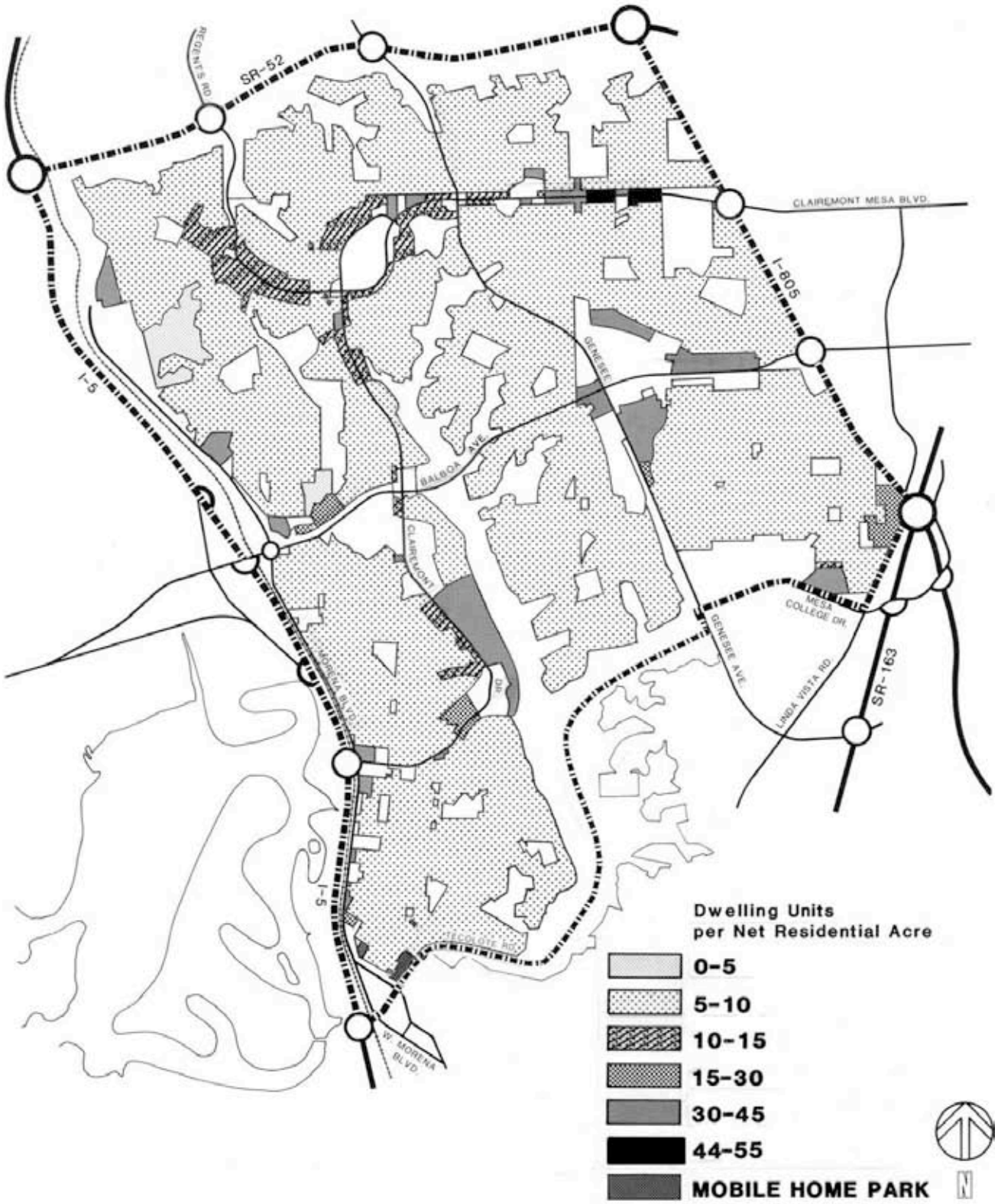


Existing Residential Development

Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

4
FIGURE

RESIDENTIAL

EXISTING CONDITIONS

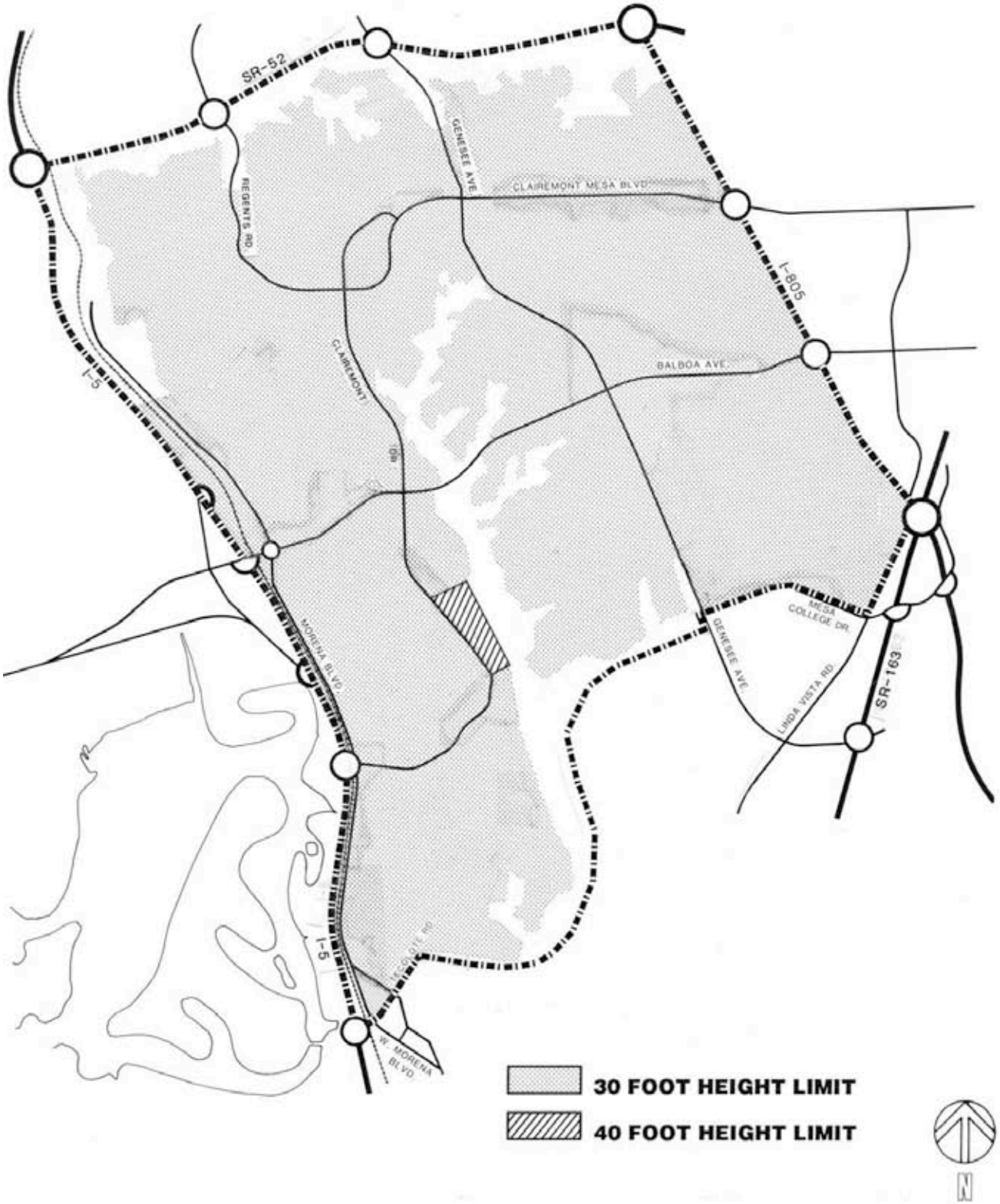
Of the 6,755 acres that comprise Clairemont Mesa, 4,213 acres (or 62 percent) are used for housing (**Figure 4**). The demand for housing in the community is due to: its inner-city location; job resources at Kearny Mesa, Centre City, Mission Valley and University; and, the recreational facilities of Mission Bay, Old Town, Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Marian Bear Memorial Park. Vacant residentially zoned land in Clairemont Mesa is scarce and is predominantly located in the canyons and hillside areas. Most of the housing stock is in good condition, but some single-family homes and duplexes that were built in the 1950s and 1960s need to be renovated. With the lack of significant undeveloped land in the community, changes in housing will undoubtedly occur by the replacement of existing housing with new housing, probably at higher densities and from revitalization.

In 1989, the City Council adopted a 30-foot height limit for almost all of Clairemont Mesa (**Figure 5**). The height limit is intended to maintain the low-scale character of development in the community and to preserve public views of Mission Bay and the Pacific Ocean from western Clairemont. This community-wide height limit replaced the West Clairemont Height Limitation Overlay Zone that applied only to a portion of the community. Residents in the community believe that the number of guest quarters and companion units that have been developed in single-family neighborhoods is changing the character of those neighborhoods. Residents also feel that the conditions of approval for some of those permits are not adhered to. In Clairemont Mesa, approximately eight companion units were constructed as of 1987 and approximately four guest quarters were constructed as of 1987. The City of San Diego requires conditional use permits for these additions when the addition is to be used for guest quarters or companion units.*

Approximately 41 percent of the multifamily development in Clairemont Mesa is comprised of duplexes located along the Clairemont Mesa Boulevard corridor and Clairemont Drive (**Figure 4**). The duplexes are in scale with the surrounding single-family homes, however, residents in the community believe that the deterioration of these duplexes has affected housing values and the image of Clairemont Mesa.

The deficiency of off-street parking resulting in a lack of on-street parking and alleys congested with parked cars has also been a problem. The duplexes located east of Clairemont Drive between Clairemont Mesa Boulevard and Feather Avenue have been redeveloping and are subject to the Hillside Review Overlay Zone and Tecolote Canyon Rim Development Guidelines which will assure that new development will occur in a manner that protects the environmental resources and aesthetic qualities of the area.

* Guest quarters are located on the same premises with the main dwelling unit for the use of a person employed on the premises, members of the family or a temporary guest. Companion units are self-contained dwelling units (including a kitchen which is permitted in addition to that of the main dwelling unit) and may be rented by a member of the family, a person over 60 years of age, or a handicapped person.



Height Limitation Zones

Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

5
FIGURE

In Clairemont Mesa, there are two mobile home parks, Coastal Trailer Villa and Morena Mobile Village, both with the Mobile Home Park Overlay Zone (**Figure 6**). The purpose of the overlay zone is to provide adequate sites for mobile homes consistent with the City's goal of accommodating alternative housing types. Both mobile home parks are located on Morena Boulevard (**Figure 6**) and are within walking distance to public transit, commercial services, Tecolote Park and Recreation Center and Mission Bay. Coastal Trailer Villa is over 30 years old with established long term residents. Most of the units in the park are older recreational trailers that would most likely not be acceptable in other mobile home parks. The park is in fair condition and would benefit from on-site landscaping improvements and recreational facilities.

The second mobile home park, Morena Mobile Village, is also over 30 years old and has a combination of recreational trailers and mobile homes. Over the years, the park has undergone refurbishment to improve the park's landscaping and appearance of the units. The park is in good condition and offers on-site recreational facilities.

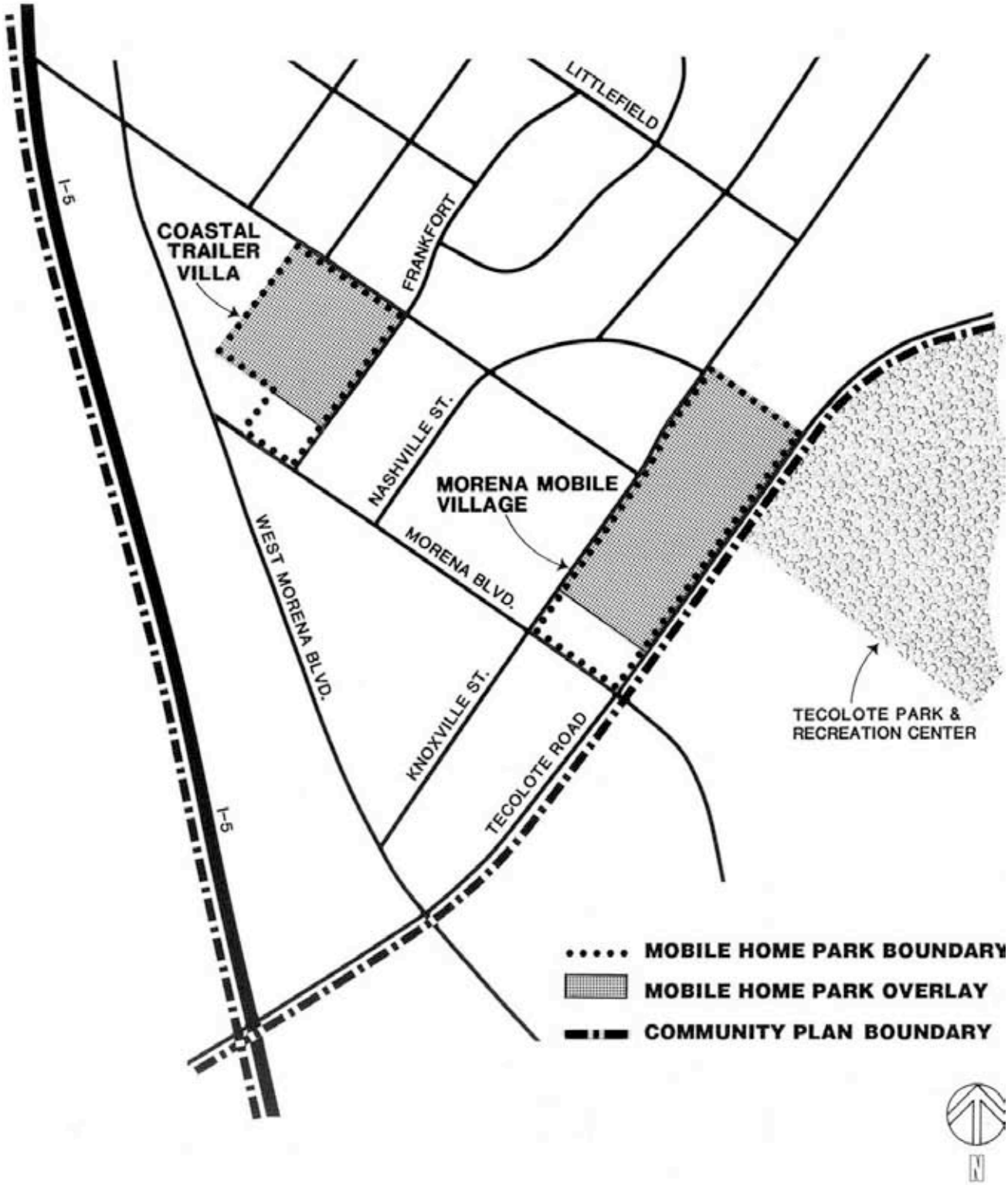
In Clairemont Mesa, there is only one historic site, the Stough-Beckett cottage that is listed on the City of San Diego Historic Site Board Register. The cottage was constructed in 1888 and has been completely restored. The architectural style is "Eastlake," and is an example of a modest Victorian rural home. The cottage is located in the southern portion of Clairemont Mesa at 2203 Denver Street.

HOUSING TYPE, TENURE AND VALUE

According to 1980 census data, there were 30,121 housing units in Clairemont Mesa. This represents an 18 percent increase in the number of housing units for Clairemont Mesa since 1970. During the same ten-year period, the number of housing units in the City of San Diego increased by more than 29 percent (**Table 1**). Approximately 69 percent of the housing units in Clairemont Mesa are single-family and 31 percent are multifamily. Single-family units in 1985 had increased by three percent since 1970, totaling 21,817 units, while multifamily units had more than doubled during the same time period, totaling 9,652 units. Within the community, 63 percent of the housing units are owner-occupied, compared to 49 percent on a citywide basis. In 1986 the average sale price for a home in the north central portion of the City, according to the San Diego Board of Realtors, was $132,695. This figure is slightly lower than the citywide average sale price of $134,774 for the same period.

TABLE 1
CLAIREMONT MESA HOUSING UNITS 1950 – 1980

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1970-1980 % Change
Clairemont Mesa (CM)	1,133	18,111	25,589	30,121	18.4
City of San Diego	110,005	192,269	241,010	341,928	29.5
CM Housing Units as a Proportion of the City	1%	9.4%	10.2%	8.81%	



Location of Mobile Home Parks

Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

6
FIGURE

EXISTING ZONING

Existing land uses generally correspond to the existing zoning. **Table 2** and **Figure 7** provide a summary of existing residential land uses by zone for Clairemont Mesa.

TABLE 2
LAND USE IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES (in acres)

Residential Zones	Acres in Zone	Residential			Commercial	Other	Vacant
		Total Acres	Single-family	Multifamily			
R1-15000	1,143	94	94	0	0	927	122
R1-5000	4,452	3,684	3,684	0	3	568	197
R-3000	421	205	47	159	1	209	6
R-1500	46	45	*	45	0	0	1
R-1000	194	176	4	172	*	5	12
R-600	7	7	1	7	*	0	0
R-400	3	2	0	2	*	1	0
Total:	**6,266**	**4,213**	**3,830**	**385**	**4**	**1,710**	**338**

Note: "Other" category includes industrial, public and semipublic uses and the "Vacant" category includes resource-based parks.

- Less than one acre.

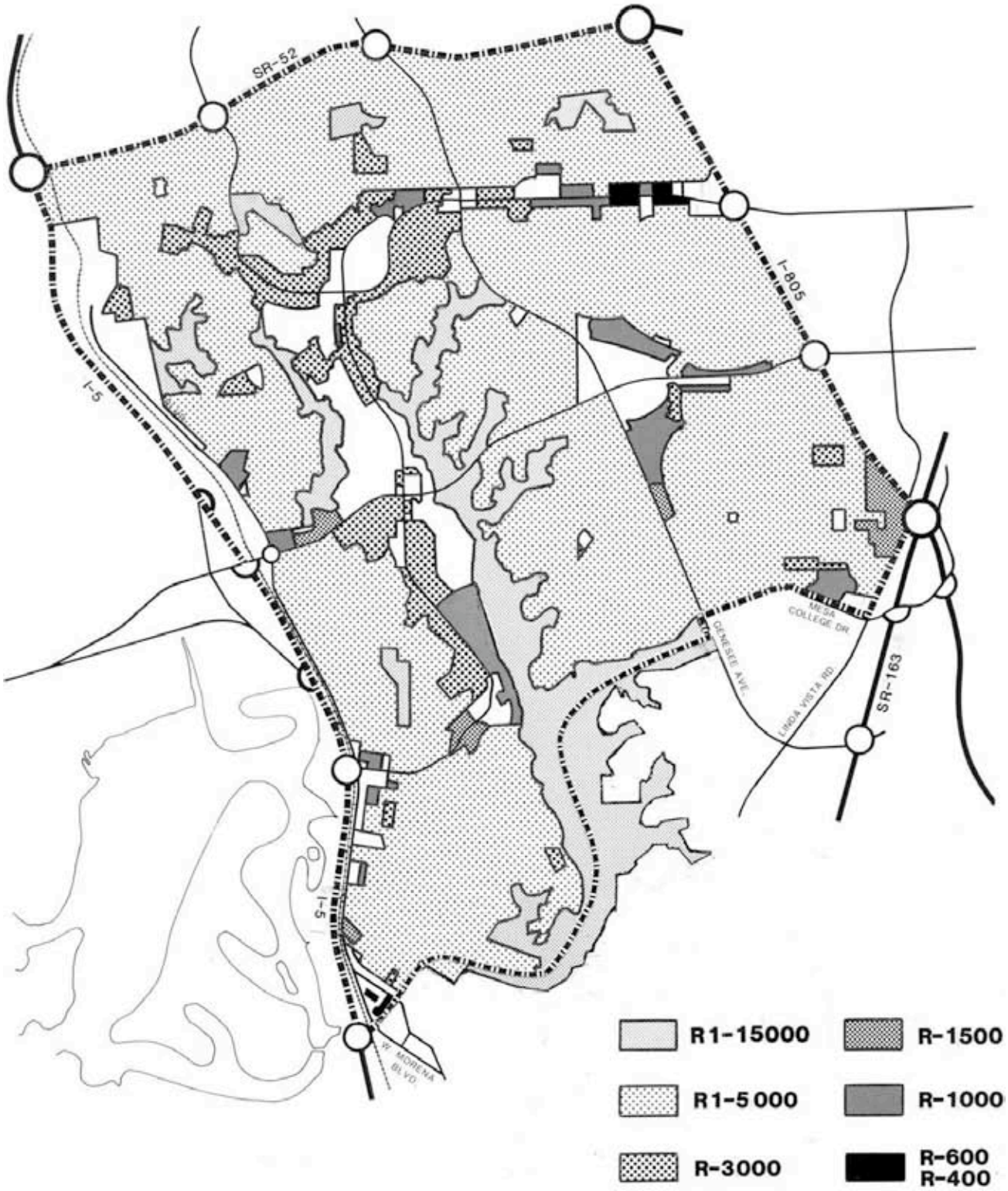
Numbers may not add up do to rounding.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND INCOME

According to 1980 census data, the population of Clairemont Mesa was 77,547. Between 1970 and 1980, the community experienced a decline in population of approximately 6.2 percent. During this period, the City's total population grew approximately 25.7 percent (**Table 3**).

TABLE 3
CLAIREMONT MESA POPULATION 1950 – 1980

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1970-1980 % Change
Clairemont Mesa (CM)	3,372	62,137	82,634	77,547	- 6.2
City of San Diego	334,587	573,224	696,769	875,538	+ 25.7
CM as a Proportion of the City	1%	10.8%	11.9%	8.9%	



Existing Residential Zoning

Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

7
FIGURE

The community's decrease in population from 1970 to 1980 was due to a decline in the average family size, which decreased from 3.4 persons in 1970 to 2.7 persons in 1980. This compares to the citywide average of 2.8 persons in 1970 and 2.5 persons in 1980. During this period, there was a decline in the number of children from zero to 14 years of age and an increase in adults from 20 to 34 and 55 to 64 years of age. The average family size in Clairemont Mesa is projected to decrease from 2.7 persons in 1980 to 2.6 persons by 1990 and until the year 2000. This compares to the citywide average of 2.5 persons by 1990 and 2.4 persons by the year 2000. The community's median family income, according to the 1980 census data, was $22,918, which was higher than the citywide median income of $20,133.

VACANT RESIDENTIAL LAND

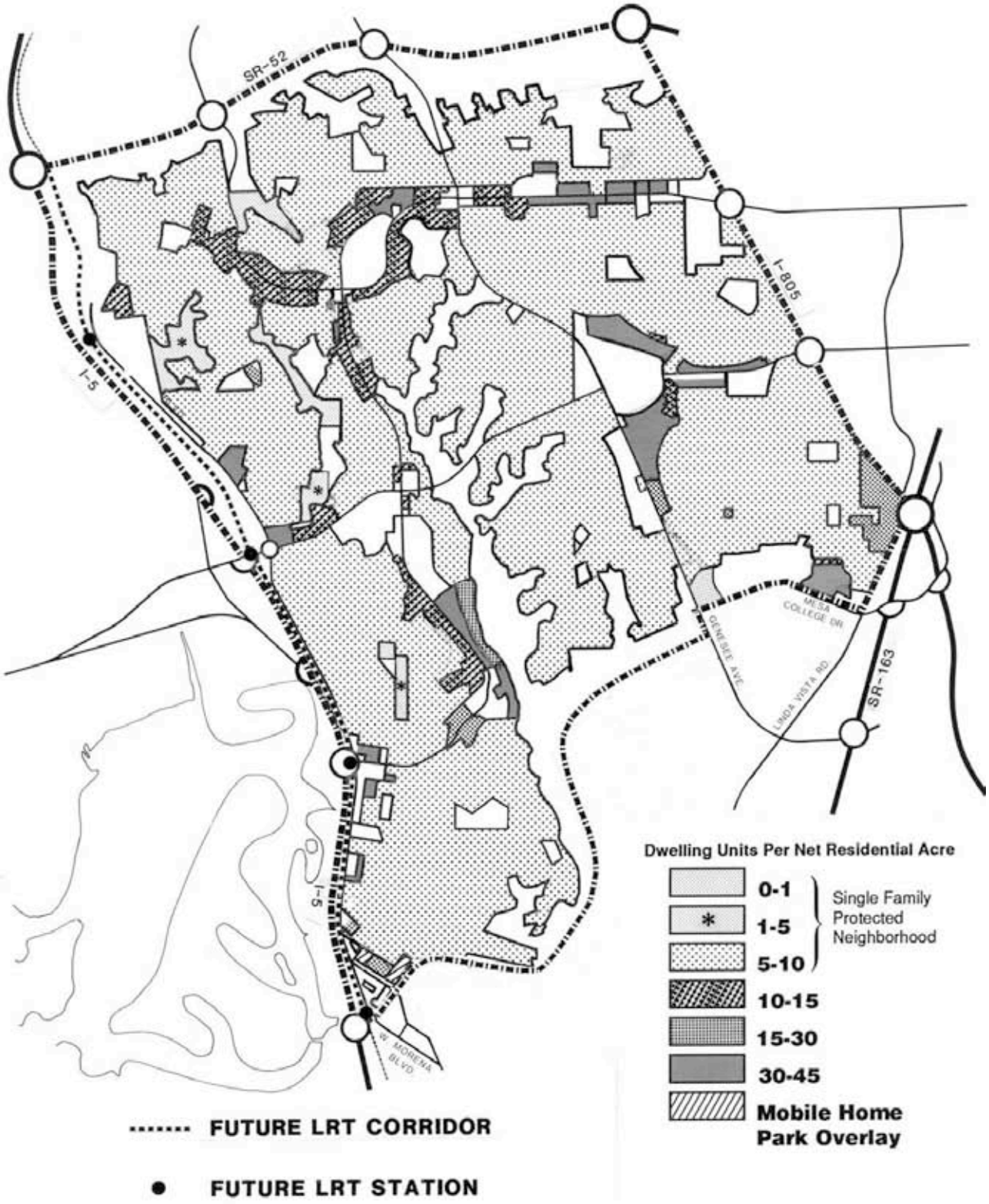
By 1988, Clairemont Mesa had approximately 358 acres of vacant residential land that are mostly located in the City's open space retention areas (**Figure 32**). Development has occurred in some of the privately owned canyons that were previously designated as open space in the 1970 community plan. These areas include: Alcott Estates, a 59-acre subdivision located north of Jutland Drive; Stonehaven, a 65.7-acre Planned Residential Development project located south of Jutland Drive; Canyon Haven, a 19.3-acre Planned Residential Development with six acres in an open space easement located at the southern portion of Stevenson Canyon; Mission Bay Valley Estates, a 7.9-acre subdivision with 5.4 acres in an open space easement located north of Clairemont Drive; and a 13-acre subdivision on Erie Street. Pressure for development in the privately owned canyon areas will continue because of the development amenities such as the canyon views and rural aesthetics in an urban environment. As development occurs, however, it must meet the underlying zone and City regulations.

PROJECTED GROWTH

In summary, Clairemont Mesa is an urbanized community and for the most part is built out. Future development of the vacant residential land and redevelopment opportunities could result in an addition of 1,100 dwelling units (not including mixed-use development), totaling 33,000 dwelling units or a three percent increase over the existing stock in the next 15 years.

OBJECTIVES FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Provide a diversity of housing options in selected locations of the community.
2. Preserve the mobile home parks on Morena Boulevard to continue providing alternative means of housing.
3. Provide development guidelines to help ensure that new development is compatible with the existing neighborhood and does not overburden community or neighborhood facilities.
4. Locate higher density housing near the commercial areas where there are adequate services.
5. Provide adequate off-street parking.



Residential Density Recommendations

Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

8
FIGURE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

1. Protected Single-family Neighborhoods

   Areas recommended for residential density ranges of zero to ten dwelling units per net residential acre, shown on **Figure 8**, are characterized by traditional single-family development (e.g. detached housing units on individual lots). These areas are recommended to have single-family zoning (R1-40000, R1-15000 or R1-5000) and should be protected as single-family neighborhoods in the future. Therefore, requests for rezonings or other discretionary actions in these areas that could result in construction of any type of residential structures other than traditional single-family residential dwellings, with one dwelling unit per lot, should be denied.

2. Single-family Development

   Planned Infill Residential Development (PIRD) permits should be used to develop new units in existing neighborhoods with single-family zoning or a combination of single-family and multifamily zoning. The PIRD regulations control residential development in already developed areas by assuring its compatibility with existing surrounding development, in terms of site design, architecture and density.

3. Residential Density Identification

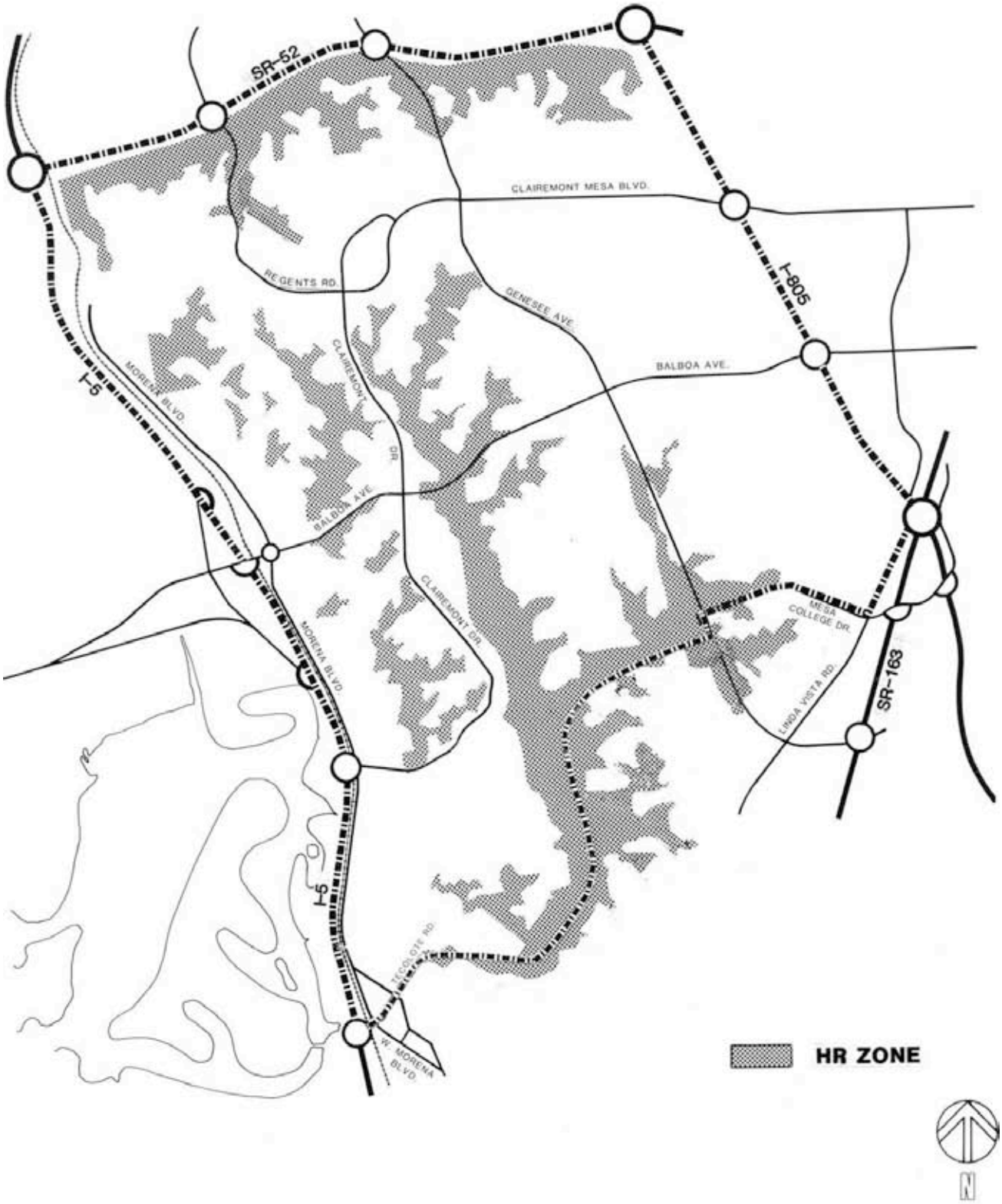
   Residential development should occur at densities shown on **Table 4** and in **Figure 8**. The density ranges are based upon dwelling units per net residential area (du/nra).

4. Rezoning

   a. The following areas should be rezoned from R-3000 to R1-5000 in order to maintain the low-density character of predominantly single-family neighborhoods: Pocahontas Avenue, north of Luna Avenue; Moraga Avenue, south of Idlewild Way; and, Onodaga Avenue between Clairemont Mesa Boulevard and Willamute Avenue (**Figure 38**).

   b. The duplexes on Clairemont Drive, between Balboa Avenue and Ute Drive should be rezoned from R-3000 to CO to be consistent with the surrounding commercial development (**Figure 38**). The site should redevelop with offices because the area is close to Balboa Avenue with good access from Clairemont Drive. On-street parking is available on Clairemont Drive and Modoc Drive.

   c. The area located east of Cowley Way, south of Dakota Street and north of Iroquois Avenue should be rezoned from R-1000/HR to R-2000/HR (**Figure 38**). Future development at this density will be more compatible with the adjacent Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and single-family development to the north. This rezoning includes the approved residential development project, Villamar, which has developed under the R-2000 zone. The property is subject to the Hillside Review Overlay Zone and the Tecolote Canyon Rim Development Guidelines.



Hillside Review Overlay Zone (HR)

Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

9
FIGURE

TABLE 4
RECOMMENDED RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

Designation	Density Range (du/nra)*
Designated Open Space**	0 – 1
Very Low	1 – 5
Low	5 – 10
Low-Medium	10 – 15
Medium	15 – 30
Medium-High	30 – 45
High	45 – 55

* dnu/nra= dwelling units per net residential acre
** See **Open Space and Environmental Resource Element**.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT – CPIOZ

The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone, Type B should apply to the area west of Cowley Way, south of Dakota Drive and north of Iroquois Avenue (**Figure 38**). The existing development, known as the Buena Vista Gardens, is currently developed with older multifamily housing at a density of less than that permitted by the underlying R-1000 Zone. Mature street trees in the public right-of-way and landscaping in the front yard setback create a parkway streetscape environment in this project. These significant site features could be lost from pressures to redevelop the site with the R-1000 Zone. In order to ensure the continuance of the streetscape environment along Clairemont Drive, Cowley Way and Dakota Drive, the following development features should be incorporated into the site design:

1. Maintain the 25-foot front yard setback and stagger buildings to create breaks between structures. This will help avoid the look of "row housing" along Cowley Way and Clairemont Drive.

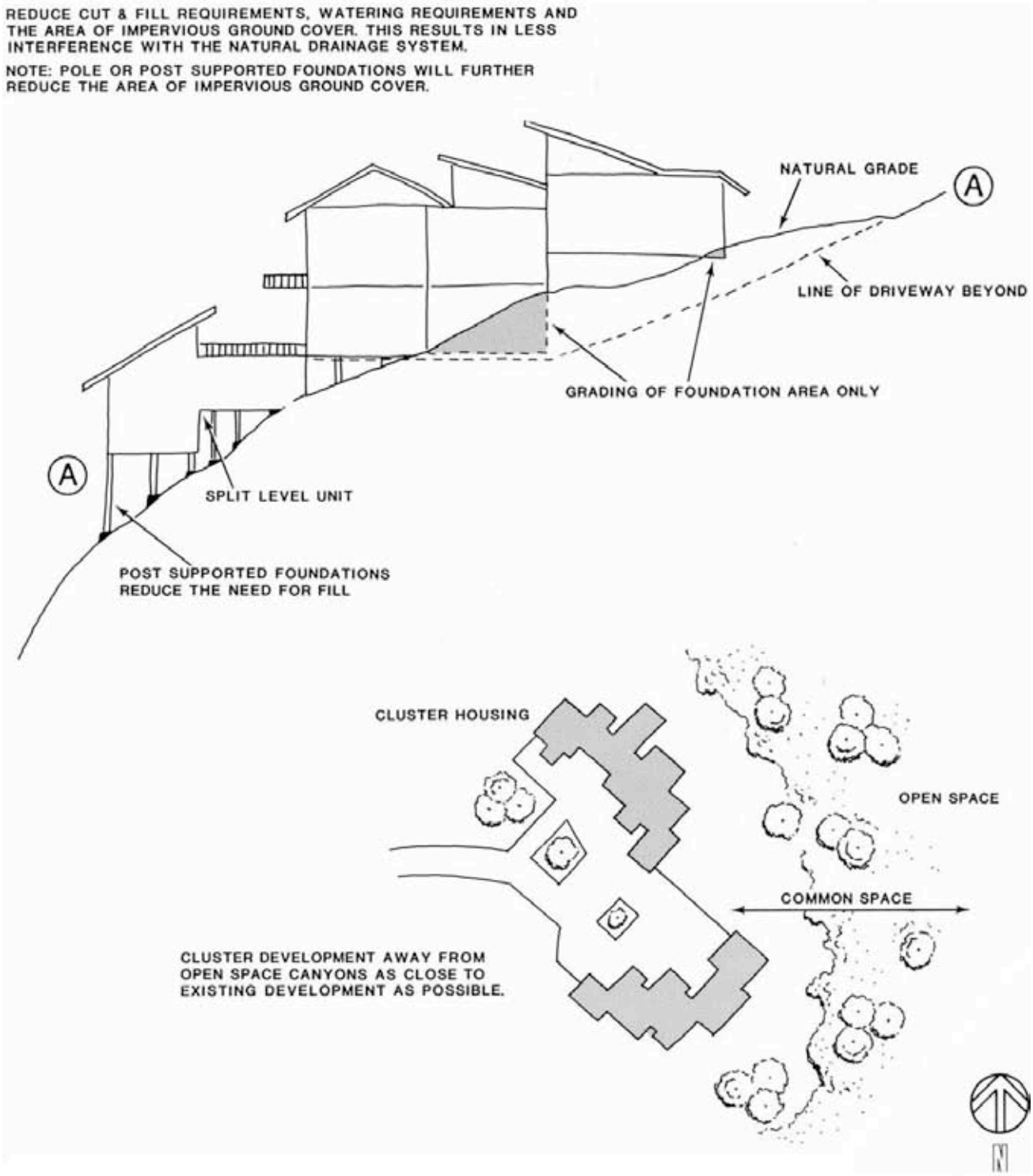
2. Provide a landscaped buffer with a 25-foot front yard setback along Dakota Drive to help create a transition area between the new multifamily development and the single-family residential neighborhood to the north.

3. Provide garages that are concealed from the public right-of-way.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT

1. <u>Preservation of Open Space</u>

   Sites that should be designated as open space and rezoned to R1-40000/HR (one dwelling unit per 40,000 square feet and the Hillside Review Overlay Zone) in order to preserve existing canyon and natural open space systems (**Figure 32** and see **Open Space and Environmental Resources Element**) include:



Hillside Development

Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

10
FIGURE

a. Approximately 39 privately owned acres comprising the northern two-thirds of Stevenson Canyon, located north of Ecochee Avenue and west of Clairemont Drive.

b. A finger canyon of Tecolote Canyon, located south of Marlesta Drive and east of Genesee Avenue.

c. A finger canyon of San Clemente Canyon, located south of San Clemente and east of Regents Road.

d. Approximately five privately owned acres comprising the northern one-half of Padre Canyon, located west of Clairemont Drive and north of Erie Street.

2. Hillside Review Overlay Zone

a. Residential development in the Hillside Review Overlay Zone must conform to the development design guidelines of that zone to assure that new development will occur in a manner that protects the environmental resources and aesthetic qualities of the area. Development should be clustered on the flatter portions of sites and grading should be minimal in order to preserve natural landforms and vegetation (**Figures 9** and **10**).

b. The subdivision of single-family lots in the Hillside Review Overlay Zone should not result in a change in the neighborhood character by permitting the location of new houses behind and/or below existing houses rather than along the street, which is more characteristic of Clairemont Mesa.

c. New development along the rim of Tecolote Canyon, San Clemente Canyon and all designated open space areas must be in accordance with the Tecolote Canyon Rim Development Guidelines and Hillside Review Overlay Zone to protect the open space system.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPANION UNITS AND GUEST QUARTERS

1. Limits on Location

a. The development of companion units and guest quarters should be permitted only in areas where such development will not adversely impact surrounding neighborhoods or the natural features of a site.

b. Companion units and guest quarters should not be developed in the Hillside Review Overlay Zone, areas designated as open space or on lots smaller than 5,000 square feet.

2. Architecture/Design

Companion units and guest quarters should be designed in a manner that is architecturally compatible with the main house and preserves the visual character of the single-family neighborhood from the street.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

1. Range of Densities

   The range of housing densities recommended in this Plan (see **Figure 8**) should be maintained in order to provide a variety of housing types for both ownership and rental at varying costs.

2. Preservation and New Construction

   Low- and moderate-income housing should be provided by preserving existing housing in this category and by encouraging the construction of additional affordable units.

3. Assistance Programs

   City and other governmental programs should be utilized for the development of low- and moderate- income housing. The affordable Housing Density Bonus, Community Development Block Grant funds, Department of Housing and Urban Development programs are examples of existing affordable housing programs.

4. Compatibility

   Densities and housing types of proposed low- and moderate-income housing projects should be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOBILE HOME PARKS

1. Morena Mobile Village

   The mobile home park on Knoxville Street (**Figure 8**) should remain as such in order to provide a diversity of housing options for residents of all income levels.

   a. Single-family Housing

      The zoning on that portion of the site which is within the boundaries of the Mobile Home Park Overlay Zone (see **Figure 6**) should remain in the R1-5000 Zone and be designated as a protected single-family neighborhood. In this way, any alternative use of the residentially zoned portion of the site will be limited to single-family housing in a density range of five to ten dwelling units per acre.

   b. Alternative Use – Recreational Facility

      As an alternative to residential development, the site could be redeveloped with a recreational facility. This area has three recreational uses (Tecolote Canyon Natural Park, Tecolote Park and Recreation Center and private tennis courts) and an additional recreational facility would be compatible with these surrounding facilities. Landscaping improvements along the perimeter of the site adjacent to Tecolote Creek channel should be the same as the requirements stated above.

2. Coastal Trailer Villa

   The mobile home park on Morena Boulevard (**Figure 8**) should remain as such in order to provide a diversity of housing options for residents of all income levels.

   a. Single-family Housing

      The zoning on that portion of the site which is within the boundaries of the Mobile Home Park Overlay Zone (see **Figure 6**) should remain in the R1-5000 Zone and be designated as a protected single-family neighborhood. In this way, any alternative use of the residentially zoned portion of the site will be limited to single-family housing in a density range of five to ten dwelling units per acre.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEIGHT AND SCALE

1. Harmony should be promoted in the visual relationships and transitions between new and older buildings. New buildings should be made sympathetic to the scale, form and texture of the surrounding neighborhood.

2. The height of new buildings should relate to the height of existing development. Tall buildings immediately adjacent to low buildings could create problems such as excessive shadows, undesirable wind tunnels, and lack of privacy.

3. Abrupt differences in scale between large commercial buildings and adjacent residential areas should be avoided. Gradual transitions in scale are preferred.