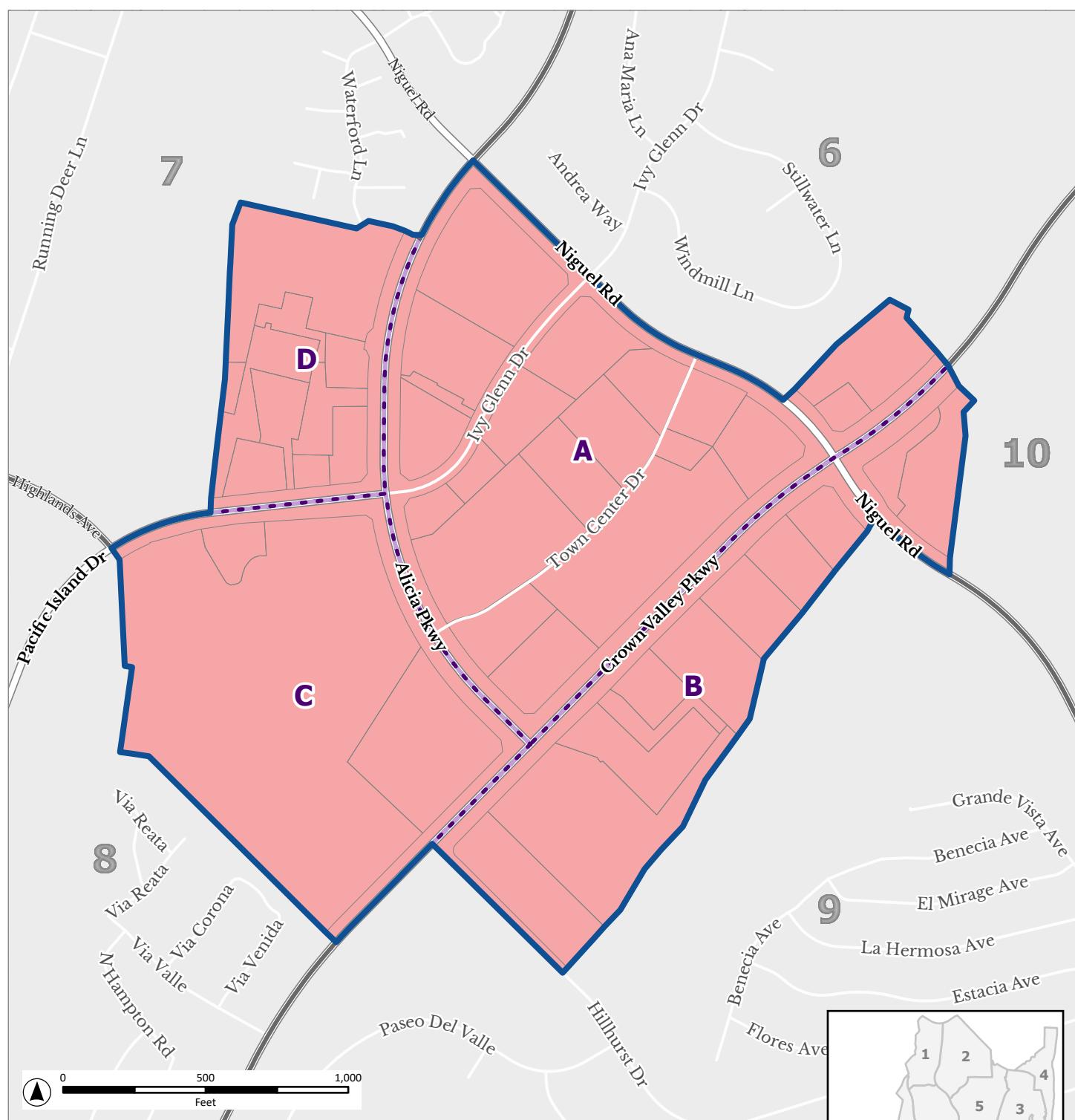
Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

- Laguna Niguel City Boundary
- Other Jurisdictions
- Adjacent Community Profile Areas

- Community Profile Area 13
- Community Sub-Profile Areas



## Figure LU-2.14 Community Profile Area 14 Sub-Profile Areas

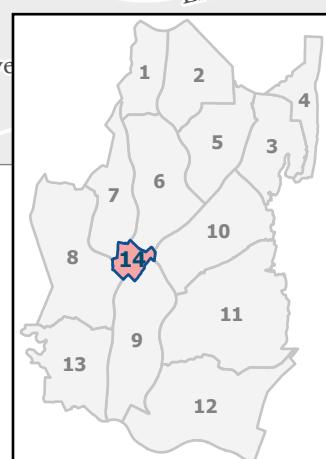


Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group, May 5, 2025.

- Laguna Niguel City Boundary
- Other Jurisdictions
- Adjacent Community Profile Areas

- Community Profile Area 14
- Community Sub-Profile Areas



# Special Planning Areas

## Laguna Niguel Gateway Specific Plan

The Laguna Niguel Gateway Area is located in the northeast corner of the City near the I-5 Freeway and includes the Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo Metrolink transit station. This area is governed by the Gateway Specific Plan, originally adopted in 1999. At the time of the Specific Plan's original adoption, the area allowed a combination of commercial, business park, light industrial, and public institutional uses. In November 2011, to spur redevelopment, the Gateway Specific Plan was updated to additionally allow transit-oriented multi-family residential and mixed use development.

## Local Coastal Programs/ Specific Plans

Laguna Niguel's Local Coastal Program (LCP) is comprised of two Orange County adopted Local Coastal Programs, the South Laguna Specific Plan and the Aliso Creek Specific Plan. Presently, Laguna Niguel's corporate boundaries include portions of these two specific plan areas. Additionally, the Aliso Creek Specific Plan incorporates by reference policies from the Country Village Planned Community and the Laguna Niguel Planned Community for the portions of these two planned communities that are located within the coastal zone.

After incorporation, the City requested that the California Coastal Commission certify those applicable portions of the previously certified South Laguna and Aliso Creek Specific Plans/Local Coastal Programs, as a single City LCP. No changes to the policies, land use designations, implementation actions or maps of the previously certified LCP's occurred. On November 14, 1990, the California Coastal Commission certified the Laguna Niguel LCP.



The LCP contains essential components and issue areas that correspond to various topics within different General Plan Elements. As a result, these components are organized across multiple Elements of the General Plan and are addressed separately in the relevant sections.

# Land Use Designations and Land Use Map

## Land Use Classification System

The descriptions below apply to the land use designations depicted with color, shading, or symbols on the Land Use Map (Figure LU-3). These designations are intended to be broad to give the City flexibility in implementing the General Plan, but, clear enough to provide sufficient direction regarding the expected type, location, and relationship of land uses within the City.

The Land Use Element, including the Land Use Map, outlines provisions and requirements for land use overlays intended to facilitate additional development flexibility beyond that permitted by the base land use designations. These overlays align with the overall vision expressed within the General Plan and its corresponding environmental analysis. Specific conditions, as described in this Element, must be met for the provisions of the overlays to be available. Until such time as these specific conditions are met, only the provisions of the base land use designations apply.

The City's Zoning Ordinance contains more detailed provisions and standards. A single General Plan land use designation may align with multiple zoning districts. Where uncertainty exists regarding interpretation or the precise boundaries of a General Plan land use designation, it shall be the duty of the Laguna Niguel Community Development Director to decide based on which best carries out the purposes and objectives of the General Plan.

### RESIDENTIAL DETACHED (RD)

The RD designation is intended to provide for the development of detached single-family residential dwelling units. This designation ensures residential development that maintains the character of Laguna Niguel's traditional suburban neighborhoods.

### RESIDENTIAL ATTACHED (RA)

The RA designation is intended to provide for the development of higher density attached single-family residential dwelling units, as well as multi-family attached townhomes, apartments, and condominium projects. This designation allows for more diverse and compact residential options, supporting a range of housing needs and preferences within the community.

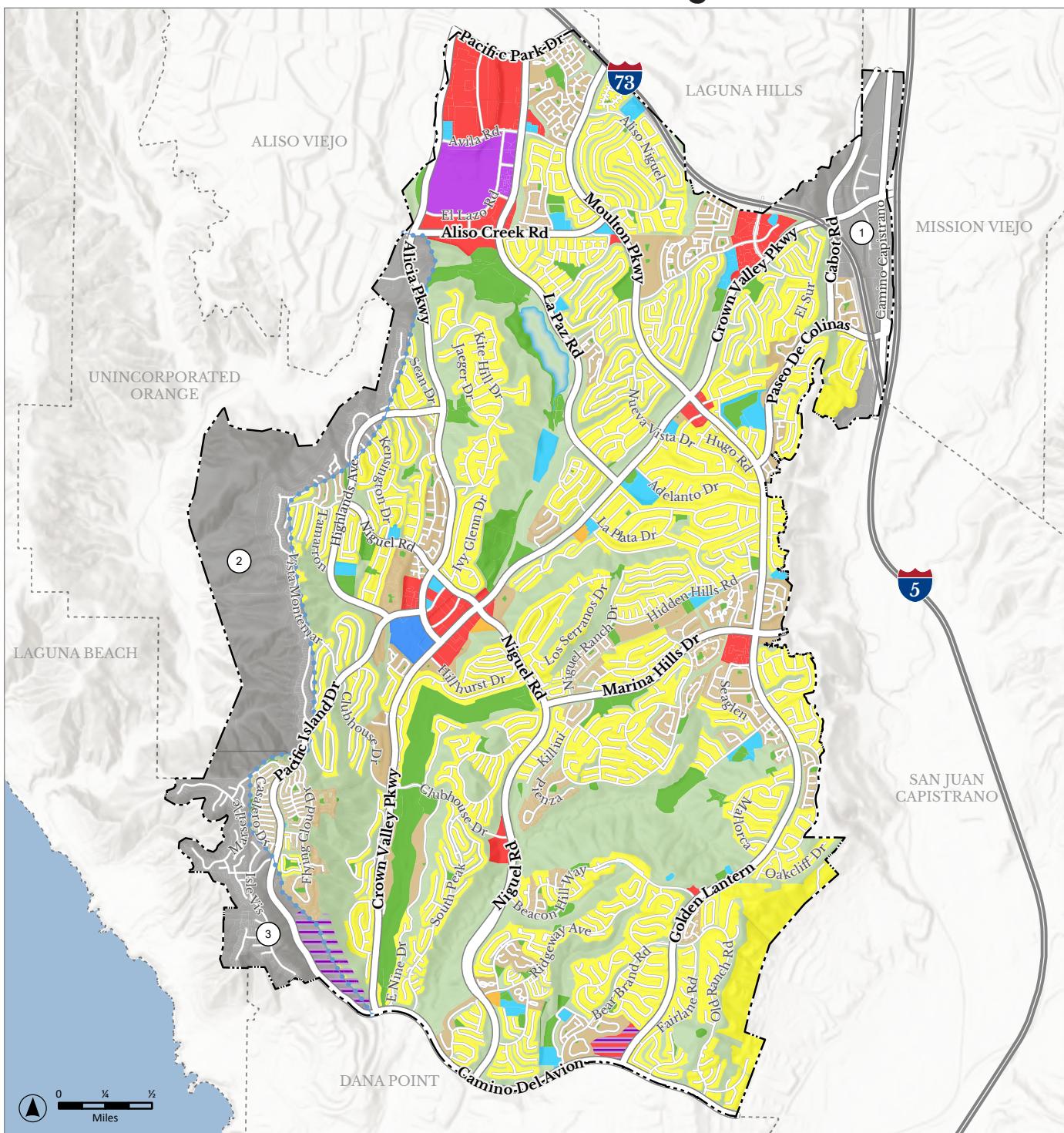
### GENERAL COMMERCIAL (GC)

The GC designation is intended to provide for a diverse range of commercial uses serving both neighborhood and regional needs. Typical uses include retail stores, restaurants, entertainment venues (e.g., cinemas, bowling alleys), professional offices (e.g., medical, financial, administrative, corporate), automobile-related businesses (e.g., sales, service, gas stations), personal service establishments, fitness and recreational facilities, private educational institutions and their support facilities, health care facilities, and hospitality establishments. This broad designation fosters a vibrant commercial environment, catering to a wide range of consumer needs and supporting economic diversity within the designated areas.

### BUSINESS PARK (BP)

The BP designation is intended to provide for business growth, innovation, and economic development for a range of uses, such as professional offices, corporate headquarters, research and development facilities, incubator businesses, and administrative offices. Additionally, compatible light manufacturing, assembly, storage, and wholesale operations may be permissible. Other uses that are determined to be compatible with the primary use, such as limited supporting retail operations may also be allowed.

## Figure LU-3 Land Use



Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel Official General Plan Map, 9-11-2023; Orange County GIS.

Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group  
April 24, 2025.

Laguna Niguel City Boundary

Laguna Niguel Lake

Coastal Zone Boundary

General Plan Land Use

RD: Residential Detached

RA: Residential Attached

GC: General Commercial

BP: Business Park

MCF: Managed Care Facility

PR: Parks and Recreation

OS: Open Space

PI: Public Institutional

CC: Civic Center

SP: Specific Plan

1. Laguna Niguel Gateway Specific Plan

2. Aliso Creek Specific Plan/Local Coastal Program

3. South Laguna Specific Plan/Local Coastal Program

//// Opportunity Area Overlay 1

XXXX Opportunity Area Overlay 2

\\\\\\ Opportunity Area Overlay 3

----- Hospitality Overlay

## PUBLIC INSTITUTIONAL (PI)

The PI designation is intended to provide for a wide range of public and special purpose private facilities that provide governmental or social services to the community. This may include, for example, religious institutions, schools, public utilities, government offices, fire stations, sheriff sub-stations, libraries, museums, community centers, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other public uses.

### CIVIC CENTER (CC)

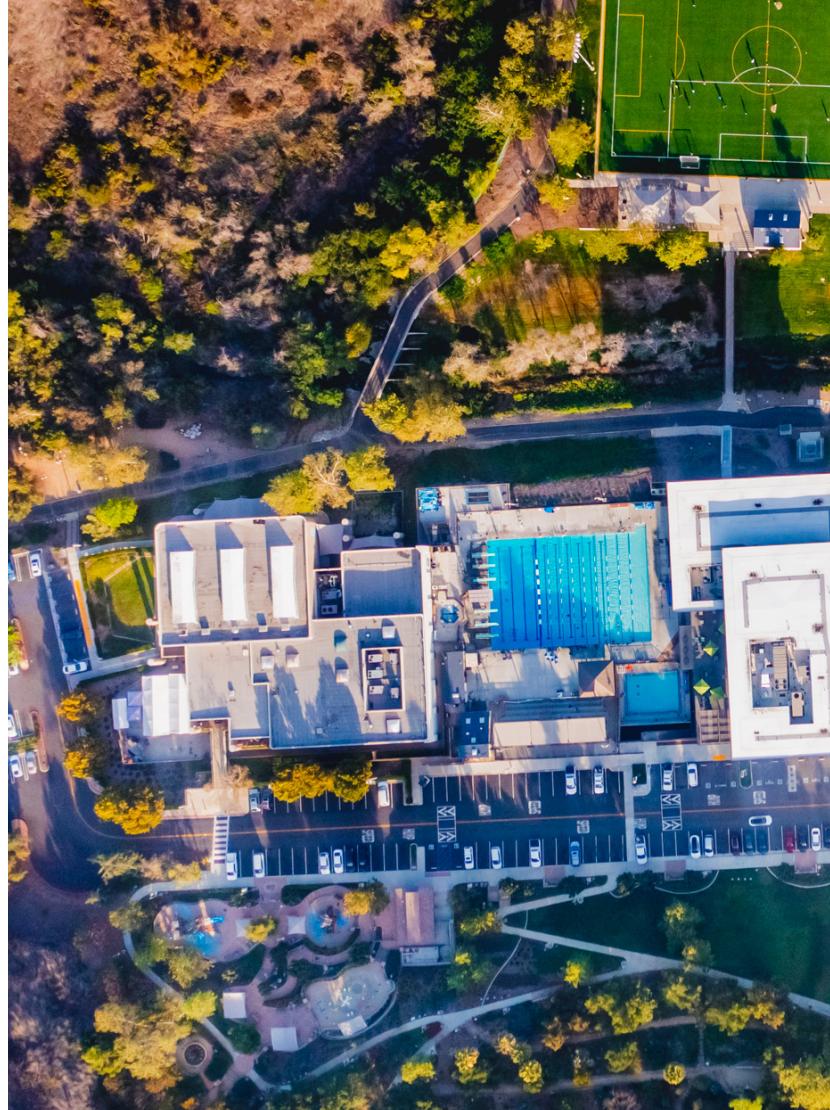
The CC designation applies to the Laguna Niguel Civic Center and is intended to provide for a mixed-use civic center campus that integrates public facilities (e.g., city hall, fire station, sheriff sub-station, library) with private development featuring retail shops, restaurants, offices, and residential apartments. A key emphasis is the inclusion of vibrant outdoor open spaces, such as dining areas, a “town green,” paseos, and plazas that create a walkable community-oriented “downtown” environment that blends civic, residential, and commercial uses.

### MANAGED CARE FACILITY (MCF)

The MCF designation is intended to provide for facilities that offer various levels of care for senior citizens (e.g., assisted living facilities, skilled nursing homes, memory care centers, and continuing care retirement communities). These areas uniquely blend residential and commercial land use characteristics, differentiating them from other land use categories. By combining residential amenities with medical and support services, MCFs offer specialized environments that address the evolving needs of the senior population within the community.

### OPEN SPACE (OS)

The OS designation is intended to preserve natural and conservation areas, undeveloped hillsides and canyons, and landscaped slopes and buffers. These areas are primarily



for passive recreation, visual enhancement, and/or resource conservation. Active sports and organized recreational activities are generally discouraged in these areas. This designation also applies to parts of the community that remain predominantly open and undeveloped, aside from ancillary amenities such as trails, benches, and picnic tables for public enjoyment.

### PARKS AND RECREATION (PR)

The PR designation is intended to provide for active recreational uses, such as ball fields and sports courts, active parks, playgrounds, and other community or neighborhood recreational facilities. Passive recreational amenities and trails may also be incorporated as complementary elements of the recreation complex. In some cases, cultural facilities such as theaters, museums, or other similar specialized features with



a recreational value may align with this designation. The PR designation allows for the development and maintenance of recreational facilities that serve the diverse needs of the community, promoting health, social interaction, and quality of life for residents of all ages and abilities.

### SPECIFIC PLAN (SP)

The Specific Plan designation provides the City the ability to establish detailed policies, development and design standards, and other criteria for the development or redevelopment of a particular area. In accordance with state law, specific plans generally consist of a land use plan, circulation plan, development standards, design guidelines, and a phasing plan. They also set forth detailed implementation programs necessary to serve the planning area.

### OVERLAYS

While Laguna Niguel's base land use plan employs more traditional broad land use designations, planning tools such as overlays enable more strategic and adaptable planning for targeted growth areas. This nuanced approach allows Laguna Niguel to more effectively adapt to evolving social and economic goals, including attracting high-quality developments that benefit the community and stimulate revitalization and economic growth.

To ensure that development within these targeted growth areas aligns with the broader community vision, the base land use designation requirements govern each area, but additional development potential defined and facilitated by the overlay designation may be accessible if specific criteria are met, as outlined on the following pages of the Land Use Element.



Illustration for conceptual purposes only.

## Opportunity Area Overlay 1 (The Marketplace at Laguna Niguel)

Opportunity Area 1 includes the Marketplace at Laguna Niguel shopping center. This area, totaling approximately 39 acres, is located in the City's northwest corner, bounded by Pacific Park Drive, Heather Ridge, Alicia Parkway, and a Walmart property within Sub-Profile Area II. The land use map (Figure LU-3) designates the area as "General Commercial."

The Marketplace at Laguna Niguel is one of the City's largest shopping centers with 350,626 square feet of retail, personal service, office, and restaurant uses. The center operates at a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of approximately 0.2, considerably lower than other commercial centers in the City. The majority of the tenant spaces are significantly set back from the center's primary street

frontage or situated at a grade differential, reducing visibility from the adjacent arterial highways, which has hindered attracting and retaining quality businesses. Additionally, the center has an oversized parking lot, with several parking fields rarely used and vacant for much of the year.

Opportunity Area Overlay 1 seeks to stimulate further market-driven investment in support of area core commercial activities through the introduction of a mix of complementary land uses, including additive residential development, to better maximize the area's development potential and profile as a key gateway to Laguna Niguel.

Once applied, and provided the following criteria are met, Opportunity Area Overlay 1 would unlock additional redevelopment potential within Opportunity Area 1, allowing up to 500 residential attached units and an additional 149,872 square feet of commercial space. This would increase the area's General Plan buildout limit to 500 residential units and 500,498 square feet of commercial uses.

Requirements for realizing the vision for Opportunity Area Overlay 1 include:

- Approval of a General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and a Specific Plan that encompasses the entirety of Opportunity Area 1 (Sub-profile Area 11).
- Incorporation of a vibrant mixed-use framework, emphasizing a thriving shopping center and robust economic activity that incorporates at least 200,000 square feet of commercial development, such as retail and restaurant uses. This includes a focus on attracting and retaining high-quality businesses, with the potential inclusion of an ancillary residential component to complement and enhance the shopping center. The center must continue serving as a major shopping destination for Laguna Niguel.
- Prioritization of high-quality architecture is essential, with an emphasis on building design, massing, scale, and landscaping, that complement the City's character, including thoughtful consideration of the surrounding environment. The design must also emphasize enhanced walkability and pedestrian-friendly spaces.
- Engaging street frontages along Alicia Parkway and Pacific Park Drive, incorporating pedestrian-scale architectural elements and perimeter landscaping that meaningfully enhance the streetscape and promote walkability.
- Addressing the underutilization of existing shopping center parking to enhance the area's functionality and appeal. Possible approaches include repurposing rarely used excessive parking for: new buildings to realize the area's development potential, public spaces (plazas, outdoor seating areas, parks, or event spaces) to foster community engagement, and/or landscaped areas to improve the area's visual appeal. Alternatively, demonstrating the necessity of underutilized parking fields to accommodate new development, such as increased commercial or residential uses elsewhere in the area, may also be acceptable.
- Incorporation of substantial public benefits in consideration of the development project's scale and impact. These benefits may include, but are not limited to: creation of public spaces, public realm improvements, and other major community focused benefits determined by the City to advance the vision for this Opportunity Area.



Illustration for conceptual purposes only.

## Opportunity Area Overlay 2 (The Chet Holifield Federal Building)

Opportunity Area 2 includes the Chet Holifield Federal Building (CHFB) site. This area, totaling approximately 88 acres, is bounded by Avila Road, Alicia Parkway, and El Lazo Road (including the northeast corner of Avila Road and Alicia Parkway) within Sub-Profile Area 1C. The land use map (Figure LU-3) designates the area as "Business Park" (86 acres) and "Public Institutional" (2 acres).

Development on the CHFB site primarily consists of a seven-story building, with approximately a million square feet of government office space, surrounded by expansive parking fields. Property disposal efforts initiated by the federal government in 2019 present an exceptional opportunity to master plan the reuse of prime real estate in South Orange County.

For decades, the federal government's use of the CHFB has served as the City's largest employer, playing a significant role in the local economy. Preserving use of the site as the envisioned employment hub remains a City priority, especially given Laguna Niguel's substantial housing and employment imbalance. Prioritizing and strengthening the City's job-to-housing ratio not only supports economic vitality but also contributes to a more sustainable urban environment. Improving the City's jobs-to-housing balance can potentially reduce commute times, bolster community engagement, and create a more resilient local economy, all of which would contribute to the City's long-term prosperity and an enhanced quality of life for residents.

Opportunity Area Overlay 2, predicated on the demolition of the CHFB, envisions a transformative redevelopment of the area, prioritizing the establishment of a thriving employment hub as the primary focus. In addition to complimentary uses permitted under the primary base land use designation of Business Park, including retail shops, restaurants, and a boutique hotel, the overlay also introduces the possibility of more intensive medical-related uses and additive residential development. Any redevelopment of the area would also need to feature dedicated parkland, plazas, and multi-use spaces to foster community engagement. By creating a vibrant live-work-play environment with a focus on significant job creation, area redevelopment would positively contribute to Laguna Niguel's overall quality of life, capitalizing on the synergistic benefits of the proposed concentrated and varied land uses.

Once applied, and provided the following criteria are met, Opportunity Area Overlay 2 would unlock additional redevelopment potential within Opportunity Area 2, allowing up to 500 residential attached units, a 120-room boutique hotel, and 910,000 square feet of commercial uses including more intensive medical related uses. This buildout scenario would supersede the area's General Plan buildout limit of 1,050,580 square feet of commercial uses that would otherwise apply.

Requirements for realizing the vision for Opportunity Area Overlay 2 include:

- Approval of a General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and a Specific Plan that encompasses the entirety of Opportunity Area 2 (Sub-profile Area 1C).
- Demolition of the CHFB and full redevelopment of the property that creates a major hub or campus of at least 500,000 square feet of professional, high-quality employment opportunities in key industries such as technology, finance, healthcare, education, or professional services.

- Anchored by a major employer or a campus-style development, complementary uses including incubator business and office park space, a retail/restaurant district, and hospitality uses, must also be incorporated to establish a vibrant mixed-use synergy for the area.
- Area redevelopment that positively contributes to daytime population with high-quality and highly trained professional workers to support the local business community rather than cannibalizing it.
- Prioritization of high-quality architecture is essential, with an emphasis on building design, massing, scale, and landscaping that complement the City's character, including thoughtful consideration of the surrounding environment, especially along both La Paz Road and Aliso Creek Road. The design must also emphasize enhanced walkability and pedestrian-friendly spaces.
- Area redevelopment must showcase an aesthetically enhanced street frontage along Alicia Parkway, serving as a prominent visual gateway. This may include a combination of design-centric elements such as elevated landscaping exceeding applicable standards, public art or other visually iconic features, and thoughtfully designed architecture and building massing, establishing the area as a landmark development.
- Incorporation of substantial public benefits in consideration of the development project's scale and impact. These benefits may include, but are not limited to: creation of expansive civic or public spaces, extensive public realm improvements, and other community focused benefits determined by the City to advance the vision for this Opportunity Area.



*Illustration for conceptual purposes only.*

## Opportunity Area Overlay 3 (Town Center)

Opportunity Area 3 includes the majority of the Town Center, totaling approximately 66 acres. This area includes the non-residential properties at the intersections of Crown Valley Parkway and Niguel Road as well as those fronting Crown Valley Parkway, Alicia Parkway, Town Center Drive, and Ivy Glenn Drive between Niguel Road and Hillhurst Drive within Sub-Profile Areas 14A, 14B, and 14D (Sub-Profile Area 14C is addressed separately under the "Civic Center" land use designation). The land use map (Figure LU-3) designates this area as "General Commercial" (61 acres) and "Public Institutional" (5 acres).

The Town Center, envisioned as Laguna Niguel's central commercial and civic hub, has struggled to achieve this vision and its market potential. Despite some progress with the construction of the City Hall in 2011 and entitlement approval for the Laguna Niguel City Center Mixed-Use Project in 2022, the balance of Town Center has seen limited significant development or improvements since the early 1980s.

Characterized by aging commercial strip centers, low-rise office buildings, fragmented ownership, and expansive parking lots, this area suffers from physical isolation between commercial spaces due to arterial roadways and underutilized land. The lack of design continuity, poor pedestrian connectivity, and few outdoor spaces for people to gather and interact pose further challenges for the area.

Opportunity Area Overlay 3 seeks to stimulate market-driven investment in support of area core commercial activities through the introduction of a mix of complementary land uses, including additive residential development to better maximize the area's development potential. This approach would incentivize the Town Center's evolution into the vibrant, interconnected community hub long imagined, enhancing the quality of life for both current and future residents and businesses.

Once applied, and provided the following criteria are met, Opportunity Area Overlay 3 would unlock additional redevelopment potential within Opportunity Area 3,

allowing up to 500 residential attached units and an additional 48,070 square feet of commercial space. This would increase the area's General Plan buildout limit to 500 residential dwelling units and 601,823 square feet of commercial uses.

Requirements for realizing the vision for Opportunity Area Overlay 3 include:

- Approval of a General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and a Specific Plan, with a minimum contiguous planning area of 10 acres within Opportunity Area 3. The assembly of parcels to allow for more efficient development patterns is strongly encouraged.
- Revitalize aging and/or fragmented commercial development(s) into a vibrant mix of land uses, including retailers, restaurants, offices, entertainment, housing, and/or outdoor open spaces. The development must emphasize placemaking by blending these uses to create a pedestrian-friendly setting that creates a sense of community and identity and offers quality shopping, dining, service,

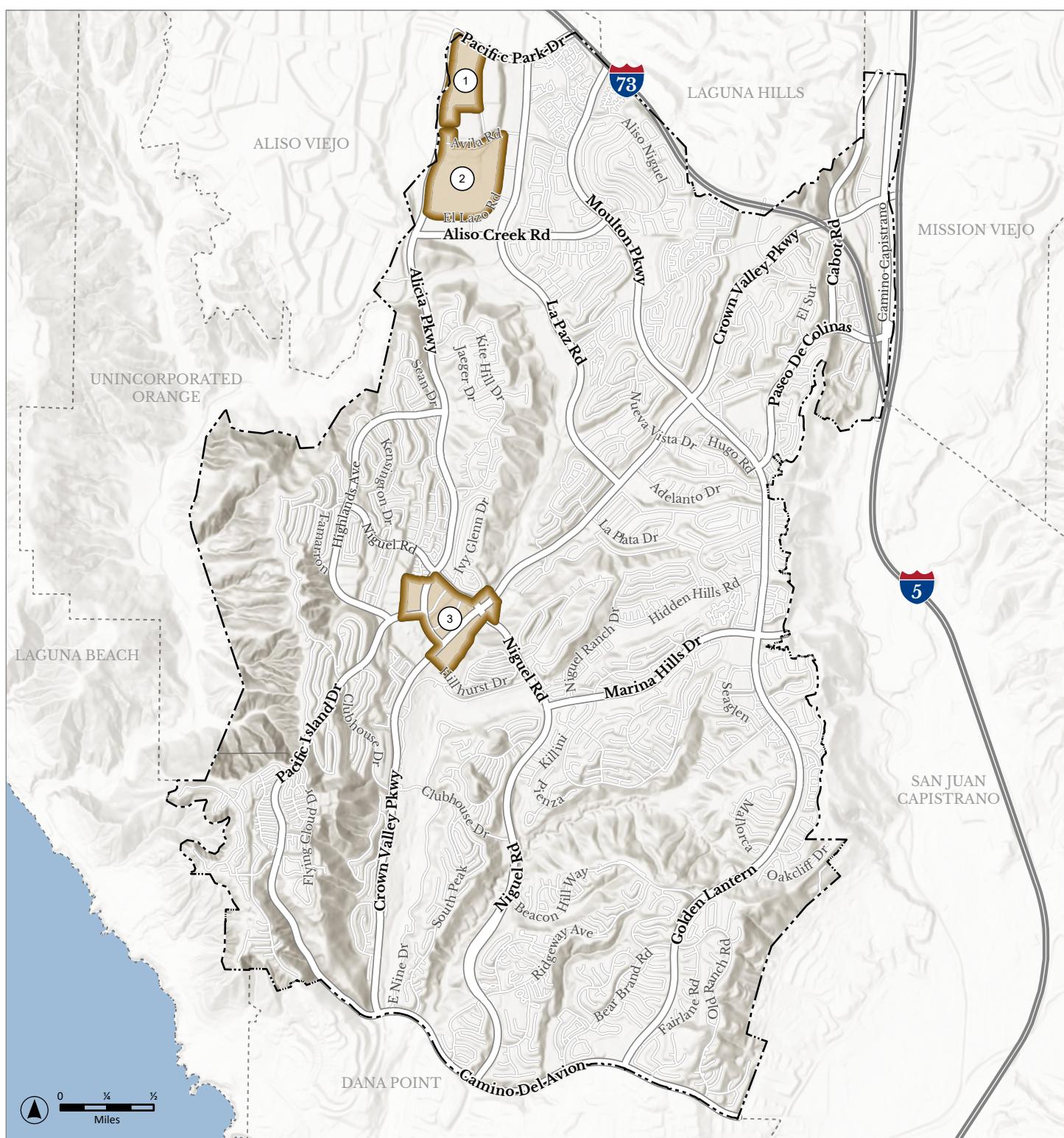
and leisure opportunities close to homes.

- Prioritization of high-quality architecture is essential, with an emphasis on building design, massing, scale, outdoor gathering spaces, and landscaping that complement the City's character, including thoughtful consideration of the surrounding environment. The design must also emphasize enhanced walkability and pedestrian-friendly spaces.
- Engaging street frontages that thoughtfully incorporate pedestrian-scale architectural elements and perimeter landscaping that meaningfully enhance the streetscape and promote walkability.
- Incorporation of substantial public benefits in consideration of the development project's scale and impact. These benefits may include, but are not limited to: creation of public spaces, public realm improvements, and other major community focused benefits determined by the City to advance the vision for this Opportunity Area.

*Illustration for conceptual purposes only.*

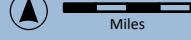


## Figure LU-4 Opportunity Areas



Data sources: City of Laguna Niguel; Orange County GIS.

Prepared for the City of Laguna Niguel by De Novo Planning Group  
June 10, 2025.



Laguna Niguel City Boundary

Other Jurisdictions

Opportunity Area

- (1) Opportunity Area 1 (The Marketplace at Laguna Niguel)
- (2) Opportunity Area 2 (The Chet Holifield Federal Building)
- (3) Opportunity Area 3 (Town Center)



## Hospitality Overlay

The Hospitality Overlay identifies sites that could accommodate future high-quality hotel uses. These sites are located along the southern City limit, including undeveloped or underutilized land with expansive ocean and/or other territorial views. This overlay facilitates the development of high-quality hotels by encouraging consideration of greater flexibility with regard to land use and development intensity as part of any associated City discretionary review process. Particular attention should be

given to maximizing views and resort qualities desirable to the community and attractive to out-of-town guests and business travelers, while integrating buildings into the existing topography to achieve compatibility with surrounding land uses.

To realize the development potential of the Hospitality Overlay, approval of a General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and a Specific Plan is required.

# 2045 General Plan Potential Buildout Summary

## Comparison of 2045 Land Use Projections to Existing Conditions

Table LU-16 presents a statistical comparison between the 2045 land use buildout projections and existing, on-the-ground conditions, summarizing potential growth across Community Profile Areas. These projections do not account for the possible implementation of the three Opportunity Area Overlays, which would require approval of multiple project-specific legislative actions. For more information on existing conditions, see Chapter 2 of the ECR.

**Table LU-16 2045 Projections Compared to Existing Conditions – Community Profile Areas**

Community Profile Area	Residential Detached Unit Max			Residential Attached Unit Max			Commercial Square Footage Max		
	Existing Condition	General Plan 2045 Buildout	Growth	Existing Condition	General Plan 2045 Buildout	Growth	Existing Condition	General Plan 2045 Buildout	Growth
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,059,716	3,177,989	118,273
2	1,792	1,792	0	1,503	1,503	0	57,491	57,491	0
3	962	1,033	71	456	486	30	473,109	513,578	40,469
4	0	0	0	1,499	2,994	1,495	1,111,023	1,812,800 <sup>1</sup>	701,777
5	1,362	1,362	0	1,810	1,810	0	29,182	29,182	0
6	1,124	1,127	3	68	77	9	0	0	0
7	1,007	1,008	1	992	992	0	0	0	0
8	768	780	12	768	809	41	0	0	0
9	921	921	0	449	449	0	69,731	69,731	0
10	2,185	2,187	2	743	743	0	45,562	45,562	0
11	1,760	1,760	0	3,348	3,348	0	163,418	178,599	15,181
12	1,783	1,794	11	1,016	1,016	0	199,776	205,620	5,844
13	465	479	14	879	879	0	0	0 <sup>2</sup>	0
14	0	0	0	0	275	275	553,753	714,343	160,590
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14,129</b>	<b>14,243</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>13,531</b>	<b>15,381</b>	<b>1,850</b>	<b>5,762,761</b>	<b>6,804,895</b>	<b>1,042,134</b>

1. The potential buildout square footage excludes the allocation for up to 350 hotel rooms for Sub-profiles 4H and 4K (including the existing 33-room hotel in Sub-profile 4K). Hotel MDIs for sub-profiles are based on number of hotel rooms instead of square footage, which is accounted for in Table LU-5.

2. The potential buildout square footage excludes a high-quality hotel of up to 120 rooms in Sub-profile 13D. Hotel MDIs for sub-profiles are based on number of hotel rooms instead of square footage, which is accounted for in Table LU-14, subject to the Hospitality Overlay criteria.

# LAND USE PLANNING



## Goal LU-1

A balanced land use pattern that integrates residential, commercial, and employment uses with open space and public services to support a vibrant, sustainable community that offers a high quality of life.

The Land Use Element provides for a diverse blend of land uses and intensities designed to accommodate anticipated growth without jeopardizing Laguna Niguel's endearing character. By strategically planning for various residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, the Land Use Element aims to create a balanced environment that supports economic vitality while balancing the quality of life of existing residential neighborhoods and enhancing the extensive open space and recreation network within the City. This comprehensive approach enables Laguna Niguel to adapt to evolving conditions and preferences, fostering a vibrant and resilient community.

## LU-1 Policies

-  **LU-1.1 Promote Mixed-Use Development.** Encourage mixed-use zoning in strategic locations to combine residential, commercial, and employment uses. This approach aims to create vibrant, walkable neighborhoods that enhance community engagement and drive economic activity.
-  **LU-1.2 Open Space Preservation.** Preserve and enhance open spaces, parks, and landscape corridors within and around urban areas to support recreational opportunities, safeguard environmental resources, and enhance overall community well-being and aesthetics. This includes ensuring that land uses and developments along designated Scenic Corridors align with scenic enhancement and preservation goals, maintaining the visual quality of these areas.
-  **LU-1.3 Employment/Housing Balance.** Strive to balance employment and housing levels within the community to provide more opportunities for residents to work locally. Laguna Niguel is “housing rich” with a forecasted jobs-housing ratio between 0.62-0.64 through 2045, significantly lower than the projected jobs-housing ratio of 1.61 for Orange County during the same period. A more balanced job-to-housing ratio enables residents to live and work in Laguna Niguel, fostering a greater sense of community and convenience. Improving this balance also improves economic resilience by allowing the community to better adapt to economic fluctuations, with one sector helping to buffer downturns in the other.
- LU-1.4 Diversified Housing Options.** Support a diverse range of housing development options and densities, ensuring that residents across income levels, age groups, and those with special needs can live within the community.
- LU-1.5 Economic Growth.** Support the preservation and growth of a variety of commercial areas, including retail, restaurant, professional, service, technology, and emerging market sectors to address the needs of residents and attract new businesses. This policy aims to strengthen the local economy and create employment opportunities for the community.
- LU-1.6 Maintain and Expand Public Facilities.** Ensure the planning, maintenance, and enhancement of public facilities and services, including emergency and safety services, infrastructure, educational and library facilities, and recreational and public gathering areas. These resources support social engagement, cultural activities, and a high quality of life for residents.
- LU-1.7 Multigenerational Planning.** Encourage new development projects to incorporate services, facilities, and spaces available to the public, with a focus on serving local youth, teens, adults, and senior citizens.
- LU-1.8 Multi-Jurisdictional Coordination.** Coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions to address land use compatibility within areas surrounding Laguna Niguel. Partnerships with adjacent cities can aid in developing cohesive strategies to address regional planning challenges and development.

 **LU-1.9 Hospitality and Entertainment.** Promote the development of high-quality hotels, entertainment venues, and recreational commercial spaces to address current amenity gaps in Laguna Niguel. By supporting innovative projects that create dynamic, engaging environments, the City can enhance the community's cultural and social offerings.

 **LU-1.10 Sustainable Development Practices.** Implement policies that encourage the efficient use of land and infrastructure to reduce environmental impacts and support long-term community sustainability.

 **LU-1.11 Mobility and Connectivity.** Prioritize transportation planning and infrastructure that connects residential, commercial, and employment areas efficiently, with a focus on improving transportation options, including pedestrian paths and bicycle lanes to promote sustainable and non-motorized transportation options when evaluating land use options and development projects.

**LU-1.12 Residential and Non-Residential Capacities.** Ensure the levels of residential and non-residential building development remain within the established baseline General Plan buildout limits (Maximum Development Intensities – MDIs) for the Sub-profile Areas.

**LU-1.13 Civic Center (Additive Residential – Sub-profile 14C).** Residential development within the Civic Center land use designation shall only be permitted on an additive basis at a maximum ratio of one (1) residential unit per 10,000 square feet of commercial space (e.g., retail, restaurant, office uses), unless the City determines that the following criteria are met:

- » The proposed development substantially advances the General Plan's Land Use Planning Goal (LU-1) and policies;
- » The proposed development results in substantial public benefits, beyond those required for projects not requesting bonus additive residential uses (e.g., community-serving facilities, public outdoor gathering and event spaces, non-project infrastructure improvements, affordable housing, etc.); and
- » The proposed development results in significant improvements over existing site and building conditions by creating exceptionally high-quality mixed-use development in terms of site planning, architecture, circulation, landscaping, pedestrian amenities, land uses, and other design elements.

**LU-1.14 Public Art.** Encourage the integration of public art into parks, plazas, streetscapes, transportation facilities, public buildings, mixed-use activity centers, and other publicly-accessible places to enrich the community experience.

# COMMUNITY DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING

## Goal LU-2

A visually appealing and cohesive community that emphasizes high-quality design, celebrates Laguna Niguel's character, and fosters a strong sense of place through well-designed spaces, architecture, and streetscapes.

Laguna Niguel is dedicated to cultivating a vibrant and attractive community. By focusing on well-designed, pedestrian-friendly development, the City aims to create spaces through strategic land use planning that enrich the quality of life, support local businesses, and strengthen civic pride.



## LU-2 Policies



**LU-2.1 Site Planning and Design.** Establish and implement comprehensive design guidelines and standards that emphasize high-quality architecture, visual cohesion, and well-planned functional spaces in consideration of site topography and the surrounding setting. This includes provisions that address varying architectural styles that reflect Laguna Niguel's character, balancing innovation with visual harmony, while allowing flexibility to adapt to individual development contexts and optimizing land use for a sustainable, pedestrian-friendly community.



**LU-2.2 Landscape Design.** Establish and implement comprehensive landscape design guidelines and standards to create visually appealing landscapes that soften and enhance development projects and complement the surrounding environment. Incorporate plant material of varying sizes for layered growth and select species adaptable to the local climate to ensure long-term sustainability.



**LU-2.3 Streetscape Design.** Establish and implement public realm streetscape guidelines and standards that balance aesthetics and functionality, with a focus on the City's arterial highways and entry gateways. This includes cohesive design elements such as street furniture, lighting, drought-tolerant landscaping in medians and parkways, and monument signage that enhance Laguna Niguel's image and provide a welcoming, visually elevated experience for both residents and visitors.



**LU-2.4 Sustainable Design.** Promote environmentally responsive design by integrating natural elements, such as drought tolerant landscaping, efficient irrigation systems, and energy-efficient building materials and design, into public and private spaces.

**LU-2.5 Neighborhood Setting.** Ensure new development projects are appropriately scaled and designed in consideration of the surrounding setting. This includes well-designed building height and massing transitions to complement the surrounding neighborhood's scale and share common aesthetic themes or architectural styles, preserving the area's desirable character and sense of place.

**LU-2.6 Public Gathering Spaces.** Encourage walkable placemaking projects that feature attractive outdoor gathering spaces conducive to pedestrian-friendly programming (e.g., farmers markets, art shows, live music, food, movie nights) to strengthen social engagement for residents.

**LU-2.7 Residential Open Spaces and Recreation.** Ensure that new residential projects incorporate thoughtfully designed usable open spaces, plazas, park areas, courtyards, and/or other outdoor gathering areas to create inviting environments for social interaction and recreation that make a community a desirable place to live.

**LU-2.8 Pedestrian-Friendly Environments.** Prioritize pedestrian-oriented design and connectivity by incorporating thoughtfully planned tree-lined sidewalks, pathways, and active street fronts throughout new developments. This includes a focus on human-scale building frontages that create visually appealing and pedestrian-friendly environments, as well as pedestrian safe connections to surrounding streets.

**LU-2.9 Above-Ground Utilities.** Ensure thoughtful placement and aesthetic treatment of utilities and support structures to minimize their visual impact.

**LU-2.10 Façade and Ancillary Improvements.** Encourage the revitalization of aging commercial centers and buildings to create more inviting and pedestrian-friendly spaces. This includes enhancing building façades, landscaping, signage, and overall property maintenance to build a stronger sense of community and support business attraction and retention.

**LU-2.11 Hillside Development.** Development within hillside areas with public views, when permitted, should prioritize minimizing grading, visual landform changes, and development intensity to retain the general character and aesthetic value of the existing landform.

**LU-2.12 Collaborative Processes.** Continue to actively engage and collaborate with community members and other stakeholders throughout community design and placemaking processes.

# OPPORTUNITY AREAS

## Goal LU-3

Strategically guide development in three designated “Opportunity Areas” to stimulate economic growth, enhance community benefits, and realize each area’s unique potential by transforming underutilized spaces into vibrant placemaking destinations with high-quality urban design.



Laguna Niguel has designated three key “Opportunity Areas” for significant redevelopment (Figure LU-4) where vibrant mixed-use hubs featuring employment, shopping, housing, and public spaces are envisioned: The Marketplace at Laguna Niguel, the Chet Holifield Federal Building site, and Town Center. Each area serves as a unique canvas for innovative planning, design, economic activity, and placemaking, subject to the specific requirements established for each location. To further ensure alignment with the City’s broader vision and goals, the following overarching policies are also applicable for unlocking each Opportunity Area’s potential beyond the base land use designation parameters and Sub-profile Area MDIs.

## LU-3 Policies



- LU-3.1 Reuse of Existing Development.** Encourage the reuse of existing properties into vibrant destinations that expand a range of employment opportunities, desirable commercial goods and services, housing options, and other public benefits that improve the quality of life in Laguna Niguel.
- LU-3.2 Differentiation of Opportunity Areas.** Establish distinct placemaking identities for Opportunity Areas by customizing land uses, design aesthetics, a mix of building types and sizes, and community features to highlight each area's individual character and context, while ensuring overall compatibility with surrounding land uses.
- LU-3.3 Mixed-Use Design Integration.** Ensure proposed development projects significantly improve existing site and building conditions through quality mixed-use placemaking design. This should include innovative site planning, exceptional architecture and landscaping, appropriately scaled buildings, inviting pedestrian features, and a well curated blend of complementary land uses. These core elements should work together to significantly elevate the overall quality and functionality of the area, setting a new standard for suburban infill projects.
- LU-3.4 Pedestrian Circulation.** Prioritize pedestrian-friendly settings that emphasize walkable, active environments featuring well-scaled buildings, interconnected open spaces (e.g., plazas, courtyards, sidewalk cafés), and inviting street frontages for residents and visitors.
- LU-3.5 Economic Vitality.** Encourage redevelopment that significantly strengthens the City's economic base, attracting new businesses, quality jobs, and generating local tax revenue. This focus on employment and local revenue opportunities directly supports high-quality community services and facilities for residents, businesses, and visitors.
- LU-3.6 Time of Use Activities.** Encourage new land uses that provide both daytime and evening activities. This may include a variety of integrated commercial and residential uses that have well planned public spaces that bring people together and provide opportunities for social interaction and active living, featuring a range of shopping, dining, service, employment, and entertainment options.
- LU-3.7 Specific Plan Areas.** Monitor the effectiveness of the Gateway Specific Plan and any new Specific Plans adopted within Opportunity Areas. Update these plans periodically as appropriate and ensure their consistent implementation.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

## Goal LU-4

Safe and quiet established residential neighborhoods contribute to the quality of life in Laguna Niguel and provide opportunities for social interaction and enhance community connections.

Single-family neighborhoods make up the majority of the City's developed land area. While the City's Opportunity Areas are envisioned to serve as vibrant community hubs and centers of activity, many neighborhoods also contribute by hosting social gatherings and events that foster community building and connectivity in their respective areas. During the General Plan Update process, maintaining established neighborhoods, encouraging property reinvestment (including general maintenance and building and landscape improvements), and strengthening neighborhood connections were identified as community priorities.

## LU-4 Policies

- LU-4.1 Preserve Single-Family Neighborhoods.** Focus growth to underutilized parcels within Opportunity Areas, reducing development pressure on established single-family residential neighborhoods.
- LU-4.2 New Development Sensitivity.** Ensure new development projects are sensitively designed to complement surrounding low-density residential neighborhoods, including architectural character, appropriate building massing and scale, and minimizing any operational impacts on the surrounding area.
- LU-4.3 Neighborhood Character.** Support resident efforts to create a distinctive sense of place and improve the visual quality of individual neighborhoods.
- LU-4.4 Property Maintenance and Reinvestment.** Promote community pride and enhance the City's visual appeal by encouraging property renovations and reinvestment. This also includes Municipal Code education and enforcement efforts to ensure proper property maintenance and preserve neighborhood character and aesthetics.
- LU-4.5 Neighborhood Infrastructure.** Maintain adequate neighborhood infrastructure, community facilities, and services to support the livability and long-term sustainability of neighborhoods.
- LU-4.6 Community Programming.** Support local outreach and education initiatives that improve neighborhoods and strengthen community connections in Laguna Niguel.