

Lake Forest land plan aims for unity

By ERIKA I. RITCHIE
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

LAKE FOREST • In what city officials called a historic step, Lake Forest moved closer this week to completing its own master plan.

After five years of study, including two environmental reports, almost 30 public input sessions, hundreds of resident comments and seven possible alternatives, the City Council late Tuesday put into motion a long-awaited proposal – known as the Opportunities Study – to rezone more than 800 acres of land currently classified as commercial industrial.

The general plan amendment change also brought with it a plan to address and improve the community's No. 1 concern – traffic – at 35 of the city's intersections through the Lake Forest Transportation Mitigation Program. Funds for this program will come from developer fees.

With the planned general plan and zone change – and at the urging of Mayor Pro Tem

Peter Herzog – the council also stipulated that the developer of Shea/Baker Ranch put a phasing plan in place to finance and build the Alton Parkway extension.

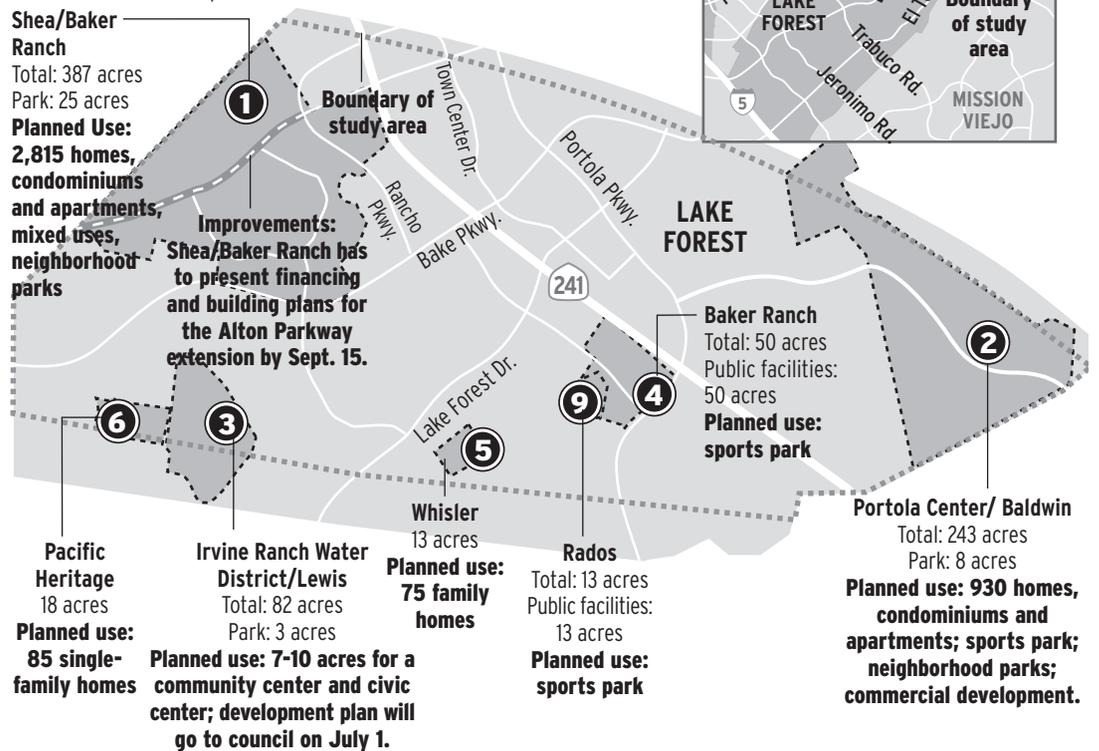
The land – once under the flight path of the former El Toro Marine Corps base – will become sites for public facilities, residential housing and commercial spaces. Officials say this zone change and general plan amendment will provide the missing link and unite the 78,310-resident city.

City leaders approved development agreements for two of the plan's five parcels. The remaining three have until Sept. 15 to get their agreements approved. Otherwise, the land retains its existing zoning and general plan designation.

If all are approved, the developments will provide funding for a sports park, civic center and traffic improvements throughout the city. El Toro High School and Serrano Intermediate and Lake Forest elementary schools will also get funding.

Rezoning in Lake Forest

The Lake Forest Opportunities Study's "Alternative 7" plan calls for more park space and public facilities such as sports parks and community centers in the study area. Below are the sites that have been studied:



Source: City of Lake Forest

The Register

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