



Wide sidewalks and enhanced streetscape along Pier Avenue

## Land Use + Community Character Strategy

The following narrative describes the intended land use and community character of Hermosa Beach. There are four primary characteristics – referred to as the 4 D's - that influence the form and function of the built environment – the destinations or uses, density/intensity of each use, the diversity of uses within a given area, and the design of the buildings and streets.

### 1 Destinations or uses

define the types of uses that are encouraged, discouraged, or prohibited on a piece of land. Destinations are split into residential, commercial, creative, and institutional uses. The land use designations form all other aspects of the 4D's.

### 2 Density and intensity

are a measure of the amount of land area compared to building area. Density, used for residential property, expresses the amount of land developed per residential dwelling unit. Intensity is used for nonresidential uses, and is expressed as a floor area ratio (FAR) which calculates the amount of usable floor area permitted in a building compared to the area of the lot on which the building stands.

### 3 Diversity or mix of uses

articulate whether an area is comprised of a predominant type of use (i.e. residential) or whether a wide range of uses are provided to create a mix of activities. How the different uses are physically arranged is also described to highlight complementary uses.

### 4 Design of the built environment

addresses the desired form and character of the buildings and streets within a particular area and includes: the scale, massing, building orientation, and interaction of buildings with the public realm (sidewalks, streetscape, and street network).

The types of destinations or uses and density/intensity are articulated through the land use designations assigned to each parcel. Land use designations are policy statements providing direction to each individual property owner regarding what uses and densities/intensities are allowed.

The diversity of uses and the design characteristics of buildings and streets are defined within each character area. Character areas define the set of guidelines or parameters the City will use to ensure redevelopment or new projects are compatible with its surroundings.

Together, the land use designations and character areas are foundational components to this Plan, with the goals and policies found throughout other elements organized to achieve the intended land use and character strategy.



## Land Use Designations

Land use designations indicate the intended use of each parcel of land in the city. They are developed to provide both a vision of the organization of uses in the city and a flexible structure to allow for changes in economic conditions and community visions. The overall distribution of land uses throughout the city is identified in Figure 2.3, with each designation defined and described in further detail in Table 2.1.

There are four categories of land use designations that can be found in Hermosa Beach: residential, commercial, creative industrial, and institutional.

### Zoning Districts

Zoning districts are an implementation mechanism of the land use designations, and provide greater details regarding: specific allowances and prohibitions of uses, dimensional requirements such as building setbacks, parking standards, and building heights. Land use designations and zoning districts must be compatible, but need not be exactly the same. Zoning districts must be within the range of the allowed intensity and uses found in this Plan.

## Residential

Residential designations range in scale and density throughout the city to define and create a variety of residential neighborhoods. Allowable densities range from a low of two units per acre, up to a maximum of 33 units per acre, with density ranges spread across low, medium, and high density designations.

## Commercial

Commercial designations provide for a wide variety of retail, restaurant, office, and other uses that provide goods or services. Commercial designations are organized based on the scale and type of goods or services provided. The most localized designations are intended to serve a neighborhood and residents within the immediate vicinity, while other commercial designations are intended to serve the entire community or the region.

## Creative

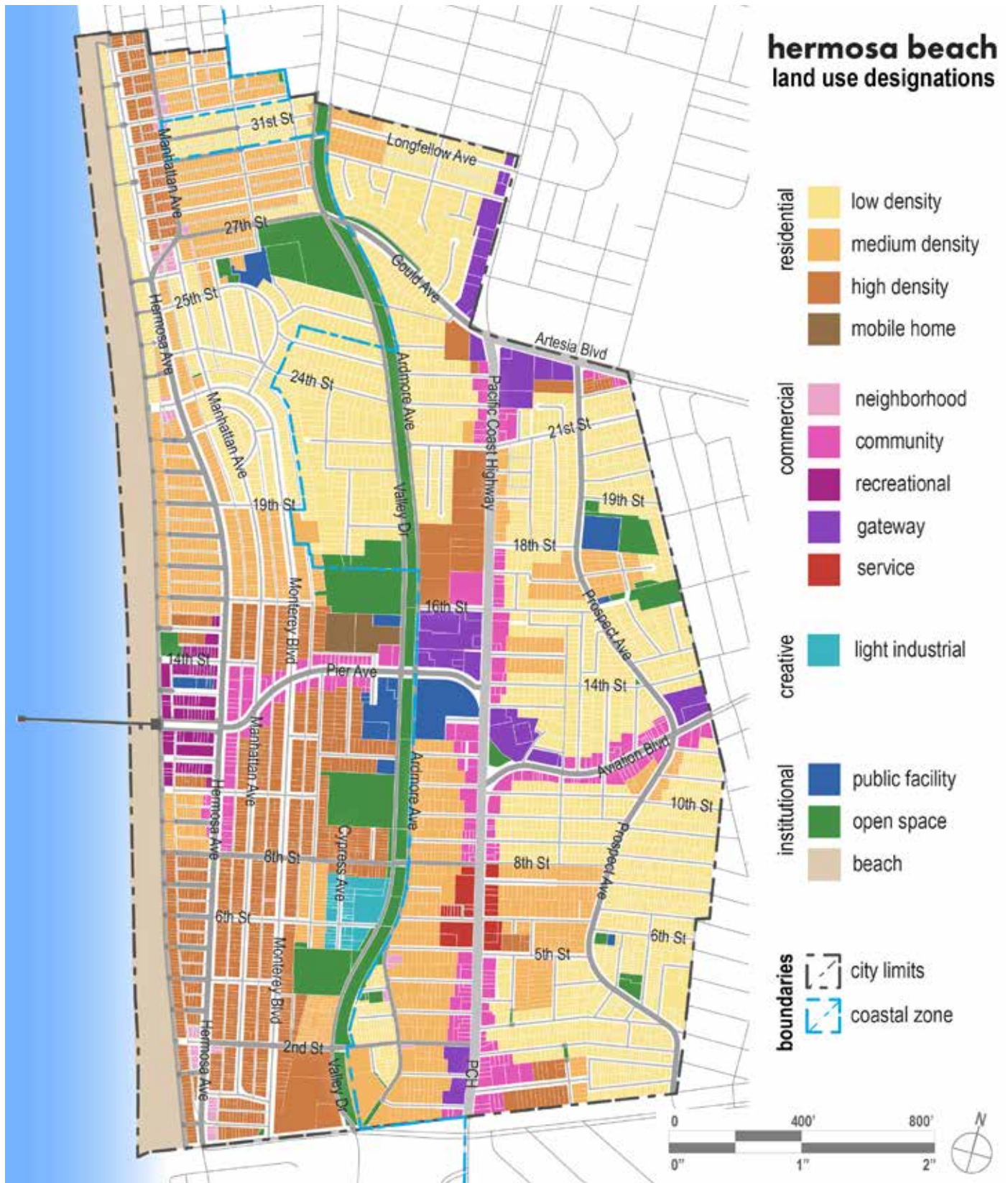
Creative land use designations are intended to provide space for production, design, and manufacturing uses that support the local employment base and produce goods and services that enhance the brand of Hermosa Beach as a creative and innovative community. Uses that are considered light industrial are to be designed and sited in a manner that ensures their compatibility with surrounding uses.

## Institutional

Institutional uses offer a range of public and community-oriented uses such as schools, parks, community facilities, administrative offices or buildings, and space for essential services and utility needs. Institutional uses also vary in scale from parkettes at a few thousand square feet to the beach, which includes approximately 63 acres of land area.



Figure 2.3 Land Use Designations Map



**Table 2.1 Land Use Designations**

Designation		Definition	Density/ Intensity
<b>LD</b>	Low Density	Single-family residential (attached or detached)	2.0 - 13.0 DU/AC
<b>MD</b>	Medium Density	Single-family residential and small-scale multi-family residential (duplex, triplex, condominium)	13.1 - 25.0 DU/AC
<b>HD</b>	High Density	Medium (8-20 unit buildings) and large-scale (20+ unit buildings) multi-family residential	25.1 - 33.0 DU/AC
<b>MH</b>	Mobile Home	Mobile home parks, where lots are owned, rented or leased to accommodate mobile homes for human habitation	2.0 - 13.0 DU/AC
<b>NC</b>	Neighborhood	Convenience stores, markets, eateries, laundromats, or similar uses to primarily serve local walk-in traffic	0.5 - 1.0 FAR
<b>CC</b>	Community	Locally-oriented uses including retail stores, restaurants, professional and medical offices, and personal services	0.5 - 1.25 FAR
<b>RC</b>	Recreational	Coastal related uses such as beach/bike rentals, restaurants, snack shops, retail, lodging accommodations, entertainment and similar uses	1.0 - 1.75 FAR
<b>GC</b>	Gateway	Lower floor community or regionally-oriented commercial uses with upper floor high-visitor office uses or hotel uses	1.0 - 2.0 FAR
<b>SC</b>	Service	Home improvement stores, furniture stores, auto dealerships, and light automotive service stations	0.25 - 0.5 FAR
<b>CI</b>	Light Industrial	Production uses for light manufacturing, creative art, or design services with professional office as an allowed accessory use	0.25 - 1.0 FAR
<b>PF</b>	Public Facility	Civic-related offices, community centers, operational facilities and educational/institutional facilities	0.10 - 1.0 FAR
<b>OS</b>	Open Space	Passive and active park, recreational, open space uses and educational/institutional facilities	0.0 - 0.5 FAR
<b>B</b>	Beach	Coastal-related recreational activities and essential public facilities (lifeguard tower/restrooms)	0.0 - 0.05 FAR

**Density:**

Density is often the primary determinant in the physical layout and appearance of residential development in relationship to the land. It will influence the housing type and perhaps the style. Densities are calculated in dwelling units per acre (du/ac), and can range from 2 du/ac for a larger lot to 33 du/ac for an urban dwelling.

**Intensity:**

Intensity for nonresidential properties is expressed in terms of the floor area ratio (FAR). The FAR expresses the relationship between the amount of usable floor area permitted in a building and the area of the lot on which the building stands. It is obtained by dividing the gross floor area of a building by the total area of the lot and is often represented as a decimal number.

# Land Use Descriptions

This section describes the purpose of each land use and articulates the uses and range of development intensity allowed in each designation.

## Residential Uses



## Low Density Residential (LD)

### Purpose

This designation provides for the retention, maintenance, and investment in single-family residential neighborhoods and protects residential uses from potential nuisances of nonresidential uses. This low density designation is intended to provide the lowest levels of density, offer a high quality environment for family life, and ensure the preservation of residential property values.

### Appropriate Land Uses

Single-family dwellings, either attached or detached, are the primary use in the low density residential designation. These uses can include home occupations, churches, schools, day cares, parks, public facilities, and other uses that are determined to be compatible and oriented towards serving the needs of low density neighborhoods may also be allowed.

### Density Range

2.0 - 13 dwelling units per acre

## Medium Density Residential (MD)

### Purpose

The purpose of this designation is to provide for the enhancement and reinvestment in mixed scale residential neighborhoods in Hermosa Beach. This medium density residential designation permits property owners to construct two residential units on a single lot. It is located throughout the city to provide a transition between higher density residential or commercial uses and single-family neighborhoods.

### Appropriate Land Uses

Small-scale residential uses, including single-family, duplex, condominiums, and townhouses in a two unit per lot format, are the predominant use in this designation. Education, cultural, and public assembly uses which are determined to be compatible with and oriented towards serving the needs of the neighborhood may also be allowed.

### Density Range

13.1 - 25 dwelling units per acre



## High Density Residential (HD)

### Purpose

The high density residential designation provides a range of residential housing types to serve the varying living accommodation needs or desires of the community. The intent of this designation is to preserve and contribute to the inventory of diverse housing types available to residents and offer alternatives to single-family residential development. The designation allows for a variety of high density building types and development patterns.

### Appropriate Land Uses

This designation provides a range of residential building formats including condominiums, townhouses, duplex/triplex, and apartment buildings. Single-family residential is discouraged in this designation. If lot size permits, special care living facilities and multi-family housing provided in larger building styles with on-site parking and amenities is allowed.

### Density Range

25.1 – 33.0 dwelling units per acre

## Mobile Home (MH)

### Purpose

The Mobile Home designation is intended to retain land area for the sole use of mobile homes and recreational vehicles without threat of other residential and commercial encroachment. The designation specifically applies to the Marine Land Mobile Home Park to retain mobile homes as an affordable housing option.

### Appropriate Land Uses

Mobile home parks, where lots are owned, rented or leased to accommodate mobile homes for human habitation. Manufactured homes without permanent foundation and recreational vehicles intended as a transitional housing option are allowed in this designation.

### Density Range

2.0 - 13 dwelling units per acre

## Commercial Uses



## Neighborhood Commercial (NC)

### Purpose

This designation creates neighborhood activity centers that are easily accessible from many directions, typically along main thoroughfares, and primarily serve residents within a half-mile radius so they may walk, bike, or make a short trip by car. Neighborhood commercial uses located in close proximity to the beach also serve as a location for beachgoers to purchase food, rent equipment, and enhance their beach experience.

### Appropriate Land Uses

The neighborhood commercial designation provides nearby residents with convenient access to daily shopping or personal service needs. Convenience stores, eateries, laundromats, and similar uses intended to serve local walk-in traffic and nearby residents are the primary uses allowed. Neighborhood commercial designations located within the Coastal Zone may also be used to provide coastal-dependent uses such as beach equipment rentals.

### Intensity Range

0.5 – 1.0 Floor Area Ratio

## Community Commercial (CC)

### Purpose

This designation provides opportunities and locations for uses designed to serve the shopping, dining, and employment desires of the entire community. The Community Commercial designation is a major generator of local economic activity with a mix of locally-owned businesses and regional or national retailers present within this designation. This designation is found in many centralized locations throughout the community primarily along the city's major corridors and in Downtown. Community Commercial land uses primarily serve the local market, though they may also serve the needs of visitors and residents of nearby jurisdictions.

### Appropriate Land Uses

This designation provides space for locally oriented commercial uses including retail stores, restaurants, professional and medical offices, and personal services. Uses on the ground floor are reserved for retail, restaurant, and other sales-tax revenue generating uses, while offices and personal service uses are encouraged on upper floors. Residential uses are not allowed in this designation as its intent is to promote and protect retail, office, and service uses that diversify the City's tax base.

### Intensity Range

0.5 – 1.25 Floor Area Ratio

## Recreational Commercial (RC)

### Purpose

As a premiere southern California coastal destination, Hermosa Beach has the luxury of offering a wide variety of recreational and coastal-related services to serve both visitors and residents. The Recreational Commercial designation is the primary cultural and entertainment center for the community with events, activities, and social gatherings often occurring here. Adjacency to the beach gives this designation the unique opportunity to provide a shopping and dining experience that attracts residents and visitors alike, capturing a large portion of the City's economic activity generated by visitors.

## Appropriate Land Uses

Coastal-related uses and visitor accommodations are the primary uses allowed within the Recreational Commercial designation. Restaurants, snack shops, entertainment, lodging, retail, beach rentals and other similar uses are prioritized within this designation and allowed on ground or upper floors. Office and personal service uses are allowed within this designation, provided they are located on upper floors.

### Intensity Range

1.0 – 1.75 Floor Area Ratio

## Gateway Commercial (GC)

### Purpose

The Gateway Commercial designation is located at key entryways and intersections to Hermosa Beach to offer a greater variety of employment, retail, and economic activity to the community. The Gateway Commercial designation also plays a role in providing services and amenities to visitors and the region by encouraging hotels and larger employment centers to be located in this area. With the Gateway Commercial designation appropriately applied to larger sites, they are intended to provide both commercial services as well as facilities that benefit the local community.

### Appropriate Land Uses

In the Gateway Commercial designation, the ground floor should include community or regionally-oriented retail uses with upper floor high visitor office uses. Professional and medical offices and hotels providing lower cost visitor accommodations are also allowed in this designation. Public assembly, recreational, and other community facilities which are determined to be compatible with and oriented towards enhancing the gateway commercial district may also be allowed. Parking facilities will serve on-site uses and are encouraged to explore shared parking agreements with nearby commercial uses to encourage a 'park once' strategy.

### Intensity Range

1.0 – 2.0 Floor Area Ratio

## Service Commercial (SC)

### Purpose

The Service Commercial designation is intended to provide adequate space specifically for specialty goods and services that serve residents and the region. These businesses often require indoor or outdoor warehousing or storage space to display or sell their inventory, and caution is taken to ensure they are located in a manner that minimizes their impact on nearby residential, retail, or office uses. Service Commercial uses often attract customers for a specific item or service, compared to a traditional retail district where customers may visit many businesses within a single trip.

### Appropriate Land Uses

The Service Commercial designation is reserved for the provision of specialty goods and services, primarily related to home and automotive needs. Home improvement stores, furniture stores, auto dealerships, and light automotive service stations are the prioritized use with this designation. Retail trade and warehousing facilities are allowed as an accessory use to the primary use.

### Intensity Range

0.25 – 0.50 Floor Area Ratio

## Creative Uses



## Creative Light Industrial (CI)

### Purpose

The creative light industrial designation is intended to create a suitable environment for small businesses that rely on manufacturing, warehousing, or production to operate successfully. This designation ensures uses are able to operate in a manner that contributes to local economic activity and diversifies the local employment base while minimizing impacts to adjacent residential uses. The designation fosters new innovations and creative economic activity by providing common gathering areas and meeting spaces to share and exchange ideas.

### Appropriate Land Uses

This designation is reserved for the provision of production uses for light manufacturing, creative art, or design services. Flexible use spaces, co-working offices, and creative or "maker" industry incubator spaces are also permitted. Professional office or specialty retail are allowed only as an accessory use to the primary production uses. Residential uses are not allowed in this designation as its intent is to promote and protect industry and production uses that diversify the City's tax base.

### Intensity Range

0.5 – 1.0 Floor Area Ratio



## Institutional Uses



## Public Facilities (PF)

### Purpose

The Public Facilities designation is intended to assure the City and other institutional organizations have adequate space to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the organization. The Public Facilities designation applies to both public and quasi-public uses and may include physical facilities or infrastructure related equipment or structures needed to provide services.

### Appropriate Land Uses

Civic-related administrative offices, community space, operational yards, and educational or institutional facilities are the primary uses allowed in this designation. Public utility structures or corridors, plazas, and historic landmarks or monuments are also allowed within this designation. Wireless telecommunications facilities may be allowed in this designation when co-located with public buildings and determined to be compatible with and avoid nuisances to surrounding uses.

### Intensity Range

0.1 – 1.0 Floor Area Ratio

## Open Space (OS)

### Purpose

The Open Space designation is intended to prohibit intensive urban development to those open space areas of the city which are necessary to assure permanent open space in and for public parks and recreation areas; and where urban development would be put at risk from natural hazards. This designation provides for public and community-serving facilities ranging in scale from a few thousand square feet to several acres of land.

### Appropriate Land Uses

Public parks in any size or format are the primary use in this designation. Trails, community gardens, and other similar uses that provide open space resources to surrounding neighborhoods and the region are permitted. Educational buildings and associated facilities to facilitate student learning and activities are allowed in this designation. Recreation facilities with an emphasis on outdoor use are also allowed.

### Intensity Range

0.0 – 0.5 Floor Area Ratio

## City Beach (B)

### Purpose

The beach offers exceptional natural beauty, provides for unique recreational activities, offers panoramic views, and is accessible to everyone. These elements combine to create an unrivaled natural asset that is cherished by the community and essential to the local beach culture. This designation is created to protect the recreational, aesthetic, and natural values of the beach. This designation is intended to prohibit any permanent buildings or structures beyond those for lifeguard and infrastructure, and minimize the amount of space used by temporary structures or equipment.

### Appropriate Land Uses

This designation provides for coastal activities and events along the sandy shoreline. The provision of permanent or temporary structures, including the pier, is allowed on the beach only as they are essential to the safe operation and enjoyment of the beach. Infrastructure or amenities such as restrooms, playgrounds, stormwater drainages are allowed provided they do not create visual obstructions or impede recreational activities.

### Intensity Range

0.0 – 0.05 Floor Area Ratio