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Proposed Vision

The Lake Forest Community Vision is a statement which describes the City in 2040.

Lake Forest is an exceptional city where people of all ages can live, work, and enjoy their lives. The City provides the necessary high-quality infrastructure, facilities, and services that our residents expect while consistently looking towards the future to carefully plan for the needs of new residents, growing business industries, and emerging technologies.

Our distinct sense of place is rooted in our parks, natural open spaces, lakes, creeks, urban forest, landscaped parkways, and established residential communities. We have well-located and maintained local and regional parks, trails, and recreation programs providing a diverse range of active and passive recreational opportunities for our residents to enjoy. Residents of our attractive, safe, and quiet neighborhoods support Lake Forest’s vibrant commercial centers which feature desirable shopping and dining options and engaging public spaces. The City provides safe and efficient ways to get around the community—in a vehicle, walking, biking, and alternative other transportation modes. Lake Forest’s enviable regional location and transportation connections allow our residents to easily access many of southern California’s most beautiful natural resources and destinations.

We also recognize that meaningful partnerships with local and regional stakeholders—including homeowner associations, businesses, the Saddleback Valley Unified School District, utility providers, neighboring jurisdictions, and public and nonprofit agencies—can help us achieve our vision. We are committed to fostering a positive atmosphere of civic collaboration so that Lake Forest remains a desirable and safe community.
Guiding Principle

Sense of Community

Foster a sense of community unique to Lake Forest that celebrates the City’s history, image, services, and amenities. Even as the City changes, the community will retain its charming character. The Civic Center will serve as the cornerstone of civic life and community events and programs held throughout Lake Forest will continue to create inviting opportunities for people to come together. The community’s distinguishing physical characteristics, including its parks, lakes, creeks, urban forest, and natural open spaces, are highly valued as an important part of the community’s sense of place and character. Residents are proud to call Lake Forest home and businesses want to locate to Lake Forest because of its sense of community.
Guiding Principle

Quality of Life

Provide the necessary infrastructure, services, and facilities for the people who choose to live, work, and do business in Lake Forest. Carefully consider how and where new development should occur to protect the safe, quiet, and peaceful ambience of the City’s existing residential neighborhoods. At the same time, recognize the City’s need to have a fiscally-sustainable balance of land uses to continue funding the public services and amenities the community expects. New development must fit within the scale and character of the community with thoughtful transitions between different land uses. Housing options desirable for all ages, including attainable housing for first-time homeowners, family housing, and homes for seniors, are all important parts of the community’s housing stock.

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Guiding Principle

Parks, Recreation, and Natural Open Space

Maintain the City’s diverse array of parks, recreation facilities, natural open space areas, and equestrian, biking, and hiking trails so that users of all ages and abilities have access to a range of active and passive amenities. The City also supports local and regional efforts to improve air quality and expand multimodal transportation options which can help create a healthier environment for Lake Forest residents. Educational material and programs promote the City’s parks, recreation, and natural open space areas and encourage residents to enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle.
Guiding Principle

Vibrant Commercial Centers

Improve our ability to be fiscally sustainable through the expansion of commercial activities, retention of existing successful commercial businesses, and redevelopment of existing commercial centers. Embrace the challenges of the new retail economy by supporting development or redevelopment of commercial centers that focus on providing unique experiences that cannot be replicated through online shopping. This includes providing a range of dining, shopping, and entertainment options for all generations so that people living and working in Lake Forest want to spend time at the community’s commercial centers. The inclusion of visible gathering spaces like public plazas and outdoor dining patios will help to create a more enjoyable commercial environment. Bringing commercial, residential, and civic uses closer together in mixed-use environments can also support the success of Lake Forest’s commercial development.
Guiding Principle

Business Opportunities

Enhance the City’s reputation as a leading location for high-quality jobs and encourage the expansion of business clusters that provide employment opportunities and add to the City’s revenues. Lake Forest has everything a business needs to thrive and grow. Its location provides businesses with access to strategic markets and a multimodal transportation system, including freeways, airports, and seaports. The community includes a diverse, highly-educated, and creative labor pool as well. Work collaboratively with businesses to promote and streamline regulations to facilitate economic activity. Continue to invest in economic development programs that promote Lake Forest as the natural choice to successfully grow a business and encourage innovation.
Guiding Principle

*Mobility in the City and Region*

Recognize and embrace the City’s special location in southern California and take advantage of the economic benefits associated with its unique position. Lake Forest is in proximity to some of the world’s best outdoor amenities. From the 5 and 405 freeways, as well as the Foothill Transportation Corridor, people living and working in Lake Forest can access the rest of Orange County and nearby coastal communities stretching from San Diego to Los Angeles. Many of southern California’s premier providers of higher education are also located nearby, providing a wonderful pool of future residents and employees looking to call Lake Forest home.
Guiding Principle

Local and Regional Partnerships

Encourage effective partnerships with local and regional stakeholders to help achieve the City’s vision. Working together with key partners including homeowner associations, businesses, providers of lifelong learning opportunities, utilities, neighboring jurisdictions, and public and nonprofit agencies, creates a shared vision and mutual commitment among parties. Public/private partnerships are also a key to the City’s successful development of some of the community’s most special places, including the Etnies Skatepark, the Sports Park, and The Arbor shopping district. The City will continue to work cooperatively and creatively with local and regional partners to further the City’s objectives.
Guiding Principle

Focus on the Future

Inspire a community culture that is forward-thinking and innovative. Change is happening all around us—in the way we connect with each other, where we live, how we get around, the jobs we have, how we purchase goods and services, and the way we receive and share information. Lake Forest believes we must use data and information to understand where we’ve been to determine where we’d like to go, and that we must chart a path that provides clear direction while also allowing us the flexibility to quickly adapt to change. With thoughtful leadership Lake Forest will be able to respond to dynamic conditions while maintaining its commitment to its residents and businesses.