

## I INTRODUCTION

The Riverwalk Specific Plan creates an **integrated, walkable neighborhood** that links – via pedestrian paths and multi-modal **trails, walkways, and open space** – the San Diego River with the more urban areas of Mission Valley. Located on an approximately 195-acre **transit-oriented** site within the central portion of the City of San Diego, the vision for Riverwalk is to develop a neighborhood that:

- » **Improves the natural aspects** of the Mission Valley Community and the recreational value of the San Diego River;
- » **Increases access** to San Diego’s high-performing Green Line Trolley and other transit options; and
- » Provides for a **diverse, balanced composition of land uses** that offers an **authentically sustainable place** where people can live, work, and play.

Riverwalk is organized around an **expansive network of open space and parks, trails, and public plazas and amenities**. Residential, retail, employment, and park uses are tied to the open space and parks system through a **carefully designed network of streets and pedestrian linkages** – located within the streetscape as

sidewalks and within the open space and park elements as trails and pathways.

With the San Diego River located at the geographic heart of Riverwalk, Districts within Riverwalk transcend the site, from higher intensity in the northern and southern portions of the site to lower-intensity development in a more natural setting along the river. This gradual intensification of land uses creates an **increasingly urban experience** at the neighborhood edges, effectively bookending the activities already existing in adjoining areas of Mission Valley. The integration of urban land uses affords Riverwalk the ability to respond to a **variety of living styles** in a **live-work-play environment**, establishing an image for Riverwalk that is distinct – and **uniquely San Diego**.



## 1.1 BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

### 1.1.1 *Brief History of Mission Valley*

Located near the geographic center of the City of San Diego, Mission Valley covers more than 2,000 acres of land, and extends from roughly Interstate (I-) 5 on the west to Fairmount Avenue on the east.

Prehistorically, the Riverwalk site is located within the traditional territory of the Kumeyaay people, which consists of two related groups: the Ipai and Tipai. The two coastal groups' traditional homelands were approximately separated by the San Diego River: the northern Ipai (extending from Escondido to Lake Henshaw) and the southern Tipai (including the Laguna Mountains, Ensenada, and Tecate). The prehistoric Village of Kosa'aay (Cosoy) and Nipaguay was located along the San Diego River in the Mission Valley area. The previous archaeological excavations within the limits of the Riverwalk project area have identified evidence of a predominately Late Archaic period occupation as substantiated by La Jollan pattern artifacts and five radiocarbon dates ranging from 360 cal BC and cal AD 650. Evidence of an early Late Prehistoric period occupation has also been identified in the form of imported lithic material from Obsidian Butte, a few Tizon Brownware potsherds, and four radiocarbon dates ranging from cal AD 1055 to 1450. There is presently no evidence from previous archaeological work that the prehistoric occupation of the Riverwalk project area was contemporaneous with that of the Village of Cosoy. Three sites within the project area have been evaluated and identified as significant cultural resources. Therefore, the implementation of the Specific Plan will include archaeological and Native American monitoring of all ground disturbance and archaeological data recovery in the locations of previously identified significant cultural resources. In addition, as discussed in later chapters of this Specific Plan, implementation of the Specific Plan will include signage and

native plant materials, at strategic locations, which articulate aspects of the prehistoric use of the area and the types of plant materials available to them.

Historically an area for agriculture until the 1960s and sand and gravel extraction until the 2000s, the first major urban development in Mission Valley came with the Mission Valley Shopping Center (now known as Westfield Mission Valley), approved in 1958. During the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, Hotel Circle (located to the south of the Riverwalk site) created a roadway where commercial uses could develop, predominantly in the form of visitor-serving uses, such as hotels, motels, and restaurants. Other significant projects constructed in Mission Valley during this period included San Diego-Jack Murphy Stadium (now known as SDCCU Stadium), completed in 1967, and Fashion Valley Mall, built in 1969. By the mid-1970s, Mission Valley had become the region's central location for large shopping centers.

Other important features that contributed to Mission Valley's built environment are the major freeways and highways, including I-8, I-5, I-805, and I-15, as well as State Route (SR) 163. These essential circulation elements serve not only the Mission Valley community but the city as a whole and provide connections for the county's motorists. This regional circulation network carries a significant portion of the region's commuting traffic to and through Mission Valley and affects the perception of the Mission Valley community. The MTS Green Line Trolley was constructed and extended through Mission Valley to what is now known as SDCCU Stadium in 1997.

In addition to Mission Valley's constructed elements, the San Diego River has consistently been an important natural feature – and lifeblood – of the

community. Initially, the river was a source of fresh water, attracting the native people of San Diego to its shores. It is the presence of the San Diego River that caused Mission Valley to emerge as an agricultural center in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Subsequently, the San Diego River grew in importance as a scenic recreational asset. Unfortunately, although some portions of the river today have been embraced and enhanced, large portions of the San Diego River are hidden from view, with access strictly limited.

At present, Mission Valley contains a mix of office, retail, residential, institutional, hotel, recreational, and industrial/business park uses. In and among developed uses are infrequent vacant lands and interim land uses such as parking lots and a golf course. A visually striking impression of Mission Valley emerges from its discontinuous development: major regional shopping centers are adjacent to under-developed parcels or vacant land. The sense of discontinuity is even further heightened by the juxtaposition of varied architectural styles.

The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the arrival of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has generated significant redevelopment activity within Mission Valley, providing unification throughout central Mission Valley as land uses intensify and the foundation of urban villages emerge. Redevelopment projects are planned or currently under construction proximate to Riverwalk, particularly in areas east and south of Riverwalk, including redevelopment of the Mission Valley Resort as a mixed of hotel, commercial, and entertainment uses; Town and Country Resort Hotel with a mix of urban uses; the Union-Tribune residential office mixed-use redevelopment; and a number of properties along Camino de la Reina, Mission Valley's emerging "main street," that incorporate multi-family residential and smaller-scale commercial retail and commercial office components. Redevelopment opportunities bring increased access to the San Diego River and further activate Mission Valley as a strong smart growth urban community, which, in turn, elevates the

importance of Mission Valley as providing much-needed housing proximate to jobs and transit to serve the City's growing population.

### ***1.1.2 History of the Riverwalk Golf Course***

In 1947, the first golf course to occupy the Riverwalk site – Mission Valley Golf Club – opened on land acquired by a lease from the Levi and Cushman families. The original course opened without a clubhouse, with only a shack to provide drinks and sandwiches. Multiple renovations to the course have occurred since construction. Nine more holes were added between 1955 and 1962. Approximately \$500,000 in renovations were completed around 1965 that included dredging the San Diego River and a partial redesign of the course. In 1976, six of the holes on the course were redesigned. Over the years, additional incremental changes were made. In September 1996, the 27-hole Stardust Country Club that occupied the site closed due to the terminating the lease. Riverwalk Golf Course was completed in 1998 with three sets of nine holes.

### ***1.1.3 Existing Levi-Cushman Specific Plan***

The Levi-Cushman Specific Plan was approved for an area that includes the project site by the San Diego City Council in 1987. The 200-acre Levi-Cushman Specific Plan houses the majority of the Riverwalk Golf Course (which operates under CUP No. 94-0563) and is comprised of the 195 acres proposed for redevelopment with the Riverwalk Specific Plan and a five-acre parcel owned by the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). (This five-acre parcel is part of a larger 15-acre holding of MTS. The entire 15 acres owned by MTS is utilized by the Riverwalk Golf Course, but only five acres of this holding are within the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan; the remaining 10 acres is not a part of the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan.)

The Levi-Cushman Specific Plan identified the project site for a mix of residential, retail, office, hotel, and recreational uses. Much of the housing and neighborhood commercial uses approved with the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan were planned to be located on the north side of the San Diego River, with office and hotel development sited on the south side of the river. Central to the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan was the creation of a 12-acre island along the southern edge of the San Diego River to accommodate small-scale specialty retail, office, and residential uses. In total, the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan allowed for 1,329 residential dwelling units; 1,000 hotel rooms; 200,000 square feet of retail; 2,582,000 square feet of office; and a minimum of 75 acres of open areas, including the San Diego River, the river buffer, parks, setbacks, hiking/biking/walking trails, theme entries, plazas, and privately maintained open areas within each parcel.

Redevelopment allowed under the approved entitlements of the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan has not been exercised. Accordingly, the site continues to operate as Riverwalk Golf Course under CUP No. 94-0563 until such time as redevelopment occurs.

## 1.2 PURPOSE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

### 1.2.1 Document Purpose

This document serves as a Specific Plan of development for the Riverwalk project, which is located in the Mission Valley community of the City of San Diego, California. The City's General Plan, the Strategic Framework Element, the Mission Valley Community Plan, and the City of San Diego Land Development Code (LDC) form the planning framework for this Specific Plan.

This Specific Plan provides detailed text and exhibits describing the range of land uses (mixed-use, employment, open space, parks, residential, and retail), circulation elements and routes, landscape concepts, and public facilities that can occur in the Specific Plan area. It provides guidelines that will ensure build-out of the neighborhood in a manner consistent with City policies and standards and State requirements, as well as applicable State and Federal requirements, regulations, and standards.

The purpose of the Riverwalk Specific Plan is to guide the development of four integrated Districts that form bands across the Riverwalk project site. The Specific Plan achieves this goal through the establishment of land uses and design guidelines, and through applicable City zoning regulations, with regulations and Tailored Development Standards as specified in this Specific Plan. Adopted by City legislative action, this Specific Plan document serves both planning and policy functions for Riverwalk. Regulatory functions for Riverwalk will be implemented through the City's Land Development Code (with regulations and Tailored Development Standards of this Specific Plan) based on local ordinances, policies, and standards in effect as of February 28, 2018, the date the Vesting Tentative Map was deemed complete.

### 1.2.2 Authority and Scope

The Riverwalk Specific Plan document has been prepared and established under the authority granted to the City of San Diego by California Government Code, Title 7, Division 3, Articles 8 and 9, Sections 65450 through 65457. California Government Code Section 65450 states that a "...planning agency may...prepare specific plans for the systematic implementation of the general plan for all or part of the area covered by the general plan." The State of California, under the authority of these code sections, encourages cities to adopt specific plans by resolution to establish a policy document, or by ordinance to establish a regulatory document. The

Riverwalk Specific Plan is intended to be a planning and policy document adopted by Ordinance and is subject to City Council approval. Once adopted by City legislative action, this Specific Plan document will serve both planning and policy functions for Riverwalk. The Riverwalk Specific Plan contains the standards, procedures, regulations, and guidelines necessary to accomplish this purpose.

The property is currently zoned RM-4-10, CC-3-9, OC-1-1, and OP-1-1. This zoning generally reflects the Riverwalk Specific Plan and allows for a mix of residential, non-residential, and parks and open space uses. With the adoption of this Specific Plan, the Riverwalk property will develop as presented in this Specific Plan. The City's Land Development Code (with regulations and Tailored Development Standards of this Specific Plan) and the Vesting Tentative Map and development permits for Riverwalk will govern development within Riverwalk.

Adoption of the Riverwalk Specific Plan by the San Diego City Council establishes the City's official development policy for Riverwalk. All future development plans, tentative parcel and/or subdivision map(s), or other similar entitlements for properties located within the boundaries of this Specific Plan must be consistent with the regulations set forth in this document.

All regulations, conditions and programs contained herein shall be deemed separate, distinct, and independent provisions of the Riverwalk Specific Plan. In the event that any provision is held invalid or unconstitutional by a State or Federal court of competent jurisdiction, the validity of all remaining provisions of this Specific Plan shall not be affected. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of the Specific Plan, the more restrictive requirements shall apply.

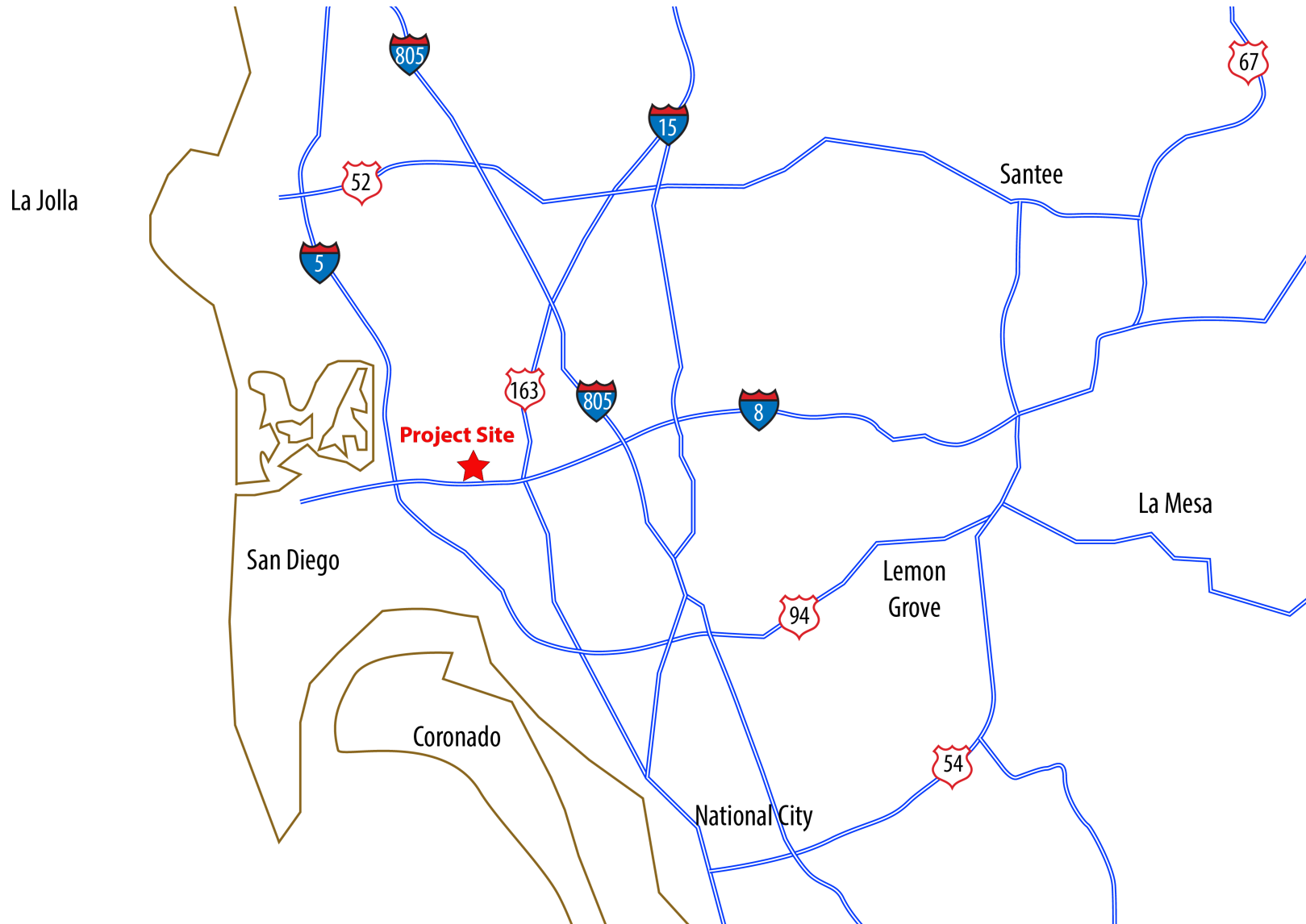
### **1.3 LOCATION AND ACCESS**

Riverwalk encompasses approximately 195 acres within the city limits of the City of San Diego, San Diego County, California, as shown in Figure 1-1, *Regional Map*. The project's vicinity is illustrated in Figure 1-2, *Vicinity Map*.

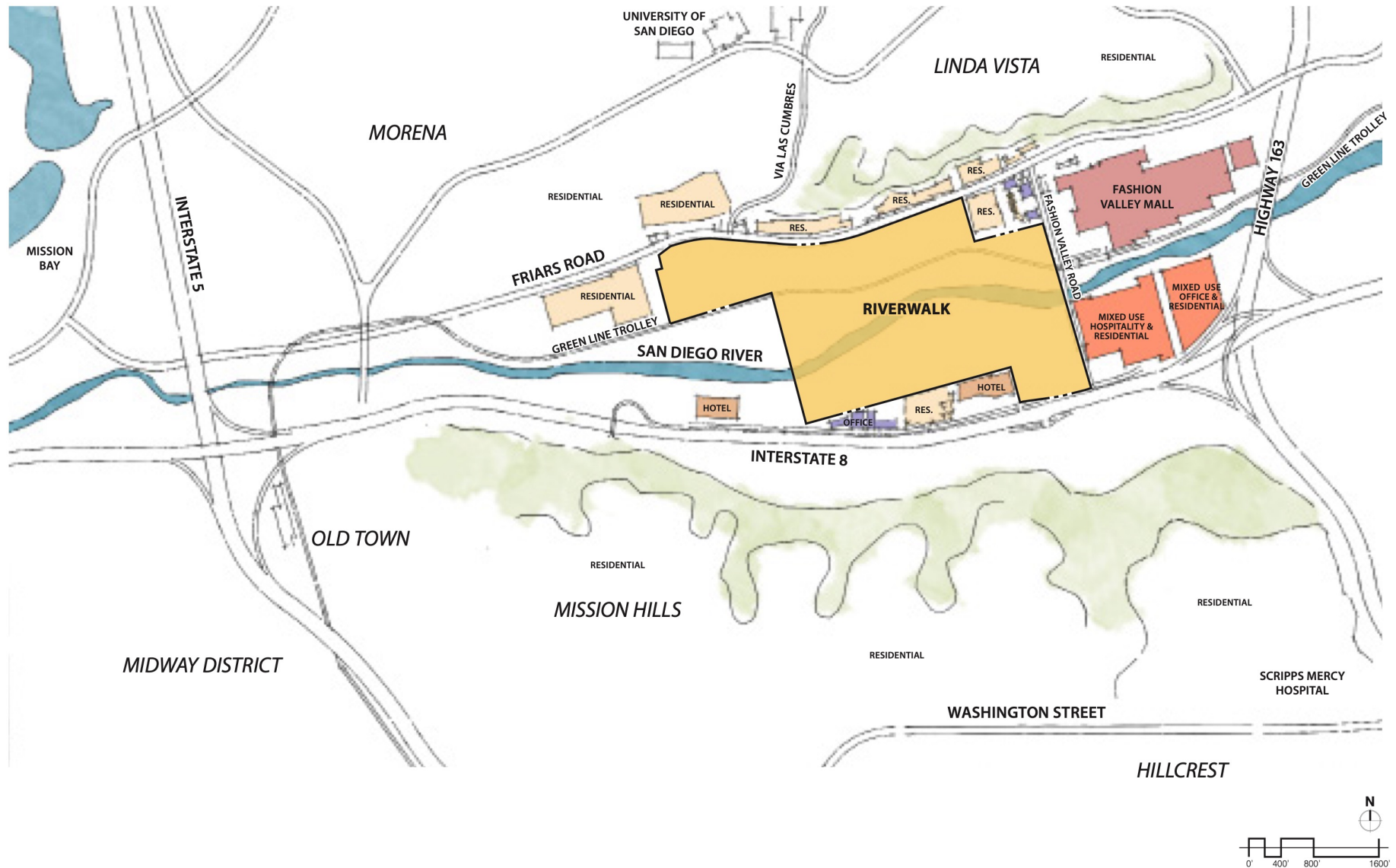
Centrally located within San Diego with established access to surface streets, freeways, and transit, Riverwalk is bordered on the south by Hotel Circle North, on the north by Friars Road and Mission Greens condominiums, on the east by Fashion Valley Road, and on the west by Crowne Plaza Hotel and The Courtyards condominiums.

Regional access to the site is provided by I-8, located immediately south of the project site; SR 163, located approximately one mile east of the project site; and I-5, located less than two miles west of the project site. Primary local access to the project is at Fashion Valley Road from the east, Hotel Circle North from the south, and Friars Road from the north.

Figure I-1. Regional Map



**Figure I-2. Vicinity Map**



## 1.4 PLANNING CONTEXT

The Riverwalk Specific Plan area lies within the Mission Valley community planning area, just south of the Mission Valley/Linda Vista community border in an area surrounded by existing multi-family residential, office, commercial, and tourism land uses (see Figure 1-2, *Vicinity Map*). Riverwalk is located within the geographic heart of Mission Valley and provides connectivity between residential and regional park amenities (Mission Bay Park and the beaches) in the west and the increasingly-dense core of Mission Valley to the east.

Site design and development within Riverwalk celebrates this unique position within the historic and metaphorical heart of the community through its grading plan, specifically selected and sited land uses, and connective elements as described in this Specific Plan. Riverwalk links the river valley formed by the San Diego River with the Linda Vista community to the north and largely tourist-serving uses to the south, resulting in a river more closely integrated into the greater community fabric.

Riverwalk's design provides connectivity to these established elements of the community. Development along Friars Road interfaces with adjacent residential, employment, and retail development on the north side of Friars Road within the Linda Vista Community. Residential uses with the potential for ground-floor retail along Fashion Valley Road provide synergy with adjacent Fashion Valley Mall and the transit center, with employment uses in the southeastern portion of Riverwalk providing interaction with the redevelopment of the Town and Country Resort Hotel, which includes retention of hotel and conference uses with the infusion of residential components. Soft transitions are provided between Riverwalk's northwestern and northeastern areas and the existing multi-family residential developments beyond with pedestrian connectivity, landscaped buffers, and stepped massings.

### 1.4.1 City of San Diego General Plan

The City's General Plan is the constitution for development in the City. The General Plan is comprised of ten elements that provide policy guidance to balance the needs of a growing city while enhancing quality of life for current and future San Diegans. It provides a strategy – the City of Villages – for how the City can enhance its many communities and neighborhoods as growth occurs over time. The ten elements of the General Plan overall provide a comprehensive “blueprint” for the City of San Diego's growth over the next 20-plus years.

The General Plan was comprehensively updated by unanimous vote of the City Council in 2008. The City Council also certified the General Plan Program Environmental Impact Report and adopted associated amendments to the Land Development Code. The General Plan update did not include land use designation or zoning changes, which is the purview of the City's Community Plans. Community Plans work together with the General Plan to provide location-based policies and recommendations in the City's community planning areas. Community Plans are written to refine the General Plan's Citywide policies, designate land uses and housing densities, and include additional site-specific recommendations, as needed.

### 1.4.2 City of San Diego Climate Action Plan

With the goal of creating a cleaner San Diego for future generations, the City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan (CAP), approved by City Council in 2015, calls for eliminating half of all greenhouse gas emissions in the City and aims for all electricity used in the city to be from renewable sources by 2035. The CAP is a package of policies that will benefit San Diego's environment and



economy by helping to create new jobs in the renewable energy industry, improving public health and air quality, conserving water, more efficiently using existing resources, increasing clean energy production, improving quality of life, and saving taxpayer money. The CAP identifies steps the City of San Diego can take to achieve the 2035 targets and helps achieve the greenhouse gas reduction targets set forth by the State of California.

California legislation and policy promote land use strategies that mitigate transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions by reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). One of the core goals of the CAP is to promote effective land use to reduce vehicle miles traveled by implementing transit-oriented development within Transit Priority Areas (TPAs). Riverwalk is located within two TPAs and, as such, has been designed with a mix of land uses and amenities oriented around transit and walking and biking trails that promote a reduction in vehicle miles traveled and a commensurate reduction in greenhouse gas emissions at the project-level.

### ***1.4.3 Mission Valley Community Plan***

In 2019, an update to the Mission Valley Community Plan was adopted, following a four-year endeavor undertaken by the City of San Diego and local community members to serve as a blueprint for future development of the community. The last overhaul of the Community Plan was in 1985, and much had changed since that time. With increasing development pressure in Mission Valley as it becomes an alternative to downtown living, a new plan was needed to direct growth and better promote transit use. Per the Mission Valley Community Plan, Mission Valley is envisioned as an urban village nestled along the San Diego River with something to offer everyone: innovative workplaces, housing that meets varied lifestyle needs, ample parklands, unique shopping and dining options, and enhanced pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access. The Mission Valley Community Plan provides a road map for future

development and promotes the creation of walkable, mixed-use community areas, better connectivity, increased spaces for parks and recreation facilities, tailored infrastructure solutions, and more mobility choices, with a focus on celebrating the San Diego River. The Mission Valley Community Plan also includes a new interchange at I-8/Via las Cumbres.

The Mission Valley Community Plan includes a number of urban village areas. The Riverwalk site is located in the Western Mission Valley urban village area. The Western Mission Valley urban village area is envisioned to have a residential and park focus with complementing office and retail uses. Habitat along the San Diego River will be designated open space with a focus on conservation and restoration. Beyond the open space, a park of community significance to serve the Mission Valley community – the Riverwalk River Park – will be provided with features like trails, sports fields, abundant tree canopy, and playgrounds. Further, stakeholder engagement will ensure this park meets the needs of nearby residents and workers. The YMCA, Sefton Field, and Presidio Park will continue to be assets in the community and will be further featured via wayfinding signage and connections, like a pedestrian bridge, to and from the San Diego River Trail.

### ***1.4.4 San Diego River Park Master Plan***

The San Diego River Park Master Plan (adopted 2013) provides the vision and guidance to restore the relationship between the San Diego River and the surrounding communities by creating a river-long park, stretching from the Pacific Ocean at Ocean Beach Park to the City's jurisdictional eastern boundary at the City of Santee. This plan is the result of grassroots community efforts in partnership with the City of San Diego.

The Master Plan covers a 17.5-mile stretch of the San Diego River and includes two distinct planning areas within Riverwalk, called the River Corridor

Area and the River Influence Area. The River Corridor Area consists of the 100-year floodway along both sides of the river, including the 35-foot path corridor on each side of the river. The River Influence Area consists of the first 200 feet adjacent to the River Corridor Area, also on both sides of the river. A portion of the Riverwalk site is located within the River Corridor Area and River Influence Area.

The San Diego River Park Master Plan contains numerous design guidelines to implement the vision for the San Diego River Park within the River Corridor and River Influence Areas. Sections 6.5.15 and 6.5.16 of this Specific Plan's Development Standards and Design Guidelines, implement the design guidelines of the San Diego River Park Master Plan, with regulations and Tailored Development Standards necessary to implement the Riverwalk project.

#### ***1.4.5 City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan***

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) was developed to preserve a network of habitat and open space, protecting bio-diversity and enhancing the region's quality of life. The City of San Diego is one of several jurisdictions participating in the MSCP. The MSCP covers 85 species and the core biological resource areas are identified within the City's Multi-Habitat Planning Areas (MHPAs). The City has entered into an Implementing Agreement (IA) with the Federal and State Wildlife Agencies to ensure implementation of the MSCP.

In March 1997, the City of San Diego adopted the MSCP Subarea Plan, a comprehensive habitat conservation planning program for southwestern San Diego County. The MSCP preserves a network of habitat and open space, protecting biodiversity and enhancing the region's quality of life. An IA was

signed in July 1997 between the City of San Diego, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), which identified roles and responsibilities of the parties to implement the MSCP Subarea Plan. Based on the Subarea Plan and IA, the City of San Diego was granted authorization by the USFWS and the CDFW to approve projects that serve to implement the MSCP.

The MHPA was developed by the City in cooperation with the wildlife agencies, property owners, developers, and environmental groups and delineates core biological resource areas and corridors targeted for open space conservation. Within the MHPA, limited development may occur. The MSCP Subarea Plan and implementing regulations provide development guidelines for areas within and adjacent to the MHPA. Section 1.4.3 of the City of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan provides Land Use Adjacency Guidelines for development adjacent to the MHPA that addresses the proximity of drainage, lighting, noise, barriers, invasives, grading/land development, brush management, and toxins to the MHPA.

#### ***1.4.6 San Diego International Airport Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan***

The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) for San Diego International Airport is the fundamental tool used by the San Diego County Airport Land Use Commission to promote airport land use compatibility in the San Diego International Airport environs. Consistent with State law, the purpose of the San Diego International Airport ALUCP is to promote compatibility between the airport and surrounding future land uses to provide for the orderly development of the airport and the area surrounding the airport and protect public health, safety, and welfare in areas around the airport. The ALUCP provides airport land use compatibility policies and

standards related to four airport-related factors: noise, safety, airspace protection, and overflight.

The Riverwalk site is located within Airport Influence Area (AIA) Review Area 2 of San Diego International Airport. Additionally, the site is located within the Airspace Protection Boundary and the Overflight Notification Boundary. Riverwalk’s compatibility with the San Diego International Airport ALUCP is discussed in Section 5.3, *Public Safety*.

### ***1.4.7 Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan***

The Riverwalk site is additionally located within AIA Review Area 2 of the Montgomery Field ALUCP. The ALUCP is the fundamental tool used by the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority in fulfilling its purpose of promoting airport land use compatibility. Specifically, the ALUCP (1) provides for the orderly growth of the airport and the area surrounding the airport; and (2) safeguards the general welfare of the inhabitants within the vicinity of the airport and the public in general. In essence, ALUCP serves as a tool for the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority to use in fulfilling its duty to review land use plans and development proposals within the AIA of the airport. In addition, the ALUCP provides compatibility policies and criteria applicable to local agencies in their preparation or amendment of general plans and to landowners in their design of new development. (Please note that the ALUCP defines general plans to include any general plan, community plan, specific plan, zoning ordinance, building regulation, land use policy document, or implementing ordinance.)

### ***1.4.8 Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan***

The Riverwalk site is within the Outer Boundary of the Airspace Protection area for Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar. Airspace protection generally includes the primary, approach, transitional, horizontal, and conical surfaces for the airport. Additionally, the FAR Part 77 standards for military airports define an outer horizontal surface (delineated by the outer boundary). The elevation of this surface is more than 200 feet above the ground level in most locations and extends beyond the limits of where FAA notification of new construction is required. Because of these parameters, locations beneath the outer horizontal surface that are outside the FAA notification area, like the Riverwalk site, are excluded from the MCAS Miramar AIA.

## 1.5 SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND DESIGN INFLUENCES

### 1.5.1 Relationship to Surrounding Areas

An overarching goal of the Riverwalk Specific Plan is to create an integrated neighborhood that is woven into the existing fabric of the community, facilitated by overt connections, such as sidewalks and roadways, as well as softer connections, such as referential landscaping and transitions. As illustrated in Figure I-2, *Vicinity Map*, Riverwalk provides a unique connection between the Linda Vista community to the north and the heart of the Mission Valley community. Immediately north and west of Riverwalk are several multi-family residential communities in the form of large condominium and apartment complexes. There are also small office and commercial components along Friars Road.



*Riverwalk Golf Course with hotel and convention center uses to the east and west, Fashion Valley Mall to the northeast, and Linda Vista community to the north*

Friars Road is an important arterial connection that runs the length of Mission Valley, with connections to communities such as Grantville, Linda Vista, Morena, and Mission Bay, as well as the regional freeway system. Additional regional access through the site is provided by the Green Line Trolley, with tracks running through the central portion of the Riverwalk site. Both Friars Road and the trolley tracks are elevated from the Riverwalk site.

Within the geographic and urban core of Mission Valley, regionally-serving Fashion Valley Mall is located east of Riverwalk, as well as the Town and Country Resort Hotel and convention center development, which is redeveloping to provide for a mix of residential and commercial uses on-site in addition to the current uses. Along Friars Road, as well as Camino de la Reina to the east, is a mixture of multi-family residential, office, and commercial land uses, with an increasingly emergent mixed-use character as redevelopment comes forward in a vertically-integrated residential, commercial retail, and commercial office fashion. Keeping with the established character east of Riverwalk, the Specific Plan site is bordered by hotel and multi-family residential to the south, with a concentration of office buildings to the southwest.

Access to the site currently occurs at Riverwalk Drive, which connects the existing clubhouse to Fashion Valley Road on the eastern boundary of the property. Fashion Valley Road connects to Friars Road to the north and Hotel Circle North to the south. SR 163 is accessed from Friars Road, while I-8 is accessed from Hotel Circle North or Hotel Circle South.

### ***1.5.2 Site Topography, Visual Features, and Degree of Disturbance***

The Riverwalk Specific Plan site has been developed as a golf course since 1947, and is currently the location of a golf course comprised of three nine-hole courses. The entire site has been disturbed and has undergone a considerable degree of modification to create varied and challenging features to the golf course. As part of the approvals for Riverwalk, the Conditional Use Permit for the golf course will be amended to allow for its continued operation in whole or in part until such as time as redevelopment in accordance with this Specific Plan occurs.

In 1997, MTS opened the Green Line Trolley, which crosses the property (east-west) and connects the Old Town Transit Center in the west to San Diego State University and eventually the Santee Transit Center in the east. The trolley line currently has stops adjacent to the project site at Morena/Linda Vista, approximately two miles west of Riverwalk, and Fashion Valley Mall, approximately one mile east of the existing golf clubhouse. Mission Valley East line opened in 1997.

The project site consists of a relatively level terrain that gradually slopes up from the San Diego River, which runs through the approximate center of the site in an east-west fashion. At the present time, the property provides limited riparian habitat or vegetation. Primary features of the site are the channel for the San Diego River running through the approximate center of the golf course and the golf course itself. Natural features and structures are visible from throughout the property and include views of natural slopes on the north and south sides of the valley, as well as distant views down the center of the valley to the east and west. The project site is highly visible from the mesas and slopes on the north and south sides of the valley.

The Riverwalk Specific Plan represents the ultimate re-use of the site. Contrasted with the high degree of disturbance is the site's location between the urban land uses of both Mission Valley and Linda Vista surrounding the site, the San Diego River running through the heart of the site provides current and future visual relief from the urban environment. The opportunities presented by the existing site conditions and the surrounding urban form allow the Riverwalk Specific Plan to re-establish the importance of the San Diego River as a natural feature that historically occurs in this area through the creation of a strong greenbelt spine connecting the river valley to the surrounding communities.



*Gradual sloping terrain from Linda Vista to the San Diego River*

## 1.6 DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS

Together, the following discretionary actions provide a pathway for appropriate development of Riverwalk, taking into account all local goals, objectives, and environmental considerations.

### 1.6.1 Levi-Cushman Specific Plan Rescission

The Levi-Cushman Specific Plan was originally approved by the City of San Diego City Council in 1987. The Levi-Cushman Specific Plan is made up of two ownerships: a smaller five-acre parcel owned by MTS and a larger 195-acre area is owned by Riverwalk. In the years since 1987, State and local regulations have changed substantially, rendering the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan incompatible with current policies and infeasible in several respects. The Riverwalk Specific Plan includes an action to rescind the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan. MTS issued a letter in support of this action and consenting to the rescission on March 11, 2020. With rescission, the MTS parcel would be regulated by the Mission Valley Community Plan land use designation and zoning. The Riverwalk Specific Plan would wholly replace the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan for the remaining 195 acres.

### 1.6.2 Community Plan Amendment

The project includes a Community Plan Amendment to align the Mission Valley Community Plan with the Riverwalk Specific Plan. This includes revisions to the Planned Land Use map (Figure 4 of the Mission Valley Community Plan) to adjust the overall site boundary and the boundaries of the existing land use designations to be consistent with the Riverwalk Specific Plan and to remove the "To be completed" reference on the Riverwalk Specific Plan area label. Furthermore, the project site will be removed from the CPIOZ map (Figure 39 of the Mission Valley Community Plan), consistent

with the proposed Land Development Code amendment (see Section 1.6.4, *Land Development Code Amendment*), and slight text changes will be made indicating that the specific plans identified in the Specific Plan Subdistrict were adopted prior to the adoption of the current Mission Valley Community Plan.

### 1.6.3 General Plan Amendment

Because the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan is an element of the Mission Valley Community Plan and approval of the Riverwalk Specific Plan includes rescinding the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan, which results in an amendment to the Mission Valley Community Plan, a de facto amendment to the City's General Plan would also be required. The General Plan identifies the Riverwalk site as Multiple Use; Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services; Park, Open Space, and Residential, which aligns with the land uses identified in the Riverwalk Specific Plan. The General Plan Land Use and Street System Map will be amended to reflect the Riverwalk Specific Plan land uses.

### 1.6.4 Land Development Code Amendment

The project includes an amendment to the Land Development Code related to the Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) to remove the area covered by the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan, which includes the proposed Riverwalk Specific Plan as well as 5-acres owned by Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). Specifically, San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 13, Article 2, Division 14, Diagram 132-14R would be modified to remove the property as described above. Diagram 132-14R Mission Valley Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone is a reproduction of Map No. C-998, for illustration purposes only.

### **1.6.5 Riverwalk Specific Plan**

The Riverwalk Specific Plan allows for a transit-oriented development (TOD) with a range of land uses (residential, commercial retail, office and non-retail commercial, and parks and open space) in a mixed-use setting, as well as a new transit/trolley stop, mobility hub (an area of connectivity between various transit and transportation options, such as bike share and rideshare), sidewalks and pedestrian trails, bicycle facilities, and vehicle circulation routes to serve the proposed land uses. For planning purposes, the Riverwalk Specific Plan area is divided into four Districts: the North, Central, South, and Park Districts.

The Riverwalk Specific Plan establishes development standards and architectural guidelines for build-out of each district. The intent of the design guidelines and development standards identified for Riverwalk as presented in the Riverwalk Specific Plan is to provide a methodology to achieve the development of a high quality, aesthetically cohesive neighborhood of districts. Additionally, the Riverwalk Specific Plan includes individual district guidelines to identify specific design considerations and special treatment areas unique to each district.

### **1.6.6 Zoning**

The Mission Valley Community Plan included a community wide rezone intended to implement the community Land Use Plan; however, small portions of the Riverwalk Specific Plan need to be rezoned to implement the Land Use Plan for the Riverwalk Specific Plan. Consistent with the Mission Valley Community Plan, the Specific Plan includes the RM-4-10, CC-3-9, OC-1-1, and OP-1-1 zones, with regulations and Tailored Development Standards of this Specific Plan. The areas subject to Specific Plan rezone include the park areas located between the San Diego River and the San Diego River Pathway (CC-3-9 to OP-1-1; OP-1-1 to OC-1-1), the area east of Lot 40 and south

of Riverwalk Drive (CC-3-9 to OP-1-1), a portion of property on Lots 41 and MM (CC-3-9 to RM-4-10), and a portion of the western boundary of the South District (OP-1-1 to CC-3-9; RMX-1 to CC-3-9).

This Specific Plan also includes project-specific development standards that differ from the Land Development Code. These tailored development standards, illustrated in Table 6-2, *Riverwalk Zoning and Tailored Development Standards*, allow for development of the Riverwalk project in a manner that responds to various site constraints, community concerns, and allows for the project to adapt to market changes that occur throughout buildout.

### **1.6.7 Vesting Tentative Map**

The nature and size of Riverwalk result in the need for a Vesting Tentative Map to allow for and facilitate the orderly phasing and development of the Specific Plan. A Vesting Tentative Map was processed and approved concurrently with the Riverwalk Specific Plan. The Vesting Tentative Map provides details relative to grading, street design, and utility layout necessary to implement the land use plan of Riverwalk in an efficient manner. Further, the Vesting Tentative Map provides for the implementation of residential and commercial condominiums. The Vesting Tentative Map was prepared in accordance with the guidelines and development intensities presented in this Specific Plan, the State Subdivision Map Act, and the City of San Diego requirements.

As the development of the project area proceeds, changes in the Vesting Tentative Map and/or subsequent Tentative Maps may be needed to more accurately reflect the site conditions and/or City requirements. Modifications to the Vesting Tentative Map or the processing of new Tentative Maps found to be consistent with the intent of the Riverwalk Specific Plan, as determined

by the Development Services Department, shall not require an amendment to this Specific Plan.

The Mission Valley Community Plan includes Community Plan Circulation Element Roads: future Street J, which would cross the San Diego River in a north-south direction; and future Street U, which would travel approximately east-west along the southern project site boundary and connect to future Street J. Street J would be an elevated roadway crossing the river valley. Per City Planning Department, these roads are regional facilities with uncertain funding, design, and construction timing. The project would grant the City Irrevocable Offers of Dedication (IODs) as a component of the VTM for the required rights-of-way to construct these roads in the future.

### ***1.6.8 Site Development Permit***

The project site contains areas that are considered Sensitive Lands in the City's Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) ordinance (LDC Section 143.0100), including sensitive biological resources, as well as historical and archaeological resources. Additionally, portions of the project site are mapped as Special Flood Zones, also addressed in the City's ESL ordinance. The ESL ordinance requires processing of a Site Development Permit (SDP) concurrently with the project's actions.

### ***1.6.9 Conditional Use Permit Amendment***

The project includes an amendment to CUP 94-0563 to allow adjustment to the existing Riverwalk Golf Course. The Specific Plan area, as well as a portion of adjacent land, is operated as the Riverwalk Golf Course, which is expected to remain active for several years beyond the approval of the project and the Riverwalk Specific Plan.

### ***1.6.10 Public Easement Vacations***

Related to the Vesting Tentative Map, certain public easements will be vacated. The vacated easements were either previously abandoned by the City or are proposed to be relocated in conjunction with the Vesting Tentative Map.

### ***1.6.11 Park General Development Plan***

The Riverwalk Specific Plan includes the provision of approximately 75 acres of publicly accessible park area. City Council Policy 600-33 allows for the concurrent processing of a Park General Development Plan for projects that include public park(s). Public meetings were held in the community during the initial phases of the site planning; however, the process was not completed prior to the completion of this Specific Plan. Therefore, the Riverwalk River Park and the Neighborhood Parks in the Central District will need to resume the public participation process as required by City Council Policy 600-33 prior to the initiation of improvements related to the above-mentioned public parks. The Park General Development Plan will address a future recreation center.

### ***1.6.12 Financing District Formation***

Project implementation includes the future formation of various financing districts to fund the maintenance of certain public improvements (e.g. parkland) required in connection with the development of the Riverwalk Specific Plan.



### ***1.6.13 Development Agreement***

A Development Agreement is being processed as part of the Riverwalk project. The purpose of a Development Agreement is to promote and facilitate orderly and planned growth and development through the provision of certainty in the development approval process by the City and through the provision of extraordinary benefits by the developer.

### ***1.6.14 Project Environmental Impact Report***

A Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and processed in conjunction with the Specific Plan document and the associated discretionary actions. The EIR was prepared in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the City's policies and procedures. The EIR (Project No. 581894; SCH No. 2018041028) evaluates the potential environmental impacts that could result from the implementation of Riverwalk land use plan and associated permits and actions.

The Riverwalk Specific Plan, Rezone, Vesting Tentative Map, SDP, Conditional Use Permit Amendment, Park General Development Plan, Development Agreement, and EIR, together, provide the framework for proper development of the project site while taking into account all local goals, objectives, and environmental considerations.

## 2 LAND USE

Riverwalk encompasses approximately 195 acres in the western portion of the Mission Valley Community Plan area of the City of San Diego. The Riverwalk site stretches along Friars Road on the north and Hotel Circle North on the south, with Fashion Valley Road forming the eastern boundary of the Specific Plan area. Affected by both a constructed element – including the Green Line Trolley – and a natural element – the San Diego River – Riverwalk is uniquely situated to create a **neighborhood of the future** that ties **healthful living** with the built and natural environments.

The Riverwalk Specific Plan focuses **high-intensity** development on the north side of the San Diego River, where access to Friars Road, Fashion Valley Road, and the Fashion Valley Transit Center promote the foundation for a neighborhood with ample **mobility opportunities**. The creation of a **vibrant mixed-use core** in this area of the Specific Plan, known as the North District, as well as the addition of a **new transit/trolley stop**, creates a centering element for the entire Riverwalk neighborhood. Additionally, because the North District’s heart opens onto

the new transit/trolley stop, it serves as a **welcoming open front door** to Riverwalk for the Mission Valley community at large, and areas beyond.

Re-purposing the existing golf course clubhouse provides a secondary core, within the Central District. This reuse **honors the heritage** of the site by retaining a **landmark element** of the golf course – the clubhouse – while

providing a physical manifestation of the core principles of **neighborhood building** and **place-making** within this expansive mixed-use space. Rounding out the District plan for Riverwalk, is the Park District, home to the expansive Riverwalk River Park, and an employment-focused South District, located in the southern portion of the site with access to Hotel Circle North, Fashion Valley Road, and adjacent Fashion Valley Transit Center. The South District provides for

**meaningful levels of employment** within walking distance of Riverwalk’s residential components and incorporates retail amenities for District employees and visitors, making Riverwalk a **true live – work – play neighborhood**.



## 2.1 RIVERWALK PLANNING DISTRICTS

Riverwalk is organized into four distinct planning areas, or Districts:

- » **North District**, located between Friars Road and the existing Green Line Trolley tracks.
- » **Central District**, located between the trolley tracks and the San Diego River.
- » **Park District**, located in the middle of the Riverwalk site between the Central District and the South District, comprised entirely of the Riverwalk River Park.
- » **South District**, located south of the San Diego River.

Each District is designed to have its own characteristics and functions and has been formulated to facilitate and focus development opportunities in a manner that interrelates District-specific land uses and zoning, important off-site considerations, and opportunities for internal integration of land uses and/or product types. By dividing the 195-acre Riverwalk Specific Plan area into smaller areas, each District can develop with its own personality and identity. This also allows the Specific Plan to address special conditions, such as the treatment of edges and interfaces between each District and other project features (such as the San Diego River, the Green Line Trolley, and adjacent roads), the location and design of project entries, special landscape treatment of the San Diego River, and vehicle access points that are relevant to a specific planning District.

Riverwalk contains four broad land use categories: residential (developed as a variety of multi-family product types), commercial retail (to include lifestyle retail and restaurants), office and non-retail commercial (comprising the majority of Riverwalk's employment uses), and parks and open space. (For a complete categorization of Riverwalk's allowed density/intensity-based land uses, see Appendix C, *Riverwalk Land Use Categories Matrix*.) With completion of Riverwalk, the neighborhood will consist of 4,300 multi-family residential units (the Riverwalk Specific Plan includes the provision of 10 percent of the residential dwelling units to qualify as "Affordable Housing"); 152,000 square feet of commercial retail space; 1,000,000 square feet of office and non-retail commercial space; and approximately 97 acres of parks, open space, and trails, in part to implement the San Diego River Park Master Plan.

Additionally, Riverwalk contains a new transit/trolley stop, mobility hub, and street improvements throughout the neighborhood, designed with the pedestrian and bicyclist in mind to reduce demand on the roadway system. These mechanisms for mobility provide safe, convenient, attractive places where the neighborhood and the community interact with one another and a multi-layered transportation system.

Table 2-1, *Riverwalk Land Use Summary*, provides a tabulation of the land uses, acreages, and development intensity for Riverwalk. Figure 2-1, *Riverwalk Specific Plan Land Use Map*, shows the proposed land uses for Riverwalk. Figure 2-2, *Riverwalk Districts*, shows the location of the four districts of this Specific Plan.

**Table 2-1. Riverwalk Land Use Summary**

Land Use	Approximate Gross Area (acres) <sup>1</sup>	Maximum Development Intensity
<b>Parks/River Channel/MHPA</b>	<b>97.4</b>	
Private Parks	11.3	N/A
Public Parks	50.9	
River Channel, MHPA, No Use Buffer, and Open Space	35.2	
<b>Mixed-use Development</b>	<b>65.7</b>	
Residential		4,300 units
Commercial Retail		152,000 square feet <sup>2</sup>
Office and Non-retail Commercial		1,000,000 square feet
<b>Circulation/Public Rights-of-Way</b>	<b>32.4</b>	
MTS Platform	1.0	N/A
IOD for Future Street J	1.8	
IOD for Future Street U	6.1	
Private Drives	3.6	
Public Streets	19.9	
<b>Total Development Area</b>	<b>195.5<sup>3</sup></b>	

<sup>1</sup> Acreages are approximate and may vary as final maps for specific development areas are implemented.

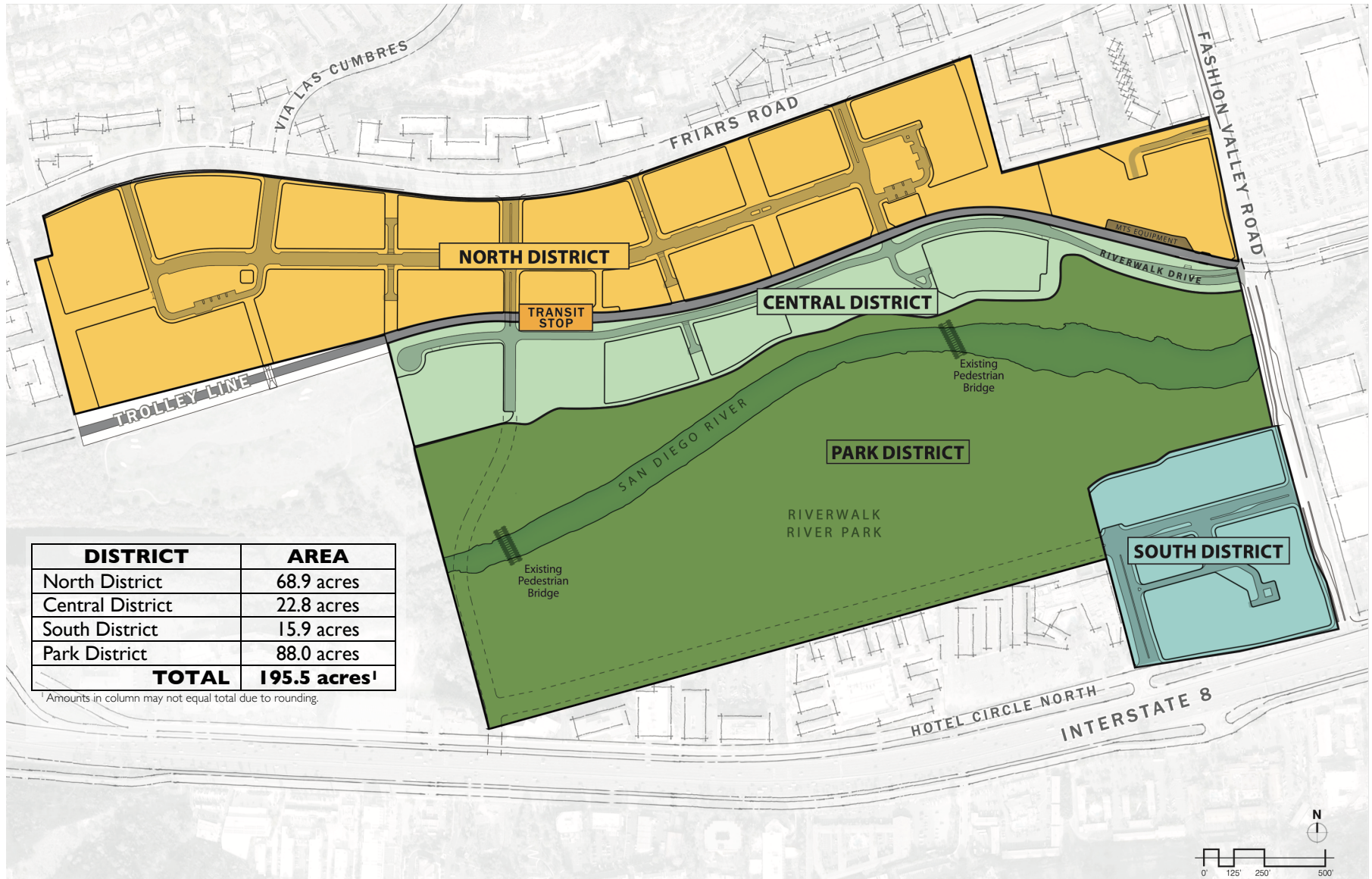
<sup>2</sup> Square footage excludes commercial office tenant serving amenities.

<sup>3</sup> Amounts in column may not equal total due to rounding.

Figure 2-1. Riverwalk Specific Plan Land Use Map



Figure 2-2. Riverwalk Districts



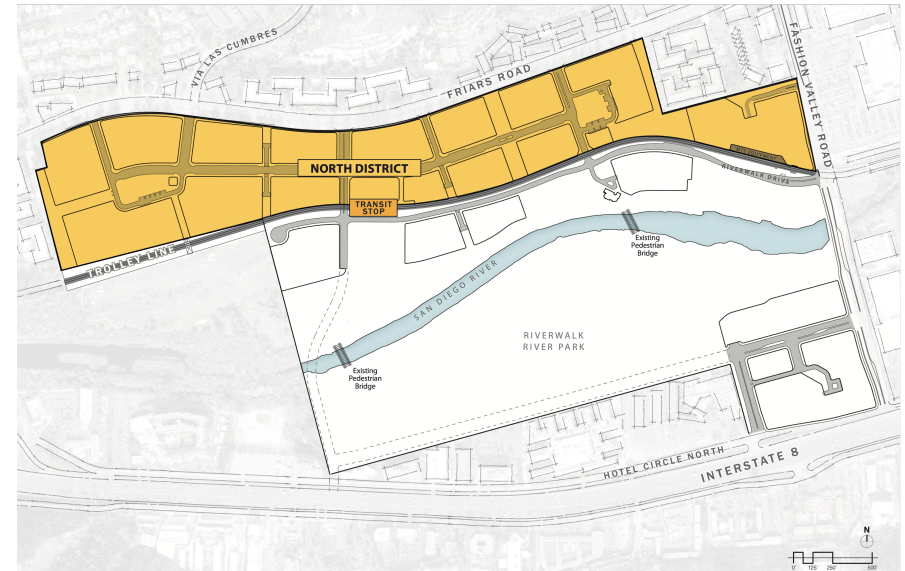
## 2.2 NORTH DISTRICT

The North District, encompassing approximately 68.9 acres between Friars Road and the Green Line Trolley tracks, provides the multimodal activity center for Riverwalk and is the location of Riverwalk’s residential developments. This District is home to the mixed-use core for Riverwalk. As such, a design focus is to create a truly experiential urban realm where land uses are supportive of a neighborhood-centering atmosphere and design.

Supportive retail services and office amenities establish this District’s mixed-use core. The North District also provides a focal node strategically located in the center of residential development that announces the transit/trolley stop and mobility hub. Included at this location will be a central plaza within the mixed-use core that will provide retail, office, and residential within proximity to the trolley, Riverwalk River Park, and associated pedestrian walkway amenities.

The uses in the North District are centered along an east-west internal spine street that acts as a promenade for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles with connections to Friars Road. Anchored on the west and east by parks – public spaces that are expansive yet designed in a manner to allow for intimate neighborhood gatherings – the spine street emphasizes an active transportation experience for the pedestrian and cyclist. The North District’s circulation network is further enhanced with two at-grade crossings of the trolley tracks (Street ‘O’ and the trolley platform), as well as two grade-separated crossings (future Street ‘J’ and just west of the intersection of Riverwalk Drive and Fashion Valley Road), which will accommodate vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles. Two existing golf cart tunnels provide additional crossing of the trolley tracks. One golf cart tunnel extends from the southern edge of the east-central portion of the North District that can be used by pedestrians and bicyclists and will provide linkage to the Central District to

the south. Another golf cart tunnel is located in the western portion of the North District, which is largely under the control of San Diego MTS and provides future linkage to the MTS property to the south.



*Neighborhood-centering atmosphere and design in gathering spaces*

### 2.2.1 North District Design Influences

The North District’s design is affected by both external and internal influences. Externally, this District’s location north of the Green Line Trolley tracks and south of multi-family residential developments that exist along Friars Road focuses a primary design objective on enhancing the experience for all users along Friars Road – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and neighbors. Internally, design in the North District is influenced by its internal spine street, mobility opportunities, and interspersed parks and open space elements.

#### FRIARS ROAD

The northern edge of the District (along Friars Road) is the “public face” for Riverwalk and has distinct importance for those individuals passing by on Friars Road and those living in the residential communities on the north side of the roadway. Creating a “good neighbor” experience along Friars Road is a

primary design objective for this northern edge. This experience will be enhanced with building massing that varies in setback or step back from Friars Road, architectural articulation along the street frontage regardless of building orientation, and pedestrian-scale details and sidewalk enhancements. Development within the North District should include design features that strengthen the interface between the pedestrian and ground-level features and between these features and the existing properties on the north side of Friars Road. Through varying setbacks and offsetting elevation planes, the façades along Friars Road imitate movement and undulation, alluding to the San Diego River not too far to the south.





**THE SPINE STREET PROMENADE’S INFLUENCE**

Recognizing the North District as having the greatest opportunities for development intensity in Riverwalk, this District’s central east-west spine street acts as a promenade that creates possibilities for active interaction of residents, workers, and visitors. Land uses along the central spine street include a mix of residential, retail (in certain areas, office), and neighborhood amenities. Residential entries will front onto the internal spine, visibly activating the street with pedestrian movement and creating physical connections to the street. Retail components will have storefront entries along the spine street and take advantage of corner locations to create statement openings to the east-west connections. Where restaurant and other sorts of eating and drinking establishments are located along the central spine street, outdoor dining can be accommodated as a range of options, from expansive patios to intimate sidewalk tables.



*Promenade activated with retail, residential, and employment uses*

**MOBILITY OPTIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY**

Riverwalk is the mid-point between the Morena/Linda Vista trolley stop and the Fashion Valley Transit Station, which provides multi-modal transit options for the Green Line Trolley and multiple bus routes. The planned transit/trolley stop located within the North District will have a significant influence on the District, as it is the foundation for the transit-oriented mixed-use heart of the District and facilitates enjoyment of Riverwalk by those living outside the neighborhood. The transit/trolley stop will function as the front door to Riverwalk for anyone traveling via the Green Line Trolley. The trolley platform should be open and inviting, with articulated paving and pedestrian-level design elements that provide a sense of arrival and express an invitation to explore. At all times, whether arriving at Riverwalk or waiting at the trolley stop to depart the neighborhood, the pedestrian experience should be one of comfort, invitation, and safety, ensuring a repeat visit soon.



## PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Linear parks and green spaces are positioned throughout the North District, providing easy access to nature and informal gathering spaces. Internal to the North District, residences facing these linear parks and green spaces will be activated to directly engage with the ground plane, contributing to the pedestrian-level experience of both the resident and the passerby. Residents will have direct access from their ground-floor patios to park areas, public spaces, and activities or pathways/walkways that connect to public spaces (see Figure 4-2, *Pedestrian Circulation*). Riverwalk offers connectivity on a number of levels. Connectivity to nature and the utilization of this natural element to connect the various neighborhoods and Districts of Riverwalk provides for a common theme of neighborhood vitality through environmental health. As often as possible, buildings should interface with Riverwalk's park and open space elements, whether directly, through entries and patios, or indirectly through window overlooks and view corridors to the open space and parks. Pedestrian circulation throughout the District focuses on wayfinding to the secondary park elements, which connect to the grand Riverwalk River Park.



*Linear parks provide easy access to nature and informal gathering spaces*



### 2.2.2 North District Land Uses and Development Intensity

Developed with residential, commercial, and employment use, as well as parks, and public amenities, the North District will serve a variety of users and promote a vibrant heart of the neighborhood. The influence of Friars Road and the surrounding residential development encourage high-density housing opportunities with supportive retail and office uses. With access to the trolley and a new transit/trolley stop planned within Riverwalk, residents, employees, and visitors within Riverwalk and nearby developments will have the ability to choose other modes of travel as a viable alternative to their personal vehicles.

As discussed in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, and elaborated upon in Chapter 6, *Land Uses, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines*, zoning has been established for Riverwalk that allows for a mix of land uses in the North District. Land uses and development intensity that can occur within the North District are shown in Table 2-2, *North District Land Use Summary*. However, all uses and mix of uses allowed in the RM-4-10 and CC-3-9 zones are permitted in the District, subject to the Development Project Review Process provided in Section 7.3 of this Specific Plan.

**Table 2-2. North District Land Use Summary**

Land Use	Allowable Zone(s)	Area (acres) <sup>1</sup>	Target District Density/Intensity		
<b>Mixed-use</b>	RM-4-10 CC-3-9	44.3	3,415 units 110,300 square feet 65,000 square feet		
Residential					
Commercial Retail					
Office and Non-retail Commercial					
<b>Private Parks</b>				10.8	0-10,000 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Public Streets/Easements</b>				11.4	N/A
<b>Private Drives</b>	2.2	N/A			
<b>Open Space</b>	0.2	N/A			
<b>Total Development Area</b>		<b>68.9</b>			

<sup>1</sup> Acreages are approximate and may vary as final maps for specific development areas are implemented.

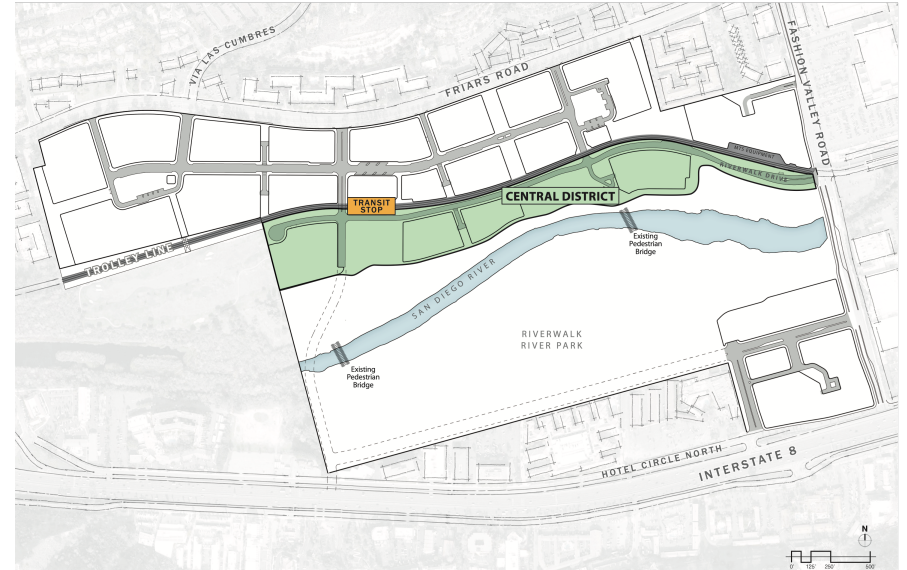
<sup>2</sup> Intensity range is contemplated for potential recreation and retail uses to be located within the parks such as vendor space.

### 2.3 CENTRAL DISTRICT

The Central District encompasses approximately 22.8 acres south of the North District, between the trolley tracks and the San Diego River, and includes a mixture of open space and urban land uses. Interspersed with public parks in the west and east portions of this District. A mix of residential and commercial uses will occur within the central portion of the Central District. The former golf course clubhouse will be re-purposed as a restaurant and amenity space, perhaps with a banquet hall and other private dining options or even a small brewing facility. Riverwalk Drive will be constructed as a Community Plan circulation element roadway to serve not only developments within the Central District but to also connect with Fashion Valley Road, providing an important linkage to the public park in the west portion of the Central District.

The Central District interfaces with the North District at the four trolley crossings (two at-grade, two grade-separated), as well as at the pedestrian/bicycle tunnel that runs under the existing trolley tracks. Additional

connectivity is provided between the Central District and the South District, to the south, via two pedestrian/bicycle bridges.



*San Diego River as an amenity space with pedestrian bridges, trails, and the San Diego River Pathway*

### 2.3.1 Central District Design Influences

The Riverwalk River Park and the San Diego River lie immediately south of the Central District and form the Central District’s southern edge.

#### SAN DIEGO RIVER INFLUENCE

As an important natural feature both in the history of Mission Valley and to the Riverwalk Specific Plan, the San Diego River provides an opportunity to engage the public with the river through public parks, pedestrian/bicycle paths and trails, private views from the residential units, and the re-purposed golf course clubhouse. Parks, residential, and commercial spaces should engage with the river and create spaces that allow an increased appreciation of the San Diego River.



*San Diego River within Mission Valley*

#### RIVERWALK RIVER PARK INFLUENCE

The Central District forms the northern edge of much of the Riverwalk River Park. Since the prehistoric period, the San Diego River has influenced local inhabitants, beginning with the Kumeyaay and continuing with local residents. As such, the uses and design within Central District have an influence on the Riverwalk River Park and provide activation to the park space. Programming of uses within this southern edge of the Central District where it interfaces with the Riverwalk River Park emphasizes pedestrian activity and human-scaled elements, wayfinding to and through the Riverwalk River Park, landscaping that allows for views to the Riverwalk River Park, and a mix of land uses that allow for regular and inclusive use of the park.



*Land uses and development within Park District act as a backdrop to the Riverwalk River Park*

## GREEN LINE TROLLEY

Central San Diego's trolley network provides quick connections throughout the City of San Diego, as well as the adjacent cities to the east and south. The Green Line Trolley, which runs along the northern boundary of the Central District, separating the District from the North District, connects Old Town San Diego in the west to Santee in the east, with multiple stops in Mission Valley (including SDCCU Stadium) and a transit center at San Diego State University. At points, the trolley tracks are above-grade. At other points, the trolley tracks are at-grade and incorporated into the circulation network present at the street level. In these areas, opportunities for connectivity are possible both with the urban interface and with pedestrian circulation, including at-grade, below-grade, and tunnel crossings of the tracks.



San Diego Trolley

## RIVERWALK DRIVE

Riverwalk Drive is also located along the northern edge of the Central District. This street provides vehicular access to Central District's residential, retail, and amenity spaces. As such, Riverwalk Drive's interface with Central District needs to take into account both the pedestrian and vehicular experience. Like the spine road within the North District, the ground plane and pedestrian experience will be enhanced and embraced through architecture and the creation of public spaces – formal and informal. For many people – residents and visitors alike – Riverwalk Drive will serve as a gateway to the trails and paths along the San Diego River. Points of connection between the buildings provide opportunities to enhance the public and resident experience and provides informal viewsheds down to the river.



Pedestrian interface with ground-floor entry and wide sidewalks

### 2.3.2 Central District Land Uses and Development Intensity

The intensity of development along Riverwalk Drive and proximity to high-performing trolley transit are in contrast with the calming nature of the river within the Central District. To balance these divergent features, residential, employment, and commercial retail uses, including the re-use of the golf course clubhouse area, are in the central portion of this district, with public parks located in the eastern and western portions of the Central District. High-density residential development along the river is accented by the re-use of the existing golf course clubhouse and additional lower-intensity commercial retail space located at the south end of a north-south corridor for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles.

As discussed in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, and elaborated upon in Chapter 6, *Land Uses, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines*, zoning has been established for Riverwalk that allows for a mix of land uses that may ultimately occur in the Central District. Land uses and development intensity that can occur within the Central District are shown in Table 2-3, *Central District Land Use Summary*. However, all uses and mix of uses allowed in the CC-3-9 zone are permitted in the District, subject to the Development Project Review Process provided in Section 7.3 of this Specific Plan.

**Table 2-3. Central District Land Use Summary**

Land Use	Allowable Zone(s)	Area (acres) <sup>1</sup>	Target District Density/Intensity
<b>Mixed-use</b>	CC-3-9	10.4	885 units 13,100 square feet 0 square feet
Residential			
Commercial Retail			
Office and Non-retail Commercial			
<b>Private Parks</b>	CC-3-9	0.5	N/A
<b>Public Parks</b>	OP-1-1	5.5	N/A
<b>Public Streets/Easements</b>	CC-3-9	5.1	N/A
<b>Private Drives</b>		0.4	N/A
<b>Open Space</b>		1.0	N/A
<b>Total Development Area</b>		<b>22.8<sup>2</sup></b>	

<sup>1</sup> Acreages are approximate and may vary as final maps for specific development areas are implemented.

<sup>2</sup> Amounts in column may not equal total due to rounding.

## 2.4 SOUTH DISTRICT

The southernmost District of Riverwalk is the South District, which comprises the approximately 15.9-acre area south of the Riverwalk River Park and the San Diego River. The South District houses the employment-focused component of Riverwalk.

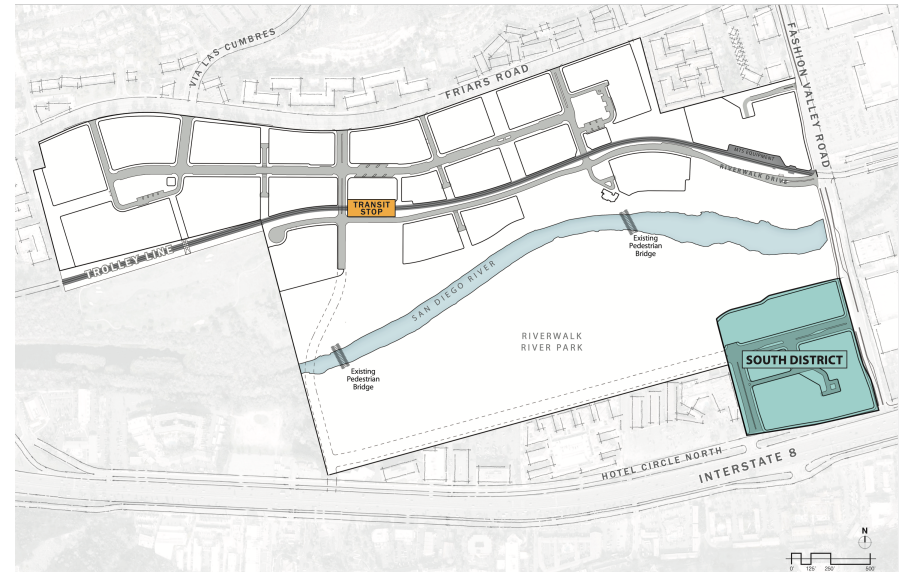
Mission Valley has its roots as an employment sector, and Riverwalk continues that tradition to the economic benefit of the neighborhood and City with the inclusion of extensive employment uses in the southern portion of the South District. The South District is envisioned to develop with an employment focus, which may occur as individual buildings or as a more integrated campus-like development, depending on the market trends and needs at the time individual projects come forward, positioning Riverwalk at the cutting edge of office use. Supporting residential and commercial uses may also occur here.

As an overall vision of the Riverwalk Specific Plan is to provide for integrated mixed-use development across the project, locating the employment component in this District provides convenient access to transit both on-site and at Fashion Valley Transit Center, the regional transportation network via the I-8 freeway, and a variety of uses provided on-site and in surrounding developments, which include commercial retail, residential, and hotel uses that

**Goal for Greatness:**

Allow for the creation of attractive and adaptive employment opportunities for San Diego’s evolving economy and attract economic growth that benefits the City and County of San Diego through increased sales and property taxes via the creation of a dynamic neighborhood.

have a synergistic relationship to Riverwalk and its employment uses. The land uses planned for the South District include a commercial component to serve employees and visitors. Vehicle access to this District is from Fashion Valley Road and Hotel Circle North. Uses planned for the South District front



Fashion Valley Road and Hotel Circle North, providing interaction at this portion of the site between Riverwalk and other office buildings and mixed-use developments further west along Hotel Circle North and east along Camino de la Reina.

Internal connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists from the South District to the Riverwalk River Park and northern Districts of Riverwalk is provided via two, active transportation-only bridges that cross the San Diego River and a network of trails, pathways, and sidewalks. Vehicle connectivity to the rest of Riverwalk is provided via Fashion Valley Road, Friars Road, and Riverwalk Drive. Additionally, this District’s location provides enhanced interaction with surrounding land uses, including hospitality and tourism uses, office buildings, commercial opportunities, and the Fashion Valley Transit Center.



### 2.4.1 South District Design Influences

#### INTERSTATE 8 / HOTEL CIRCLE NORTH INFLUENCE

The South District is Riverwalk's primary interface with I-8 and Hotel Circle North. Architecture along the southern boundary of the South District should maintain an emphasis on the pedestrian but provide additional articulation that is legible to motorists traveling at higher speeds along the freeway. Architectural features should be articulated at a greater level along the entire building elevation. Breaks in building massing; variation in wall textures, materials, and colors; and vertical landscape massing all highlight the buildings and provide visual interest along I-8 and Hotel Circle North.

#### INTERFACE WITH EXISTING HOTEL DEVELOPMENT

The South District interfaces with both the Handlery Hotel, which is likely to redevelop in the future, to the southwest and current redevelopment of the Town and County Resort Hotel to the east. Relative to the Handlery Hotel, care should be taken to ensure that buildings located in this portion of the South District are complementary to the existing development, while maintaining a modern and authentic aesthetic. The Town and Country Resort Hotel, located across Fashion Valley Road from the South District, is redeveloping as a mixed-use development. Similar to the Handlery Hotel, the interface along the east should provide for a complementary visual field through this neighborhood gateway, while allowing for Riverwalk's unique identity. Complementary development with the existing hotels to the southwest and east of the South District's land use concentration may be achieved through the use of a consistent or similar color palette, similar materials, or stepped massing that reflects the scale of existing development. As redevelopment occurs and these land uses and urban form change in the future, the interface along this edge will adapt to ensure that development within the South District is compatible with the future condition.

### 2.4.2 South District Land Uses and Development Intensity

The South District is located on the south side of the San Diego River and includes much of the employment components of the Specific Plan. Additionally, other land uses, especially commercial retail uses that serve as an amenity to the park and employment centers, are allowed within the District.

As discussed in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, and elaborated upon in Chapter 6, *Land Uses, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines*, zoning has been

established for Riverwalk that allows for a mix of land uses that may ultimately occur in the South District. Land uses and development intensity that can occur within the South District are shown in Table 2-4, *South District Land Use Summary*. However, all uses and mix of uses allowed in the CC-3-9 zone, including residential, are permitted in the District, subject to the Development Project Review Process provided in Section 7.3 of this Specific Plan.

**Table 2-4. South District Land Use Summary**

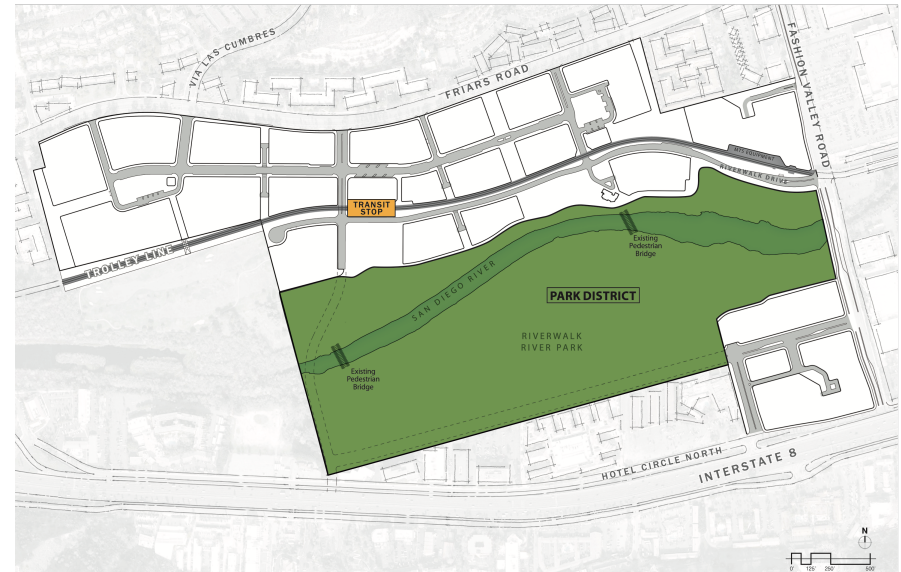
Land Use	Allowable Zone(s)	Area (acres) <sup>1</sup>	Target District Density/Intensity
<b>Mixed-use</b>	CC-3-9	11.0	0 units
Residential			28,600 sf
Commercial Retail			935,000 sf
Office and Non-retail Commercial			
<b>Public Streets/Easements</b>		3.9	N/A
<b>Private Drives</b>		1.0	N/A
<b>Total Development Area</b>		15.9	

<sup>1</sup> Acreages are approximate and may vary as final maps for specific development areas are implemented.

## 2.5 PARK DISTRICT

The San Diego River has been an integral part of the property for generations, as well as the various golf courses that have occupied the property over the past 60 plus years. Unfortunately for the larger community, access to the San Diego River has been limited by ownership and use. The San Diego River is a special natural amenity and core feature of the Riverwalk Specific Plan and will be enhanced by the expansive Park District, which is comprised of the Riverwalk River Park (45.0 acres), river habitat restoration area (34.6 acres), IODs for future streets J and U (7.7 acres), and the easement for Fashion Valley Road (0.6 acre). Collectively, these areas create the 88.0-acre Park District. Provision and implementation of the Riverwalk River Park is a major element of the Riverwalk Specific Plan and a significant benefit to Mission Valley and the adjacent communities.

Park spaces provide place making value to a neighborhood or community. They contribute to a high-quality public realm and to the overall livability of a neighborhood. Current trends have shifted toward a desire for a greater number of more intimately scaled urban parks distributed throughout a development. Riverwalk provides for high-quality park experiences at both a smaller scale of linear and pocket parks throughout the neighborhood, as well as the larger-scale of a Riverwalk River Park to serve beyond the needs of the neighborhood and invite the community at-large.



The Riverwalk River Park provides a significant public benefit to the region and Mission Valley, as Riverwalk's Riverwalk River Park is intended to serve the larger community of San Diego as a passive and active recreational area. Passive areas are located closer to the river, while active use would be located away from the river to limit impacts such as noise, litter, and unauthorized access. The passive areas include a no-use wetland buffer and riparian restoration area with habitat, natural open space (within the MHPA), and nature viewing areas.

### 2.5.1 Park District Design Influences

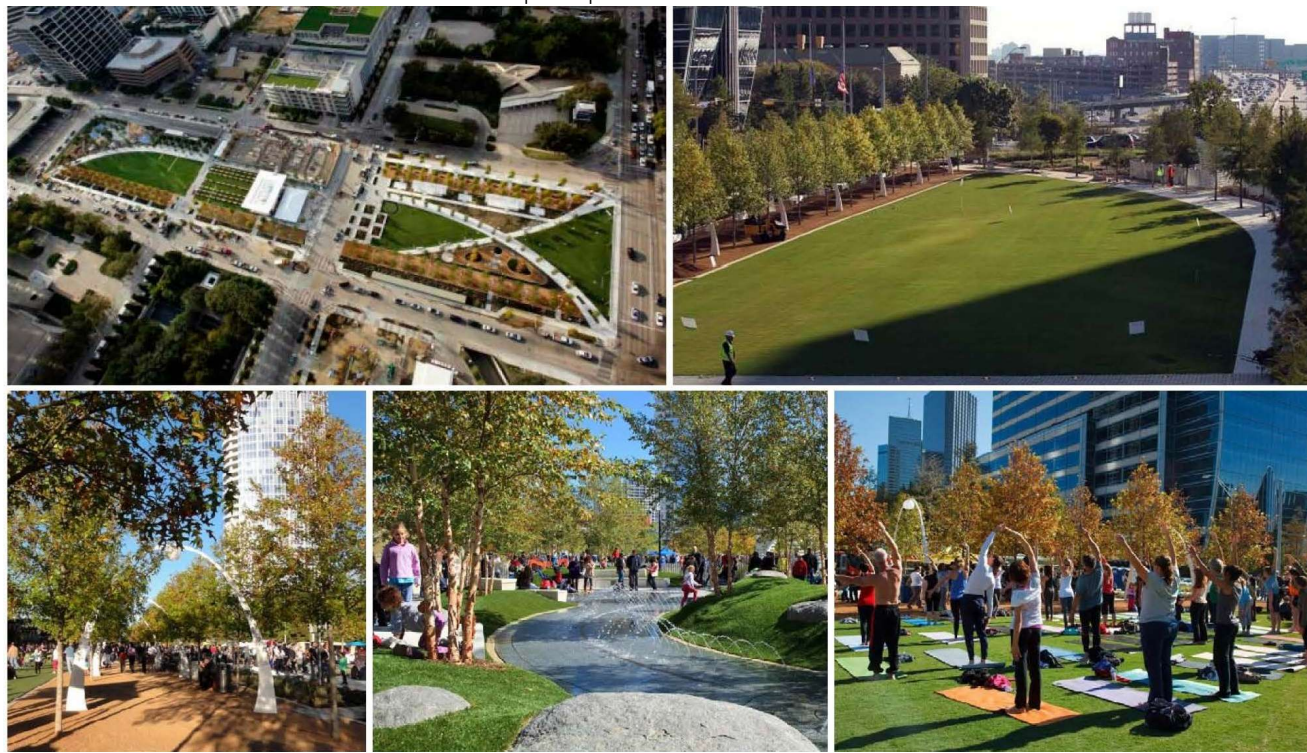
#### SAN DIEGO RIVER INFLUENCE

Creation of the Riverwalk River Park and related river trails has been informed by the San Diego River Park Master Plan, integrating applicable principles into park design. To promote access to the San Diego River, Riverwalk includes a system of paths on the north and south side of the San Diego River. These paths will be multi-modal, providing for pedestrian and bicycle access through the Riverwalk River Park and along the San Diego River. Landscaping along the San Diego River will reflect the riparian nature of the area through the selection of trees and other elements of the plant palette.

#### RIVERWALK RIVER PARK INFLUENCE

The Riverwalk River Park, which generally encompasses the entire Park District, is located at the center of the Riverwalk community. Influences draw upon the prehistoric inhabitants, beginning with the Kumeyaay, and continuing with local residents to ensure integration of the park into the neighborhood. Design influences include the combination of activity and respite, a little something for everyone regardless of if they are looking for a quiet spot for conversation, a scenic place to amble, an activity space for fitness, and everything in between. The diversity of programming also provides for fun

active elements for children in proximity to gathering benches or picnic areas for parents and caregivers. The Riverwalk River Park doubles as community quasi-event space, with various outdoor “rooms” capable of housing intimate gatherings or large-scale events, such a neighborhood movie in the park night in summer or a holiday fair in winter. Varied and active programming draws people to the park through the year, and offers dynamic changes with the seasons and special events. Lining the park with the varied uses of the Central District to the north create watchful eyes on this park edge at all hours. Elements of park programming may be brought into the park area, such as food trucks in hardscape plazas or adjacent areas, to further enliven the park experience.



*Examples of permanent and active programming that may contribute to the use and identity of Riverwalk River Park*

### 2.5.2 Park District Land Uses and Development Intensity

The Riverwalk River Park is located in the middle portion of Riverwalk north and south of the San Diego River. The public park areas outside of the floodway will be zoned OP-1-1, which is consistent with the City’s park policies. An overall General Development Plan (GDP) for the Riverwalk Specific Plan parks was processed concurrently with the entitlements associated with the project. The MHPA areas of the property will be zoned OC-1-1.

Land uses and development intensity that can occur within the Riverwalk River Park are shown in Table 2-5, *Park District Land Use Summary*.

**Table 2-5. Park District Land Use Summary**

Land Use	Allowable Zone(s)	Area (acres) <sup>1</sup>	Target District Density/Intensity
Public Parks	OP-1-1	45.0	N/A
Open Space	OC-1-1	34.6	N/A
Public Streets	OP-1-1 OC-1-1	8.4	N/A
<b>Total</b>		<b>88.0<sup>2</sup></b>	

<sup>1</sup> Acreages are approximate and may vary as final maps for specific development areas are implemented.

<sup>2</sup> Amounts in column may not equal total due to rounding.