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## ***COMMERCIAL LAND USE***

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*Commercial Designations*  
*Commercial Development Guidelines*  
*Commercial Area Recommendations*

## ***COMMERCIAL LAND USE ELEMENT***

### **GOALS:**

- Maintain a diversified, yet balanced land use pattern which includes providing adequate levels of commercial retail services, residential development and cultural opportunities within existing commercial areas, while limiting additional office use within commercially designated districts.
- Revitalize commercial retail areas to strengthen, reinforce and unify existing retail districts within La Jolla.
- Promote pedestrian-oriented features to improve pedestrian safety, access and ease of movement through all the commercial areas.
- Promote mixed-use residential and commercial development along transit corridors such as the commercial areas of La Jolla Boulevard, in order to encourage affordable housing opportunities, particularly within the Bird Rock retail area and in the Windansea area on La Jolla Boulevard centered on Nautilus Street.

### **BACKGROUND**

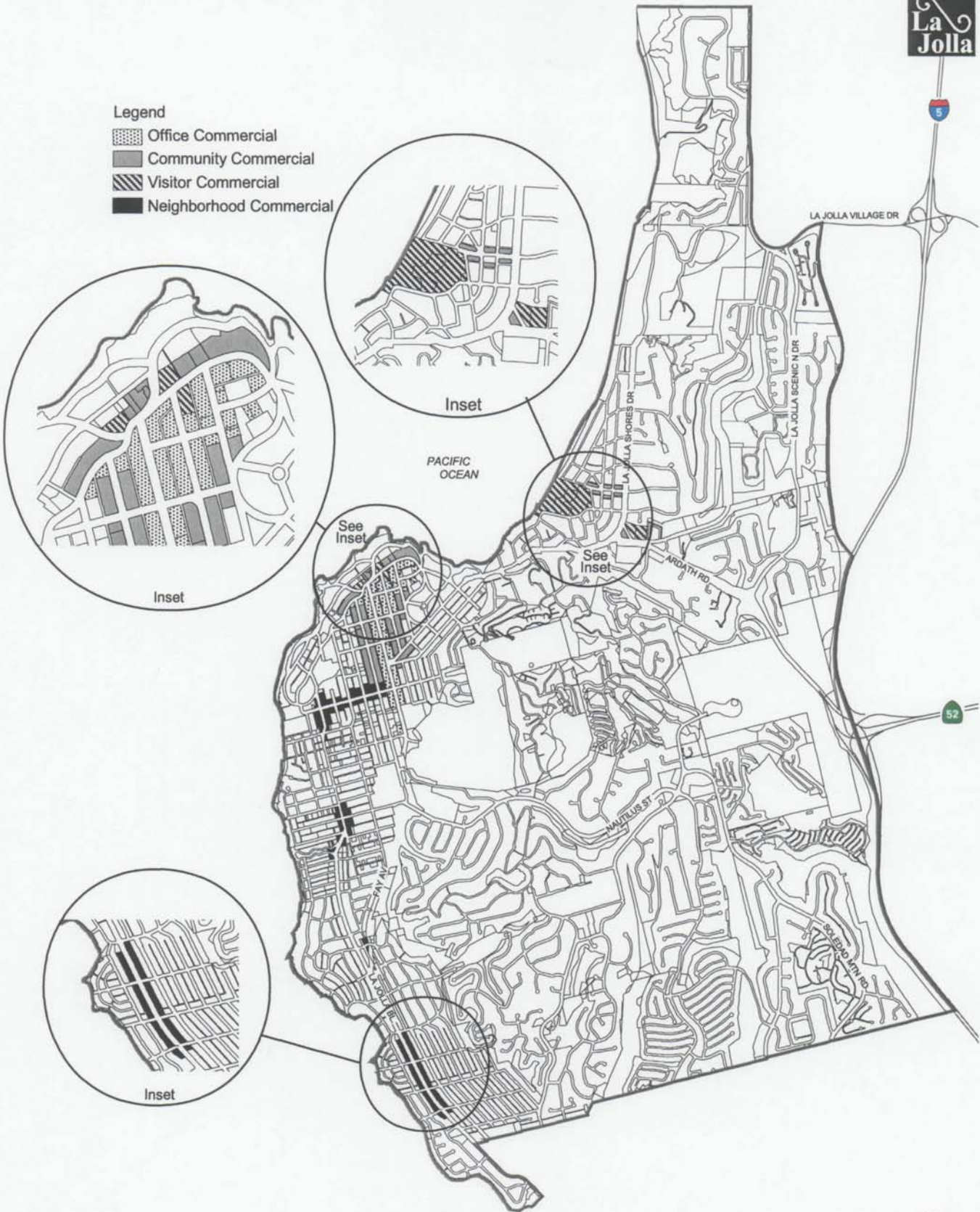
Over 150 acres of total net land in La Jolla is used for commercial purposes, representing about 4 million square feet of commercial space. The commercial core of La Jolla is known as the "village" or "downtown." This area is the prime business, office and retail commercial center of the community. The village area, generally bounded by Prospect Street, Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla Boulevard and Pearl Street, contains such uses as specialty shops, hotel and motel services, restaurants and corporate offices. The area also serves as the cultural and heritage center of the community and includes significant community landmarks such as the La Jolla Recreation Center, the La Jolla Woman's Club, the Atheneum, the San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art as well as other historically designated structures. In addition, the village area contains both public and private schools, churches and recreation areas, such as Ellen B. Scripps Park and La Jolla Cove which are located along Coast Boulevard. Some residential uses are also located within the village area, including single dwelling unit homes and multiple dwelling units.

All of the commercial areas, and some of the non-commercial areas, in the community are covered by a planned district ordinance which contains special regulations pertaining to property development and permitted uses. The development regulations for the village area and neighborhood retail areas are contained in the La Jolla Planned District Ordinance, which was adopted by City Council in 1983. The La Jolla Shores Planned District Ordinance, adopted in 1974, governs both commercial and residential property development in the La Jolla Shores area.

The overall purpose of both the La Jolla and La Jolla Shores Planned District Ordinances has been to maintain a balanced land use pattern within commercially designated areas, to protect scenic vistas of the ocean, shoreline and hillside areas, and to beautify the overall streetscape of commercial streets and retail corridors.

1. The City should seek to strengthen the existing commercial districts by requiring pedestrian-related amenities with development, such as plazas and courtyards, by limiting office-commercial uses to the existing office-commercial areas identified in this plan, and by prohibiting the encroachment of new commercial uses into existing residential neighborhoods.
2. The City should encourage small lot development consistent with the traditional rhythm and spacing of buildings along major retail-oriented streets.
3. The City should preserve and enhance, where possible, ocean views and other scenic vistas in commercially designated areas by maintaining the established 30- foot height limit and by establishing setback requirements and public view corridors along the right-of-way to these visual resources.
4. The City should develop transit-supported commercial uses along existing transit corridors such as La Jolla Boulevard to reduce traffic congestion and parking space needs within the neighborhood retail and the village commercial districts.
5. The City should provide opportunities to develop affordable housing in order to meet a variety of housing needs within La Jolla's neighborhood mixed-use districts, by allowing a residential density bonus 25 percent above and beyond that allowed by the base zone, provided that, in return for the density bonus, the applicant be required to set aside a portion of the units as affordable to “low-income” or “very low-income” persons pursuant to the State Affordable Housing density bonus statute and implementing City regulations.
6. The City should seek to promote the pedestrian orientation of the office-commercial areas of downtown La Jolla.
7. The City should promote mixed-use development in all commercial areas of the community.
8. The City should encourage and promote energy-efficiency appliances and technology.
9. The City should analyze for visual impact and ensure public review and comment for any telecommunications structures proposed to be located in commercial areas. Regarding the proposed placement of cellular facilities in these areas, the Citywide Telecommunications Policy should be adhered to.





## Commercial Designations



**La Jolla Community Plan**  
City of San Diego · Planning Department



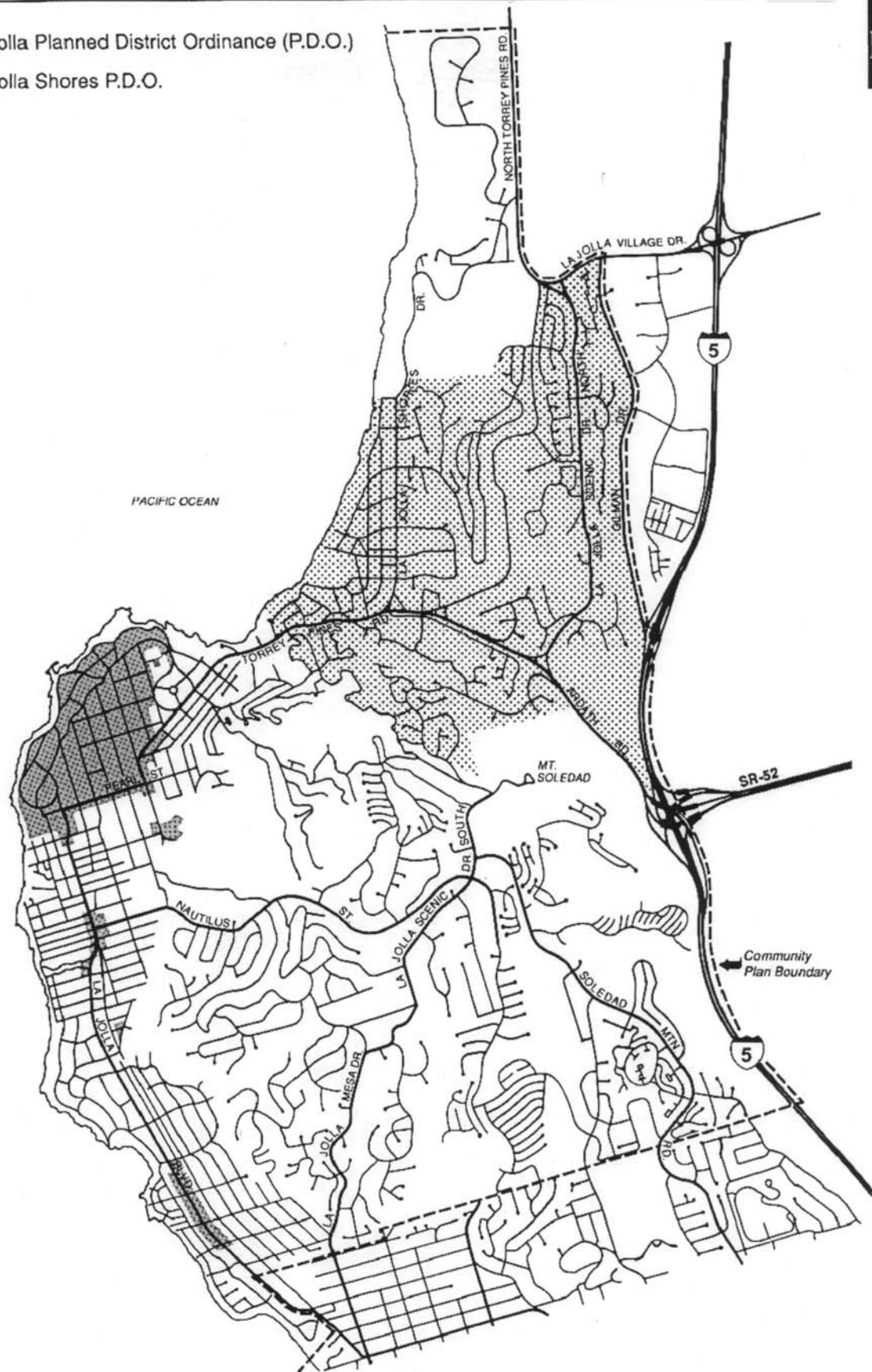
Figure 17



La Jolla Planned District Ordinance (P.D.O.)



La Jolla Shores P.D.O.



## La Jolla/La Jolla Shores P.D.O. Areas



**La Jolla Community Plan**  
City of San Diego • Planning Department



Figure 18



## ACTION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION	ADOPT WITH	<u>TIMING</u> WITHIN 5 YEARS	WITHIN 20 YEARS	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING	SEE FOR MORE DETAILS
Require that new projects developed under the discretionary review employ transit-oriented and pedestrian oriented criteria of this plan.		On-Going		Planning Department	City	Policies 1, 2, & 4
Develop a streetscape theme and consider a Maintenance Assessment District or a Property-based Business Improvement District to enhance and beautify all commercial areas.		•		Planning, Engineering and Capital Improvement, Development Services and Park and Recreation Departments	City	Policy 3
Designate the three properties on the northwest corner of Cave Street and Prospect Street Office Commercial.	•			Planning Department Planning Commission City Council	City	Policies 2 & 6
Designate as Neighborhood Commercial the La Jolla Boulevard property at the southeast corner of Camino de La Costa as well as the adjacent property to the South. Rezone the southerly property from CC to LJ-4 (La Jolla PDO Zone 4).	•			Planning Department Planning Commission City Council	City	Policies 2 & 4

## PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Commercial Designations

Within La Jolla, four commercial designations implement the goals and policies of this community plan. These designations and the areas to which they are applied are shown below and in Figure 17 as follows:

**Office Commercial** includes uses such as business and professional offices, banks, financial services and hotels.

- Village area

**Visitor Commercial** includes uses such as hotels, motels, specialty shops and restaurants.

- Village area -Prospect Street (between Cave Street and Eads Avenue)

**Neighborhood Commercial** includes uses such as convenience stores, florists, restaurants, specialty stores and professional offices.

- Bird Rock
- Pearl Street
- Nautilus Street and La Jolla Boulevard intersection (between Westbourne Street and Gravilla Street)

**Community Commercial** includes uses such as apparel stores, banks, medical offices and dental services.

- Village area
- Avenida de la Playa in La Jolla Shores (which is regulated by the La Jolla Shores Planned District Ordinance). Specific recommendations for the various commercial areas are detailed in the following section.

### 2. Commercial Development Recommendations (applicable to all commercial areas in La Jolla)

- a. Avoid abrupt transitions in scale between commercial buildings and adjacent residential areas. Utilize transitions in bulk and scale to create visual interest and create a sense of enclosure for pedestrians; gradual transitions in scale between commercial and residential uses are preferred. Design larger structures in a manner that reduces actual or apparent bulk with the use of building articulation. Provide landscaping to add texture to blank walls, soften edges and provide a sense of pedestrian scale.



- b. Incorporate open areas such as plazas, courtyards, tables or bench areas with shade trees or overhead trellises into the design of new commercial projects.
- c. Provide pedestrian paths and activity areas with benches, tables and decorative sidewalk treatment. Enhance large, unbroken open areas of concrete with pattern paving or landscaping in order to break up monotonous areas. Decorative paving should also be used to identify safe crossing areas for pedestrians at major street intersections.
- d. Unify the streetscape system by providing an overall landscaping and streetscape master plan for commercially designated areas in accordance with tree specifications and planting guidelines contained in the citywide landscape regulations and standards. Use curb side planting and street trees along major streets to separate pedestrian from parked vehicles.
- e. Provide and maintain attractive kiosks with street trees at key pedestrian nodes and transit waiting areas, within the village area.
- f. Landscape or screen off-street parking areas and large parking structures that are visible from the public right-of-way.
- g. Where feasible, locate customer parking at the rear of commercial buildings with ingress and egress from the alley. Avoid curb cuts in pedestrian-oriented streets such as Prospect Street, Girard Avenue and Wall Street. Provide parking in accordance with regulations contained in the Land Development Code.
- h. Screen storage and loading areas that are visible from the public right-of-way with buffers such as attractive fencing and landscaping. Also screen or landscape mechanical equipment from public view.
- i. Enhance the character of commercial on-site signs in order to help unify the architectural theme of commercial projects.
- j. Apply the policies and plan recommendations of the Visual Resources and Public Access sections contained in the Natural Resources and Open Space Element of the plan, and the regulations of the La Jolla and La Jolla Shores Planned District Ordinances which are incorporated herein by reference.
- k. Promote mixed-use development in the commercial areas of the community.
- l. For the residential portion of all mixed-use projects, make available information on energy efficient appliances and technology in marketing materials and within sales offices in order to promote energy savings.
- m. For mixed-use projects, either provide, or offer as an option, alternative energy technologies to be incorporated into the residences during construction in order to promote energy savings. Identify the provision of, or option for, alternative energy in the marketing materials.



## **Area Recommendations**

### **Bird Rock - Neighborhood Commercial**

Due to its proximity to the community of Pacific Beach, this district is considered to be the gateway into La Jolla from the south, and should be developed in a traditional boulevard manner with street trees and median landscaping, where feasible, within the public right-of-way.



1. Redevelop structures within this retail district to include mixed-use residential/commercial development in order to provide opportunities for more affordable housing in La Jolla.
2. Maintain consistency with the La Jolla Commercial and Industrial Sign Control District of the citywide sign regulations for all commercial signs.
3. Enhance sidewalk with decorative or uniform paving to enhance streetscape.
4. Install street median or island landscaping near the boundary between the La Jolla and Pacific Beach communities.
5. Provide decorative lighting, street trees, benches and other pedestrian amenities to create a stronger pedestrian-oriented image to this commercial district.

## **Nautilus Street and La Jolla Boulevard - Neighborhood Commercial**

Support the commercial properties that surround this district by enhancing pedestrian amenities such as sidewalk treatments, curb side landscaping or decorative awnings which would tend to strengthen and unify this retail corridor.

1. Enhance sidewalk area with decorative paving.
2. Install street trees and benches along the sidewalk.
3. Provide transit shelters consistent with the La Jolla Planned District Ordinance design criteria at pedestrian waiting areas for transit users.
4. Maintain consistency with the La Jolla Commercial and Industrial Sign Control District of the citywide sign regulations in order to foster a stronger commercial sign image within this district.
5. Permit the redevelopment of structures within this retail district to include mixed-use residential/commercial development.
6. Provide decorative lighting to increase public safety and visibility at night.



## **Pearl Street - Neighborhood Commercial**

The Pearl Street corridor is primarily auto-oriented, which brings vehicular traffic into the area through the residential neighborhood that is located south of this retail district as well as from other adjacent areas. Pedestrian-related amenities should be improved to strengthen this area's image as a neighborhood serving commercial center. The streetscape recommendations provided in Appendix E propose an appropriate curbside landscaping plan that will mitigate the asphalt and concrete image of the streetscape of this district.



1. Install appropriate curb side landscaping as identified in Appendix E.
2. Control excessive signage and establish unified design themes through the Planned District Ordinance sign plans and the La Jolla Commercial and Industrial Sign Control District.
3. Provide decorative lighting to increase public safety and visibility at night and create a stronger image and pedestrian-orientation for this commercial district.

## **Avenida de la Playa - Community Commercial**

The commercial structures that exist along this 4-block commercial district have generally maintained their original building scale and pedestrian orientation despite development pressures to expand over the years. Improvements within this district should focus on pedestrian-related amenities such as sidewalk surface treatments and street trees to reinforce the pedestrian environment. Open areas, like Laureate (Mata) Park, will continue to be maintained by the City.



1. Provide uniform sidewalk surface treatment along this 4-block corridor.
2. Retain small scale establishments and install street trees to provide shade and enhance pedestrian environment.
3. Maintain open areas, such as Laureate (Mata) Park, and continue to allow sidewalk cafes with appropriate permits within this corridor.
4. The painted traffic island at the intersection of El Paseo Grande and Avenida de la Playa should be improved with curbs and landscaping in accordance with Appendix E.

## **Village Area - Office Commercial and Visitor Commercial**

Focus future commercial office development within this community in the Office Commercial areas of the village. Encourage the continuation of small lot commercial retail development along the major retail-oriented streets, such as Girard Avenue, Wall Street, Herschel Avenue, Fay Avenue, Silverado Street, and Prospect Street.

The Visitor Commercial uses that are located along Prospect Street provide a high degree of pedestrian activity to this area partly because of its proximity to La Jolla's coastal activity areas such as Ellen B. Scripps Park and La Jolla Cove. Develop new commercial uses within the Visitor Commercial areas of the village in a manner that preserves view corridors to the ocean from public vantage points. Design buildings along this area in a manner that provides setbacks from corner lots and provides open areas and view corridors to the ocean. Locate refuse collection and loading areas where public view corridors and sidewalk access will not be obstructed.

The following recommendations, based on the Vista Project, are intended to promote appropriately scaled improvements at key intersections with La Jolla's commercial core to foster and reinforce the village character of La Jolla's downtown area.

### **Prospect Street (between Girard Avenue and Herschel Avenue) - Office Commercial and Visitor Commercial**

1. No parking should be eliminated along the upper portion of Prospect Street other than for operational requirements such as medians or fire access, unless it is replaced within the immediate area. Maintain through traffic in both directions along the lower portion of Prospect Street. Explore opportunities for a below-grade parking structure on Prospect Street between Girard Avenue and Herschel Avenue.



2. Relocate on-street parking spaces from the southeast side of Prospect Street to the north side of the street.
3. Create a 15-30 foot wide pedestrian promenade with outdoor cafes and seating areas using the space that was vacated by the traffic and parking lanes.
4. Create an overlook to the ocean across Ellen B. Scripps Park.
5. Replace existing retaining wall with a sloped garden.

## Girard Avenue and Silverado Street - Office Commercial



1. Install decorative paving within the public sidewalk right-of-way.
2. Reinforce the existing pattern of major street trees along Girard Avenue.
3. Add park benches and curbside plants along the sidewalk to separate pedestrians from parked cars.
4. Enhance identification of pedestrian crosswalks with patterned paving.
5. Enhance the sidewalk areas at all four corners of this intersection with landscaping, street trees, and park benches.
6. Provide decorative lighting in order to create a stronger image and character to this commercial district.



## Fay Avenue and Silverado Street - Office Commercial



1. Improve street lighting by adding more light fixtures at consistent intervals.
3. Add benches and curb-side plants.
3. Use a variety of street trees along the public right-of-way to reinforce the village image.