

PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES & SAFETY

6.1 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

6.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Introduction

The General Plan provides a comprehensive discussion of public facilities, services and safety. This community plan addresses priorities for improved public service delivery within the community and identifies potential characteristics for facility expansion. The emphasis of the Public Facilities, Services and Safety Element is to identify existing facilities and services and address the capacity and needs for future services. This element specifically addresses public facilities financing and prioritization, policies related to fire-rescue, police, stormwater, water and sewer infrastructure, waste management, libraries, schools, parks, public utilities, and health and safety. Public facilities and services are also discussed within other elements such as the recreation element which specifically addresses population-based parks and recreation facility needs.

PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES & SAFETY ELEMENT GOALS:

- A high level of community facilities and services that meet the needs of Uptown.
- Systematic and efficient improvements to water and sewer lines and undergrounding of utilities.
- Police and fire safety services that meet the needs of the community.
- A community aware of emergency issues and well prepared for emergencies.
- Maintenance, repair and replacement when needed to maintain or improve the serviceability of the community's older infrastructure.
- Community use of school facilities during non-school hours for educational, recreational and cultural purposes.
- Private initiatives that 'adopt' community schools to enhance educational programs.
- Maintenance, repair and replacement when needed to maintain or improve the serviceability of the community's older infrastructure.

KEY GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

The Uptown Community Plan furthers the policies contained in the General Plan. Policies include pursuing diverse funding sources for new facilities, considering new development's impact on addressing public facility needs, as well as continuing to pursue joint-use opportunities for shared facilities with the San Diego Unified School District. Because the General Plan is an overarching document with goals and policies that apply broadly to all of the city's community planning areas, these broad policies remain in the General Plan, but are listed on Table 6 -1 as reference in this plan to avoid redundancy.

General Plan-related Topics	Policies
Public Facilities Financing	PF-A.2
Public Facilities and Services Prioritization	PF-B.3
Evaluation of Growth, Facilities, and Services	PF-C.1 & PF-C.3
Water Infrastructure	PF-H.3.c
Libraries	PF-J.3 & PF-J.5
Schools	PF-K.6 & PF-K.9

6.1 Public Facilities & Services

As an urban community, Uptown faces aging infrastructure and substandard facilities that may not meet current standards. Figure 6-1 illustrates where current facilities exist and identifies sites for future facilities. The City's two main funding sources for providing and improving facilities include Development Impact Fees (DIF) and the General Fund. DIF collects a proportional fair share of capital improvements needed to offset the impact of development. The General Fund is relied on for facility improvement and upgrades and operational and maintenance costs. The community's DIF and General Fund have helped alleviate growing facilities needs but a deficit remains with regards to most public facilities leaving the City and community with the challenge to find alternative means of funding improvements.

There is limited funding for annual capital improvements and the City has instituted a prioritization and ranking strategy that integrates community input. This effort allows the City to strategize funding and be more responsive to the community's facility and infrastructure priorities. Although the City is making changes in how CIP projects are funded to provide more timely improvements, there remains an existing facilities and infrastructure deficit in Uptown. There are a number of obstacles in alleviating the infrastructure deficit, including, the increased costs in acquisition and construction, lack of available land, and funding constraints and competing needs. It is up to the City and the community of Uptown to work together to find solutions for meeting facility and infrastructure needs. Solutions such as clustering facilities, incentive zoning provisions, providing broader community serving facilities, offering equivalencies, seeking citywide or regional initiatives for new sources of revenue, and exploring public-private opportunities are just some ways that may make it possible to accommodate new facilities for the next generation.

POLICE AND FIRE

Facilities for police and fire emergency services affect planning goals for livability and safety. The City provides these services through geographic service areas that can cover more than one community. The Police Department groups neighborhoods within the City into nine divisions. Uptown is served by the Central and Western Neighborhood Divisions of the Police Department. The Central Division station is at 2501 Imperial Avenue in Southeastern San Diego and the Western Division station is at 5215 Gaines Street within Mission Valley.

The Fire-Rescue Department provides emergency/rescue services, hazard prevention and safety education to ensure the protection of life, property and the environment. This also includes education about vegetation management to protect properties from wildfires in canyon areas. The Fire-Rescue Department provides service to Uptown with three fire stations. Station 8 located at Goldfinch and Washington Streets, Station 5 located at Ninth and University Avenues, and Station 3 located at State and Kalmia Streets. Maintaining a successful fire service system is a challenge due to the City's topography, fiscal constraints, and an ever-growing population. A particular fire threat in Uptown is the open space canyons, from which damaging fires have occurred in the past. The Fire-Rescue Department has an active program which promotes the clearing of canyon vegetation away from structures. The City has recognized the value of fire prevention measures to reduce pressure on the overall response system in the long term; such measures include adopting strenuous safety codes and an aggressive brush management program. City wide fire service goals, policies and standards are located in the Public Facilities, Services, and Safety Element of the General Plan and the Fire-Rescue Services Department's Fire Service Standards of Response Coverage Deployment Study (Citygate 2011).

As growth and development occur, police and fire capacity will be evaluated to ensure that station locations and staffing levels are adequate to maintain acceptable levels of service. In the near term, Fire Station 5 will be rebuilt. Expansion plans for Fire Station 8 include new quarters and parking for fire staff that will occupy the Mission Hills Library site, once the library is relocated. Over the life of the community plan, Fire-Rescue Department will continue to evaluate upgrades, expansions, and new facilities to maintain adequate service to the community.

LIBRARY

Uptown is served by two library branches: the Mission Hills and University Heights libraries. The University Heights branch library serves both Uptown and Greater North Park. In 1952, it was expanded to 3,750 square feet. The community plan envisions the

University Heights branch library locating to Teacher’s Annex should the property become available. A new 15,000-square-foot facility will replace the current 3,850-square-foot Mission Hills Branch Library located at 925 West Washington Street and built in 1961. The new library facility site will be located at the southwest corner of Washington and Front Streets. See General Plan policies PF-J.3 and PF-J.5 which support libraries which serve larger areas to maximize capital efficiencies.

SCHOOLS

One of the most important public services is the provision of schools and the offering of quality education to the residents of the community. Schools that serve Uptown are centrally located and within walking distance to public transit. Uptown is served by three public elementary schools: Florence, Alice Birney and Grant Elementary Schools; plus Roosevelt Middle School and San Diego High School. In addition, there are a number of charter schools, private schools, and neighboring community schools which help to serve the community. The public schools within Uptown have joint-use facilities that provide recreational space during non-school hours for residents. The acquisition of school district and private school property provides an opportunity to acquire large amount of acreage within the community for parks, recreational centers, community meeting space, and other public uses should the properties become available. This includes the San Diego Unified District Educational Center on Normal Street.

In 2012, voters approved funding two bond measures, Propositions S and Z, to fund repairs, renovate and revitalize schools within the San Diego Unified School District. Bond projects build off improvements that were started with Prop MM funding and include classroom technology, safety and security upgrades, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades, new/renovated facilities, temporary classrooms replaced by permanent classrooms, air conditioning, upgrades to ADA improvements to athletic facilities, turf fields, and other capital improvements at traditional and charter schools throughout the district.

POST OFFICE

Uptown is served by the U.S. Post Office located in Hillcrest. The site provides an opportunity for a new post office and potential mixed-use development.

GAS, ELECTRIC, AND COMMUNICATION UTILITIES

Gas and electricity are provided by the San Diego Gas & Electric Company. San Diego Gas & Electric Company has a number of programs related to conservation, including commercial and residential energy audits, low interest loan programs for energy conservation, retrofit installations and rebates for solar water heaters.

The City has a long-term City-wide program for utility providers to underground overhead power and communication lines. Wireless communication antennas are installed on buildings throughout the community. New antennas will need to be installed in a manner that does not detract from the design of the building.

MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT DISTRICT AND PROPERTY AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A Maintenance Assessment District (MAD) is a tool property owners use to assess themselves to receive enhanced maintenance, landscaping, and lighting services. These services are above and beyond the City’s baseline general services. A Property and Business Improvement District (PBID) is a tool available to property and business owners to improve a commercial area and is a special benefit assessment district designed to raise funds within a specific geographic area. Funds may be raised through a special assessment on real property, businesses, or a combination of both, and are used to provide supplemental services beyond those provided by the city. Additional discussion on Maintenance Assessment Districts can be found in the Economic Prosperity Element.

WATER, WASTEWATER, AND STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Public Utilities Department’s Capital Improvement Program Guidelines and Standards provides the framework for the design and construction of new water facilities and address water efficiency, conservation, recycled and reclaimed water, cost effectiveness and timely construction. In a continuing main replacement program, concrete wastewater mains and cast iron water mains are being

replaced. Replacement is currently scheduled based on breaks or blockages in the mains. As incidents mount, main replacement is scheduled for accomplishment through the annual Capital Improvements Program.

The community's water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure has issues with aging, insufficient capacity and outmoded design. The City is addressing these issues for the water and sewer systems through rate increases beginning in 2007 to replace and improve infrastructure. The City also monitors and maintains the water and sewer system on an ongoing basis because of the age of the water and sewer infrastructure in the older communities. In a continuing replacement program, outmoded concrete sewer mains and cast iron water mains are being replaced on a citywide basis. Replacement is currently scheduled based on breaks or blockages in the mains. The City has an ongoing process to maintain and upgrade water and wastewater infrastructure.

Storm drains are designed to handle normal water flow, but occasionally during heavy rain, flooding can occur. Storm drain infrastructure within the community's streets often discharges into the natural canyon areas causing erosion. Storm water pollution affects human life as well as aquatic plant and animal life. Oil and grease from parking lots and roads, leaking petroleum storage tanks, pesticides, cleaning solvents, and other toxic chemicals can contaminate storm water and be transported into water bodies and receiving waters.

While storm drain infrastructure within public streets in the community still needs to be upgraded, new regulations require storm water flow to be controlled within individual sites. The City's Municipal Storm Sewer System Permit (MS4 Permit), issued by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and requires all development and redevelopment projects to implement storm water source control and site design practices to minimize the generation of pollutants. Additionally, the Permit requires new development and significant redevelopment projects that exceed certain size threshold to implement Structural Storm Water Best Management Practices (Structural BMPs) to reduce pollutant in storm water runoff and control runoff volume. There is also an increased reliance on Low Impact Development (LID) strategies to meet the MS4 Permit requirements and total maximum daily load as well. Examples of LID techniques are bio-retention cells, green roofs, porous pavement, infiltration basins and bio-filtration planters.

STREETLIGHTS

Street lighting is important to improve safety for pedestrians, vehicles, and property at night. The City provides standard street lights. Neighborhoods within Uptown have existing acorn style pedestrian oriented lights. The Community Plan envisions adding additional acorn style pedestrian oriented street lighting within commercial and mixed-use areas and historic districts. Special lighting or maintenance district can provide and ensure long-term operation and maintenance for pedestrian oriented lighting.

POLICIES

Public Facilities

- PF-1.1** Locate and cluster public facilities, such as libraries, post offices, community meeting space, schools, and transit-oriented development to create an active center.
- PF-1.2** Incorporate public art in public facilities.
- PF-1.3** Provide public facilities that accommodate a full range of programs to serve residents and to cultivate civic involvement.
- PF-1.4.** Locate free public meeting spaces in accessible locations near transit.
- PF-1.5** Establish a community relations office in the community which could include utilizing space within the Uptown Shopping District.

Police

- PF-1.6** Reduce incidents of criminal activity within the Uptown neighborhoods. Also see General Plan section PF-E related to policy service and Urban Design section UD-A for crime prevention through design.
 - a. Continue Neighborhood Watch Programs.
 - b. Neighborhood organizations should maintain a close relationship and have a continuing exchange of information with patrol officers.

- c. Promote the development of Community Alert Programs where they do not presently exist.
- d. Maintain a community relations program between police and residents.
- e. When feasible, introduce foot patrols to districts of high crime.
- f. Development projects should provide adequate lighting, visibility for surveillance, and gradations between public and private spatial territories.

Fire

- PF-1.2** Maintain the high level of fire protection throughout Uptown.
- a. Support efforts by the City to educate and inform the community regarding fire prevention techniques.
 - b. Support regular upgrading of Uptown fire stations as necessary to adequately respond to fires and emergencies.

Libraries

- PF-1.3** Support the funding and creation of a new and expanded branch libraries to meet community needs.
- a. Support the construction of the Mission Hills Branch Library.
 - b. Support the relocation of the University Heights Branch Library to the Teachers Training Annex at the San Diego Unified School District’s Education Center should the property become available.
- PF-1.4** Support the extension of hours, expansion of book and periodical collections, and hiring of additional staff as necessary to provide adequate access to a full range of materials.

Schools

- PF-1.5** Transform school facilities in Uptown into neighborhood focal points with a strong image and identity.
- a. Encourage full community use of school facilities during non-school hours for educational, recreational and cultural purposes.
 - b. Pursue and maintain joint-use agreements whereby school facilities are made available for community use.
 - c. Acquire excess school district property within Uptown to reserve the property for public use.
 - d. Encourage the San Diego Unified School District to engage the community in planning for new and expanded facilities.

Public Utilities and Undergrounding of Utilities

- PF-1.6** Buffer the physical and visual impacts of energy facilities on adjacent uses through the use of adequate landscaping and screening, as well as, maintain access to energy facilities for repair and maintenance.
- PF-1.7** Enhance the streetscape and encourage building façade improvements to utility facilities with prominent street frontage, such as the telecommunications building along University Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Avenues.

Maintenance Assessment District and Property and Business Improvement District

- PF-1.8** Support programs in Uptown where property owners assess themselves for the benefit of public enhancements beyond the general services provided by the City. These enhancements include but are not limited to: landscape, lighting, streetscape improvements and maintenance, security, signage and banners, street furniture, and public art.

Water, Sewer and Stormwater Infrastructure

- PF-1.9** Implement water improvements programs so there are systematic improvements and gradual replacement of water and sewer facilities throughout the community. Also see General Plan PF-F.6 PF-G.2, PF-H.3, and PF-I.1.
- a. Support capital improvements to the system where replacement lines are needed and encourage the systematic improvement of water and wastewater facilities.
 - b. Provide routine maintenance of the water and wastewater facilities.

- c. Collaborate with the Uptown community members and other entities and stakeholders when funding and siting improvements to coordinate timing and replacement of infrastructure.
- d. Consider non-invasive means when replacing wastewater facilities in canyons.
- e. Implement green infrastructure strategies to address stormwater runoff.
- f. Maintain sidewalk traditional material, color, and scoring patterns along with original contractor date stamps when replacing utilities.

6.2 Health & Safety

GEOLOGIC AND SEISMIC HAZARDS

Geologic considerations relate to drainage systems and seismic safety (earthquake fault zones and steep areas of unstable soil). The geology complements open space areas since geological criteria is important in relating land use to seismic risk zones, with the protection of particularly sensitive geological areas from the safety hazards resulting from development encroachment.

The lateral canyons off Mission Valley and State Route 163 contain the soil type of terrace escarpment (TEF). It is four inches to ten inches of loamy or gravelly soil over soft marine sandstone, shale or gravelly sediments typical of a watershed. There are severe problems with erodibility and drainage in this type of soil. All other canyon systems in Uptown contain gaviota fine sandy loam (GAF) and (GAE) soil. This soil type is chiefly clay. It has a very slow infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. There are severe problems with drainage because the runoff on these soils is quite rapid, resulting in high erosion and ground collapse.

The two major fault lines are the Old Town Fault and the Mission Bay Fault (See Figure 6-2). The Old Town Fault runs south of Presidio Park through the Mission Hills Canyon System and the Washington Street Canyon System. The Mission Bay Fault runs to the south of the Old Town Fault, and does not cross any canyon systems. There are three other minor faults which run through the Mission Hills Canyon System. The General Plan provides policy support for disaster preparedness and Seismic Safety in the Public Facilities, Services & Safety Element sections PF-P and PF-Q. Design considerations with regards to safety are located in the Urban Design Element.

FIRE HAZARDS

Fire protection service is described in Section 6.1. The natural environment throughout San Diego presents considerable demands on fire and rescue services under various conditions and can also affect response times. For times of additional need, the City augments its own forces with Automatic Aid agreements with adjoining jurisdictions, and Mutual Aid agreements with County, State, and federal government agencies.

POLICIES

- PF-2.1** Maintain a high level of fire protection throughout the community, particularly in the neighborhoods adjacent to natural open space.
- a. Modernize and/or replace facilities and equipment to meet the needs of the community as firefighting technology improves.
 - b. Support efforts by the City to educate and inform the community regarding fire prevention techniques, particularly those related to brush management and wildland fires.
 - c. Provide routine brush management within City-owned open space.