CONSERVATION

8

INTRODUCTION

The principles of conservation emphasize humankind's relationship to the natural environment and recognize the social and environmental benefits that can be achieved through the application of these principles. These benefits can accrue to all citizens as well as to future generations. The appropriate practice of conservation, including the implementation of sustainable development, can therefore contribute to a sense of social equity between present and future residents of Golden Hill.

Many elements of conservation and sustainability have much broader geographic and political relationships and may be more suited to implement on a Citywide or regional basis. At these broader levels, the State of California has enacted legislation related to global climate change and the City of San Diego has adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP). However, much can be done to further conservation goals at the local community level, and individual communities can also be at the forefront of the policy discussion. At a Citywide level, the General Plan envisions that San Diego will become an international model of sustainable development. It provides policy guidance for the long-term conservation and sustainable management of the City's natural resources, acknowledging that they help define the City's identity, contribute to its economy, and improve its quality of life. Specific Conservation Element policies relate to sustainable development, open space and landform preservation, water resource management, urban runoff management, air quality, biological diversity, wetlands, energy independence, urban forestry, and environmental education.

Preservation of natural features and resources will depend on the integration of sustainable development practices.

Golden Hill recognizes the importance of natural resources and the need for conservation. Many residents are very environmentally aware and actively participate in maintaining sustainable lifestyles and clean and healthy natural surroundings. Preservation of natural features and resources will depend on the integration of sustainable development practices. Implementation of the Conservation Element's policies and recommendations through development project review, infrastructure investment, and individual action is intended to conserve natural resources and minimize ecological 'footprints' within the community.

The Conservation Element is closely linked with other community plan elements. Key conservation topics and some of their related policies in other community plan elements are shown in Table 8-1.

GENERAL PLAN CROSS-REFERENCE TABLE

The General Plan establishes Citywide policies to be cited in conjunction with community plan policies. General Plan policies may also be further referenced, emphasized or detailed in a community plan to provide community-specific direction. The General Plan policies particularly relevant to Golden Hill are listed by their identifiers in the cross reference table (Table 8-2, page CE-156).

TABLE 8-1: COMMUNITY PLAN CONSERVATION RELATED TOPICS AND POLICIES

CONSERVATION TOPIC	COMMUNITY PLAN POLICY
Reduce the community's carbon footprint	LU-2.7, LU-2.10, LU-2.11, LU-2.19-2.21, ME-1.1-1.11, ME-2.1-2.8, ME-3.1-3.7, ME-4.5, ME-4.7, ME-4.10, ME-4.11, ME-4.14, ME-4.16, PF-1.8, PF-1.12, RE-2.2
Improve pedestrian mobility and comfort	UD-2.27-2.31, ME-1.1-1.6
Develop a sustainable urban forest	UD-2.35, 2.38, 2.40
Reduce urban heat island effect	UD-2.35, 2.38, 3.11, 3.74
Improve air quality by encouraging landscaping	UD-3.72, 2.35, 2.38, 2.40
Employ sustainable/green building techniques	UD-3.73-3.76
Conserve water resources	RE-2.2, UD-3.74(f)
Control urban runoff	PF-1.12, RE-4.2, UD-3.11, 3.75, 3.32(c)
Conserve landforms, canyon lands & open space	LU-2.15-2.18, RE-2.4, RE-4.2, RE-4.4-4.6, UD-3.26-3.31
Protect biological diversity within open space	RE-4.1, UD-3.32

CONSERVATION ELEMENT GOALS

- Implementation of sustainable development and 'green' building practices to reduce dependence on non-renewable energy sources as well as to lower energy costs, reduce emissions and reduce water consumption.
- Preservation of the natural character of open space for its biological diversity and ecosystem value as well as the relief from urban development that it provides.
- Protection of natural canyon landforms and habitat from building encroachment and incompatible uses.
- Restoration of habitat value within disturbed natural landscapes.
- Maintenance of scenic resources and public access to open space and enhancement where needed.
- Application of sustainable storm water management techniques to support the surrounding landscape and reduce impacts on urban infrastructure, canyon drainages, and the marine environment.
- Creation of sustainable landscapes that are re-generative, increase energy efficiency, and contribute positively to community aesthetics.
- Foster a community that is supportive of regional and local initiatives to improve air quality.

TABLE 8-2: GENERAL PLAN RELATED TOPICS AND POLICIES

COMMUNITY PLAN TOPIC	GENERAL PLAN POLICY
Reduce the community's carbon footprint	CE-A.2
Employ sustainable/green building techniques	CE-A.5
Reduce construction and demolition waste	CE-A.8
Use sustainable building materials	CE-A.9
Implement sustainable landscape design and maintenance	CE-A.11
Reduce urban heat island effect	CE-A.12
Conserve landforms, canyon lands & open space	CE-B.1
Apply Environmentally Sensitive Lands Regulations	CE-B.2
Incorporate trails and greenways	CE-B.5
Conserve water resources	CE-D.1(d) & (h), CE-D.5
Control urban runoff	CE-E.2
Improve air quality by landscaping	CE-F.4
Protect biological diversity within open space	CE-G.1, CE-G.3
Develop a sustainable urban forest	CE-J.1
Support urban agriculture	CE-L.3

8.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development meets the needs of the present while conserving resources to ensure the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The General Plan bases its goals and policies regarding climate change and natural resources on a number of basic principles intended to guide development to conserve natural, non-renewable resources through sustainable development practices. This model of development considers a balance between natural resources and economic prosperity while protecting the public health, safety, and welfare and making our built environment more resilient and healthy.

The City's main responsibility when implementing State climate change legislation centers on its authority to regulate land use. Through sensible land use regulation that reduces the number of vehicle miles travelled and promotes sustainable building and development practices, the City and the community can achieve a meaningful reduction in carbon emissions.

Energy reduction can be achieved through the continued use or adaptive reuse of the existing building stock along with any needed energy efficiency upgrades.

Actions that reduce dependence on the automobile by promoting walking, bicycling, and transit use are key aspects of any strategy to reduce carbon emissions. Golden Hill is well-positioned to reduce dependence on the private automobile due to the community's central location in the region, generally walkable street grid, and access to transit services.

At the community plan level, policies and initiatives that further the General Plan's sustainable development policies would protect and improve habitat values of open space, increase the urban forest, and prioritize sustainable development practices. Sustainable building and development practices include adaptively retrofitting and reusing existing buildings; constructing energy efficient buildings with healthy interior environments; reuse or recycling of building material; creating quality outdoor living spaces; providing storm water infiltration; conserving water, and promoting renewable energy, including solar.

Improved sidewalks and bicycle facilities will encourage walking and bicycling, enhancing the function of the community's grid pattern street network..

POLICIES

CE-1.1 Build upon the community's existing street grid network to create a more functional environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, and reduce local dependence on automobile transportation (also refer to Urban Design Element, Streetscape and Public Realm section, and Mobility Element, Active Transportation section).

CE-1.2 Reduce development project-level greenhouse gas emissions to acceptable levels by incorporating sustainable building and development practices (also refer to Urban Design Element, Green Building Practices and Sustainability section), applying site-specific mitigation measures, and adhering to standardized measures outlined in the City's Climate Action Plan.

- A. Encourage the adherence to LEED standards for construction to achieve environmental benefits through new development and redevelopment projects.

CE-1.3 As part of a comprehensive energy-reduction strategy, promote the continued use or adaptive reuse of existing buildings in conjunction with any needed increase to their energy use efficiency.

- A. Preserve existing buildings with important architectural or historic character as valued community assets.
- B. Preserve structures that meet the Historical Resources criteria for designation and adaptively reuse if necessary to maintain their economic viability.

CE-1.4 Create meaningful visually and functionally cohesive outdoor gathering space within multifamily developments designed to provide natural ventilation to individual residences and minimize solar heat gain.

CE-1.5 Encourage the use of solar and other renewable energy systems to supplement or replace traditional building energy systems, including the use of solar water heating systems.

CE-1.6 Provide energy-efficient lighting within the public right-of-way and/or retrofit existing street lighting to be energy-efficient. Use solar powered lights where practical.

CE-1.7 Encourage the retrofit of buildings to capture and utilize rain water for landscape irrigation and to implement graywater reuse systems.

CE-1.8 Utilize small City-owned sites not suitable for recreation use as opportunities for community gardens, parks, or local composting sites when feasible.

CE-1.9 Improve energy and water conservation in the operation and design of existing and new public facilities.

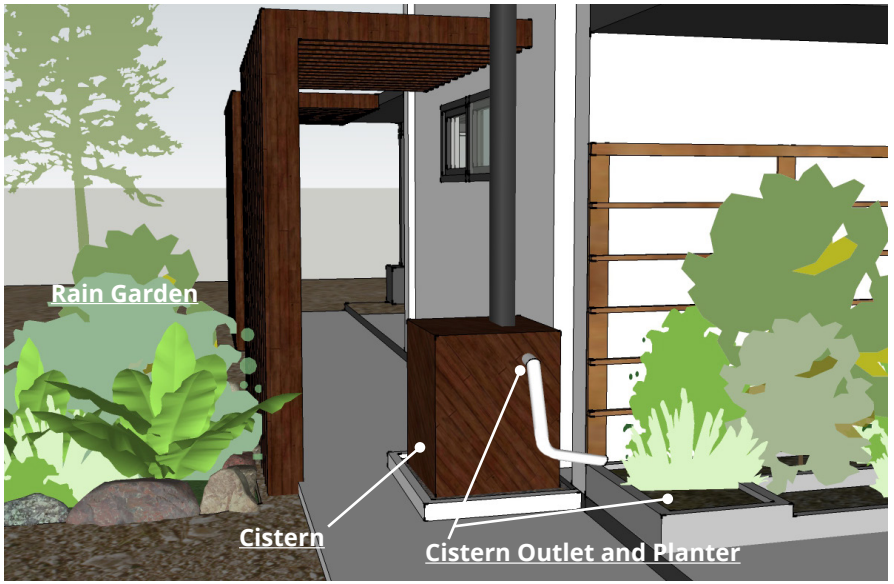
CE-1.10 Promote community initiatives to provide locally sourced and more environmentally sustainable goods and services.

CE-1.11 Increase the size and scope of the community's urban forest (also refer to Urban Design Element, Urban Forest/Street Tree Master Plan section).

CE-1.12 Design and construct development to retain significant, mature and healthy trees located within required landscape setbacks, and within other portions of the site as feasible.

CE-1.13 Plant or replace street trees utilizing low water use species to fill existing gaps and provide continuous, regularly spaced tree canopies (also refer to Urban Design Element, Streetscape and Public Realm and Urban Forest/Street Tree Master Plan sections).

Increasing the community's tree canopy can provide multiple benefits such as reducing summer heat temperatures, contributing to overall pedestrian comfort and increased foot traffic within business districts.



Building and landscape features that capture and direct stormwater for landscape irrigation and infiltration are important for water-efficient and sustainable landscape design.

Climate Action Plan Monitoring Policies

CE-1.14 Continue to monitor mode share within Transit Priority Areas within the community in support of the CAP Annual Monitoring Report Program.

CE-1.15 Continue to implement General Plan policies related to climate change and support implementation of the CAP through a wide range of actions, including:

A. Providing additional bicycle and pedestrian improvements in coordination with street resurfacing as feasible;

B. Coordinating with regional transit planners to identify transit right-of-way and priority measures to support existing and planned transit routes, prioritizing for implementation the highest priority bicycle and pedestrian improvements that align with "Vision Zero;"

C. Supporting regional improvements that promote alternative modes of transportation, such as mobility hubs;

D. Promoting bicycle and car-sharing programs;

E. Applying the CAP consistency checklist as part of the development permit process, as applicable; and

F. Supporting and implementing improvement to enhance transit accessibility and operations, as feasible.

Amenities at transit stops such as benches, shade structures and timetables improve the transit user's experience and promote use of transit within the community.

The provision of integrated photovoltaic panels on existing garages or structures (as shown above) can produce cleaner electricity that can help reduce GHG emissions.

8.2 NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Conservation of the community's remaining open spaces, canyon landforms, natural habitats and public views is important. While the General Plan, Climate Action Plan, this community plan, San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan, and zoning regulations provide the primary framework for natural resource conservation, the community's residents play an important role in determining the ultimate success of preservation and restoration programs. The boundaries of many residential neighborhoods are created by canyons, providing an opportunity not only for visual enjoyment of these unique areas but also neighborhood involvement in canyon protection, education, and restoration efforts.

Canyon open space is an integral part of South Park's residential neighborhoods.

OPEN SPACE, LANDFORMS & NATURAL HABITATS

State law recognizes that open space land is a limited and valuable resource that should be conserved wherever possible. Open space serves as visual relief to urban development, and adds character and identity to a community and its neighborhoods. Protecting Golden Hill's open spaces, including canyon landforms and steep hillsides, and their natural resources, is a fundamental component of resource conservation efforts in the community, including air and water quality improvement. Open space has value for managing urban runoff and protecting water resources, understanding geology, mitigating the effects of climate change, and complementing and enhancing urban forestry efforts. Therefore, sustainable development should conserve open space, natural landforms, and natural habitats to the maximum extent feasible.

"Open Space" as a land use designation applied in the community is discussed in the Land Use Element. Open space may be publicly or privately owned. Most publicly-owned parcels within canyon open space are also identified as dedicated open space parkland. Open space lands and resource-based parks (e.g. Balboa Park) are also discussed in the Recreation Element as valued resources for public enjoyment.

As mentioned above, canyon landforms are a major defining characteristic of the community and its neighborhoods. Steep hillsides are associated with canyons, and, to a lesser extent, terraced landforms. Through long-standing policies private development has largely been kept to canyon edges, leaving many canyons intact as valuable open spaces although development has occurred within steep hillsides to some extent. Preservation of canyon landforms and steep hillsides is important to the community.

The community includes three major canyon landforms: 32nd Street, 34th Street (Juniper) and Switzer canyons. Switzer and 34th Street Canyons are also shared with North Park and Balboa Park. Portions of these canyons have been disturbed by residential development within the canyons and along the canyon rims, as well as by ongoing disturbances from illegal trash disposal and other activities. Street improvements have also intersected with or protruded into these canyons which, in combination with the community's development over time, has interrupted the natural topographic and biological continuity of the canyon systems. However, breaks in the development that surround canyon interfaces also provide important opportunities to interact with these open spaces. For example, Golden Hill Elementary School and some informal small parks are located adjacent to canyon open space. While access to canyons can provide recreational opportunities, the improvement of habitat and wildlife value within canyons is also important to the community.

Canyon open space interfaces in the community often need attention to erosion control and better management of unwanted edge effects.

32nd Street Canyon is a major landform in the community.

MULTIPLE SPECIES CONSERVATION PROGRAM & BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a long-term habitat conservation planning program for San Diego County. The City's MSCP Subarea Plan was adopted in 1997, and the Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) is the area intended to contain the Subarea Plan's preserved habitats. The MHPA was designed to be a managed, connected network of habitat and open space to ensure long-term biological diversity. Biological diversity means the degree of variation of life forms within an ecosystem. The Subarea Plan provides policies, management directives and acquisition requirements for preserved habitats, as well as Land Use Adjacency Guidelines for development within or adjacent to the MHPA. The MHPA, as shown in Appendix B, includes several of the canyon systems within Golden Hill.

Natural habitat areas in the community include the remaining locations of indigenous plant communities, restored native plant communities, and naturalized landscapes, mainly found in the canyons and adjacent hillsides. These areas include coastal sage scrub, chaparral, grasslands, riparian/wetlands, and native and non-native woodland habitats. These habitats support a variety of migrant and year-round fauna, including California gnatcatcher and Cooper's Hawk, by providing shelter, foraging opportunities, and connectivity to other local and regional habitats.

"Urban" canyons provide habitat for native species to continue to reproduce and find new territories, and provide necessary shelter and foraging opportunities for migrating species (primarily avian species). They also contribute to the public's experience of nature and the local native environment. Conserving biodiversity will require effective protection, management, and restoration of remaining natural habitats.

NATURAL RESOURCE MAPPING

As part of the community plan update process, the areas designated as open space in the 1988 Community Plan were reviewed using detailed maps available through Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software. The areas intended for preservation by the San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan were also reviewed.

As a result, many areas designated Open Space in the 1988 Community Plan were found to contain a significant amount of existing development (e.g. houses, streets). The Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) boundary established by the MSCP Subarea Plan was particularly affected by development and did not correlate well to either the existing Community Plan's open space boundary, nor to the actual location of sensitive biological resources intended for conservation. While the framework for open space conservation in the 1988 Golden Hill community plan allowed some development within open space, especially along canyon edges, the General Plan and Multiple Species Conservation Program intend mapped open space specifically for conservation of sensitive natural resources and limit any type of development that impacts these resources. Therefore, a comprehensive, systematic approach was undertaken as part of the development of this Community Plan in order to evaluate the boundaries of community plan open space and the MHPA with respect to their effectiveness for protection of existing natural resources. This evaluation resulted in the reconfiguration of the open space boundary established in the 1988 Community Plan to exclude most developed areas from open space due to their lack of natural resources. Areas that contained sensitive biology that were previously excluded from the MHPA were added to the MHPA as part of a MHPA boundary line correction (refer to Appendix B for details).

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS REGULATIONS

The City's Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) regulations are intended to protect, preserve, and, where damaged, restore the environmentally sensitive lands of San Diego. These lands include steep hillsides, sensitive biological resources, flood hazard areas, coastal resources and lands within the MHPA. ESL regulations prohibit disturbance of natural resources wherever they are located within private or public property and contain development regulations that allow development within sites containing environmentally sensitive lands subject to certain restrictions. Development in Golden Hill is expected to comply with ESL regulations, and any impact to habitats as the result of development would be mitigated in accordance with the provisions of ESL regulations and the City of San Diego's Biology Guidelines.

POLICIES

CE-2.1 Follow applicable requirements of the Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations, Biology Guidelines, and MSCP Subarea Plan for the protection, mitigation, acquisition, restoration, and management and monitoring of biological resources.

CE-2.2 Avoid grading of steep hillsides and other significant natural features. Where this is infeasible, minimize grading to the least sensitive portions of the site and design development to follow the natural landforms.

CE-2.3 Re-vegetate graded or disturbed areas and areas of invasive vegetation to restore native habitat value and minimize soil erosion and instability.

CE-2.4 Preserve areas mapped as designated open space through easements, open space dedication and/or granting of fee title ownership to the City (refer also to Land Use Element Figure 2-1).

CE-2.5 Support canyon habitat restoration efforts and invasive species removal by seeking grant funding and working with neighborhood and community groups involved in these efforts.

CE-2.6 Restore or enhance natural biological values and improve visual aesthetics where streets and storm drain systems abut or cross canyon landforms or steep hillsides. Habitat restoration efforts should aid wildlife movement by providing vegetative cover and controlling and directing community access to designated trails.

CE-2.7 Repair and retrofit storm drain discharge systems in open space areas to prevent erosion and improve water quality by adequately controlling flow and providing filtration. Storm drain outfalls should limit the use of concrete in favor of more natural, vegetated designs.

CE-2.8 Foster local stewardship and develop positive neighborhood awareness of the open space preserve areas with environmental education programs that address the local ecosystem and habitat preservation provided through local schools, community groups, neighborhood and homeowner's associations, and non-profit groups. Incorporate hands-on learning via neighborhood hikes or other initiatives that present information and increase interest in the natural environment.

CE-2.9 Consider incorporating 32nd Street and 34th Street Canyons into any future regional park proposal for the Chollas Creek watershed.

Protection of Environmentally Sensitive Lands within the community includes remaining areas vegetated with native plant communities.

Residential development within hillsides can limit its impact on steep slopes by using building types which avoid the typical grading associated with flat slab foundations.

CANYON SEWER PROGRAM

As the City of San Diego developed, sewer lines were placed within canyons to utilize gravity flow to transport sewage. Of the 2,894 miles of sewer lines in the City, 253 miles are currently situated in canyons and other environmentally sensitive areas. These pipelines have historically had limited cleaning because the original maintenance paths were not adequately constructed or maintained to prevent overgrowth of non-native vegetation. As a result, a number of sewer spills have occurred within urban canyons or other inaccessible areas over the years. In order to address this problem, the City initiated the Long-Term Canyon Sewer Maintenance Program in 2001. The program's focus is to evaluate each of the City's sewer lines in canyons and environmentally sensitive areas for long-term maintenance access needs.

The City Council also adopted two Council Policies related to sewer lines in environmentally sensitive areas. Council Policy 400-13 identifies the need to provide maintenance access to all sewers in order to reduce the potential for spills. The policy requires that maintenance access minimize environmental impacts in environmentally sensitive areas to the maximum extent possible through the use of sensitive path design, canyon-proficient maintenance vehicles, and preparation of plans that dictate routine maintenance and emergency access procedures.

Council Policy 400-14 outlines a program to evaluate whether sewage flow can be redirected out of canyons and environmentally sensitive areas. The policy includes an evaluation procedure that requires both a physical evaluation and a cost-benefit analysis. If redirection of flow outside the canyon is found to be infeasible, the preparation of a long-term maintenance and emergency access plan is required. The plan would prescribe long-term access locations for routine maintenance and emergency repairs along with standard operating procedures identifying cleaning methods and inspection frequency.

POLICIES

CE-2.10 Evaluate the impacts of sewer cleaning and maintenance activities in the community to assure that they are effective, efficient and environmentally sensitive.

CE-2.11 Continue communication between the community and the City to report sewer spills or other potential problems as quickly as possible in order to minimize environmental damage and scope of repair.

SCENIC RESOURCES & PUBLIC VIEWS

Preservation and enhancement of public view resources are important to maintain community and neighborhood character. Due to the community's sloping topography, public views (both near and far) are common. Prominent views include the natural scenic amenities of San Diego Bay, Balboa Park, Switzer Canyon, and the 32nd Street and 34th Street canyons. Unimproved rights-of-way, or 'paper streets,' are common in the community and provide opportunities for public views when they intersect or abut canyons or steep hillsides. Public view resources and applicable policies are discussed in the Urban Design Element.

Canyon trails allow for views as well as recreation.

'Paper' streets provide view opportunities and should be considered for trails.

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The amount of water on Earth is constant over time. However, water moves between different geographic locations and phases (e.g. mist, rain, snow) through a process known as the water cycle. In San Diego, the natural water cycle is dominated by moist air from the Pacific that condenses as rain, fog or mountain snow and collects within the rivers and streams of local watersheds. Due to the pronounced dry season in the local climate, rivers and streams can flow intermittently and rainfall collected by local watersheds is insufficient to supply water to the region's population. Therefore, the primary water supply for San Diego comes from sources outside the region, largely from the Colorado River and watersheds in Northern California. The City's historically reliable water supply is credited to its ability to secure and import water from these sources. However, these sources face limitations, especially in times of drought. The conveyance systems needed to provide this water also consume resources, particularly large amounts of energy.

The City does not have direct control over its imported water supply but is a member agency of the San Diego County Water Authority, which is responsible for securing the region's imported water supply mainly from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California in Los Angeles. The California Constitution requires that uses of the state's water be both reasonable and beneficial, and places a limitation on water rights by prohibiting waste and unreasonable use.

Water should be available in adequate quantity and quality without compromising natural systems to ensure a sustainable, reliable supply. Urban water supply is influenced by demand pressure such as population growth, management approaches, and lifestyle needs and choices, as well as environmental factors such as water quality and climate variability.

A water supply strategy that reduces water demand and promotes reuse and more effective management increases efficiency. This can reduce water stress on human populations and natural systems. Efficient use of water is therefore an important aspect of environmental sustainability.

Residences upstream from natural drainages can contribute to water quality improvement by reducing the amount of impervious driveway area.

Streets with wide parkways provide opportunities for storm water infiltration using landscaped swales.

Community gardens provide locally sourced food as well as spaces for community-building and learning.

Low water use landscapes reduce water usage as well as energy costs.

POLICIES

CE-2.12 Encourage new public and private development and building retrofits to incorporate as many water-efficient practices as possible in their design and construction (also refer to Urban Design Element policy UD-3.74), such as:

A. Use of recycled and/or gray water landscape irrigation systems;

B. Retrofit public spaces and public rights-of-way with low-water use vegetation and/or alternative permeable surface materials that meet adopted landscape regulations;

C. Ensure that any "community greening" projects utilize water-efficient landscape design.

URBAN RUNOFF MANAGEMENT

Urban runoff is surface water runoff generated from developed or disturbed land associated with urbanization. Increases in impervious surfaces lead to fewer opportunities for water runoff infiltration within the landscape. This increases the magnitude and duration of storm flows, contributing to urban flooding, and provides a source for sediment and pollutants to enter watersheds and downstream waterbodies. Urban runoff is the largest pollution source of Southern California's coastal beaches and near-shore waters.

Urban runoff control programs typically focus on managing the effect that new impervious surfaces have on stream channels, but may also remediate existing problems. Golden Hill is within the Pueblo San Diego Watershed which ultimately discharges into San Diego Bay. Local community initiatives to reduce consumption of potable water for landscape irrigation and effectively manage storm water runoff can also help achieve important regional goals to reduce dependence on imported water and protect water quality within streams, bays and the ocean.

POLICIES

CE-2.13 Incorporate sustainable site planning (Low Impact Development) practices that work with the natural hydrology of a site to reduce urban runoff, including the design or retrofit of landscaped or impervious areas to better capture and use storm water runoff onsite (also refer to the Urban Design Element policy UD-3.75).

CE-2.14 Encourage property owners to design and retrofit landscaped and impervious areas to better capture storm water runoff.

CE-2.15 Identify opportunities to implement additional hydro-modification management measures to protect natural drainages from erosion, water pollution, and other water-related problems. Give particular attention to the steeper canyon drainages receiving runoff directly from developed areas via storm drains or other conveyance systems.

CE-2.16 Incorporate and maintain storm water best management practices in development projects to limit water pollution, erosion and sedimentation.

As an example of a stormwater best management practice, this curb cut creates an inlet for surface water runoff to infiltrate an adjacent planting strip designed as a bioretention area.

8.3 AIR QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Air is an important resource shared by all members of a community. Suitable air quality is important for healthy living and working environments. Poor air quality due to pollution from various sources harms humans, animals, plant life, water quality and aesthetics (e.g. visibility). It creates health problems particularly for children, the elderly, and persons with respiratory problems.

Local air quality is affected most significantly by motor vehicles and other fossil-fuel burning vehicles, which account for approximately 80 percent of air pollution emissions in the San Diego region. Freeways are a primary source of concentrated adverse health effects resulting from air pollution. These associations diminish with distance from the pollution source. The impact of air pollution is a community concern for Golden Hill.

The General Plan Conservation Element addresses air quality in the San Diego Air Basin and includes policies designed to improve air quality on a citywide level. Location-specific conditions can lead to ongoing community-based recommendations for air quality improvement.

POLICIES

CE-3.1 Require that new development, renovation or redevelopment of housing, schools and active use parks within 500 feet of the outside travel lane of a freeway or highway take the following steps in order to avoid or minimize the potential health effects of air pollution for the occupants or users:

A. Complete an air quality analysis for the project site and proposed land use;

B. Use site planning measures where feasible to locate sensitive receptor uses outside of the area where health risks are known to be unacceptably elevated;

C. When site planning measures are determined infeasible, incorporate mitigation measures as part of the development proposal such as individual dwelling ventilation systems, HEPA filters, inoperable windows facing the freeway, and design of the development to locate usable open space where it will be most shielded from the freeway.

CE-3.2 Encourage street tree and private tree planting programs as well as the retention of mature landscaping along freeways and throughout the community to increase absorption of carbon dioxide and air pollutants.

Street trees provide multiple environmental benefits such as improving air quality, reducing heat gain, and reducing surface runoff. They also improve the pedestrian experience and provide an urban design statement. These Tipu trees on Fern Street have become a community landmark.

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