

2. Land Use and Development

2.1 EXISTING LAND USE

Existing on the ground land uses were identified from City and County data and aerial photography. The analysis uses parcel-level information from Geographic Information Systems (GIS) databases, including Assessor's data, updated in 2018. Aerial photography is current as of 2018.

There are approximately 10,500 acres in Mira Mesa, or 9,344 acres excluding utilities and rights-of-way. Table 2-1 shows the breakdown of existing land uses, and Chart 2-1 shows the summary of existing land uses in a pie chart, excluding rights-of-way and utilities. Figure 2-1 shows the overall pattern of existing land uses in Mira Mesa.

Current Land Use Pattern

As shown in Table 2-1 and Chart 2-1, residential use is the most prominent existing land use in Mira Mesa, occupying 2,736 acres (29.3%) of the Planning Area, closely followed by Open Space with 2,414 acres (25.8%). The Industrial land use is the 3rd largest area occupying 2,006 acres (21.5%) while Office land uses account for 654 acres (7.0%) of the Planning Area. There are only 49 acres of Vacant/Undeveloped land in Mira Mesa.

Chart 2-1: Existing Land Use Summary

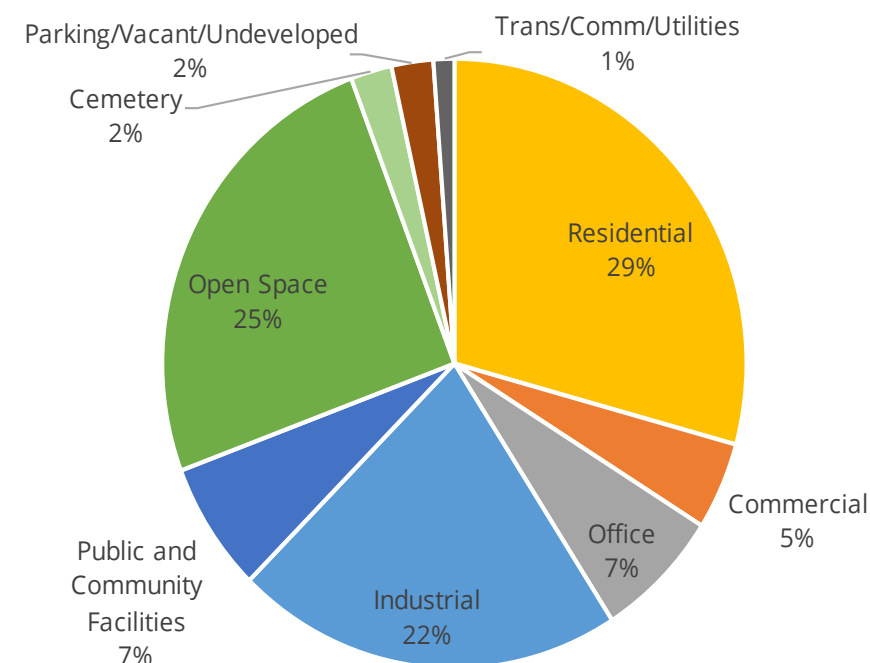
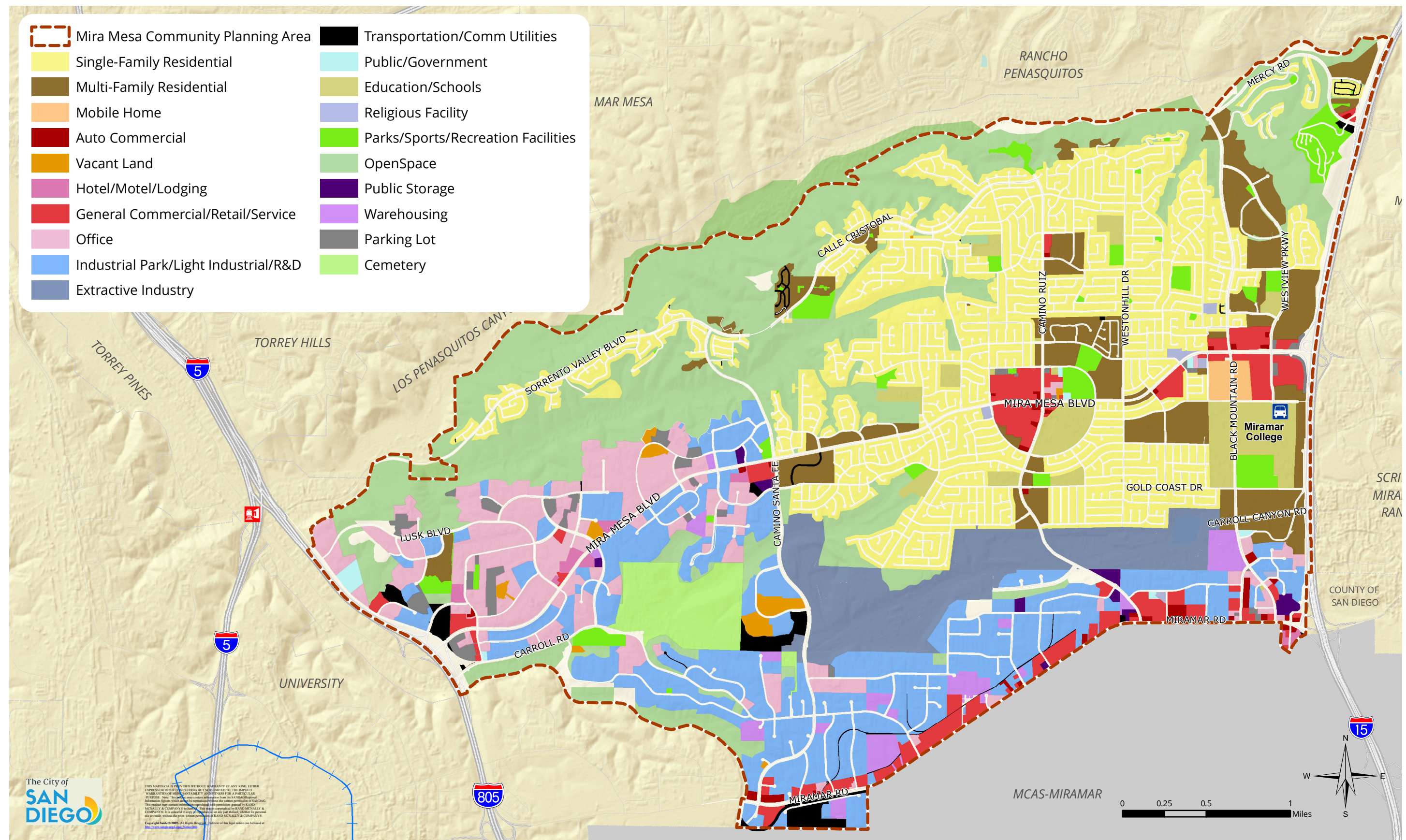


Table 2-1: Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use Categories	Acres	Percentage
Residential	2,736	29.3%
Single-Family	2,009	21.5%
Multi-Family	692	7.4%
Mobile Home Park	35	0.4%
Commercial	434	4.6%
Auto Commercial	43	0.5%
Hotel/Motel/Lodging Commercial	30	0.3%
General Commercial/Retail/Service	330	3.5%
Public Storage	32	0.3%
Office	654	7.0%
Industrial	2,006	21.5%
Industrial Park/Light Industrial	1,277	13.7%
Extractive Industry	599	6.4%
Warehousing	130	1.4%
Public and Community Facilities	644	6.9%
Public/Government	19	0.2%
Educational/Institutional	289	3.1%
Religious Facilities	15	0.2%
Parks/Sports/Recreational Facilities	320	3.4%
Open Space	2,414	25.8%
Cemetery	213	2.3%
Parking Lot	86	0.9%
Vacant/Undeveloped	49	0.5%
Trans/Comm/Utilities	108	1.2%
Total	9,344	100%

Source: City of San Diego, 2018; SANGIS Regional GIS Data Warehouse, 2018

Figure 2-1: Existing Land Use

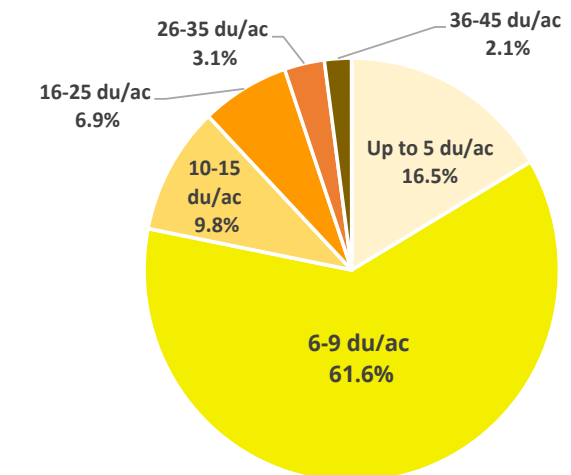


2.2 RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

The density of residential development in Mira Mesa is shown in Figure 2-2 and Chart 2-2. For residential uses, density is expressed as the number of housing units per acre (dwelling units/acre, or du/ac). As reflected in this analysis, residential density is calculated as a “gross” residential density, which also accounts for streets and other public areas.

Average residential density in Mira Mesa is approximately 8 dwelling units per acre, demonstrating the relatively compact suburban form that predominate in the community. Mira Mesa’s housing includes single-family homes, townhomes, multiplex apartment and condominium complexes; these housing typologies are described in detail in Section 4.4, Buildings. As shown in Chart 2-2, over 61 percent of residential properties have a gross density of at least 6–9 dwelling units per acre. Many of the densest residential properties are located West of I-15.

Chart 2-2: Breakdown of Existing Residential Densities



6 Sorrento Heights, 5 dwelling units/acre.



5 Londonderry, 8 dwelling units/acre.



4 Wateridge, 15 dwelling units/acre.



1 Casa Mira View, 45 dwelling units/acre.



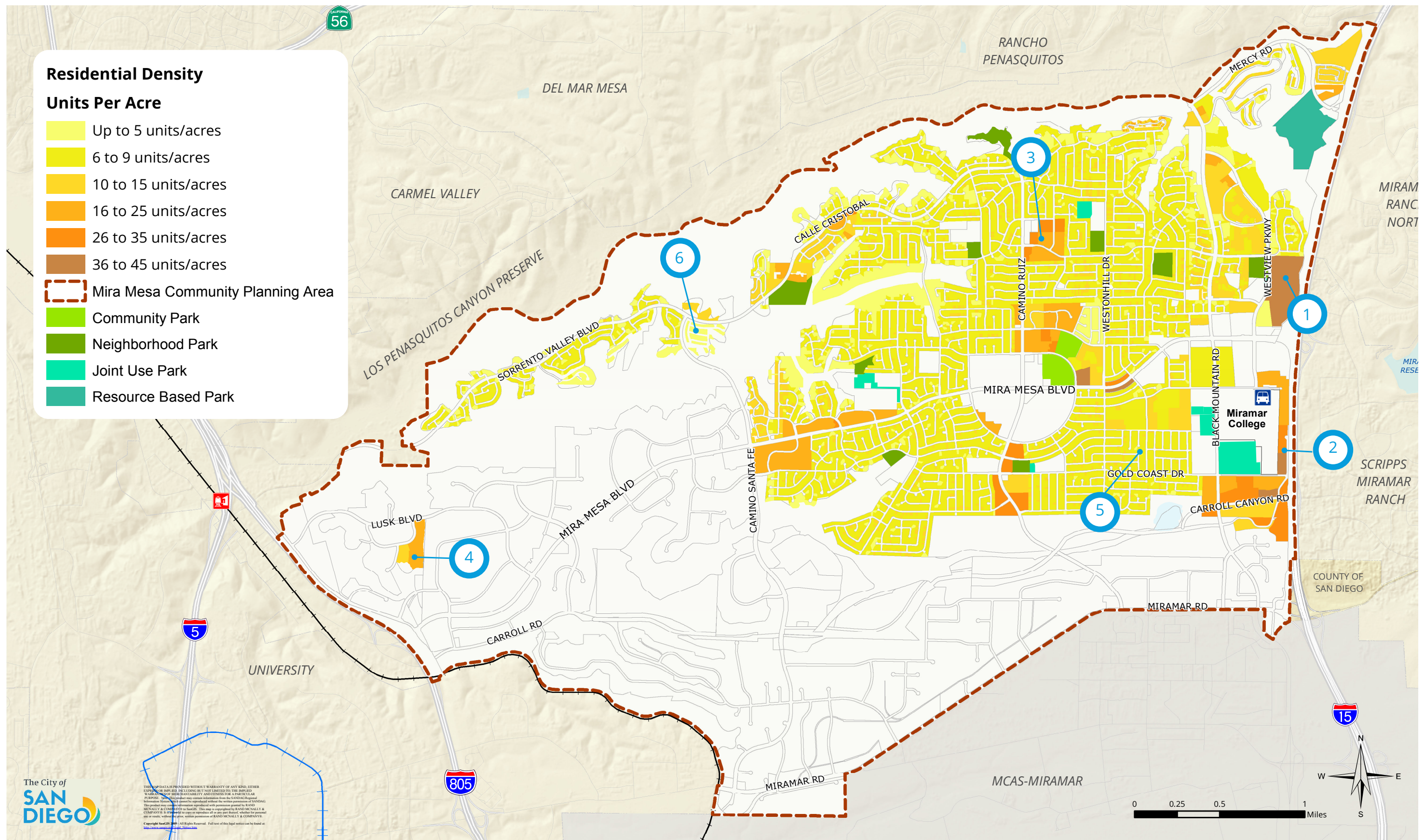
2 Mira Monte Apartments, 31 dwelling units/acre.



3 Casa Ruiz Apartments, 19 dwelling units/acre.

Source: Photo 2, 4, 5, & 6 Google Streetview

Figure 2-2: Existing Residential Density



2.3 NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

The intensity of non-residential development (office, retail, and industrial) in Mira Mesa is shown in Figure 2-3. Development intensity is expressed as Floor Area Ratio (FAR), which refers to the ratio between a building's total floor area and the total area (excluding any area devoted to parking) of the site. For instance, as shown in Figure 2-3, a one-story building occupying half of a parcel has an FAR of 0.5; a two-story building occupying the same half of a parcel has an FAR of 1.0.

Overall, non-residential buildings in Mira Mesa have a median FAR of 0.44. As shown in Chart 2-3, over 85.5 percent of non-residential buildings have an FAR of 0.5 or less. Only fourteen development in Mira Mesa has an FAR that reaches beyond 1.0. Taller buildings in the Planning Area, such as the San Diego Innovation Center, Country Inn & Suites, and Qualcomm Building WT, have an overall FAR of less than 2.0 because they are situated on lots with substantial surface parking and landscaping.

Figure 2-3: FAR Illustration

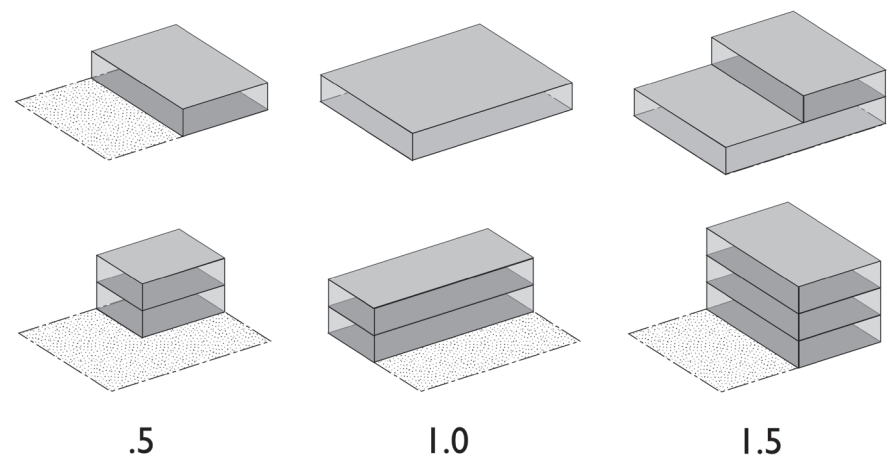
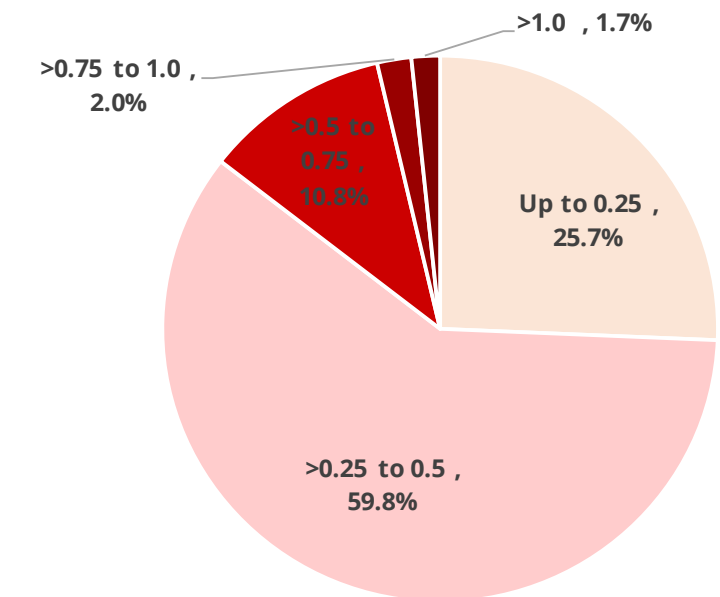


Chart 2-3: FAR Breakdown



1 Mesa Shopping Center, 0.29 FAR.



4 The Towers Sorrento, 1.43 FAR.



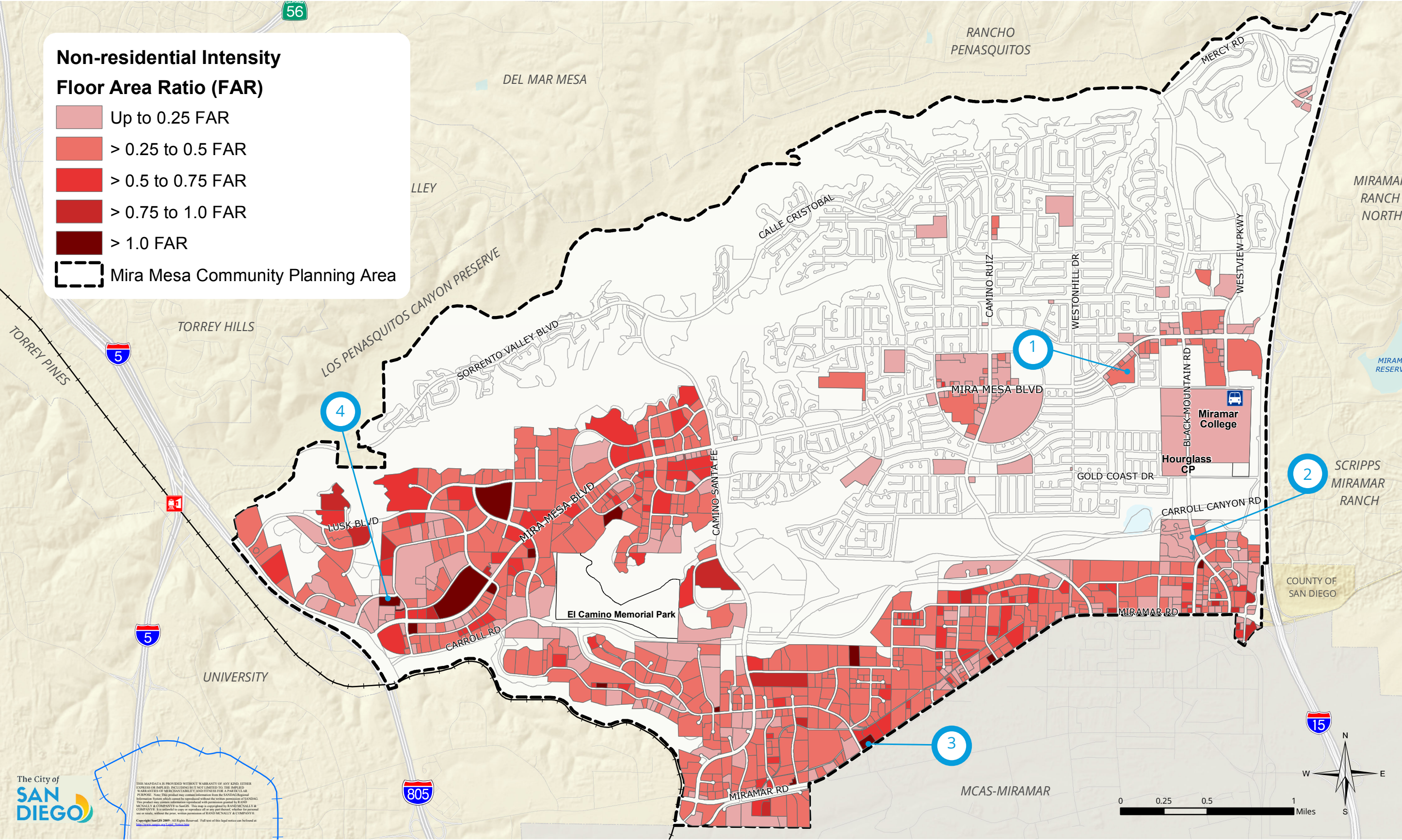
3 San Diego Innovation Center, 1.07 FAR.



2 Office building located at 9600 Kearny Villa Road, 0.45 FAR.

Source: Google Streetview

Figure 2-4: Non-Residential Development Intensity (FAR)



2.4 PUBLIC FACILITIES

Figure 2-5 depicts community services, facilities and infrastructures that support Mira Mesa.

Mira Mesa has three fire station, one community relations police storefront, and one library which is centrally located on New Salem Street. There are 14 public and charter schools at the kindergarten through twelfth grade level, as well as San Diego Miramar College that serve the community (Table 2-2). In school year 2017-2018, 9,381 K-12 students attended Mira Mesa schools.

The 2016 Mira Mesa Public Facilities Financing Plan (PFFP) implements the City of San Diego General Plan and the Mira Mesa Community Plan. The financing plan identifies major public facilities that will be needed to serve the community over the next 25 years. When construction or building permit is issues, the Development Impact Fees (DIF) are collected to help finance community projects, such as:

- Transportation improvements;
- Neighborhood parks and recreation;
- Fire; and
- Libraries.

The DIF are paid on a per unit basis for residential development, and on a per acre basis for non-residential development. The Current Mira Mesa PFFP identifies:

- \$156.3 million for transportation projects;
- \$292.1 million for park and recreation projects; and
- \$12.2 million for Fire-Rescue projects

The Mira Mesa PFFP will be revised during the phase 4 of Mira Mesa Community Plan Update and will be renamed Impact Fee Study (IFS). The current list of public facilities projects is available at: www.sandiego.gov/facilitiesfinancing/plans

Table 2-2: Mira Mesa School Enrollment

Schools	Enrollment	
Public	2007-2008	2017-2018
Sandburg Elementary	672	571
Ericson Elementary	753	692
Hage Elementary	741	696
Hickman Elementary	683	424
Jonas Salk Elementary	N/A	702
Mason Elementary	776	552
Walker Elementary	565	389
Challenger Middle	1,137	976
Waggenheim Middle	1,308	941
Mira Mesa High	2,592	2,338
Charter	2007-2008	2017-2018
Trace	N/A	471
Twain High (Alternative)	N/A	234
Private	2007-2008	2017-2018
Good Shepard	N/A	250
Lutheran - Christ the Cornerstone - Academy	N/A	145
Total		9,381
Community College	2007-2008	2017-2018
San Diego Miramar College	7,922 FTE	10,108 FTE*

Source: San Diego Unified School District, 2018; San Diego Community College District, 2018 (*projected)



Miramar College

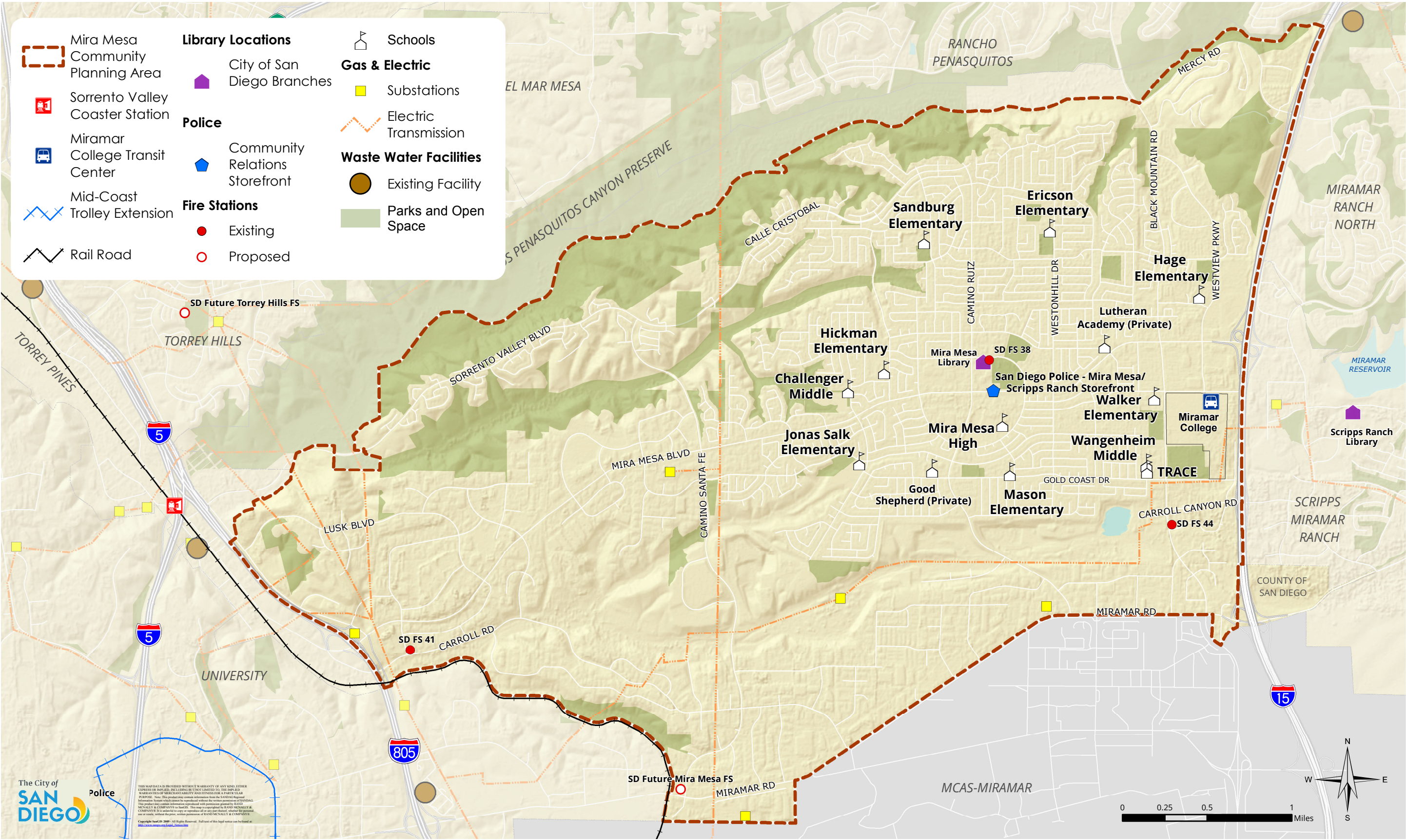


Mira Mesa Library



Mira Mesa Fire Station

Figure 2-5: Public Facilities



2.5 PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

There are three use categories of parks and recreation for residents and visitors: population-based, resource-based, and open space. These three categories of recreation, including land, facilities, and programming, constitute the City of San Diego's municipal park and recreation system.

- Population-based parks (commonly known as Neighborhood and Community parks), facilities and services are located in close proximity to residential development and are intended to serve the daily needs of the neighborhood and community. Joint use parks/facilities are intended to provide active and passive recreational opportunities for school children when school is in session and the general public when school is not in session. Each joint use site is governed by a joint use agreement between the City of San Diego and San Diego Unified School District. These agreements outline the responsibilities of each agency.
- Resource-based parks are located at, or centered on, notable natural or man-made features (beaches, canyons, habitat systems, lakes, historic sites, and cultural facilities) and are intended to serve the citywide population, as well as visitors.
- Open space lands are City-owned lands located throughout the City, consisting of canyons, mesas, and other natural landforms. This open space is intended to preserve and protect native plants and animals, while providing public access and enjoyment by the use of hiking, biking, and equestrian trails.

The Planning Area's existing parks, recreation facilities and open space areas are shown in Figure 2-9 while Table 2-3 illustrate the acreage of existing parks.

Table 2-3: List of Existing Parks

Name	Acre (Usable)
Community Park (CP)	
Mira Mesa CP	28.00
Neighborhood Park (NP)	
Sandburg NP	4.84
Camino Ruiz NP	10.27
Mesa Viking NP	6.67
Westview NP	7.25
Breen NP	8.66
Lopez Ridge NP	8.38
Maddox NP	5.00
Mesa Verde NP	4.50
Mcauliffe NP*	4.52
Resource Based Park	
Canyon Hills Park	16.25
Joint Use Facility	
Hourglass CP - Miramar College	31.00
Challenger Middle School	7.57
Ericson Elementary	5.44
Hage Elementary	0.30
Mason Elementary	1.12
Walker Elementary	4.80
Walker Elementary NP	1.88
Wangenheim Middle School	6.6
Existing Park Total	163.05
Existing Eligible Park Total	146.80

*Mcauliffe NP is currently designated in the Mira Mesa Community Plan as a Community Park, but due to the lack of usable acreage, designation has been adjusted to accurately reflect realities on the ground.



Westview Neighborhood Park

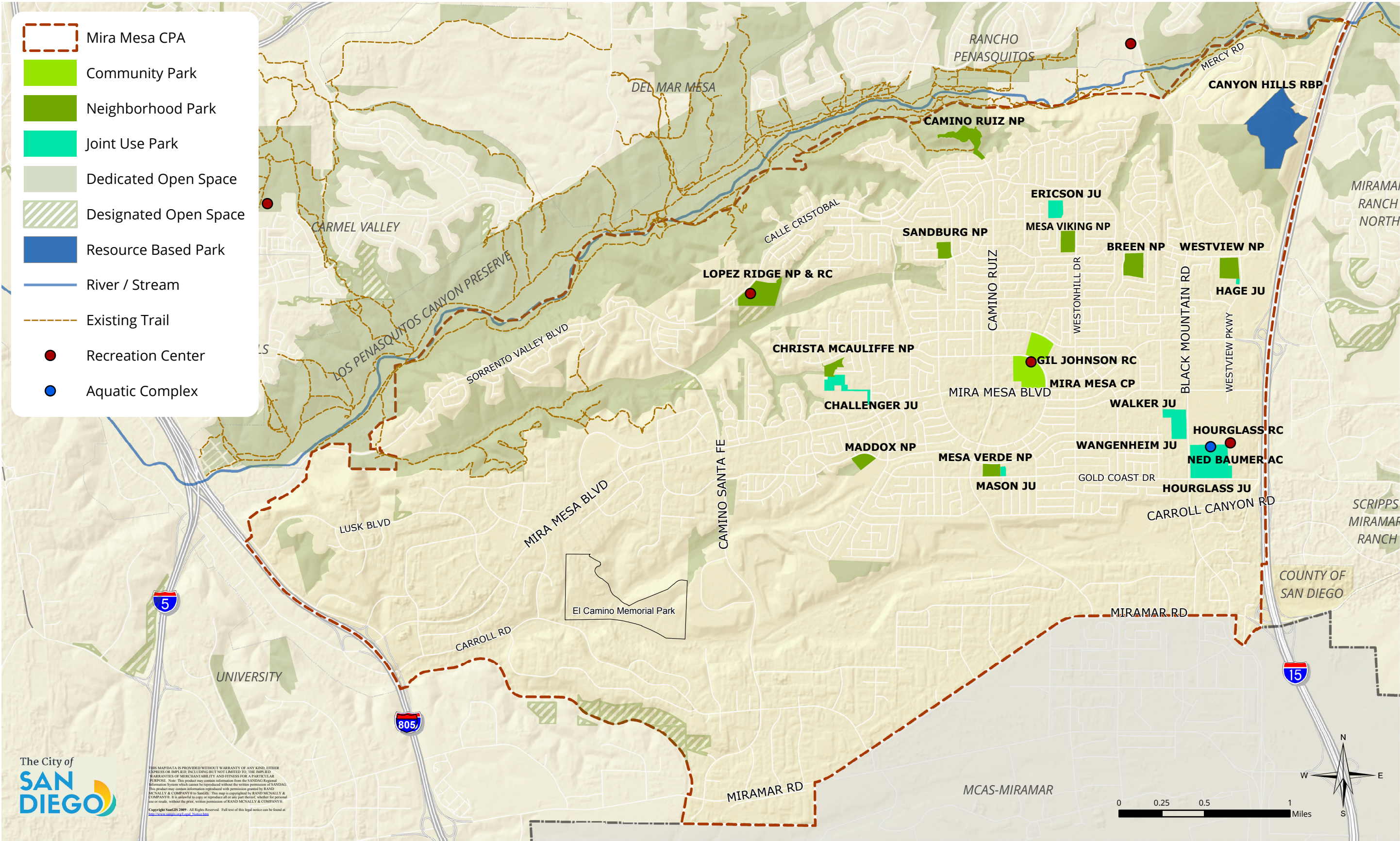


Camino Ruiz Neighborhood Park



Breen Neighborhood Park

Figure 2-6: Existing Parks, Recreation and Open Space

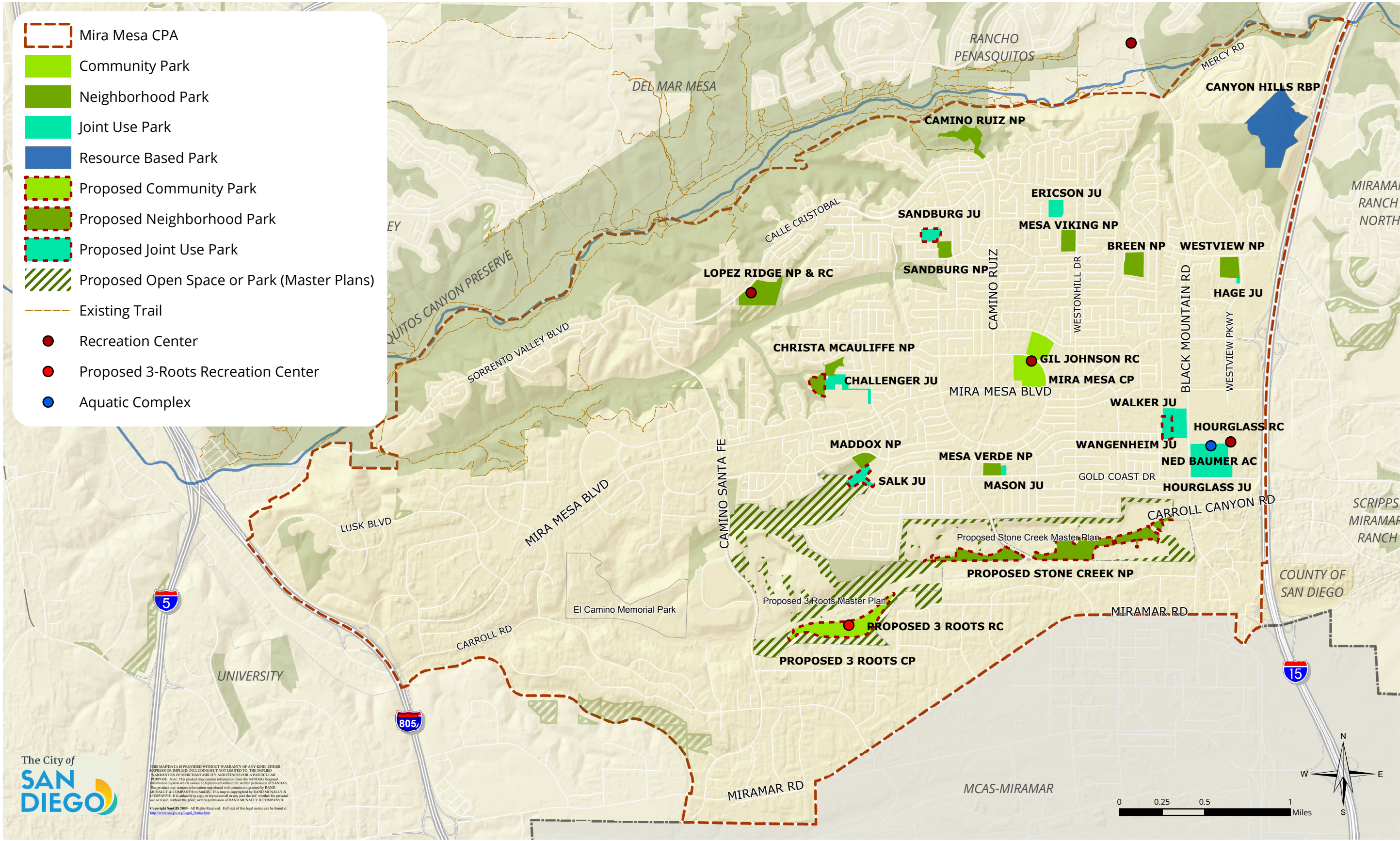


The Planning Area’s proposed parks (as of September 2018) are shown in Figure 2-7 while Table 2-4 illustrates different types of park facilities.

Table 2-4: Park Facilities Descriptions

Park Type	Community Park	Neighborhood Park	Mini Park/Plaza	Pocket Park	Major Park
Population	Serves 25,000, typically one community plan area.	Serves approximately 5,000 within 1 mile.	Serves population within ½ mile.	Serves population within ¼ mile.	Serves single or multiple community plan areas/ populations, parking provided.
Features	Passive and active recreation facilities, community cultural facilities, multi-purpose sports fields, recreation center and aquatic complex.	Accessible by bicycling and walking. Minimal parking. Picnic areas, children's play area, multi-purpose turf areas, walkways, and landscaping.	Accessible by bicycling and walking. No parking. Picnic areas, children's play area, and/or multi-purpose turf areas.	Accessible by bicycling and walking. No parking. Primarily hardscape, picnic areas, children's play area, and/or multi-purpose turf areas.	Specialized facilities that serve larger populations, passive and active recreation facilities found in Community Parks, could include special activities such as skate park, dog off leash.
Example	Hourglass Community Park	Camino Ruiz Neighborhood Park	Kenmore Terrace Mini Park	Lewis Street Pocket Park	NTC Park
					
Park Type	Open Space Trails	Special Activity Park	Recreation Center	Aquatics Complex	
Population	Serves single or multiple community plan areas.	Serves one or more community.	Serves 25,000 or more.	Serves 50,000. Serves multiple community plan areas.	
Features	City-owned land, canyons, mesas, other natural land-forms, usually with trails, staging areas, outlooks, viewpoints, picnic areas.	Skateboard parks, off-leash dog park, and/or other unique uses.	May be a stand-alone facility or within a community park. May include a gymnasium, indoor courts, multi-purpose rooms, kitchen, or other facilities. Parking provided.	May be a stand-alone facility or located within a community park. May include pool facility, locker rooms, showers, and/or special types of pools.	
Examples	Los Peñiquitos Canyon Preserve	Linda Vista Skate Park	Doyle Recreation Center	Ned Baumer Aquatic Center	
					

Figure 2-7: Existing and Proposed Parks, Recreation and Open Space



2.6 LAND USE SITING OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities to transition the existing auto-centric land use pattern towards a smart growth and mixed-use transit-oriented development along Transit Priority Areas in Mira Mesa CPA. The growth of craft breweries, life science, and high-tech sectors; regional housing shortage; and policies to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) are creating demand for a high quality mixed-use community and residences near job centers. For existing residential areas, the physical layout of compact suburban land use pattern and close proximity to many amenities provides a strong foundation to improve neighborhood walkability, bikability, and safety through strategic investment in multi-modal infrastructure.

Sand Diego Forward: The Regional Plan & SANDAG Smart Growth Areas (SGAs)

San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan was adopted by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Board of Directors on October 9, 2015. It combines the big-picture vision for how our region will grow by 2050 within an implementation program to help make that vision a reality. Smart Growth is a compact, efficient, and environmentally-sensitive urban development pattern. It focuses future growth and infill development close to jobs, services, and public facilities to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and preserve open space and natural resources. SANDAG has identified eight areas in Mira Mesa as Smart Growth Areas (SGAs). The Smart Growth Concept Map and SGAs serves as the foundation for prioritizing regional transportation investments and determining eligibility for local smart growth incentive funds (Figure 2-7).

General Plan

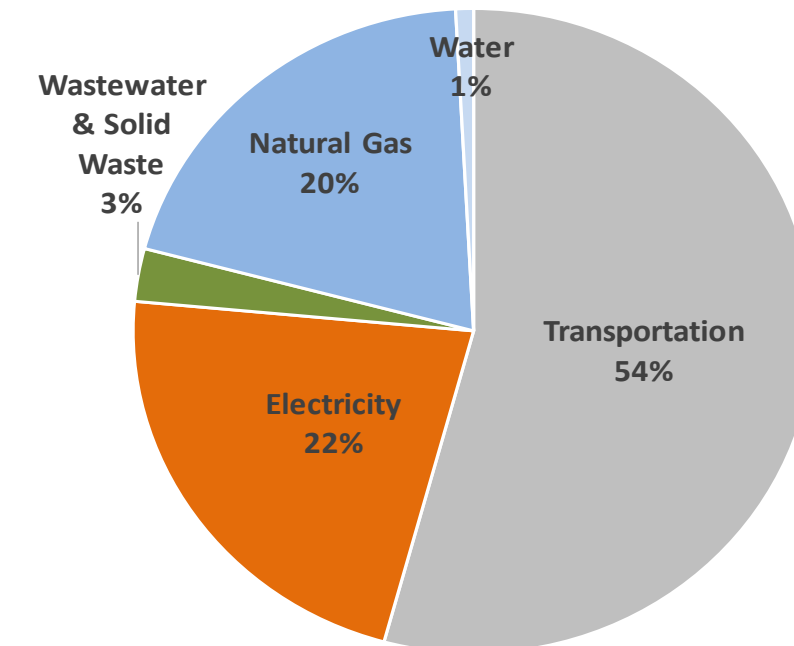
City of San Diego General Plan, adopted in 2008, calls for a City of Village Strategy to redevelop, infill, and target new growth into compact, mixed-use, and walkable villages that are connected to the regional transit system. It is comprised of 10 elements that provide a comprehensive slate of citywide policies.

Climate Action Plan - Transit Priority Areas (TPAs)

The City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan, adopted in December 2015, is a roadmap towards a sustainable future that serves all citizens. Sustainability means making better use of resources, such as water, energy and waste; designing neighborhoods to be more walkable, bikable and livable; and investing in the future by supporting clean-energy technology, innovation, and jobs. The CAP 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. 54 percent of City's emission came from transportation in 2016 (Chart 2-4). The average Mira Mesa Household contribute to the release of 47.5 tons of CO₂e annually (Chart 2-5), which is higher than City wide average of 41.7 tons CO₂e. The tailpipe emissions from car fuel is the highest source of household emission.

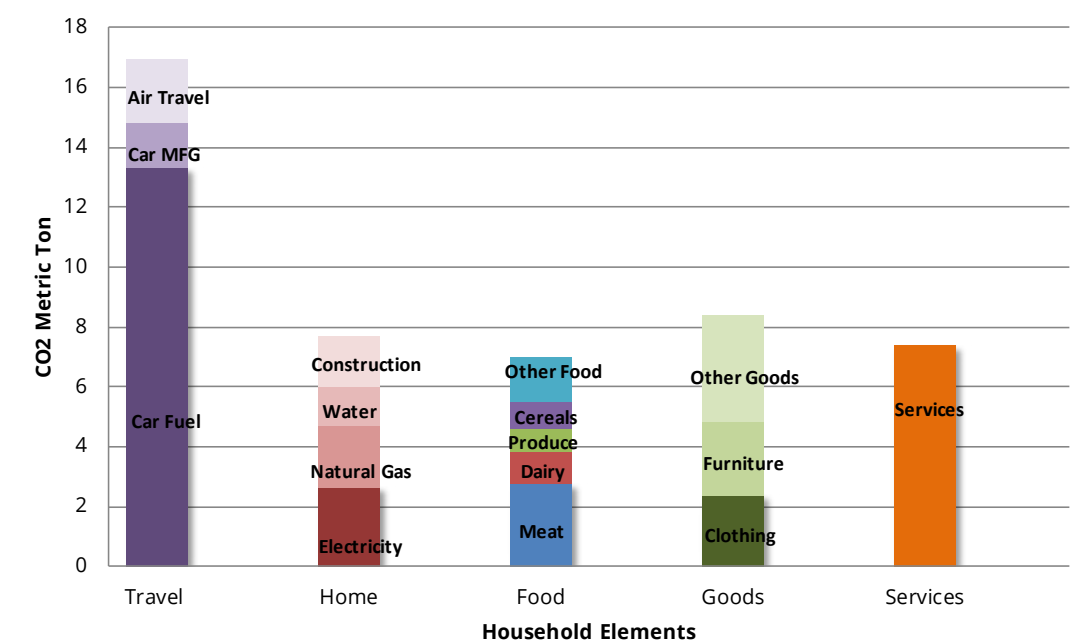
The CAP prioritizes the implementation of the General Plan's Mobility Element and the City Villages Strategy in TPAs to increase housing, jobs, and the use of transit. The TPAs means "an area within one-half mile of a major transit stop that is existing or planned, if the planned stop is scheduled to be completed within the planning horizon included in a Transportation Improvement Program adopted pursuant to Section 450.216 of Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations."

Chart 2-4: City of San Diego GHG Emissions 2016



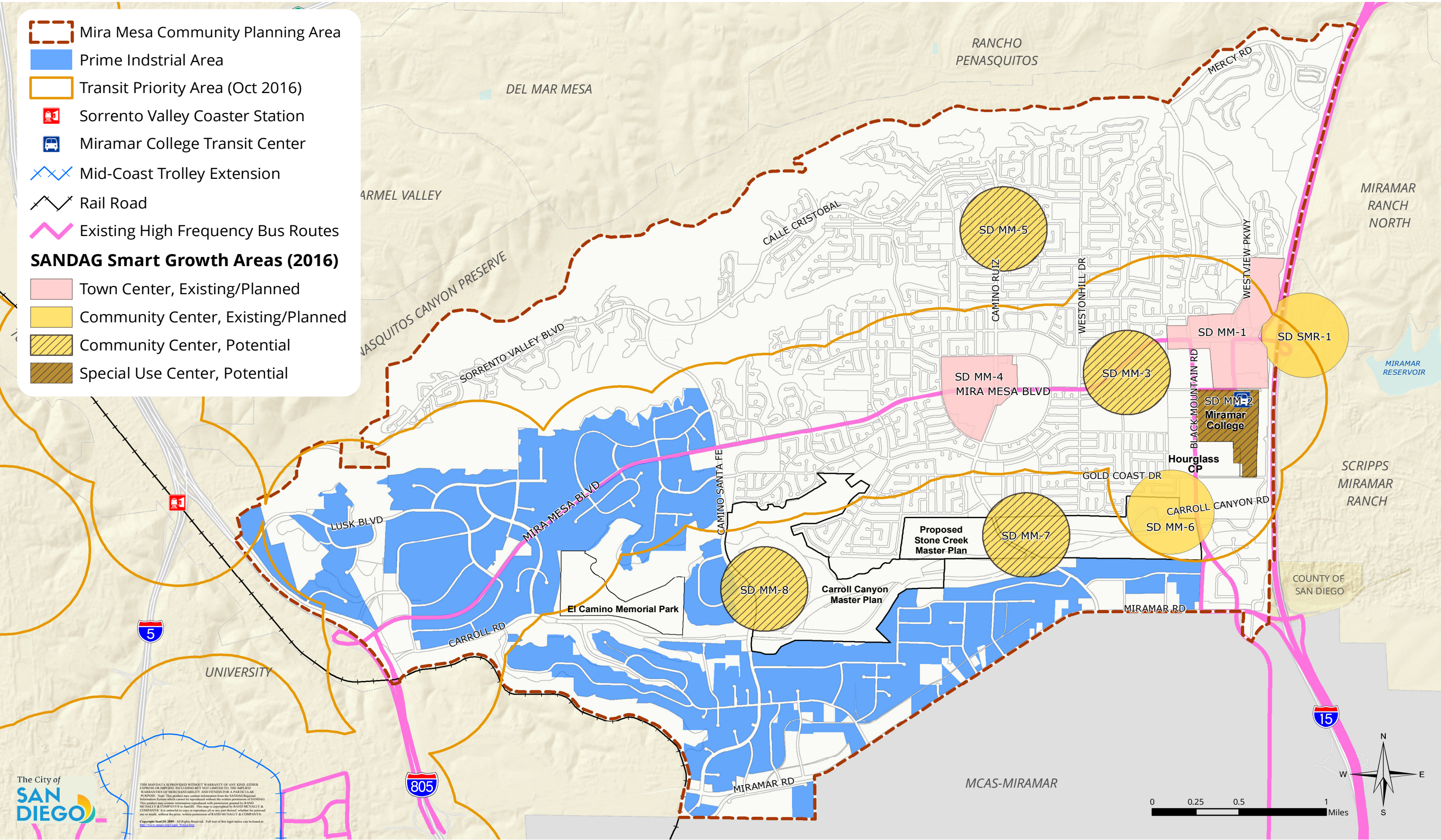
Source: City of San Diego, 2018

Chart 2-5: Mira Mesa Average Household Carbon Footprint



Source: UC Berkeley Cool Climate Calculator, 2018

Figure 2-7: Smart Growth and Transit Priority Areas



2.7 LAND USE SITING CONSTRAINTS

The major community constraints to residential development are the Airport Land Use Compatibility Overlay Zone (ALUCOZ) and Prime Industrial Land Use Designation, which limits residential development in western and southern Mira Mesa CPA. There are additional restrictions related to intensity of commercial uses within the ALUCOZ safety zones. Furthermore, approximately 2,300 acres in western Mira Mesa are located within the Local Coastal Program.

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

The 2008 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) for MCAS Miramar establishes land use compatibility policies and development criteria to protect airport operations and minimize the public's exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards (See Figure 2-9). Policies focus on limiting or avoiding new land uses that are sensitive to aircraft noise, minimizing concentrations of people in the event of an off-airport aircraft accident or emergency landing, ensuring that structures and other uses of the land do not cause hazards to aircraft in flight, and notifying people of aircraft overflights. The ALUCP does not allow residential use in noise contour 65+ CNEL and Accident Potential Zone 1, 2 and Clear Zone.

The General Plan Land Use and Community Planning Element address the policies and criteria contained in the ALUCPs. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulates additional safety factors to protect the approach, departure and circling airspace near airports. The Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 77, the ALUCPs, and the MCAS Miramar Master Plan provide technical descriptions of the safety factors.

Prime Industrial Lands (PIL)

The General Plan identifies prime industrial lands as areas that support export-oriented base sector activities such as manufacturing, research and development, assembly and distribution (see Section 3, Figure 3-1). The General Plan includes policy direction to protect these lands through:

- Maintaining or expanding industrial land use designations
- Preserving or applying strict industrial zoning
- Limiting public assembly and sensitive receptor uses
- Providing incentives for job growth, and
- Requiring a General Plan amendment to remove properties from the PIL map

While policies do not prescribe a specific buffer around these industrial lands, changes in land use that abut PIL must carefully consider the potential to reduce its utility.

Local Coastal Program (LCP)

California Coastal Act of 1976 established a coastal zone boundary within which certain planning and development requirements must be met. These requirements have been designed to protect and enhance California's coastal resources. The North City Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan (LCP) was adopted by the City Council in March 1981, revised in May 1985 and revised again in March 1987. The North City LCP provides development criteria for approximately 2,300 acres in western Mira Mesa that are within the watershed of Los Peñasquitos Lagoon (Figure 2-8).

Figure 2-8: Coastal Zone

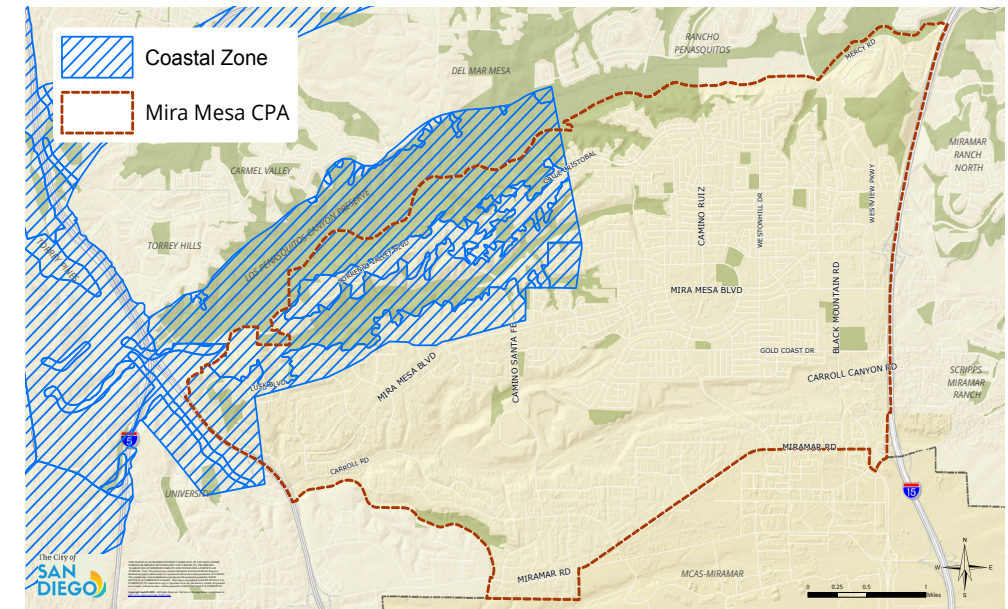


Figure 2-9: Airport Influence Areas

