

### 3 PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND THE PEDESTRIAN REALM

Areas in Riverwalk devoted to open space, parks, and the pedestrian realm occur in many forms. The primary open space and park feature is the **Riverwalk River Park**, which runs through the heart of the Specific Plan area and connects the higher-density Districts north of the San Diego River with the employment core south of the river. **Linear parks and plazas** are interspersed throughout the neighborhood and particularly within the North District, delivering a variety of **human-scale park components** that connect to the Riverwalk River Park, providing stimulating **activity** and **social interaction**.

Tying together the various open space, parks, recreation, and pedestrian experiences is a comprehensive network of **trails and pedestrian amenities**. The pedestrian trail system, in conjunction with the street network planned for Riverwalk, provides a means for pedestrians and bicyclists to pass through and access the various Districts and park elements in a **pleasant environment**. The **San Diego River Pathway** traverses the Riverwalk River Park on the north side of the San Diego River, providing **visual connectivity** to the river and allowing for active transportation away from vehicular traffic. This interconnected system also provides opportunities for casual strolls and active jogging, physical linkages to the Districts **independent of the vehicular circulation network**, and rest areas with seating to provide smaller scale intimate areas for **rest** and **reflection**.

Added to the overall parks and recreation experience for residents in Riverwalk, **recreation facilities** will be provided in concert with residential development. The requirements and area devoted to private open space and recreational facilities will be in conformance with the City's Land Development Code (effective February 28, 2018).

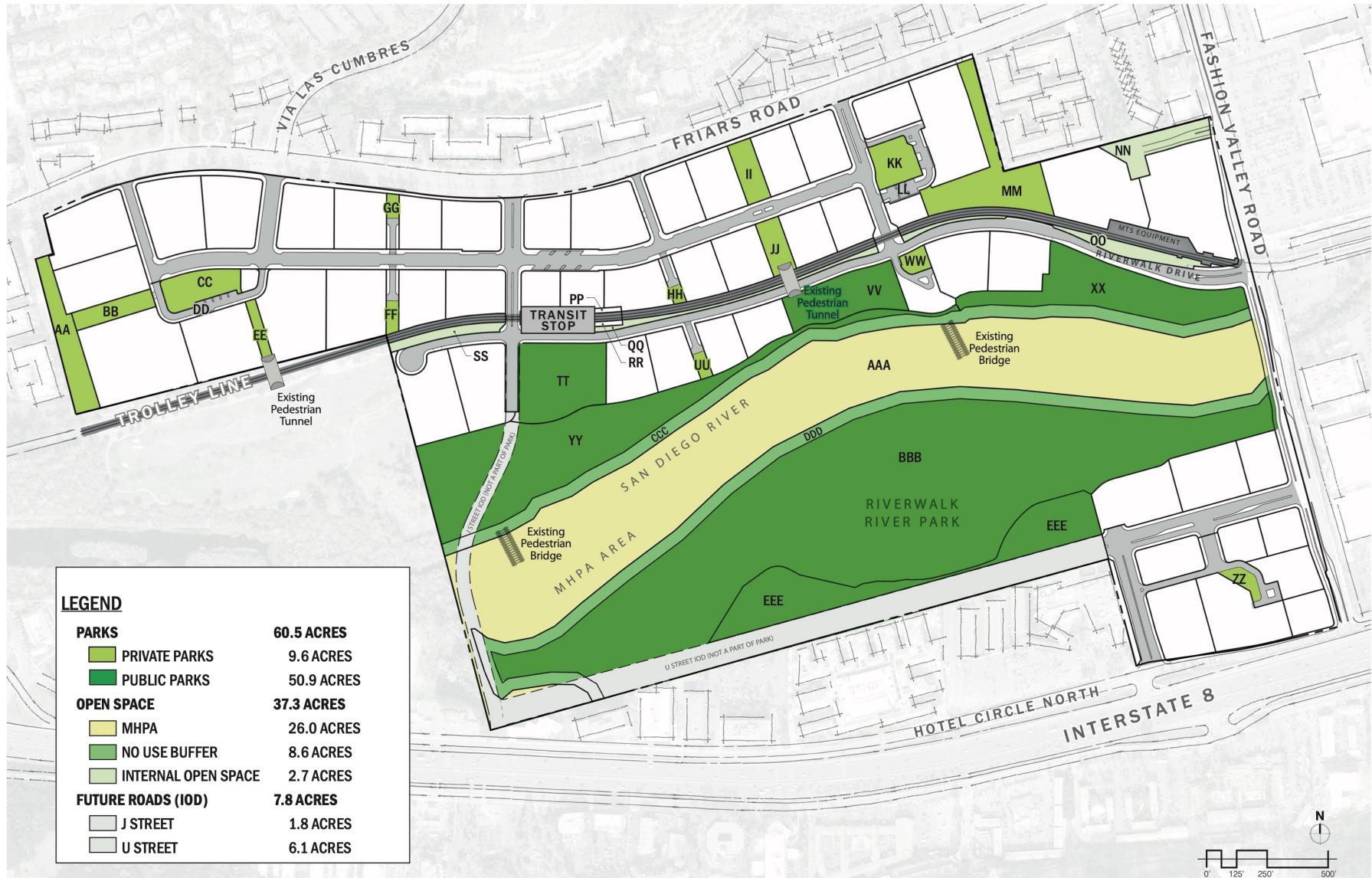
The various components of the Riverwalk parks and open space amenities are shown in Figure 3-1, *Parks and Open Space Amenities Plan*. Area devoted to each of the major open space and park elements is identified in Table 3-1, *Park Area Summary*. (Note: The intent and use of this table is different from Table 2-1 and, therefore, the typologies on this table are different from Table 2-1.) Parks located in the North District will be privately owned and publicly accessible via a recreation easement. Parks located in the Park District will be publicly owned. Parks located in the Central District will either be privately owned and publicly accessible via a recreation easement or publicly owned.

**Table 3-1. Park Area Summary**

Park Type	Ownership	Acreage
Riverwalk River Park	Public	45.0 acres
Neighborhood Parks	Public or Private (Recreation Easement)	17.3 acres
Open Space & River Habitat	Public / Non-Profit	35.2 acres
<b>Total</b>	--	<b>97.5 acres*</b>

\*Summation of acreage may not equal Table 2-1 summation due to rounding.

Figure 3-1. Parks and Open Space Amenities Plan



### 3.1 PUBLIC SPACES

To assure an open character within Riverwalk, major open space use areas link to one another to form the open space network, conceptually shown in Figure 3-1, *Parks and Open Space Amenities Plan*. The largest element of the open space network is the Riverwalk River Park, which is principally located on the south side of the San Diego River and serves as a natural spine connecting Fashion Valley Road on the east to the western boundary of Riverwalk. Pedestrian and bicycle paths, trails, bridges, and tunnels provide the often uninterrupted physical connections into the developed portions of Riverwalk. (See Figure 4-2, *Pedestrian Circulation*, and Figure 4-3, *Bicycle Circulation*.) These connections serve as extensions of the open space network by incorporating green street elements including tree canopies, enhanced landscaping, and focus on pedestrian and bicycle circulation. Additionally, the North and Central Districts of Riverwalk provide a variety of amenities, such as active play areas large enough for impromptu pick-up sports games, play equipment, river overlooks, activated plazas and paseos, and passive space for all residents and visitors. This open space network is defined in two parts:



Community gathering within public space

- » **Riverwalk River Park and Open Space** (80.2 acres): is a Major Park (20-acre minimum) composed of the existing San Diego River channel and proposed Riverwalk River Park area; and
- » **Recreational Open Space** (approximately 17.3 acres): includes the network of park areas that may include Pocket Parks (less than one acre), Mini Parks/Plazas (one to three acres), and/or Neighborhood Parks (three to 13 acres), pedestrian and bike paths, and plazas.

Riverwalk includes an integrated network of pedestrian (see Figure 4-2, *Pedestrian Circulation*) and bicycle pathways (see Figure 4-3, *Bicycle Circulation*) that are critical to connectivity to the various Specific Plan features, including the open space network, and connectivity to the greater community surrounding Riverwalk. Trails within the Riverwalk River Park connect to sidewalk elements within Riverwalk and in the surrounding street network. Furthermore, the San Diego River Pathway within Riverwalk will align with the existing San Diego River Pathway on the east side of Fashion Valley Road at Town and Country Resort Hotel, allowing for easy connectivity. These pedestrian and bicycle networks link Riverwalk to the surrounding community and further reinforces the existing active transportation network.

#### **Goal for Greatness:**

Fulfill the vision of the San Diego River Park Master Plan by reclaiming a portion of the project surrounding the San Diego River as a common; a synergy of water, wildlife, and people.

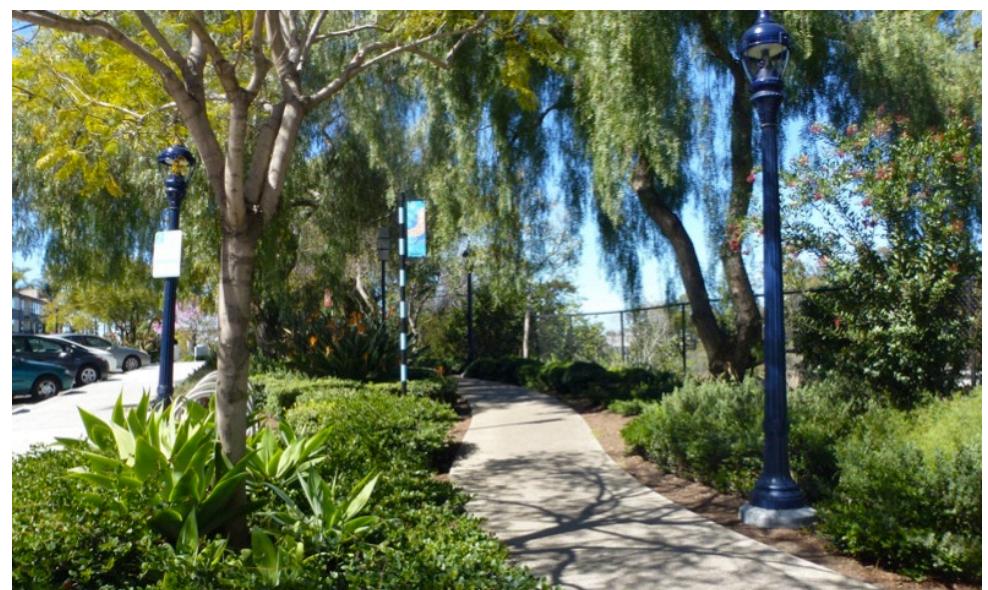
## 3.2 PARKS

Parks within Riverwalk provide the opportunity for people to connect with their neighbors and visitors and provide the ground plane connection between development areas via paths, trails, and sidewalks. Per City Council Policy 600-33, a General Development Plan (GDP) will be prepared for the Riverwalk Specific Plan public parks.

Riverwalk's parks include a wide variety of opportunities for both active and passive uses. The spaces will likely include Pocket Parks, Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and the Riverwalk River Park (Major Park), each providing differing experiences for users (Figure 3-2, Conceptual Park Plan, and Figure 3-3, Typical Park Vignette Key Map). The Riverwalk River Park is the single largest land use within Riverwalk and serves as the natural spine from which fingers of open space extend into the developed areas of Riverwalk.



Linear parks are activated with pedestrian uses and surrounding urban development



Mini and pocket parks allow for interspersion of recreation space throughout Riverwalk.

Figure 3-2. Conceptual Park Plan

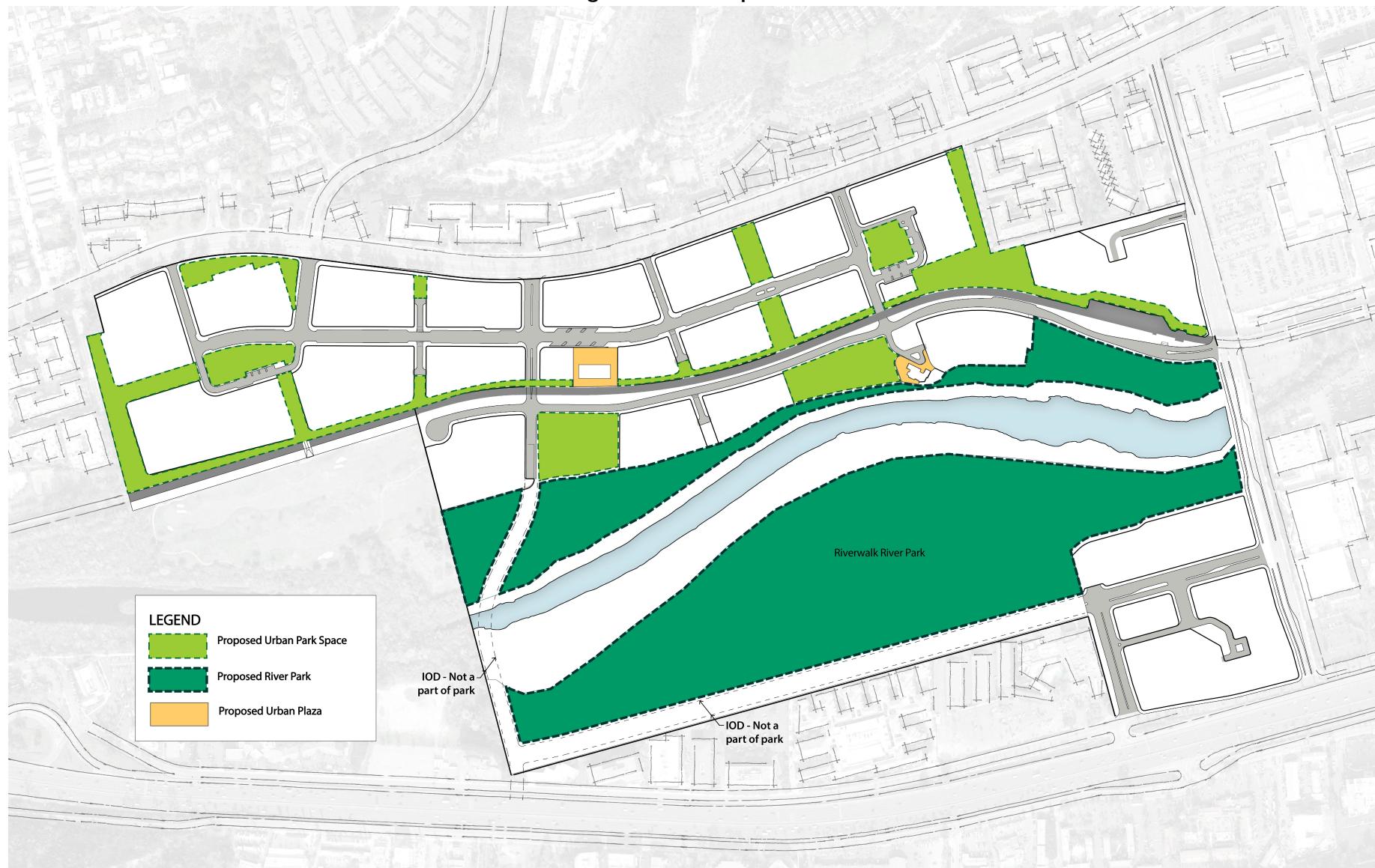
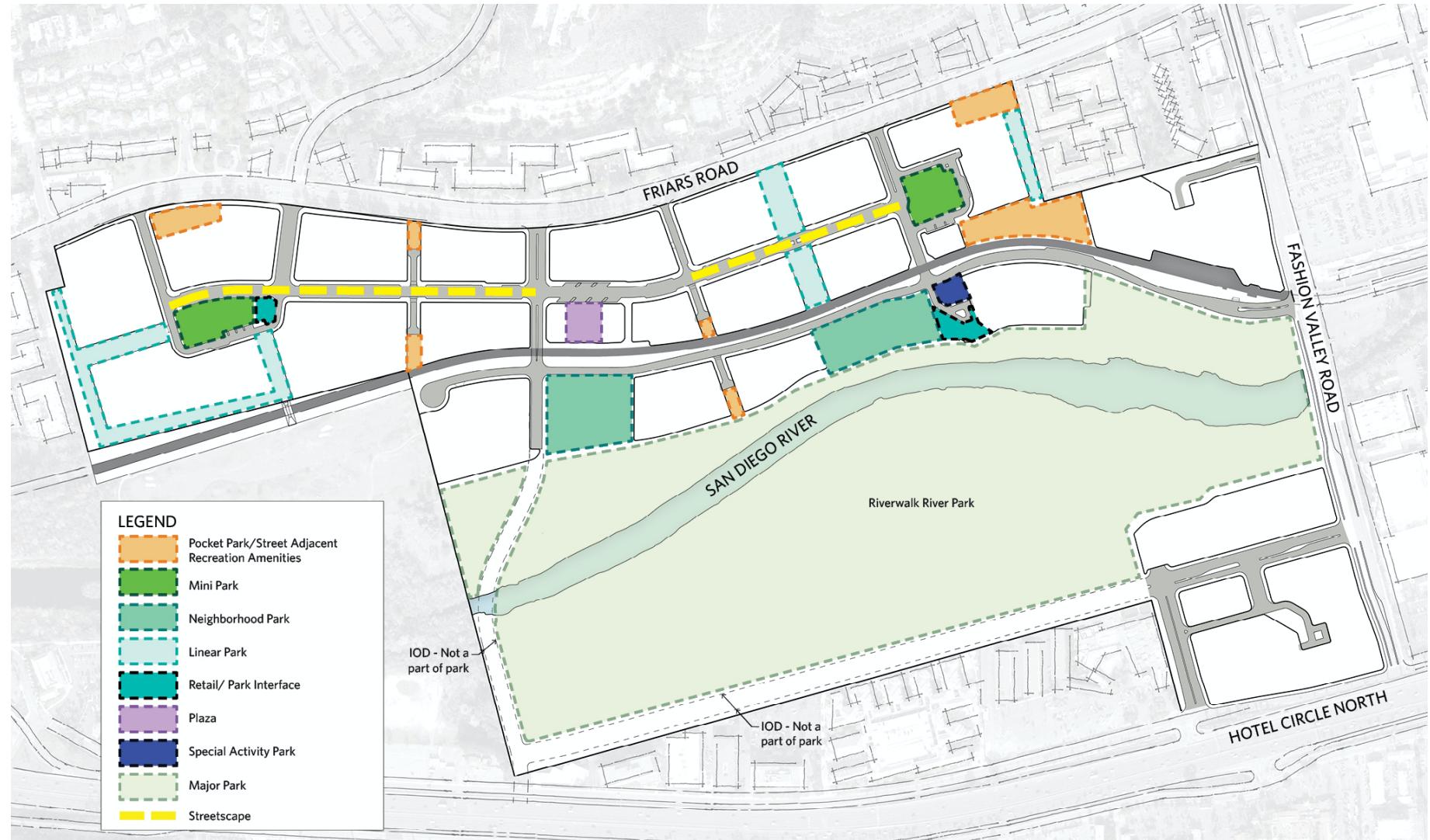


Figure 3-3. Typical Park Vignette Key Map



### 3.2.1 Riverwalk River Park (Major Park)

The Riverwalk River Park is an essential component in enriching Riverwalk and the surrounding Mission Valley. The multifaceted role of the Riverwalk River Park includes a place to connect with nature and the San Diego River, as well as a place for social and cultural exchange. The Riverwalk River Park may be enlivened by markets; physical activities, such as children playing or people skating, walking or jogging; cultural activities, such as art and community events; or simply socializing with friends. Maintenance responsibilities of the Riverwalk River Park will be provided by the City and/or developer as described in the Development Agreement.

Programming within the Riverwalk River Park will ensure inclusivity with uses not just for the active athlete or families with kids, but other activities to attract people such as seniors or teens, or people who are just looking for a place to sit or walk on a daily basis. Ample sidewalks, trails, and pathways; places for respite in the shade; and even opportunities to buy a sandwich or cup of coffee at adjacent retail uses all invite the full range of users to the Riverwalk River Park. The active programming of traditional and non-traditional park elements within the Riverwalk River Park presents greater reasons for people to go to the park and increases the value added of the Riverwalk River Park. Programming elements may include:

- » A ranger station
- » Educational signage/kiosks

- » Nature viewing
- » Community garden area
- » Dog park(s)
- » Children's play areas
- » Water features
- » Ball fields
- » A community-serving recreation center

Numerous elements of great park planning for the creation of place are incorporated into the Riverwalk River Park. As a great park, the Riverwalk River Park provides a range of things to do – a multitude of activities for different age groups and types of people to use. The Riverwalk River Park is easy to get to, and connected to the surrounding neighborhood and community. Through regular and thorough maintenance, the Riverwalk River Park will be safe, clean, and attractive and there will be comfortable places to sit such as benches, picnic tables, and shaded areas. Most important of all is the Riverwalk River Park's sociability – the park as a place to meet other people as an integral part of community life.



Expansive park space with walking trails, lighting, and passive space

### 3.2.2 Urban Parks

Urban parks provide unique value to neighborhoods and communities. These parks woven into the urban fabric provide enhanced walkability in proximity to green space, improved health of both the urban environment and the inhabitants, and incorporated areas for gathering places and quick breaks from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Within Riverwalk, intermittent linear parks are linked together with smaller pocket parks to create an urban park network that acts as one cohesive linear park. Thus, the Specific Plan contains a discussion of urban parks that includes various sized parks, plazas, and paseos, as well as the connectivity these parks have in relation to each other and the Riverwalk site as a whole. The urban park network of Riverwalk, comprised of linear parks and pocket parks, differs from traditional green spaces and the expansive Riverwalk River Park thanks to the assorted proportions provided by urban parks. These urban parks serve as a link to boost alternative transportation as a means to a carry pedestrians, bicyclists, scooter riders, and others in a pleasant and safe manner.

#### Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are generally three to 13 acres and are intended to serve a population of approximately 5,000 within one mile. Accessible by bicycling and walking, this type of park would have minimal parking. Amenities for neighborhood parks may include picnic areas, children's play area, multi-purpose turf areas, walkways, and landscaping.

#### Linear Parks

Linear parks (Figure 3-4) are of varying size and take people on a journey through Riverwalk and link public spaces. Linear parks and plazas may occur as linkages along roadway elements or within expanded setbacks between buildings. Linear park programing may include picnic and seating areas, hardscape and softscape components, passive or active recreation opportunities, and/or multi-purpose turf areas.

**Figure 3-4. Linear Park Vignette**

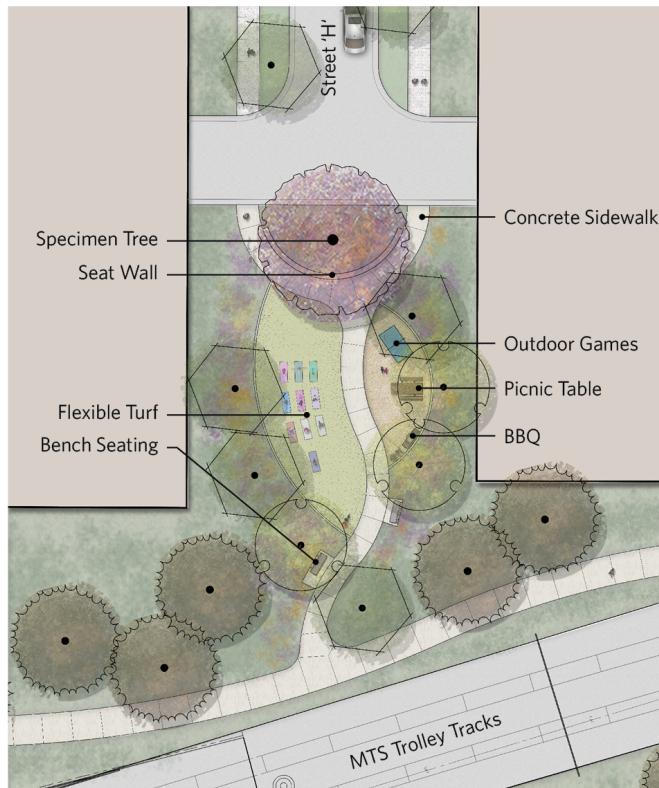


For illustrative concept purposes only.

### Pocket Parks

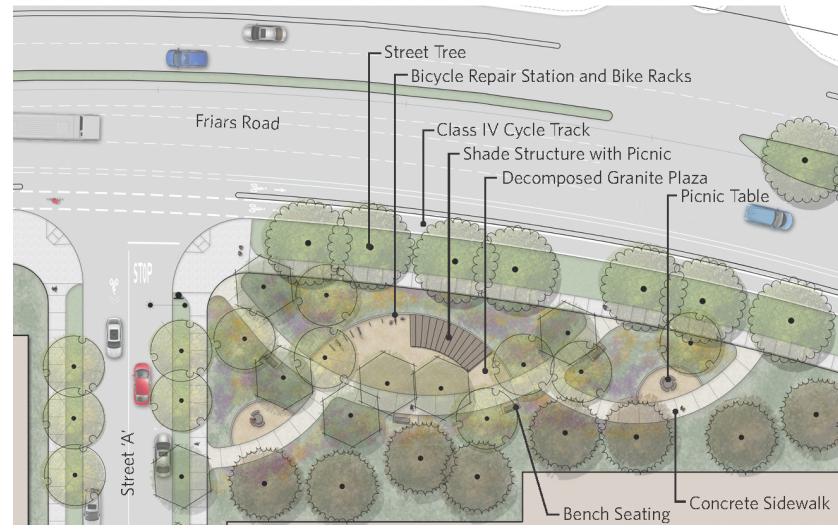
Pocket Parks (Figures 3-5, 3-6, and 3-7) provide for passive and active recreation interspersed throughout Riverwalk. Pocket Parks are less than one acre and may have overlooks, playgrounds, art installations, and places to picnic; these are spaces that encourage both movement and relaxation and an opportunity to engage with neighbors, friends, and strangers. Special opportunities for Pocket Parks include street adjacent recreation amenities along fronting roads (Figure 3-6) and spaces between buildings and the MTS trolley line (Figure 3-5).

**Figure 3-5. Pocket Park Vignette**



For illustrative concept purposes only.

**Figure 3-6. Street Adjacent Recreation Amenity Vignette**



For illustrative concept purposes only.

**Figure 3-7. Retail/Park Interface Vignette**



For illustrative concept purposes only.

### Mini Parks

Mini parks (Figure 3-8), which are one to three acres in size, provide for passive and active recreation. Like Pocket Parks, mini parks may have overlooks, playgrounds, art installations, and places to picnic encourage both movement, relaxation, and engagement. Mini park features may include picnic areas, multi-purpose turf areas, children's play equipment, and other features that facilitate social engagement. Mini parks may also be special activity parks, such as a community garden or dog park.

**Figure 3-8. Mini Park Vignette**

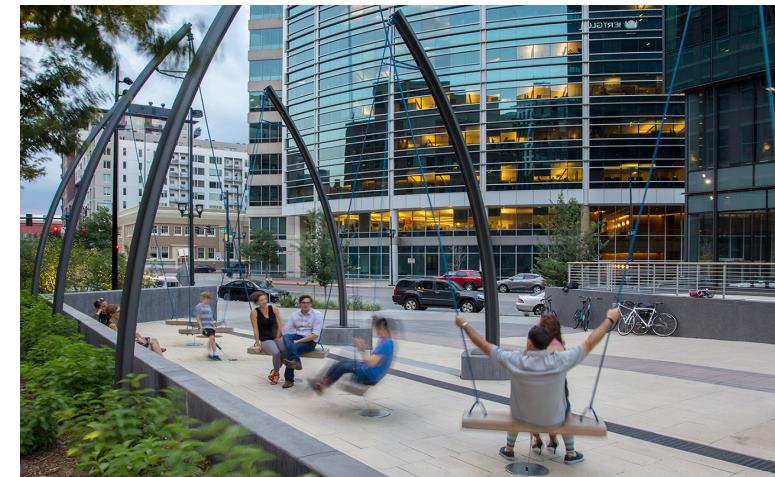


### Plazas

Riverwalk's plazas will serve as attractive, inviting places for residents, employees, and visitors. While high quality materials will enhance the ambiance of Riverwalk's plazas, basic attributes such as protection from the elements, ample seating, and visually stimulating design should establish comfortable gathering places. Without the need for heavy landscaping, stone

or brick paving patterns, ornamental railings, and seating are all high-quality components that can be used to add to the inviting ambience of Riverwalk's hardscape plazas. With the exception of the plaza located at the transit/trolley stop, plazas shall include a minimum of 20 percent landscaped area and achieve 0.05 point per square foot. Planting areas may be at-grade or in permanently affixed planters. The transit/trolley stop plaza has a minimum of five percent landscaping to allow for community engagement in this space. Within the transit/trolley stop plaza, a minimum of 0.05 points per square foot is to be achieved with trees that are 36-inch box minimum.

Riverwalk's plazas will be varied in form, using building edges and landscaped areas to create unique spaces. Focal points, such as fountains, sculptures, or other design features, may be included to give plazas a unique identity from each other. A variety of activities such as outdoor dining, socializing with neighbors, and quiet relaxation are supported in Riverwalk's plazas. Converging building walls, partial vistas, and walkway angles that slowly reveal the next experience will draw a person from one space to the next, creating a sense of discovery about what waits around the next corner.



*Placemaking elements within an urban hardscape plaza*

### Paseos

As described in the Mission Valley Community Plan, paseos are enhanced pedestrian paths that provide ingress/egress through development projects that are privately owned and publicly accessible. Paseos can create corridors that function as secondary frontages for business storefronts and product displays or for café seating and plazas. Paseos may be anchored by new spaces that serve as space for seating, music, performances, art, and festivals. Actual design and locations of paseos will be determined as individual developments come online.

### *Special Activity Parks*

Special activity parks within Riverwalk vary in size and allow for specialized park uses. Special activity parks may be created for such uses as off-leash dog park(s) and/or community garden space.

### **3.2.3 Private Open Space**

Private open space (also referred to in the LDC as common open space) is any privately constructed and maintained outdoor space articulated for human use and/or relaxation. Private open space is an exclusive-use area for a specific development(s) to serve its residents, employees, and/or visitors. This includes, but is not limited to, plazas, paseos, courtyards, seating areas, recreational areas, viewing areas, children's play areas, picnic areas, pools, and other amenity areas.



Children's play areas and urban picnicking in plazas enliven private open space

### 3.3 MULTI-HABITAT PLANNING AREA WITHIN RIVERWALK

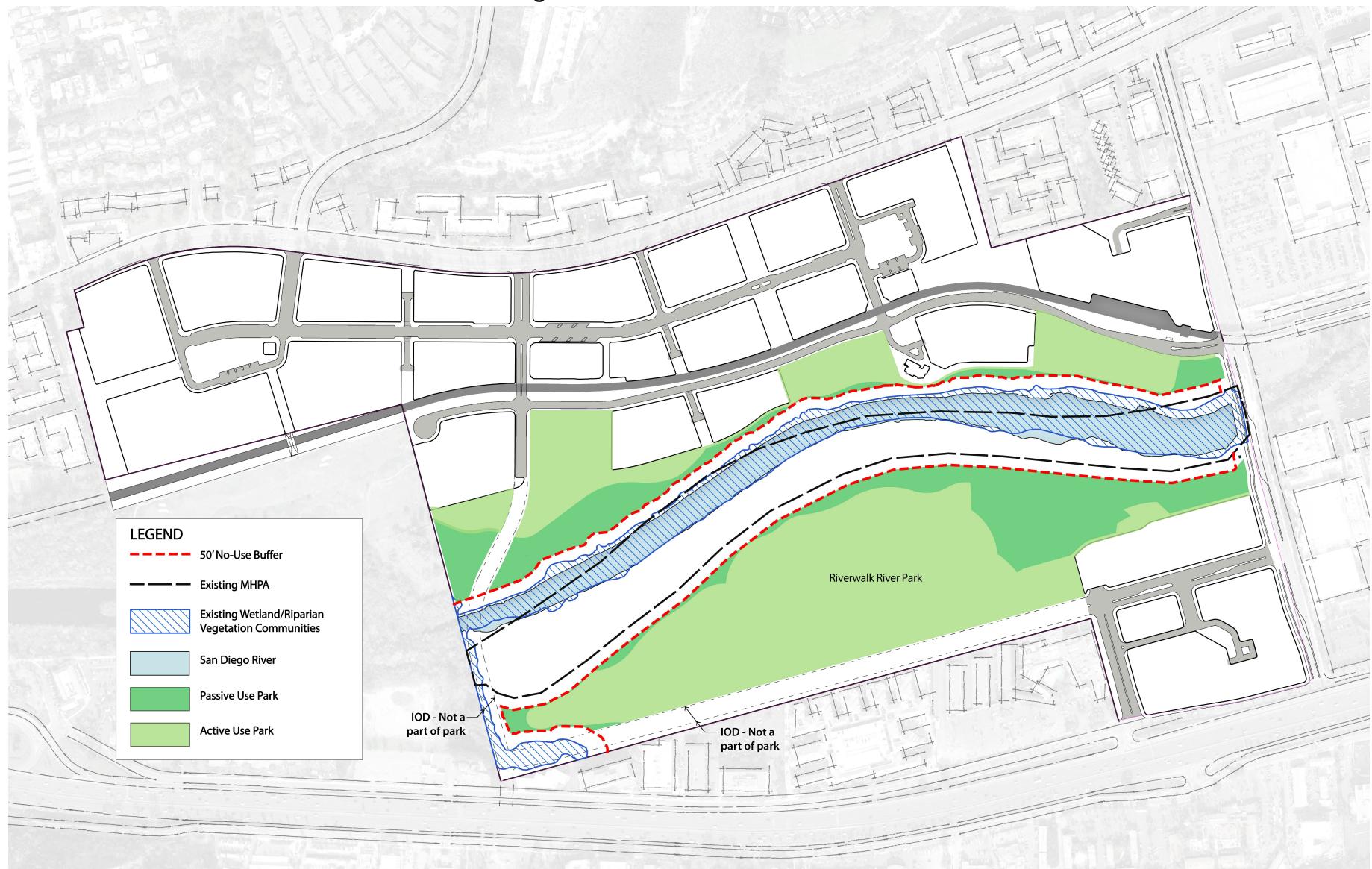
The Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) was developed by the City in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, property owners, developers, and environmental groups using the Preserve Design Criteria contained in the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Plan, and the City Council-adopted criteria for the creation of the MHPA.

MHPA lands are large blocks of native habitat that have the ability to support a diversity of plant and animal life and, therefore, have been included within the City's Subarea Plan for conservation. The MHPA also delineates core biological resource areas and corridors targeted for conservation as these lands have been determined to provide the necessary habitat quality, quantity, and connectivity to sustain the unique biodiversity of the San Diego region. While MHPA lands are considered by the City to be a sensitive biological resource and intended to be mostly void of development activities, development is allowed in the MHPA subject to the requirements of the MSCP Plan.

MHPA land occurs within the Riverwalk project site (Figure 3-9, *MHPA Within Riverwalk*). The MHPA includes the following specific guideline (B-15): "Native vegetation shall be restored as a condition of future development proposals along this portion of the San Diego River." Riverwalk includes grading within the MHPA to restore the form and function of the San Diego River, as well as revegetate the area with native plant materials through establishment of a Mitigation Bank.

Existing golf cart bridges, which are to be repurposed for pedestrian and bicycle use and cross the San Diego River, are located within the MHPA. These existing bridges will be utilized and maintained by the Riverwalk project. With the exception of necessary direct connections to these existing bridges, no new trails will be created within the MHPA, as a 50-foot "no use" buffer will be implemented on either side of the MHPA. Per the Subarea Plan, passive recreation in the form of these existing bridges and connections is compatible with the biological objectives of the MSCP and is, therefore, allowed in the MHPA.

Figure 3-9. MHPA Within Riverwalk



## 3.4 SAN DIEGO RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN AREA WITHIN RIVERWALK

### 3.4.1 River Corridor Area

In accordance with the San Diego River Park Master Plan, a minimum 35-foot wide area, referred to as the Path Corridor, will be created along the north side of the San Diego River floodway, outside the floodway, except in locations where this is not feasible due to site constraints. A wetland buffer will vary in width and includes a vegetative barrier to limit human physical access; a minimum 14-foot-wide San Diego River Pathway; additional trails connecting to the San Diego River Pathway; landscaped areas; and/or passive recreational areas, such as picnic areas, scenic and interpretive overlooks, fitness stations, seating, and educational exhibit areas.

Relative to the San Diego River, the existing river channel and MHPA will be preserved and restored with native vegetation as part of the River Corridor Area. The Riverwalk Restoration Plan provides details on plant species and methods of revegetation. The managed Riverwalk River Park occurs between the development areas of Riverwalk and the restored river habitat. The Riverwalk River Park includes native plantings and sites passive uses adjacent to the San Diego River and MHPA. MHPA land use adjacency guidelines are incorporated into project design to protect the river habitat area, including fencing and signage.

### 3.4.2 River Influence Area

In accordance with the San Diego River Park Master Plan, the River Influence Area is defined as the 200-foot-wide area extending outward from the River Corridor Area on each side of the river. The purpose of the River Influence

Area is to create a quality backdrop to the River Corridor Area through design that treats the San Diego River as an amenity, orients development toward the San Diego River, encourages active uses adjacent to the River Corridor Area, and provides public access to the San Diego River Pathway.

Development within the River Influence Area should be oriented to engage the San Diego River, taking advantage of the river environment as a park amenity while simultaneously providing passive crime prevention within the River Influence Area. In addition, development should define the edge and boundary of the River Corridor Area to reinforce and/or establish the corridor identity and image. Structures should be located and shaped in a manner that opens up views to the San Diego River from surrounding Districts, and a structure's location and shape on the site should create a spatial transition to the San Diego River. The active uses of a structure should be focused toward the San Diego River and inactive uses should be directed away from the San Diego River.

Figure 6-6, San Diego River Park Master Plan Area Within Riverwalk, illustrates the River Corridor Area and River Influence Area of the San Diego River, as they relate to the Riverwalk Specific Plan area. Development regulations of the River Corridor Area are included in Section 6.5.15, River Corridor Area. Development regulations for the River Influence Area are included in Section 6.5.16, River Influence Area.



San Diego River Park River Pathway within Mission

## 3.5 SITE PLANNING AND VIEW CORRIDORS

In site planning for Riverwalk, considerable emphasis is placed on establishing tree-framed view corridors both within the Specific Plan area and also into the site from adjacent roadways (Figure 3-10, Riverwalk View Corridors). These are views as seen by pedestrians, from automobiles and transit, and other individuals passing by the property at the street level. The non-motorized view corridors are the most critical due to the pedestrian orientation of the site. Most of the views from I-8 are obscured by existing development. Chapter 6, *Land Uses, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines*, of this Specific Plan provides criteria for addressing views from I-8 toward the river through the development parcels of the South District. Riverwalk will additionally afford views from the north into the Riverwalk River Park and other elements of Riverwalk's open space system, with a specific emphasis on view corridors from Friars Road through the development parcels of the North District and Central District toward the San Diego River.

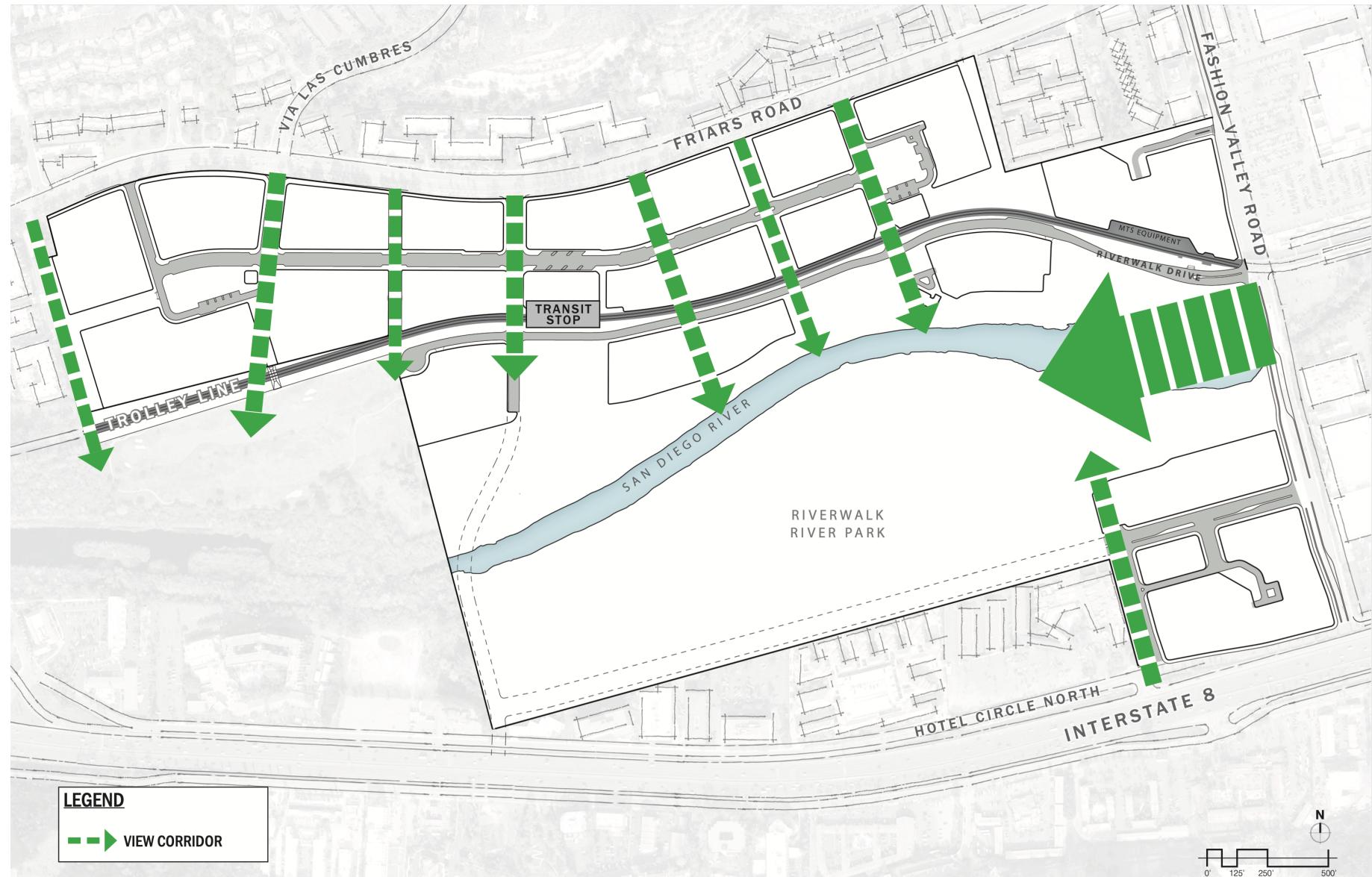
### 3.5.1 Site Planning

Large plazas and courts within Riverwalk are expected to have visual "terminations" such as landscape forms, fixed furnishings, and special buildings. The potential addition of water features such as pools, fountains, and artificial streams can also be utilized to provide visual focal points. These water features are subject to the City's water restriction and should be designed to serve aesthetically while accommodating periodic drought conditions. In addition, water features that accommodate storm water conveyance can be used to integrate the San Diego River with the proposed development by carrying the river corridor feeling into the development.



Large plaza with sculptures and water feature as visual terminations

Figure 3-10. View Corridors



### 3.5.2 Views and View Corridors

The placement and orientation of buildings should reflect the visual corridor objectives by organizing in a pattern which emphasizes these focal points. Providing interior view opportunities defines the urban character of Riverwalk through a variety of spaces linked by walkways and plazas, and articulated by overhead structures that frame views and create a changing spatial experience for pedestrians. Tree-framed view corridors are encouraged.



View corridors may be framed by natural elements, such as park spaces and trees, or urban elements, such as buildings and streetscapes