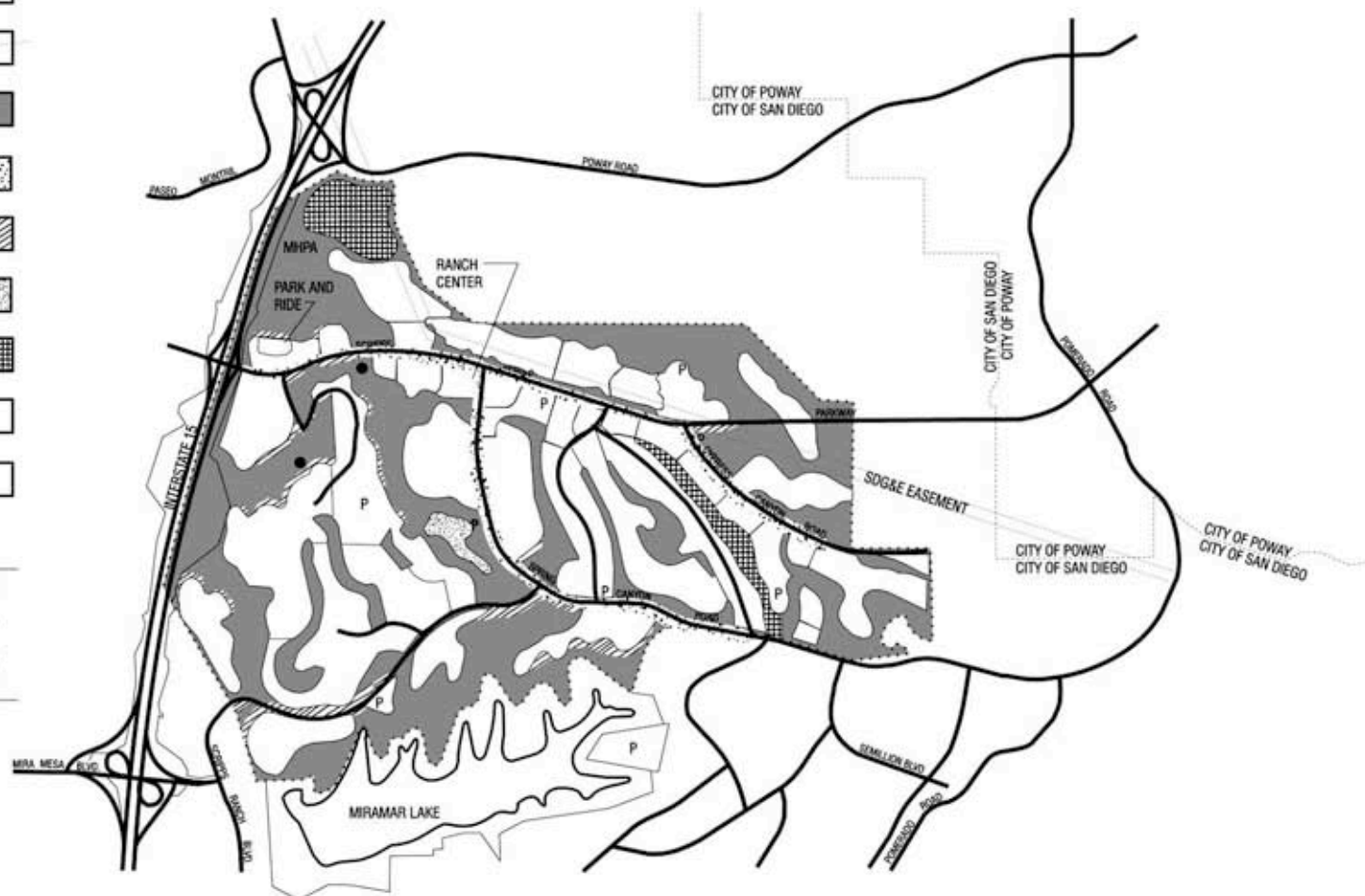


ACRES OF OPEN SPACE	
NATURAL:	671
TRANSITION:	129
SLOPES > 30°:	110
PARKS/FIELDS:	41
TOTAL:	951



Open Space System **32**
Miramar Ranch North Community Plan **FIGURE**

SECTION 12: SENSITIVE LANDS/OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Goal 1: Encourage the careful management of community environmental resources through preservation of a passive open space network and support of environmentally sensitive development.

Goal 2: Provide broad areas of natural open space with linkages to one another and with adequate buffers to active use areas.

12.1 SENSITIVE LANDS AND OPEN SPACE PROTECTION

Objective: Encourage the preservation of significant environmental resources and minimize impacts on environmentally sensitive areas through the creation of special open space preserves and a passive open space network.

Prior to any development, if needed, additional biological surveys may be required over the subject property as part of the environmental review process. Appropriate mitigation measures of impacts on environmental resources should be undertaken in accordance with recommendations of the Environmental Quality Division of the City of San Diego.

Approximately 52 percent of the total planning area is designated as open space; acreage and general locations are indicated in **Figure 32**. To the extent possible, open space areas should create a community-wide passive open space system. Connections between large open space areas are especially important in maximizing the overall network as a wildlife habitat. The open space system should connect into the network in Scripps Ranch where feasible. At least one at-grade crossing for wildlife should be provided along the western portion of Spring Canyon Road, the Ranch Center.

The importance of the Miramar Ranch North area to the citywide open space system has long been recognized by the City. As previously mentioned, the Cypress Canyon and Lake Miramar viewshed areas are contained in Priority Numbers 17 and 28, respectively, of the citywide open space retention list. In addition, the area adjacent to the Scripps and Oceanview neighborhoods (see **Figure 12**) is contained within Priority Number 53, while the northwest portion of the Oceanview neighborhood is contained within Priority Number 95.

Definitions: *Natural open space* is land which is not altered by development. *Natural vegetation* is preserved and no seeding or irrigation will occur. *Transition area* is land which has been graded or otherwise altered by development but is not planned for buildings, streets, or lawn areas. *Transition* is also along the boundary of developed areas with natural open space. The transition areas should be landscaped (1) to enhance the community visually, (2) to provide buffers between developed areas and natural areas and (3) to provide community and neighborhood separation and identity. In some areas, greenways and pedestrian paths should be incorporated as part of the transition area. Slopes over 30 feet are graded major slope areas found in several areas of the Plan. Slopes should be revegetated to lessen the visual impact of these major slope areas.

As depicted in **Figure 32**, two wildlife water catchments shown in the western portion of the community may be provided. The annual maintenance of these catchments should be provided through the Open Space Maintenance District.

Several special open space preserves are designated. The preserves are designed to protect existing high-interest biological species and/or transplanted species. Special care should be taken to preserve not only the natural habitat itself, but the conditions such as drainage and sunlight creating the habitat. No landscaping should be undertaken in special open space preserves. Preservation of the existing conditions is especially important for the riparian area next to I-15.

Two areas are designated for special study in regard to biological resources, as shown in **Figure 32**. The Poway interchange corner includes Peñasquitos Creek and surrounding vegetative habitat, while the northeast-facing slope in the east-central portion of the planning area may support extensive Del Mar Manzanita. Further biological reconnaissance should be undertaken prior to development in or near these two areas. Appropriate mitigation, such as designation of a special open space preserve, should be included in the pertinent project EIRs.

During design, construction and maintenance of developments, areas designated as natural open spaces should be left as intact as possible. Dumping of fill and garbage should be prohibited and trampling of vegetation on foot and by vehicles should not be permitted. Control measures may include signing, fencing and close supervision of construction. To control the use of off-road vehicles, appropriate design layouts, fencing, signing and landscaping should be employed at open space access points and in open space areas where preservation of particular natural features is desired. Any planting in passive open space areas should utilize drought-resistant, native species. Hydroseeding with a eucalyptus mix is desirable except in special open space preserves.

12.2 LANDSCAPING PROGRAM

Objective: Provide for the planting and maintenance of landscaped areas appropriate to creating the overall community character and to local environmental conditions, with emphasis on eucalyptus forestation.

Landscaping should contribute to the creation of an overall aesthetic quality for the community. A planting program is proposed combining extensive forestation with eucalyptus trees and landscaping of individual development areas with clusters of trees, shrubs and ground covers. Landscaping should be viewed in the context of the passive open space system, that is, native vegetation punctuated by eucalyptus stands should together act as a backdrop for designed and maintained landscaped areas. This landscaping concept should produce an overall effect similar to that of the twin community of Scripps Ranch. The landscaping program is summarized in **Table 18**.

If possible, transition areas located along streets and within parcels should be planted with eucalyptus trees prior to any community development, in order to create an early visual impact. Hydroseeding is acceptable. A mix of eucalyptus varieties should be utilized, emphasizing clean, noninvasive, drought-resistant types.

The transition areas located along the boundary of developed areas that are adjacent to open space will serve as brush management areas and will be planted with a mix of native vegetation.

Overall, tree planting patterns should be of a naturalized grove character rather than in definitive formal designs. Tree planting should respond to topographic features and accentuate the differences between canyons and ridges. Special planting of trees and shrubs should occur in active open space areas (along pathways). The use of trees and landscaping in transition zones is discussed in **Section 11**; the planting density along ridgetops, in particular the density of trees, should ensure views are preserved. Where possible, existing stands of trees should be preserved.

Landscaping is important in creating the street scene, especially along the major streets. An informal quality utilizing eucalyptus is sought for the length of Spring Canyon Road. Scripps Ranch Boulevard is discussed in **Section 11.3** and **Section 11.4** speaks to Scripps North Parkway/Cypress Canyon Road. Mounded lawn and ground cover areas should be emphasized in the street medians.

Aside from its aesthetic function, landscaping should be used to minimize runoff on slopes. Areas disturbed by grading should be landscaped expediently, with planting done in sequence with grading rather than on a project-wide basis. Landscaping should be utilized as a visual and/or noise screen to separate disparate land uses.

To the extent practicable, all landscape materials and seed mixtures should have low water requirements and should be native species or equivalent. On artificial slope banks, landscape materials should be deep-rooted species. Native seed mixes should be planted with “punched-in” straw on fill slopes or serrations on cut slopes. The landscape architect should consider the soils engineer’s reports as to the watering of artificial slopes and determine a watering program to set a plant establishment period.

In the design and maintenance of native vegetation and landscaped areas, consideration should be given to potential brush fires. The use of fire retardant plant materials is encouraged. In addition, sprinkler systems and other watering methods should be available to control fires as needed.

12.3 LANDFORM AND GRADING

Objective: Permit reasonable grading for development while ensuring the overall landform is retained and the graded areas blend into the natural terrain.

Site planning should maintain the topographic relief of the existing terrain and preserve significant views from and of development areas as shown on the 1-inch = 400-foot scale concept grading plan which may be found at the end of the Plan. The ridge-canyon relationship should be maintained and not obliterated. While hilltops and valleys may be graded to permit development, the sense of distinctive landform should remain to the maximum extent possible.

TABLE 18
SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPING PROGRAM

Area or Condition	Landscaping Approach
Passive Natural Open Space	Native vegetation
Special Open Space Preserves	Rare plant species preserved, no landscaping
Pedestrian Paths	Special planting of trees and shrubs, highlighting pathway (as differentiated from surrounding natural open space)
Street Scene on Major Streets	Consistent landscaping program along length of street emphasizing tree planting, bermed medians. Twenty-foot-wide open space linkages along major roads
Transition Areas adjacent to Open Space, all Streets and in parcels	Native vegetation in areas adjacent to open space. In all other transition areas, naturalized planting blended into existing native, trees permit views from ridge yet screen view from below as needed.
Parks and Cypress Canyon Greenway (urban portion)	Selected lawn areas permitting intensive recreational use, trees for shade and intimacy, drought resistant ground covers and shrubs
Individual Development Projects	Planting of open space and parking areas, blended to surrounding conditions; landscape screens as needed

The technique of topping narrow ridges and filling sharp canyons by daylight cut and fill methods should prevent the destruction of entire hillsides, as shown in **Figures 33** and **27**. The use of artificial slope banks should be discouraged.

The height difference between ridges and canyons should be retained to the greatest extent possible. In single-family residential areas, grading in canyons and on ridges should be limited to the minimum area necessary to install streets, prepare house pads and create usable outdoor living areas. Hillsides between canyons and ridges should be retained in their natural state. All graded areas should be blended with the native hillside terrain to achieve a natural effect.

It is recognized that in some portions of the proposed Plan, substantial cuts and fills are required, even utilizing the topping-and-filling grading technique. These cut and fill areas arise where important streets must meet City engineering standards, such as for grades and curve radii. Three cases in point are Scripps Ranch Boulevard at the western entrance to the community, Spring Canyon road along the ridge between Scripps Ranch and Miramar Ranch North and the north-south road passing by the eastern elementary school site, through Cypress Canyon and northward across the power easement. In the detailed engineering of important roads in the plan area, care should be taken to minimize the cuts and fills to the extent feasible while meeting City road standards. Significant cuts may also be anticipated on narrow ridges in order to create even a minimum developable acreage.

In engineering design, the heights of manufactured slope banks should be minimized. For artificial banks over 30 feet in height, slopes should be blended, tops of slope banks should be rounded and contoured or landform grading should be utilized. Both horizontally and vertically, all artificial slopes should be blended to meet native terrain. Use of variable slope ratios is encouraged. The overall effect desired is a “natural” undulating terrain rather than a manufactured appearance.

In those instances where manufactured slopes exceed 30 feet in height, a landscaping and maintenance plan should accompany development plans. Those plans shall ensure natural-appearing slope coverage by vegetation within a practicable time frame, as recommended by the landscape architect and approved by the Park and Recreation Department. The plant material used to cover the slopes is to be fire resistant, self-sufficient and drought resistant and should reduce erosion potential. An irrigation system, if needed, should be designed as part of the development plans and should be in place for as long as needed by the selected species to initiate and develop.

Both horizontally and vertically, all artificial slopes should be blended to meet native terrain. Use of variable slope ratios is encouraged. The overall effect desired is a “natural” undulating terrain rather than a manufactured appearance. Grading should minimize disturbance to natural landscape on slopes adjacent to natural canyon areas.

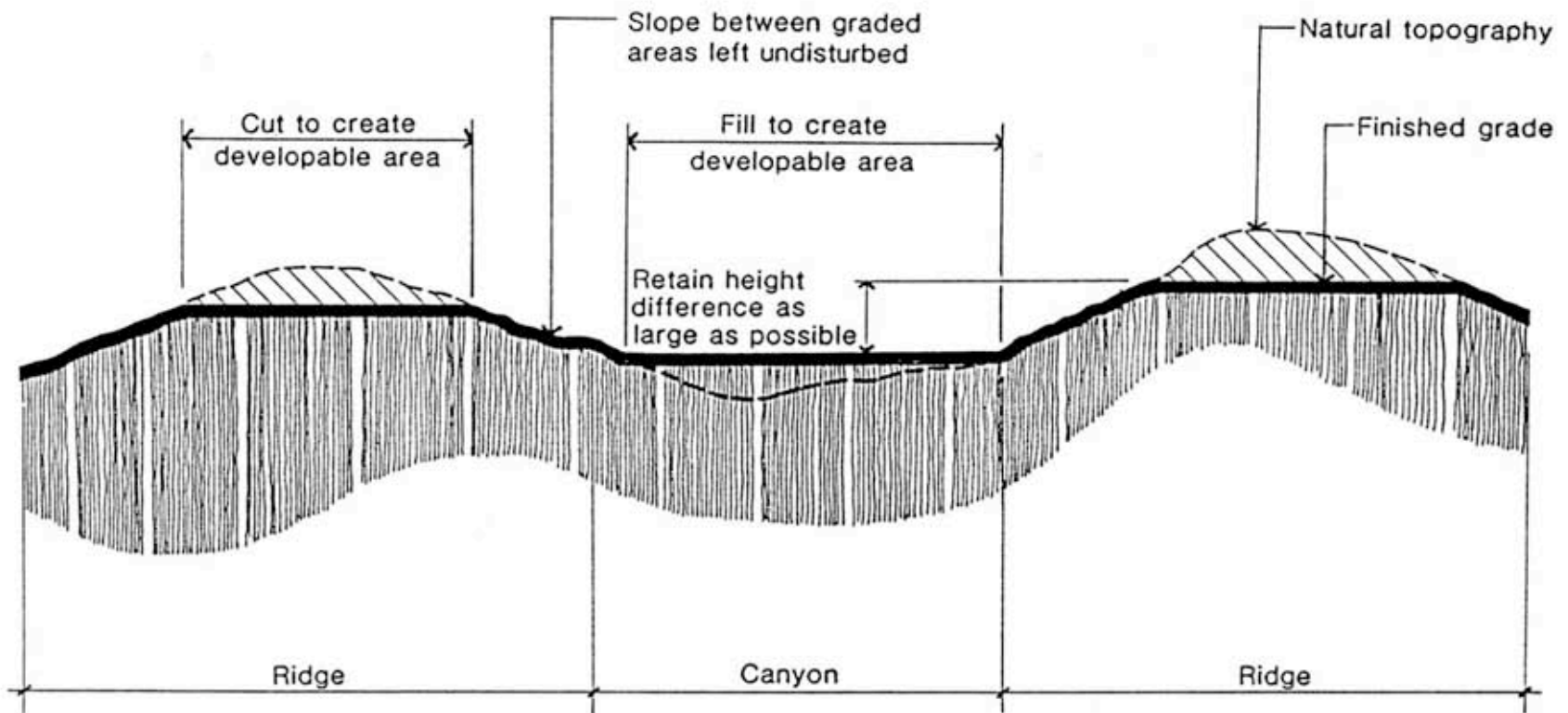
All grading operations should take into account the potential for erosion and settling. Earth moving should be accomplished in phases to avoid clearing of ground cover far in advance of grading. Grading should be limited to what is necessary, such that spillovers into natural areas are avoided and native vegetation to be preserved is not trampled. The final earth surface should be watered and rolled to form a hardened, compacted cap of soil which will minimize dust and erosion. Construction control should pay attention to soils compaction and avoid an over-concentration of rocks and cobbles in the outer area of fills, pursuant to the soils engineer’s recommendations.

Drainage facilities should be constructed concurrently with earth moving activities, with runoff directed away from slope banks. Any grading activity undertaken during the rainy season should have adequate safeguards against erosion and damage to adjacent property, as determined by the City Engineer. Grading operations should be avoided during the rainy season if possible. Any earth moving activity should be followed by construction and landscaping as soon as practicable.

2.4 DRAINAGE

Objective: Provide an adequate drainage system for the collection and control of surface water.

In planning developments and siting buildings, water flows and the natural drainage patterns ought to be considered. Efforts to limit the amount of surfaced ground should be made, especially in hillside areas. Impervious surfaces such as foundations, driveways and patios should be integrated into the natural drainage systems.



Typical Section Showing Grading Concept

Miramar Ranch North Community Plan

33

FIGURE



The provision for the collection of sediment and control of erosion on manufactured slopes should be the responsibility of the developer as outlined in the City Code. During construction, runoff ought to be channeled to prevent erosion. Drainage facilities should be constructed concurrently with all grading activities, including artificial slopes. Runoff should be directed toward planned drainage facilities and away from artificial and natural slopes to the extent feasible. Access to drainage systems should be provided such that cleaning and maintenance are facilitated. Drainage directed into the Peñasquitos Creek system should be non-erosive.

As described in **Section 12.2**, this Plan calls for the retention of about one-half the planning area in natural ground cover and native plants, supplemented by eucalyptus forestation. Because these species are adapted to the soils, water and climate of the site, this landscaping approach should reduce both the volume of water necessary for irrigation and the requirements for fertilizers and pesticides. This would have the effect of decreasing runoff volume and pollutant concentrations. Similarly, the landscaping program requires the use of native or naturalized plant stock in heavily planted areas to the extent practicable, for the same reasons.

Runoff containing chemical pollutants will not be permitted to contaminate the public water supply in Miramar Lake. All runoff containing contaminants such as fertilizers, pesticides, detergents and petroleum products are diverted from the reservoir into a City-approved drainage system.

12.5 CONSERVATION PRACTICES

Objective: Promote conservation concerns in the design, construction and use of buildings and developments.

Conservation practices should be utilized in the development of residential, commercial and industrial areas and in public and community facilities. Conservation concerns should be taken into account not only in design and construction but also for long-term maintenance and usage.

Site planning and building design should take into account energy conservation practices in heating, air conditioning, water heating, window treatments, insulation and weather stripping and lighting. Building design and selection of equipment should consider lifecycle costs rather than short-term capital and installation costs. Individual projects should respond to state regulations and guidelines in regard to energy conservation.

Of special interest is the utilization of passive and active solar energy design principles and equipment. Projects developed under this Plan should conform to any mandates of the City of San Diego in regard to solar use and should consider solar accommodation where encouraged by the City. Possible City policies could include utilization of solar facilities and techniques, provision for solar easements guaranteeing the right to receive sunlight and shade control to limit landscaping which interferes with solar collection. Additional measures might include required documentation of life cycle costs on projects and economic incentives to build solar projects.

Water conservation should be considered in the selection of mechanical equipment and plumbing fixtures. Landscape design and choice of plant materials should emphasize low water requirements and the capacity to reduce water runoff. Consideration should be given to a water recycling program for the community if feasible.

12.6 SENSITIVE LANDS MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Objective: Arrange for the adequate implementation of the resources management proposals set out in this Plan.

The development guidelines proposed in this section should be implemented through the review of individual and community development proposals by appropriate government agencies and citizen groups. Items reviewed should include environmentally sensitive areas, grading, drainage, landscaping and conservation practices. Planned industrial, commercial and residential developments are required in special sensitive areas. In addition, most developments in the planning area are subject to hillside review (HR). The environmental review process should be utilized to ensure the mitigation measures proposed in this Plan and accompanying EIR are followed in each development project.

The designated open space system should be preserved through dedication of large open space areas to the City as part of the subdivision process. Additionally, open space may be retained through negative or positive easements. In the western escarpment area, in particular for the very low-density residential areas, passive open space may be lotted out, provided construction on steep slopes is prohibited. Active open space areas and special open space preserves should be dedicated through the subdivision process or held by homeowners associations as common land.

The five pocket parks should be developed as part of the subdivision process and be maintained by the Open Space Maintenance District. These areas will be minimally landscaped to blend into the transitional landscaping. Facilities will be limited to a few benches and equipment to provide a rest stop along the trail along with par-course elements.

Landscaping of individual projects is the responsibility of private developers or institutions. Active open space should be landscaped in conjunction with private projects or as part of public facilities benefit assessments or fees. The assessment or fee (or assessment district) should finance landscaping of street medians, public rights-of-way along major streets and possibly eucalyptus forestation.

Maintenance of open space and landscaping should be ensured during the review of individual and community projects. Individual projects should be maintained by private owners or tenants, condominium associations, or a combination thereof. Codes Covenants & Restrictions (CC&Rs) should detail maintenance responsibilities where possible. The grounds at community facilities and within public rights-of-way along major streets should be maintained through a community-wide Open Space Maintenance District administered by the City. Special open space preserves and active open spaces should be maintained on a private basis, depending on location.

Table 19 summarizes the actions and responsible parties for implementation of the resources management proposals.

TABLE 19
IMPLEMENTATION OF SENSITIVE LANDS/OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Proposal	Action	Responsibility
Create special open space preserves and retain passive designated open space system.	Secure open space through dedication of easement.	City of San Diego.
Provide for planting of community landscaped areas and private developments.	Plant eucalyptus trees and landscape community areas and major streets, monitor development proposals.	Financing plan, Open Space Maintenance District.
Permit reasonable, sensitive grading to allow development as outlined in this Plan.	Monitor development proposals and grading plans, such as through hillside review and planned development review.	Planning Commission, Planning Department, City Engineer, Planning Committee.
Provide adequate drainage in developing the community, with special attention to Miramar Lake.	Monitor development proposals.	City of San Diego, Health Department, Regional Water Quality Control Board.
Promote conservation practices in public and private developments.	Monitor development proposals.	Planning Committee, Planning Department.
Provide for maintenance of landscape areas and open spaces.	Assign maintenance responsibility during project review and monitor maintenance activity, create Open Space Maintenance District.	Planning Committee, Planning Department, City of San Diego, owners associations.