

College Area Community Planning Board Response to the First Draft College Area Community Plan

March 10, 2025

The College Area Community Planning Board ("CACPB") has the following comments on the first draft of the College Area Community Plan Update:

The update is generally aligned with the 7 Visions Plan, but there are some significant differences and issues the CACPB is asking to be addressed.

1. Revise the plan to reduce changes to no more than a 11,250 increase over the maximum build out as proposed by the 7 Visions Plan. This proposed increase is in alignment with percentage increases in dwelling unit counts in recently adopted community plan updates for University, Mira Mesa and Hillcrest.
2. Revise the plan to eliminate all areas designated as Residential Low 4; to be clear, the CACPB does not support any land designated Residential Low 4 in the College Area.
3. Eliminate all density increases on Dorothy Way and Campanile Drive south of Dorothy Drive.
4. Eliminate all density increases in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone except property that fronts on Montezuma Road between 55th Street and El Cajon Blvd; along El Cajon Boulevard and on College Avenue.
5. Designate all existing institutional uses such as religious, educational, City owned facilities, etc as institutional land use zoning; preserving these areas for future community-serving uses.
6. The community plan needs to include a public safety section that establishes specific plans to ensure emergency preparedness for response, commensurate infrastructure (firefighting access and suppression), determined and maintained evacuation routes for both the SDSU campus and neighborhoods and other relevant land use provisions.
7. Revise the plan to include a promenade on both sides of Montezuma Rd. from College Ave. to El Cajon Blvd, including two traffic circles on Montezuma (at 63rd and at Catoctin).

8. The Campus Town must require mixed use/commercial at the corridors and nodes between College and Montezuma, College and El Cajon and Montezuma and El Cajon.
9. Complete Communities should not apply in the College Area after the approval of the Plan.
10. The Community Priority Implementation Overlay Zone should only be applied to high density or mixed-use land use designations along the major corridors and nodes.
11. The Community Plan needs to have an Economic Development Element.
12. The plan should require phasing of zone changes tied to completed infrastructure triggers.
13. The Community Plan Update does not qualify for an Addendum to the Master Blueprint San Diego EIR. A Supplemental EIR is required, that includes the CACPB's 7- Visions Plan as one of the alternatives per the May 25, 2022, key takeaways.
14. Transportation data used to inform the Mobility element (January 13, 2025, presentation, College Area Travel Patterns, U.S. Census Bureau 2020) needs to be updated to reflect more accurate post-pandemic traffic and mobility uses.
15. In the Recreation element: (Pg 35) – Change the projected population of 87,300 people for the College Area to reflect the correct number for the Plan.
16. The proposed size of the College Avenue Recreation Center and parks is not sufficient for the community; alternate (additional) locations for future recreation center(s) and parks need to be identified and committed to.
17. San Diego State University facilities should not be counted as fulfilling the needs of residents of the area, there are not enough for on campus students to be able to also contribute to the community for general recreation/parks.
18. Joint Use Facilities, do not allow access to facilities during the day. They fill a need for sports facilities but not for passive recreation space. Table 10-8 Park and Recreation Inventory page 70-72: #7 – Confirm with Park and Recreation Planning regarding JUA for Hardy Elementary School is currently in the middle of school site redevelopment and will be removing the black top and play structure from the public area and reducing the size of the field, thereby reducing the value of the “park” and eliminating the option for expanding the agreement.

19. Though all the surrounding canyons around the College Area are zoned “park/open space”, they are privately owned and not accessible for recreation purposes. Recommend/encourage partnerships with private landowners in the MSCP (such as south/west end of Montezuma Road) to designate trails for public access that comply with the Multiple Species Conservation Program guidelines and that will discourage encampments.
20. The Plan needs to include a Public Facility element (current conditions assessment and recommendations) that specify the need for and provision of fire stations, police stations, wastewater, library and other facilities.
21. The existing library facility needs 52 additional dedicated parking spaces, and an increase as the population grows.

Although the CACPB appreciates the effort of the staff to accommodate the 7 Visions Plan, the Community Plan Update still needs significant changes to provide an acceptable guidance document for the next 30 years. The College Area has and will continue to accept a fair share of increased density, but there must be some ability to accommodate this density with the infrastructure and community services necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the issues raised in this letter. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or need further clarification.

Regards,

Robert Montana Tom Silva
Chair, College Area Community Plan Chair, College Area Community Planning Board
Update Committee