

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Community Profile

COMMUNITY SETTING

~~The Uptown community~~Uptown contains some of the oldest and most distinct neighborhoods in San Diego consisting of Hillcrest, Mission Hills, Bankers Hill/Park West, University Heights, Middletown, and the Medical Center. ~~Each exhibits~~each exhibiting a variety of historic architectural types, established landscaping, active neighborhood and commercial districts, natural canyon open space, and other unique community features such as its proximity to Balboa Park. The community features a wide range of residential opportunities and a diverse mix of people within a distinctly urban setting prototypical of San Diego. Most of the street system and building lot development was also well established before the need to consider the automobile as a part of subdivision planning. ~~I~~and the community is relatively well-served by transit along ~~the~~ major corridors. The canyon systems help define the community's urban form, provide environmental benefits, and offer magnificent views.

~~The planning area~~Uptown is located just north of Downtown ~~San Diego~~. It is bounded on the north by the steep hillsides of Mission Valley, on the east by Park Boulevard and Balboa Park, and on the west and south by Old Town San Diego and Interstate 5. ~~The planning area~~Uptown comprises about 2,700 acres or approximately 4.2 square miles.

The community's topography generally consists of a level mesa that is ~~broken~~ segmented by ~~heavily vegetated~~ canyons and borders two major parks, Presidio and Balboa. This gives the area a sense of seclusion from Downtown and other surrounding communities, and provides a sense of openness within the community. It also affords scenic views of ~~downtown~~Downtown, the ocean, canyons, the harbor, Coronado, and Point Loma.

~~The boundaries of the community's six neighborhoods are based upon contributing factors such as historical documents, county assessor's parcel maps, property deeds, subdivision maps, police beat maps, the existence of active neighborhood organizations, and residents' perceptions about where they live within the community.~~

~~Through the years, residents within these neighborhoods have come together to focus on their local needs, improvement opportunities, and to celebrate their local identity within the greater Uptown community. More detail on Uptown's distinctive neighborhoods can also be found within the Urban Design Element.~~

UPTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS

Uptown is known for its distinct neighborhoods. The evolution of the community through numerous eras, and the topographic definition created by the canyons, has resulted in neighborhoods that have developed unique architectural, landscape, and demographic characteristics. The distinctiveness of the individual neighborhoods is highly valued by the Uptown community, and a key objective of the urban form element is to protect and enhance the qualities that make these neighborhoods unique. ~~.~~

The boundaries of the community's six neighborhoods are based upon contributing factors such as historical documents, county assessor's parcel maps, property deeds, subdivision maps, police beat maps, the existence of active neighborhood organizations, and residents' perceptions about where they live within the community. Through the years, residents within these neighborhoods have come together to focus on their local needs, improvement opportunities, and to celebrate their local identity within the greater Uptown community.

Mission Hills

The Mission Hills neighborhood includes the area ~~of Uptown generally~~ south of Mission Valley, west of Curlew Street and Reynard Way, north of Norton Avenue, and east of the Old San Diego ~~Community Plan Area.~~ —Mission Hills is a residentially-focused neighborhood consisting of predominantly single-family homes, with Washington Street as the primary corridor providing access into and through the neighborhood. ~~The main~~A commercial ~~core~~~~ecore~~ is generally located along ~~the~~ Washington Street ~~corridor~~, with another smaller neighborhood-serving commercial area ~~is located~~ at the intersection of West Lewis and Stephens Streets. ~~HA-series~~ ~~of~~ higher density, multi-family developments are located north of Washington ~~Street~~ between Eagle and Ibis Streets.

Topographically, the neighborhood is perched on the upper elevations of the mesa amid a series of steep canyons that extend out from the neighborhood to the north and south, displaying sweeping views of Mission Valley, the Bay, and Downtown. The deep, heavily vegetated canyons divide the neighborhood into a series of secluded sub-neighborhoods buffered by open space. The street and block pattern reflects this topography, with small square and rectangular blocks occupying the flatter areas at the top of the ~~canyon in Mesas Mesa~~, and curvilinear, non-continuous streets, and irregular blocks approaching the canyons. The street system includes an assortment of streets and street widths, with the majority of streets being quiet, relatively narrow, residential streets. Fort Stockton ~~Drive, and Sunset Drive, Sunset Boulevard, and Juan Street~~ serve as residential collectors that distribute local traffic in the upper areas, and Reynard Way distributes traffic to the south. ~~The busy, four-lane arterial~~ scale and character of Washington Street sharply contrasts with the placid character of the rest of the neighborhood. The high volumes of traffic along Washington ~~Street~~ have generated a predominance of auto-oriented commercial uses and design responses in the section east of Washington Place. West of Washington Place the street drops into a canyon and creates a physical divide in the community.

Features that contribute to Mission Hills' unique identity include the mature vegetation that characterizes the neighborhood, the use of Queen ~~palms~~ ~~Palms~~ as street trees, and the prevalence of low front yard walls—many using local cobblestone, in addition to the neighborhood's dramatic canyons and views. The Mission Hills gateway sign on Washington Street also provides a neighborhood marker and sense of entry into the neighborhood.

Hillcrest

The Hillcrest neighborhood is located at the center of Uptown, bounded between Washington and Upas Streets, and Dove/ Curlew Streets and Park Boulevard. The topography slopes up from Downtown to relatively flat mesas, and canyons bisect the southern portion of the neighborhood. ~~Topographically, the developed portion of Hillcrest is relatively flat, except for canyons extending into the southern portion of the area, and the SR-163 canyon which bisects the neighborhood.~~

Hillcrest is the most diverse of the Uptown neighborhoods, containing more retail, office and ~~mixed-use~~ ~~mixed-use~~ development and more varied residential character. ~~The area~~ Hillcrest includes the primary commercial core of Uptown, which is concentrated around the intersection of Fifth Avenue and University Avenue, and extends several blocks east, west, and south. This area is a vibrant pedestrian-oriented commercial center, as well as the center of community-wide activity with active, walkable streets, mixed-use buildings and retail, office, and entertainment activities. Hillcrest is marked by the iconic Hillcrest gateway sign, at University and ~~5th~~ Fifth Avenue ~~Avenues~~, serving as a key neighborhood identify feature.

University Avenue is the primary spine of Hillcrest, with commercial development extending along University Avenue east of ~~State SR-163~~State Route 163, and west until it converges with Mission Hills. The eastern portion of University Avenue generally experiences higher traffic speeds due to increased street width. Streetscape improvements and the development of the ~~mixed use~~mixed-use Uptown District have contributed to a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Hillcrest is one of the more intensely developed neighborhoods in Uptown. Residential development includes a variety of multi-family residential developments in both stand-alone and ~~mixed use~~mixed-use formats, with densities ranging from 30 to 100 units per acre in some areas, and commercial development intensities are the highest in the community, particularly in the core retail district where ~~no development~~building setbacks are not required and surface parking is at a minimum. ~~The majority of the structures are one- and two-stories, but more recent~~Retail storefronts and office buildings range from one to two stories. ~~Mi-~~mixed-use and residential development generally tends to be in the ~~3~~three- to ~~seven~~seven-story range. The area also includes ~~a handful of residential~~ high-rise buildings, all of which were developed to take advantage of views of either Balboa Park or the Bay. Taller buildings are scattered but tend to be located in the core along Fifth Avenue, near Park Boulevard and University Avenue, or at the north end of Balboa Park. Buildings in Hillcrest include a range of architectural styles. Single-family residential clusters along ~~1st~~First and ~~2nd~~Second Avenues, and east of ~~State Route SR-163~~State Route 163 and south of Robinson, include styles associated with early development, ~~such as that~~ include Craftsman, Bungalow, Prairie, and Mission and Spanish Revival. ~~Commercial architecture is a combination of historic commercial buildings, such as on the corner of Fifth and University Avenues, and more auto-oriented buildings from later generations.~~ Infill development ~~completed in the last several years~~ has introduced new architectural forms and styles, many that try to complement the form, scale and stylistic precedents in found within the Hillcrest communityHillcrest.

Hillcrest is generally characterized by a street grid pattern that, ~~unlike Mission Hills,~~ includes little variation in response to topography. The predominant block pattern consists of long rectangular blocks (~~300 feet~~300' x ~~600 feet~~600') with a mid-block alley running the length of the block. While retaining the same general dimensions, the blocks are oriented north-south along the Avenues, but are rotated east-west along University Avenue and Robinson Avenue, and then northeast/southwest along Normal Street. Despite this grid pattern, Robinson Avenue, University Avenue and Washington Streets are the only streets that provide contiguous east-west connections through Hillcrest, due to the divide created by ~~State Route R 1-SR-163~~State Route 163 and canyons. ~~Because~~ Hillcrest is the crossroads of Uptown, with ~~the~~ major streets intersecting in ~~the Hillcrest~~Hillcrest's core, high traffic volumes characterize primary connector streets ~~that~~ presenting a challenge to preserving the core area's pedestrian orientation. Normal Street represents a unique feature in the street system with its diagonal orientation, ~~it's~~ extremely and wide right-of-way, ~~and relatively low traffic volumes.~~

Medical Complex

The Medical Complex neighborhood is bounded by Interstate 8 on the north, Washington Street on the south, ~~SR-163~~State Route 163 on the east and the Dove Street Canyon on the west. Topographically, the area sits atop a flat mesa north from Washington Street until it meets the two canyons that flow down to Mission Valley. The rim of the canyon provides dramatic views north over Mission Valley. Washington Street forms the boundary between Hillcrest and the Medical Complex, and marks the transition from Hillcrest's pedestrian-oriented retail district to the more automobile-oriented medical center uses. Buildings are noticeably taller in the Medical Complex than they are in the Hillcrest core just to the south. The two medical centers, which are both ~~8~~eight to ~~12~~twelve stories tall, are surrounded by development that is predominantly ~~3~~three and ~~5~~five stories, particularly in the area east of ~~First~~First Avenue. The western portion of Medical Complex has more single family housing that is ~~11~~one to ~~22~~two stories. Development intensities, both residential and institutional, are generally higher than in the majority of Uptown. Residential densities of 30 to 100 dwelling units per acre are common, and the hospitals and medical office buildings have very high floor area ratios.

The Medical Complex is dominated by the presence of two medical centers: Scripps Mercy Hospital and Medical Center and the UCSD Medical Center, which occupy over ~~40~~forty percent of the neighborhood. The remaining portion of the Medical Complex area is occupied primarily by residential uses, the majority being multi-family housing to serve medical center employees. Commercial

development, which is mostly auto-oriented, is located on the north side of Washington Street, and sporadically ~~surrounding~~ surrounds the medical centers. While Medical Complex contains the lowest proportion of single-family homes in Uptown, stylistically, they are similar to elsewhere ~~in~~ within the community. Multi-family buildings are more contemporary, reflecting a combination of mid-century, ~~and~~ late Modern and Post-Modern styles. The medical buildings have an institutional character that distinguishes them from other development in Uptown, and there is a much higher occurrence of free-standing parking garages, many of which have been sited in canyons to reduce the apparent mass. The character of the pedestrian realm varies according to the surrounding use. ~~The more-residential areas generally have pleasant-a pedestrian-focus streetscapes with street trees. Near the hospitals, while less attention is paid to the pedestrian environment around the hospitals, where~~ the chief priority is vehicular access.

The block pattern of Medical Complex is similar to Hillcrest just north of Washington Street, with long north-south blocks with mid-block alleys. Approaching the canyons, the block dimensions begin to shift, first losing the mid-block alley, and then morphing into large-scale development parcels and curvilinear cul-de-sacs that respond to the topography at the canyon interface. The scale of the residential streets in Medical Complex is similar to the residential portions of Mission Hills, with narrow, intimate streets. With the exception of Bachman Place which extends north through the area to Mission Valley, the streets in the Medical Complex only provide for internal circulation with the only external connections being to Washington Street.

Bankers Hill/Park West

The Bankers Hill/-Park West neighborhood is located just west of Balboa Park, between Upas Street and Interstate 5, and east of Reynard Way. ~~Its~~ proximity to Downtown and Balboa Park has been an important influence on the neighborhood, while its topography, which slopes down to the south and west, plays an important role in its character, providing dramatic views of both ~~the~~ Downtown and the Bay, and influencing the design of buildings. The canyons that cross the northwest corner of ~~the~~ neighborhood introduce a natural open space element and a contrast to the regularity of the grid of streets that characterizes the majority of the area. Linear north-south streets serve as major connectors between Downtown and Balboa Park and the Uptown neighborhoods. The direct connection provided by the Avenues to Downtown results in higher traffic volumes, particularly along ~~4th~~ Fourth and Fifth Avenues ~~4th and 5th~~, in addition to these avenues' designation as one-way streets. First and Fourth Avenues cross iconic historic bridges that represent the interplay of canyons within the neighborhood. Laurel Street, which originates along the Bay, is a primary connector within Banker's Hill/Park West, connecting the Bay to Balboa Park and Uptown neighborhoods.

Bankers Hill/-Park West includes single-family neighborhoods isolated by canyons in the northwest portion of the neighborhood, older ~~multifamily~~ multi-family residential development in the southwest area, and a significant component of professional office uses that extend the length of the area along the ~~avenues~~ Avenues. Small clusters of neighborhood commercial are located on Reynard Way between Eagle ~~Street~~ and Falcon ~~Street~~ Streets, on First Avenue between Ivy ~~Street~~ and Juniper ~~Street~~ Streets and at the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Laurel Street. These commercial centers function as neighborhood centers and provide a variety of neighborhood services including grocery stores, dry cleaning businesses and entertainment establishments.

Bankers Hill/-Park West ~~contain~~ contains some of the oldest architecture in Uptown, including several large Victorian and Queen Anne homes from the 1870's. ~~Otherwise, The neighborhood also~~ Banker's Hill/Park West expresses a range of architectural styles ~~and building ages from different periods~~—including several recent, high-density mixed-use developments along the “Avenues,” to single- and multi-family neighborhoods characterized by Craftsman bungalows, Mission Revival, and Colonial Revival styles.—Several churches and office buildings also represent distinctive architectural styles and periods of ~~the~~ development ~~of the~~ within the neighborhood. Building heights ~~are greatly varied~~ greatly vary, with several buildings of ~~13~~ thirteen stories and above located between Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Avenues, taking advantage of views and proximity to Balboa Park. This is due to more generous height limits than elsewhere in Uptown, including a height limit of 150 feet' along Fifth and Sixth ~~Avenues~~ Avenue. Residential density is greatest

closest to Downtown with several buildings of over 100 dwelling units per acre located along Grape and Hawthorn Streets and Interstate 5. Elsewhere, the majority of buildings are low-rise (below 4-four stories), and density is lower (1 to -15 du/acre dwelling units per acre), as buildings step down to integrate with the neighborhood.

The Bankers Hill/Park West neighborhood is characterized by the historic grid street pattern that ~~is an extension of the pattern in the~~ extends from Downtown, not seen elsewhere in Uptown. The grid ~~is comprised~~ comprises of short blocks (200 feet 'x 300 feet') without alleys. Blocks near canyons are irregular, responding to the topography of the canyon. A key characteristic of streets in Bankers Hill/Park West is that they are generally wider than all but major collector streets ~~in the rest of~~ found elsewhere in Uptown. With curb-to-curb cross-sections of 50-fifty feet, these streets can accommodate three travel lanes and two parallel parking lanes, which is typical along the ~~avenues~~ Avenues. In some places, where traffic volumes are not high, these widths have been reconfigured to provide two travel lanes with diagonal parking on one side.

MIDDLETOWN

The Middletown neighborhood is located on the far west side of Uptown, bounded by Interstate 5 to the west, Horton Avenue and Titus Street to the east, Laurel Street and Reynard Way to the south, and Witherby Street to the north. Historically the area included areas to the west and south of Interstate 5, but since the construction of the freeway, are now outside of the Uptown Community Plan boundary. The development of Middletown is built on a west-facing hillside facing the San Diego Bay, as buildings step up the slope creating a distinctive urban character and providing numerous scenic views. The architecture of Middletown is diverse; ~~—~~ representing periods of San Diego's earliest growth to contemporary styles, including both single- and multi-family residences to large scale light industrial buildings, and commercial uses. Among the residential areas, Middletown has the highest concentration of Contemporary, Ranch, and Minimal -Traditional buildings, as well as other vernacular styles. While most of the area does not have formal or consistent street tree planting, Middletown has a relatively lush landscape character which is due in part to the sloping topography, which tends to make landscaping on private lots more visible.

The Middletown street system is generally laid out in a grid pattern, running parallel to Interstate 5, with hillside grid blocks that are oriented to respond to the downward-sloping hillside rather than maintain the north-south orientation of Downtown or Bankers Hill/Park West blocks. North of Washington Street, the blocks are more irregular in response to both canyon topography and large footprint uses such as hotels and large commercial and ~~/~~ light industrial buildings. The majority of the streets are relatively narrow residential streets that carry local traffic. San Diego Avenue/India Street, which parallels the freeway, is a busy collector street that carries both local traffic and serves as a frontage access road for Interstate I-5. The commercial area located at the vicinity of the Washington Street and As India Street intersection meets Washington Street, it also becomes a neighborhood center/node of Middletown. ~~As it meets Washington Avenue, India Street is also a neighborhood center/node of Middletown.~~

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

The University Heights neighborhood is part of two community planning areas: ~~North Park~~ Greater North Park and Uptown. The portion of ~~the~~ University Heights ~~neighborhood~~ within Uptown is west of Park Boulevard, south of the Mission Valley, north of Washington Street, and east of ~~SR SR-163~~ State Stateate Route R- 163. University Heights occupies the flat top of a mesa that is ringed on three sides by canyons, with an extensive perimeter of canyon interface that creates a sense of enclosure and privacy ~~in~~ within the neighborhood. Views of Mission Valley and Mission Bay are prominent from the canyon rims. A well-established and popular commercial district is located at the north end of Park Boulevard ~~and~~ terminating at Adams Avenue and is the neighborhood center/node for ~~the~~ University Heights ~~community~~.

University Heights is a predominantly single-family, low-rise residential neighborhood, with multi-family residential located along and nearby to the major north-south streets west of Park Boulevard. Despite its relatively low profile, University Heights is one of Uptown's denser neighborhoods due to the high number of multi-family units. Residential development is typically one-11one to two2-2two stories, or 24 to 30 feet in height, with commercial development along Park Boulevard ranging between ~~the typical 11one-~~ to two2-

~~Two-story buildings with some scattered instances of three-story buildings. Densities range from 15 to 100 units per acre/du/ac in the blocks east of Maryland Street, while single-family neighborhoods are generally between 1 to and 14 units per acre/du/ac.~~

As one of the earliest neighborhoods in San Diego, University Heights includes several historic character-defining elements and styles. The northerly terminus of Park Boulevard once served as the terminus of the San Diego Cable Railway (1890-1892) and later trolley. The area west of Park Boulevard includes examples of early architectural styles such as Craftsman, Arts & Crafts, Bungalow, Prairie, Mission and Spanish revival, and Monterey, exhibited in commercial as well as residential buildings. Most buildings date from 1910-1929 and 1930-1948 with infill from later periods. Office and public institutional uses are clustered at the intersection of Park Boulevard, El Cajon Boulevard, and Normal Street, which include the San Diego ~~City Schools~~ Unified School District's Education Center and Alice Birney Elementary School. These occupy large parcels and signify an institutional presence and a gateway into the neighborhood.

The predominant block pattern in University Heights is the same long, north-south blocks with mid-block alleys that exist in Hillcrest, with irregular block patterns approaching the canyon rim, and a series of spoke-like cul-de-sacs, like Proctor Place, Rhode Island Street, and New Hampshire Street, that extend out between the canyons. As in Bankers Hill/Park West, University Heights has very broad streets (~~50-foot~~feet). Since these streets generally accommodate only local traffic, they are relatively quiet with an open and airy character. The landscape character of the neighborhood is generally characterized by the natural landscape at the canyon perimeter. The Park Boulevard commercial district also has a planting pattern of palms and liquid ambers that give the street an intimate and distinctive character. Within residential areas, streetscape planting is relatively sparse, although some streets feature palm trees that unify street character. The Vermont Street pedestrian bridge, connecting University Heights to Hillcrest, the University Heights gateway sign, and the Mission Cliff cobblestone wall ~~on along~~ Adams Avenue are all distinctive features that contribute to neighborhood character.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

~~The current population of Uptown is approximately 37,8491. Residents within the community represent all economic backgrounds and are diverse in their ethnic composition. Future population of the community can be estimated based upon the number of dwelling units expected to be achieved with the application of planned land uses and development intensity. Since the 2010 Census, the population of Uptown was approximately 37,600 people with 23,000 dwelling units. The community is estimated to have a future population of 55,700 people with the number of housing units expected to increase to 32,680 dwelling units during the build out of the community plan. The area consists of single family and multi-family residential uses, retail, and office uses, and is also dominated by two large hospitals: University of California, San Diego (UCSD) Medical Center and Scripps Mercy Hospital. The Washington Street and Fifth Avenue corridors are significantly influenced by these two hospitals with many medically-related uses. The Hillcrest business area south of the medical complex is linked to Downtown by a retail, office and residential use corridor along Fourth and Fifth Avenues.~~

1.2 Community Planning Framework

SHARED PLANNING PROCESS WITH NORTH PARK GREATER NORTH PARK AND GOLDEN HILL GREATER GOLDEN HILL

The Uptown Community Plan provides a long range guide for the future physical development of the community and was updated concurrently with the community plans for North Park Greater North Park and Greater Golden Hill. A goal of the concurrent updates is to address key issues and propose solutions as they relate to attributes shared by each of the three communities. The updates started in 2009 with an intensive public outreach effort centered around individual community meetings that included stakeholder committees, neighborhood associations, workshops on key topics, a multi-day charrette and meetings of the Uptown Planners, along with the City's recognized community planning group.

Various attributes including those related to urban design, historic, preservation, open space, and mobility are common to each of the three communities at both larger and smaller scales leading to the development of shared planning solutions with refinements appropriate to individual community and neighborhood contexts. Each community is situated within a landform that is part of a broad mesa interspersed with many natural or semi-developed canyons allowing a distinctive combination of outward views and interaction with open space along most community edge points. These characteristics also provide a sense of seclusion from the surrounding city not uncommon for San Diego's neighborhoods, and importantly, support the interconnectedness between the three communities. Adjacent freeways reinforce this relationship as they have usually followed canyons and other low points in San Diego, although freeways have also created negative effects and undesirable divisions within each community.

The three communities surround regionally significant and historic Balboa Park. As development radiated out from Downtown along streetcar lines, later forming commercial districts along arterial streets and major crossings, a legacy remains of traditional storefronts uniquely suited to small and sole-proprietor businesses. A grid pattern of streets enhances connectivity and promotes walkability, yet traffic congestion occurs at many 'pinch-points' where street widths narrow or access is 'funneled' due to canyon and freeway interfaces.

The three communities have also been part of one of the longest historical development periods ~~in~~within the region due to their central location and accommodative zoning which has left a breadth of building forms and architectural styles as well as historic resources in need of preservation. This has sometimes resulted in awkward scale transitions and juxtaposition of building styles as the rate of development has oftentimes been modest or uneven. The relatively intense concentrations of retail and employment uses nearby in Downtown and Mission Valley draw certain retail formats and employment away from these communities. As these communities developed prior to current citywide public facilities standards, locating and financing new facilities, such as parks, is difficult due to lack of available land as well as a limited rate of new development. Aging infrastructure often needs to be upgraded and/or replaced.

1.3 Community Plan Guiding Principles

Through the process of community meetings with the Community Plan Update Advisory Committee the Uptown Planners, and members of the community, the following issues have been identified:

- Providing a wide variety of housing types for all age, income and social groups
- Revitalizing certain neighborhood commercial districts
- Establishing and maintaining a high level of public facilities and services to meet the needs of the community
- Promoting of a clean, healthful, and sustainable environment
- Preserving of significant historic structures and the designation of historic districts
- Preserving community character and historical, architectural and cultural resources
- Preventing further loss and encroachment into open space
- The need to establish urban design standards and criteria for various neighborhoods
- Addressing Discrepancies ~~discrepancies~~ between actual zoning and community plan land use recommendation

The following are the guiding principles that establish the essential structure for the Uptown Community Plan:

- ~~1.~~ 1. Maintaining distinctive neighborhoods by preserving the qualities and resources that make Uptown unique.
- ~~2.~~ 2. Encouraging development diversity by maintaining the demographic, architectural, and economic diversity that have contributed to Uptown's vitality and aesthetic vibrancy.
- ~~3.~~ 3. Preserving the Uptown's historic fabric by preserving important resources, adaptively reusing older buildings, and sensitively responding to the scale and character of historic buildings.
- ~~4.~~ 4. Recognizing the environmental, visual, and recreational value of Uptown's natural canyon landscape
- ~~5.~~ 5. Creating a complete, well-served community that ensures that neither diminishes existing levels of service nor exacerbates existing deficiencies.

5. Ensuring vibrant business and commercial districts by creating a physical environment that supports retail and entertainment activities and encourages multi-modal access.
6. Providing convenient access to parks and community distinctive open spaces through the addition of new park lands, a desire for more and better distribution of parks, including small pocket parks and spaces for community gardens, and better trail connections to canyons and other open space.
7. Walkable neighborhoods and complete streets that accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians safely, and reduce vehicular travel speeds.
8. Re-establishing transit as an attractive and viable transportation alternative to the automobile
9. Creating a balance between integrating parking into the urban fabric to support commercial areas and access for non-motorized forms of transportation
10. Designing for sustainability in buildings and in the environment
11. A balanced transportation network that accommodates all modes of transportation, links ~~the Uptown community~~Uptown to the region, and efficiently manages parking.
12. An urban form that respects neighborhood context through appropriate scale and transitions between existing and infill development and promotes sustainability.
13. A high level of community facilities and services that not only meets the needs of the community, but are equally distributed and accessible throughout the neighborhoods in ~~the Uptown community~~Uptown.
14. An open space network that links local neighborhoods to the region and allows for non-traditional opportunities for recreation.
15. Cultural and heritage resources that are respected and preserved through historic designations and adaptive reuse within the community.

1.4 Legislative Framework

THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan sets out a long-range vision and policy framework to guide future development, provide public services, and maintain the qualities that define San Diego and contains a set of overall guiding principles (see ~~inset in~~inset in next page). The recent update to the General Plan shifts focus from how to develop vacant land to how to design infill development and reinvest in existing communities. A key component guiding these efforts is the City of Villages Strategy which proposes growth be directed into pedestrian-friendly mixed-use activity centers linked to an improved regional transit system.

Regional and local investments that promote transit and bicycle use support this strategy. By increasing transportation choices, a reduction in overall vehicle miles travelled can be achieved which is a key contributor to broader sustainable development initiatives. Better mobility options are also needed for those who cannot drive, do not own a motor vehicle, or prefer to reduce their dependence on the automobile. Benefits to individual as well as public health can be achieved with any reduction in air pollutants as well as a shift in favor of walking.

These villages or activity centers are to be formally identified through the community plan update process. The mixed-use commercial districts and higher density neighborhoods along transit lines are candidate village locations within each of the three communities. The policies of each plan can be used to focus needed investments in infrastructure, transit and other mobility improvements.

LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

The City of San Diego Land Development Code (LDC) is part of the municipal code and contains regulations and controls pertaining to land use, density and intensity, building massing, architectural design, landscaping, storm water management, street frontages, lighting, and other development characteristics. The LDC implements the policies and recommendations of the Community Plan, including application of the Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone, and all development within the community must comply with regulations set forth in the LDC.

AIRPORT LAND USE COMPATIBILITY PLAN

The Airport Influence Area for San Diego International Airport (SDIA) affects the Uptown Community Plan. The Airport Influence Area serves as the planning boundaries for the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and is divided into two review areas. Review Area 1 is composed of the noise contours, safety zones, airspace protection surfaces, and overflight areas. Review Area 2 is composed of the airspace protection surfaces and overflight areas. The Airport Land Use Commission for San Diego County adopted the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan to establish land use compatibility policies and development criteria for new development within the Airport Influence Area to protect the airport from incompatible land uses and provide the City with development criteria that will allow for the orderly growth of the area surrounding the airport. The policies and criteria contained in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan are addressed in the General Plan (Land Use and Community Planning and Noise Elements) and implemented by the supplemental development regulations in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Overlay Zone of the San Diego Municipal Code. Planning efforts need to address airport land use compatibility issues consistent with airport land use compatibility policies and regulations mentioned above.

GENERAL PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. An open space network formed by parks, canyons, river valleys, habitats, beaches and ocean;
2. Diverse residential communities formed by the open space network;
3. Compact and walkable mixed-use villages of different scales within communities;
4. Employment centers for a strong economy;
5. An integrated regional transportation network of walkways, bikeways, transit, roadways, and freeways that efficiently link communities and villages to each other and to employment centers;
6. High quality, affordable, and well-maintained public facilities to serve the City's population, workers, and visitors;
7. Historic districts and sites that respect our heritage;
8. Balanced communities that offer opportunities for all San Diegans and share citywide responsibilities;
9. A clean and sustainable environment; and
10. A high aesthetic standard.

MULTIPLE SPECIES CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation planning program that is designed to preserve native habitat for multiple species. This is accomplished by identifying areas for directed development and areas to be conserved in perpetuity, referred to as the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), to achieve a workable balance between smart growth and species conservation. A portion of the open space lands within the community are within the MHPA. Open space lands within the MHPA are addressed in the Conservation and Recreation Elements of the Uptown Community Plan and are implemented by the City's MSCP Subarea Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Uptown Community Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides a programmatic assessment of potential impacts occurring with the realization and implementation of Community Plan policies and recommendations. Potential impacts were anticipated during preparation of the Community Plan, and many of the policies were designed to reduce or avoid such impacts.

1.5 Planning Process

COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

The City prepares its community plans with an expected 20-30 year period of relevance. This community plan update~~to~~ was initiated in 2009 and supersedes the previous Uptown Community Plan adopted on February 2, 1988 by Resolution No. 270273. The community plan update process evaluated issues identified with the previous community plan. Although visible progress was made since the past update to address the issues identified in that plan, many of the issues were still relevant, particularly as progress was uneven throughout the community. Also, the City's General Plan places more focus on how to design infill development and reinvest in existing communities. A number of plans and studies have been prepared for Uptown since adoption of the 1988 community plan. These range from design guidelines to parking management plans and other studies. Although most of these studies are not officially-adopted City documents, they offer a breadth of analysis and public deliberation on planning issues and have been used as appropriate in the preparation of this community plan. Appendix A contains a listing of some of the previous plans and studies prepared for ~~the~~ Uptown~~community~~.

1.6 Plan Scope and Organization

The Uptown Community Plan provides a statement of development policies intended to inform land use, development form and public resource decisions within this planning area. The community plan is a component of the General Plan and both the General Plan and the Uptown Community Plan should be reviewed for land use planning direction in this community. While the community plan addresses specific community needs, its policies and recommendations remain in harmony with the General Plan. Specific General Plan policies are referenced within the community plan to emphasize their significance ~~in~~within the community, but all applicable General Plan policies may be cited in conjunction with the community plan.

This plan ~~should is not be considered~~ a static document. Subsequent to plan adoption, two additional steps follow: implementation and review. Implementation is the ongoing process of putting plan policies and recommendations into effect. A zoning implementation program was adopted concurrently with the community plan update. Guidelines for implementation are also provided in the plan. Review refers to the process of monitoring the community and recommending changes to the plan as conditions in the community change. The actual work requires a sustained, cooperative effort of private citizens, City officials and other agencies. As the City's officially recognized community planning group, the Uptown Planners is tasked with providing the continuity and oversight needed for an effective and relevant implementation program.

The community plan is organized into nine elements, an implementation section and appendices as outlined in the table of contents. Each element contains an introduction intended to establish overall vision, purpose and context as needed. A table of key General Plan related cross-references is included in some elements for ease of use. The goals within each plan element or section are succinct statements of the community's vision. The policies and recommendations address specific topics or issues and direct implementation decision.