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Urban Design Analysis



## COMMUNITY SUB-AREAS

The Community Plan Area has several disconnected development patterns that cause limited cohesion within the community as a whole. Though formal districts are not identified in the current Community Plan, there have been many attempts to identify districts or character areas in past planning efforts. For the purposes of discussing general land use observations, nine sub-areas have been identified on the map at right. These areas are generally anchored by dominant uses where development has occurred to support the use. These clusters of development have each evolved over time and have unique characteristics that need to be strengthened or mitigated in order to improve the quality of life and create a memorable community. The various sub-areas are discussed below and documented by photographs on the following pages.

### Sports Arena Boulevard Gateway (Area A)

This area in the most northwest corner of the planning area serves as a gateway to the Midway portion of the community from the communities of Peninsula, Mission Beach, Ocean Beach, as well as Mission Bay Park. The predominant use in this sub-area is multifamily residential. There are also several commercial establishments. The intersection of West Point Loma Boulevard, Midway Drive, and Sports Arena Boulevard is irregularly shaped because it is the confluence of three major arterials. This intersection presents circulation and urban design challenges because of the large volume of vehicles that use this intersection to access the I-8 west ramp from Sports Arena Boulevard.

### Sports Arena Facility (Area B)

The San Diego Sports Arena (Valley View Casino Center) was built in 1966 as a regional sports and entertainment venue. It has been home to the San Diego Clippers, San Diego Sockers, and San Diego Gulls sports teams, is also the only facility in the region with a professional ice rink, and currently hosts between 20 and 30 entertainment events annually. Surrounding the arena are several acres of parking lots, which are used on the weekends for the Kobey's Swap Meet since 1980. Uses around the arena are mostly offices, restaurants, a gas station, and some other strip commercial establishments. The Sports Arena and much of the adjacent property are owned by the City. To the east of the Sports Area, there are larger lot commercial businesses.

### Small-Lot Industrial Complex (Area C)

South of the I-5 and I-8 interchange is a collection of predominantly small-lot industrial businesses with a mix of motels, warehousing buildings, and offices. Much of the industrial uses include machine shops and other small-scale manufacturing. Many streets within the sub-area have narrow widths, limited sidewalks and landscaping. The street grid is consistent with the street grid of Old Town.

### Rosecrans/Midway Commercial Corridor (Area D)

Rosecrans Street and Midway Drive are two of the three major arterials within the Community Planning Area. The predominant use is retail commercial, which has a sub-regional draw. Smaller retail centers, which house both independent and chain businesses, are also scattered throughout the retail area. Each individual shopping center is self-contained and there are few interconnections. The southwestern edge of this sub-area contains a mix of residential, commercial, and community serving uses. This area serves as a transition/buffer between the dominant industrial and commercial uses in the Community Planning Area and the predominantly residential uses of the Peninsula Community Planning Area to the south. The San Diego Community College District, replaced the West City Campus Continuing Education Center with a new building in September 2010. The new campus resulted in excess land that the Community College District is planning to lease for private development. In February of 2009, Sharp Health System closed the Sharp Cabrillo Skilled Nursing Center, which was a 76-bed acute care facility formerly located adjacent to the education center. This sub-area also has medical office buildings and private institutional related facilities. The area has newly built multifamily condominium residential units.

### Military Housing /Post Office (Area E)

Within this sub-area, the 26-acre United States Postal Service (USPS) Midway processing and distribution center is located along Midway Drive. The Post Office site is currently for sale. The eastern side of the Rosecrans corridor south of Midway Drive is fronted by retail establishments and Dewey Elementary School. Included in the commercial development is the reuse of the former Loma movie theater, which now is home to a bookstore, gym, and small offices which provides a memorable urban design element within the community. A community retail center is located on Rosecrans Street and Midway Drive. The Lincoln Military Housing Gateway Village complex is adjacent to Marine Corps Recruit Depot on Barnett Street. The design of the complex allows for pedestrian connections with the adjacent retail. Also located in the sub-area is the St. Charles Borromeo church and school, and an older retail/office that often serves as transitional space for growing businesses along Barnett Avenue.

### Government Facilities/Large Lot Industrial (Area F)

This sub-area has several large industrial facilities including US Navy warehouse and distribution center. In the northern portion of the sub-area are two major government facilities, which provide regional services. The Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) is a military research and development facility that serves as a leading economic engine in the regional defense industry, providing many high-paying jobs. The facility is extremely

large and has very limited access to surrounding properties because of its location along Pacific Highway, which has limited pedestrian crossing opportunities. The County of San Diego Health and Human Services complex is also located in this sub-area, which provides an array of regional-serving medical and support services. This complex is within walking distance to the Old Town Transit Center. Across from the County facility is a constricted pocket of development, mostly comprised of small lot commercial and industrial businesses. The area is tightly constrained by Rosecrans Street, Camino Del Rio South, and the entrances to the I-5 and I-8 freeways. Many of the interconnecting streets are one-way, which greatly limits accessibility to the small lots. Rosecrans Street directly connects this pocket of development to Old Town, though it is somewhat physically divided by the I-5 freeway overpass. Remaining uses scattered within this sub-area include medium-sized retail uses, office, strip commercial, as well as adult entertainment businesses. Streets within this sub-area are under-utilized, have limited sidewalks, and are often impacted with over-sized vehicles, using on-street parking for extended periods.

### I-5 Frontage (Area G)

Across from the Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) is a mix of land uses that have limited relation to one another. The mosaic of land uses include industrial, retail, group facilities, residential, office, commercial recreation, warehousing, storage, parking, transportation, and other uses. The streets within this area are also disconnected due to the rail right-of-way. The Mission Brewery facility is located on West Washington Street and Hancock Street adjacent to the Washington Street Trolley Station. The former brewery was converted into an office building that provides iconic architecture for the community. The Mission Villas is an approved apartment development adjacent to Mission Brewery that is expected to start construction soon. The Stella project located on Hancock Street is expected to be completed soon as apartments.

### Airport Supporting Uses (Area H)

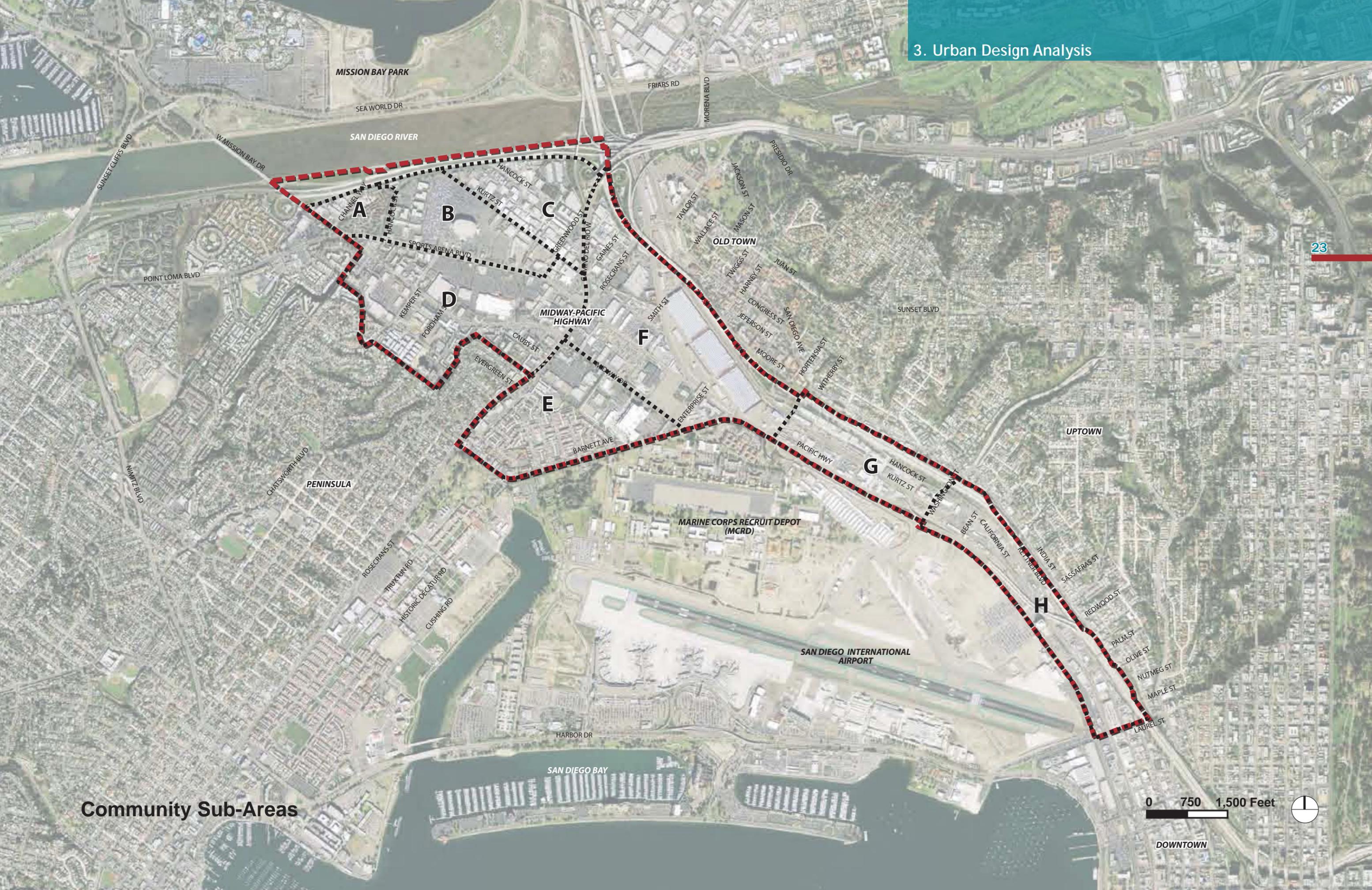
Across from the San Diego International Airport is also a mix of uses, but unlike the area to the north, many of the facilities are airport serving uses— predominantly long-term parking and rental car facilities as well as limited commercial uses. The San Diego Unified Port District controls property along Pacific Highway which includes the Port District's administrative offices. The Port is considering a parking structure near the Palm Street Trolley Station. The Airport Authority is planning to build a consolidated rental car facility on airport property.

Community Sub-Areas

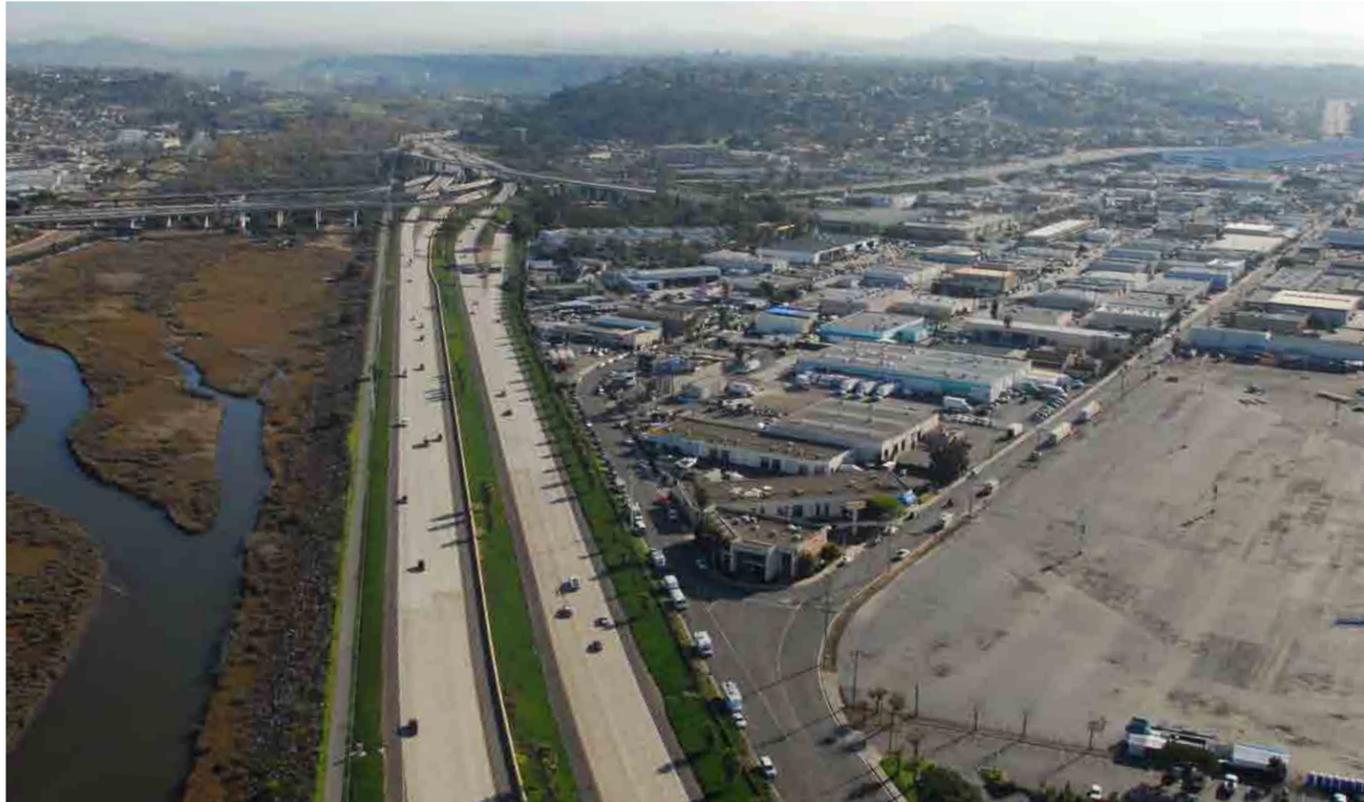
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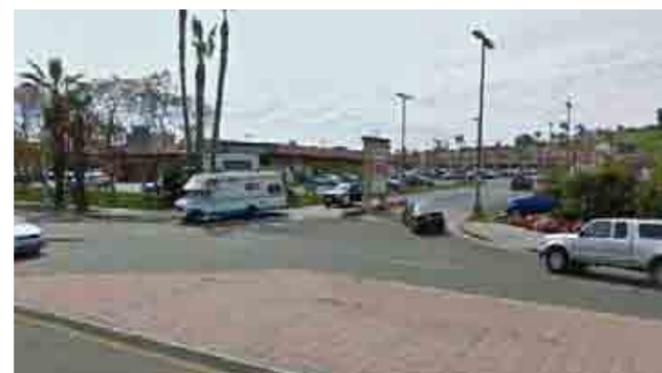


DOWNTOWN



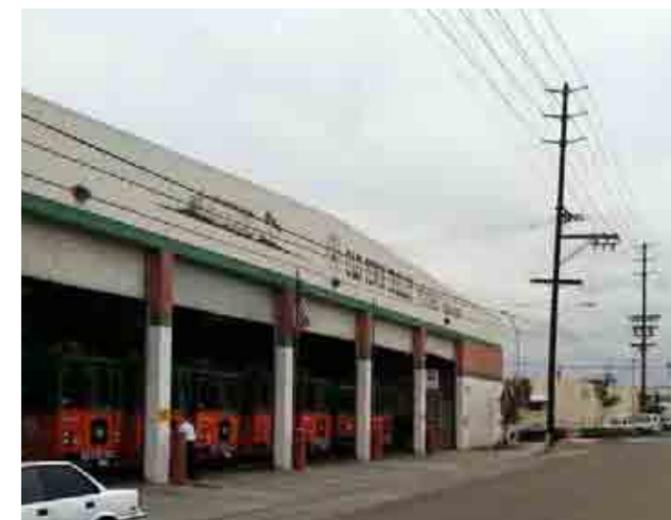












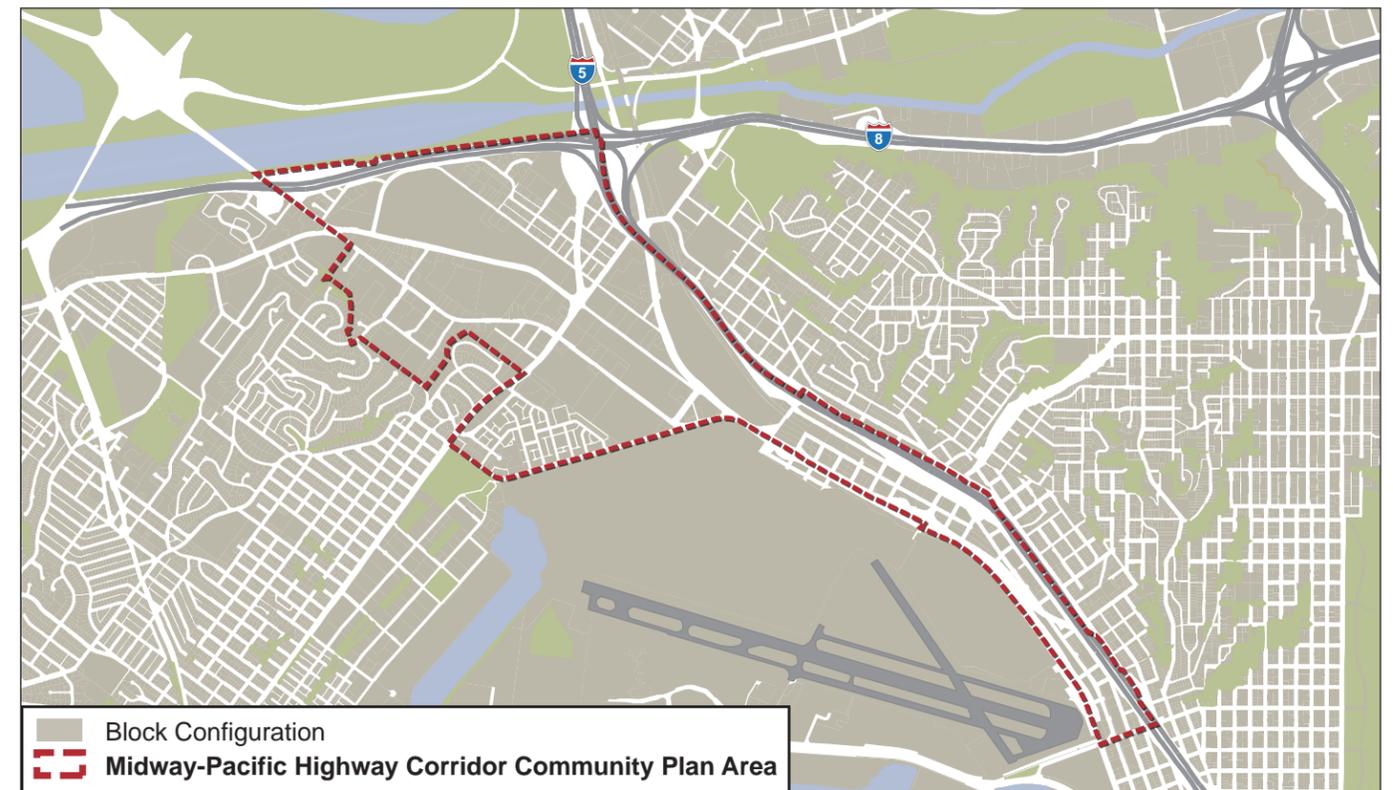
## DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The community is comprised of two general areas: the Midway Area and the narrow, linear shaped Pacific Highway Corridor. With the exception of the smaller blocks north of Kurtz Street, the Midway Area is characterized by large “super-blocks” divided by large arterial streets that have a large volume of vehicle traffic. The large blocks and busy streets result in auto-oriented development that typically has larger building footprints that are setback from the street, and sited in a large parking area. This urban form contrasts with the smaller block structure typical in adjacent Peninsula community that has a more residential feel. In the Midway Area, the super-block pattern results in limited through-streets with much of the development being accessible by parking lots or parking lot driveways. The large size of the blocks, the intensity of through traffic, truck traffic, and some one-way streets make navigation difficult for both drivers and pedestrians. Buildings are generally one to two stories in height, with exception of a few buildings such as former Cabrillo Hospital and the Sports Arena. The quality of the pedestrian environment is thus generally poor due to:

- physical barriers of the I-8 and I-5
- large block perimeters and lack of through-streets or pedestrian connections
- inconsistent sidewalks or lack of paved sidewalks
- significant areas of parking lots along many street edges
- significant fenced-off areas and blank walls
- lack of pedestrian amenities, lighting, benches, etc.
- confusing signage and intersections
- lack of street trees
- No parks or open space areas, and limited bike lanes or pedestrian connections to Mission Bay

The Pacific Highway Corridor, in contrast, is located along a slender strip of land between Pacific Highway and the I-5. The Corridor contains a wide variety of building types and sizes. With the exception of the Port District Building and the Mission Brewery, buildings are generally one to three stories in height. The Mission Brewery office building which is located within this area, provides iconic architecture for the community. The San Diego Unified Port District administration building is also a noticeable feature of the Corridor. Due to the configuration of the site and the slender blocks, many buildings are sited along the street edge, although they are not always oriented towards the street. In the northern part of the Corridor, the streets are disconnected due to the rail right-of-way, and an elevated portion of Pacific Highway. It does however generally have smaller blocks more consistent with the adjacent

street grids in the Downtown and Uptown communities, with some buildings creating a stronger street wall. Sites are long and slender, and suitable for smaller lot development. The southern portion of the Pacific Highway Corridor continues a similar block pattern as the northern portion, but has better connectivity to transit, with two trolley stops. This area also has better pedestrian access, with street level access to Pacific Highway and Kettner Blvd, although there is limited connectivity from east to west due to the I-5. Across from the San Diego International Airport is also a mix of uses, but unlike the area to the north, many of the uses are airport serving uses—predominantly long-term parking and rental car businesses.



Block Configuration



-  Building Footprint
-  Block Configuration
-  Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor Community Plan Area

Block Configuration and Building Footprints

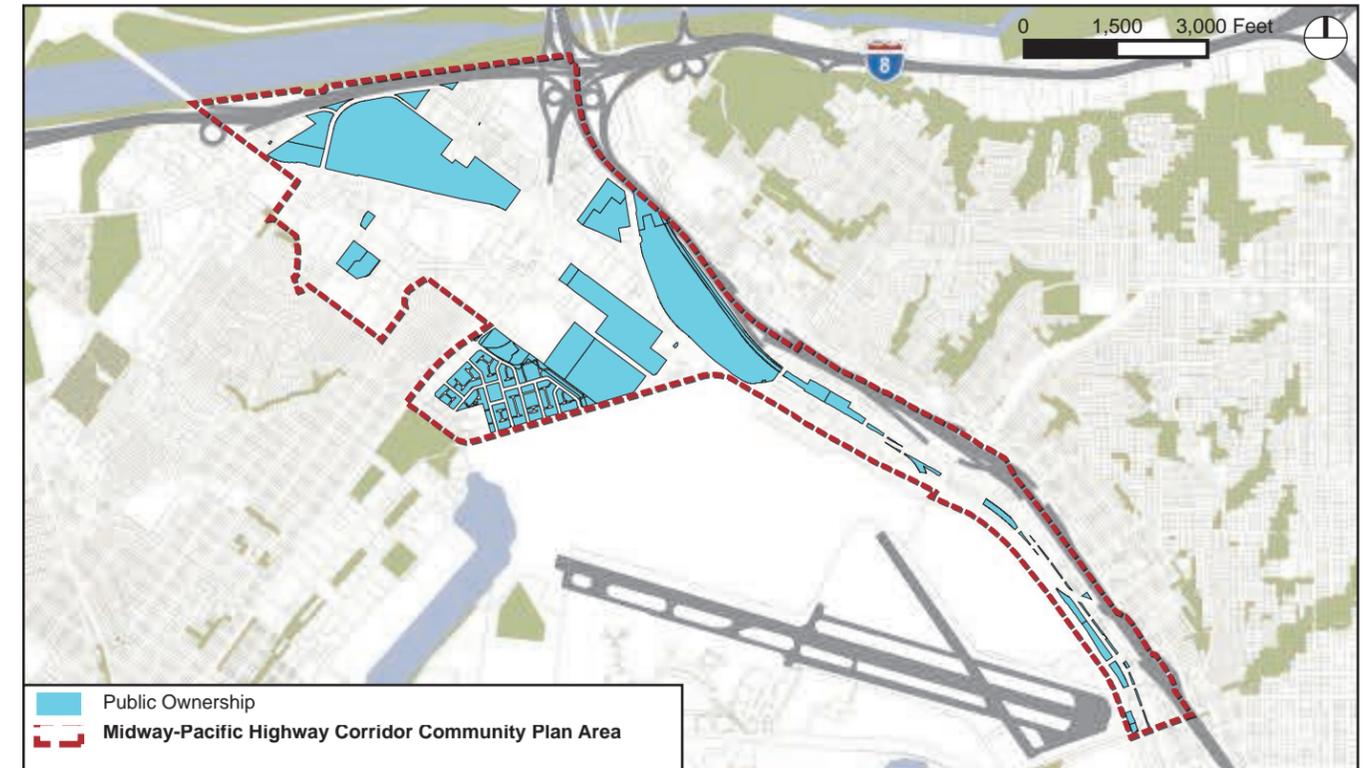


## LAND OWNERSHIP

Just over 40 percent of the parcelized area in the Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor Community Plan Area is owned by public agencies. This includes the Lincoln Military Housing Gateway Village, SPAWAR facilities, US Navy distribution and storage facility, and post office site that are federally owned. This does not include MCRD, SDIA or transportation rights-of-way. The Unified Port District of San Diego owns land along the Pacific Highway Corridor, the County of San Diego owns the land for the County Health Services Complex, the Metropolitan Transit System and North County Transit District own the rail right-of-way, San Diego Community College District owns the land for the Midway Continuing Education Center, and the San Diego Unified School District owns the land for the Dewey Elementary School. The City of San Diego owns one of the largest pieces of land in the Community Plan Area, the Sports Arena site, and the adjacent property including the apartments. The remainder of the land is owned by various private owners. A number of quasi-public entities own land in the area, including religious institutions, SDG&E, and other not-for-profit entities.

Acreage of Publically Owned Parcels, by Agency

PUBLIC AGENCY	ACRES
Federal	126.54
State of California	3.58
County of San Diego	11.42
City of San Diego	81.13
San Diego Community College District	5.47
San Diego Unified School District	5.74
San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board	16.80
San Diego Unified Port District	5.04
<b>Total in Plan Area</b>	<b>255.72</b>



Publicly Owned Parcels



Publicly Owned Parcels, by Agency

**Land Ownership**

- Public Ownership
- Quasi-Public Ownership (I.e., utility or not-for-profit)
- Private Ownership (does not include transportation rights-of-way)
- Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor Community Plan Area

**Land Ownership**

0 750 1,500 Feet



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## EXISTING LAND USE

The Community Plan Area has a diverse mix of existing land uses. Commercial land uses make up almost a third of the existing land uses, and light industrial land uses accounting for almost one-quarter of the area. Multifamily residential makes up just over 10 percent of the Community Plan Area's existing land use, and civic/institutional land uses make up almost 10 percent. A variety of other uses exist within the Community Plan Area. However, dominant uses are present in certain areas, though not without the presence of other uses. The Community Plan Area has limited vacant land and no existing parks or open space. In general, land uses are dispersed throughout the Community Plan Area. A map of existing land uses is shown on the following page.

### Distribution of Existing Land Uses within the Plan Area

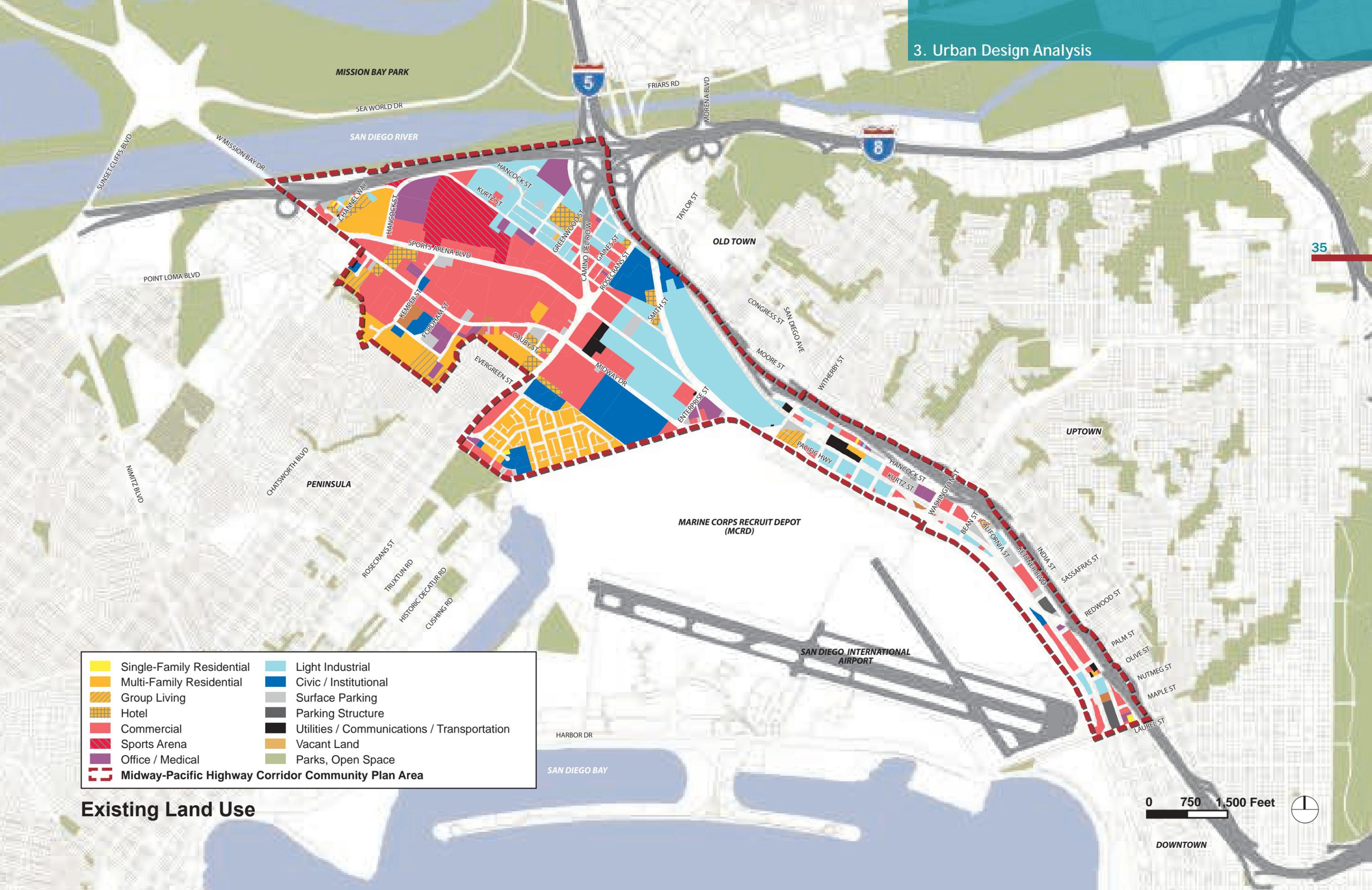
EXISTING LAND USE	ACRES	% of Total
Single Family Residential	1.23	0.13%
Multi-Family Residential	65.72	7.15%
Group Living / Convalescent	13.28	1.44%
Hotel / Motel	18.30	1.99%
Commercial (General)	188.89	20.54%
Stadium	33.74	3.67%
Office / Medical	33.12	3.60%
Light Industrial / Warehousing	142.92	15.54%
Civic Institutional	56.69	6.16%
Parking	20.39	2.22%
Utilities	7.10	0.77%
Vacant Land	4.78	0.52%
Parks, Open Space	0.00	0.00%
Transportation Right-of-Way	333.45	36.26%
<b>Total in Plan Area</b>	<b>919.61</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

	Single-Family Residential		Light Industrial
	Multi-Family Residential		Civic / Institutional
	Group Living		Surface Parking
	Hotel		Parking Structure
	Commercial		Utilities / Communications / Transportation
	Sports Arena		Vacant Land
	Office / Medical		Parks, Open Space
	Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor Community Plan Area		

Existing Land Use



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## VACANT PARCELS, PARKING LOTS, AND OUTDOOR STORAGE AREAS

Vacant parcels, parking lots, and outdoor storage areas, shown on the following page, often represent a significant opportunity for change in a community. There are approximately five acres of vacant parcels within the Community Plan Area. Parcels with only parking lots and storage areas account for over 20 acres. This does not include the parking lot areas associated with another use such as retail on a parcel. Additionally, one use not identified in the table is outdoor vehicular storage areas. Vehicular storage areas were mapped and are identified in the illustration at right.

Parking lots and car storage areas are critical to the operations of existing businesses throughout the Community Plan Area, including both parking lots for customers and visitors, as well as lots related to the storage or movement of goods. Although these areas serve an important purpose, they also affect for part of the Community Plan Area's sense of place and bicycle and pedestrian environment due to frequent curb cuts, the siting of large parking areas between the sidewalk and the front of buildings, and large expanses of road that are difficult to cross. Parking lots may also represent an opportunity for redevelopment or infill development, as they can be replaced by structured parking in some cases, freeing up available land and creating opportunities for a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

### Parking Lots and Vacant Parcels within the Plan Area

	Acres	Percentage
Developed Areas	252.31	27.4%
Vacant Parcels	5.61	0.6%
Parking Lots and Storage Areas	306.08	33.3%
Transportation Right-of-Way	355.61	38.7%
<b>Total in Plan Area</b>	<b>919.61</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



Aerial view of surface parking along Sports Arena Blvd.



Outdoor storage within Pacific Highway Corridor.



Outdoor storage within Midway Area.



Parking lot within Pacific Highway Corridor.

- Vacant Land
- Parking Lots and Outdoor Storage Areas
- Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor Community Plan Area

### Vacant Parcels, Parking Lots, and Outdoor Storage Areas

0 750 1,500 Feet



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## CIRCULATION AND MOBILITY

Circulation and mobility allow for the movement of goods and people between destinations in the Community Plan Area. Each use within the Community Plan Area has different demands on the circulation and mobility network. A detailed assessment is contained in a separate mobility existing conditions report.

### Freeway Access

Interstate 5 on the east, and Interstate 8 on the north, provide regional connections to the Community Plan Area and to adjacent communities. The two freeways intersect in the northeast corner of the Community Plan Area. However, there is a lack of a connection between eastbound I-8 and northbound I-5, as well as southbound I-5 and westbound I-8.

### Streets

Many of the roads in the Community Plan Area are large and congested, with small contiguous sidewalks, frequent curb cuts, and few streetscape amenities such as street trees. Interstate 5, the railroad tracks, and grade separated portions of Pacific Highway, create some barriers that make wayfinding and walkability difficult.

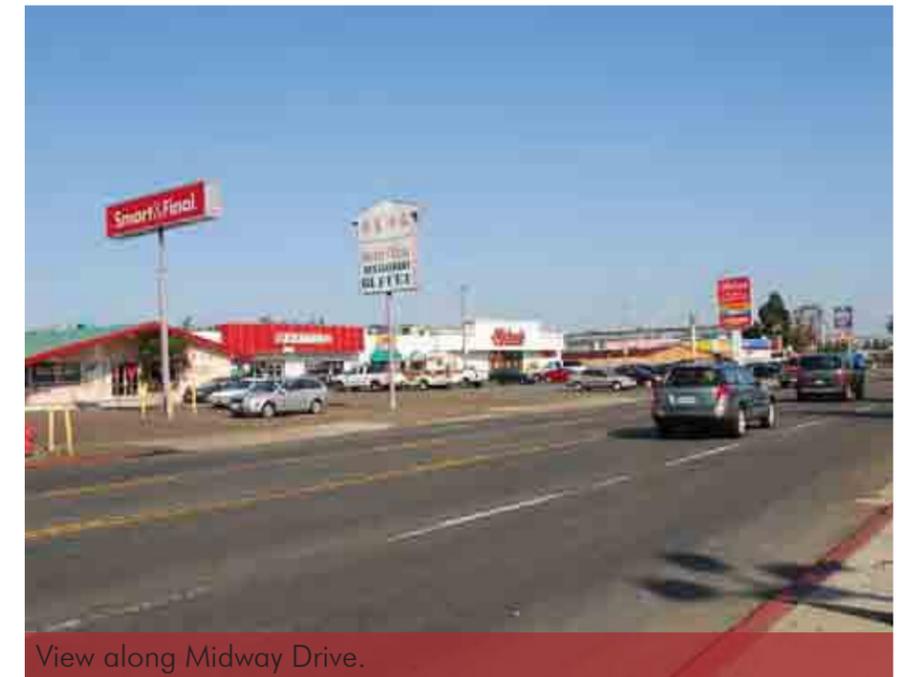
### Transit and Bike Lanes

The Community Plan Area is served by local and express bus service, as well as Amtrak, the Coaster, and the Trolley. The Old Town Transit Center is just outside the Community Plan Area, at the intersection of Rosecrans Street and Taylor Street with Pacific Highway, just east of Interstate 5. The Old Town Transit Center serves as a stop for a number of bus routes, the Coaster, and the MTS Trolley - Blue Line and the MTS Trolley - Green Line. A future Intermodal Transit Center is planned, generally in the area between Washington Street and Sassafras Street, along the Pacific Highway Corridor.

There are bike lanes along Pacific Highway, a portion of Midway Drive, and Barnett Avenue.



View down Rosecrans Street.



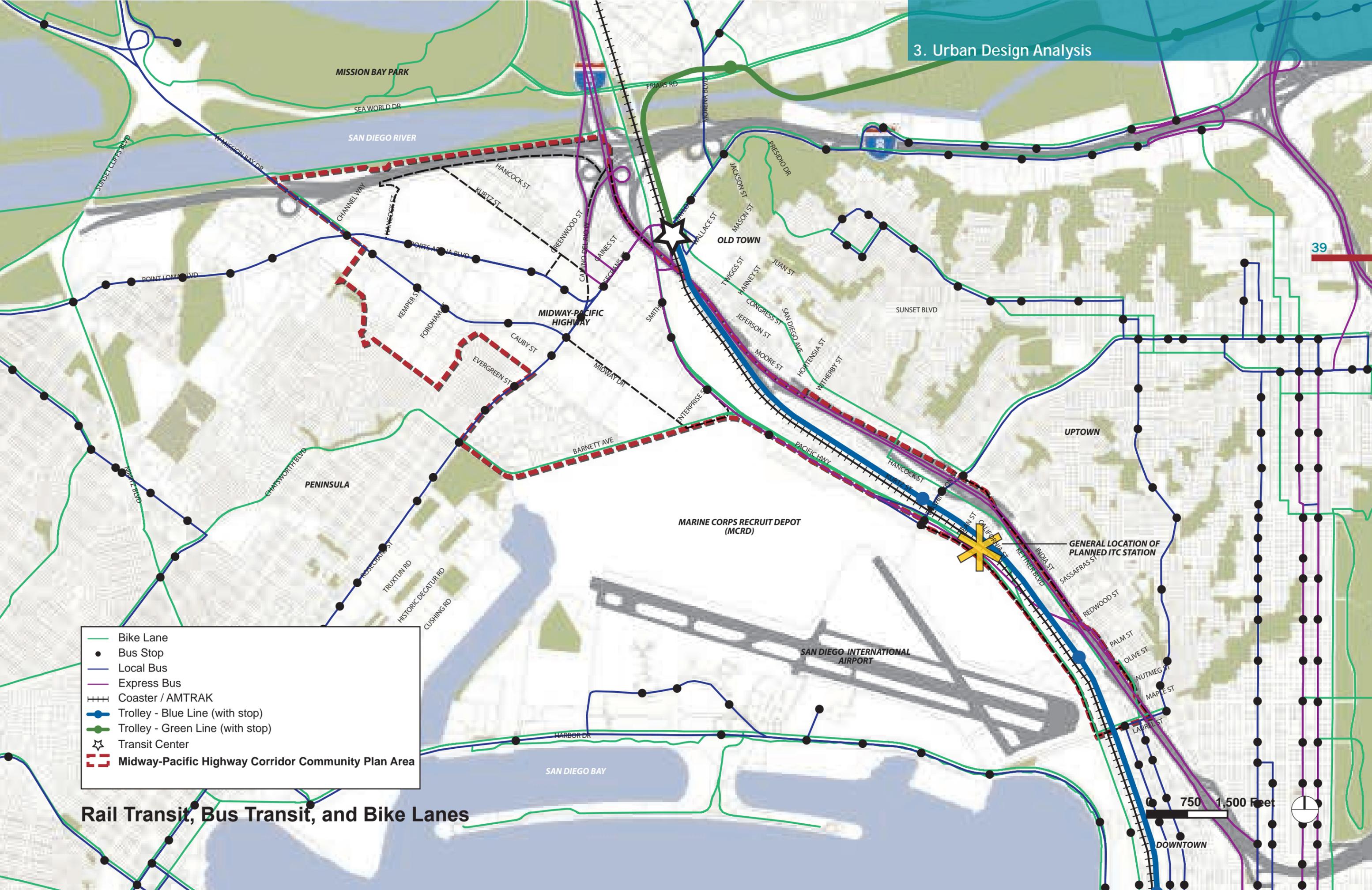
View along Midway Drive.



MTS Route 8 bus along Sports Arena Blvd.



Bicyclist along Pacific Highway.

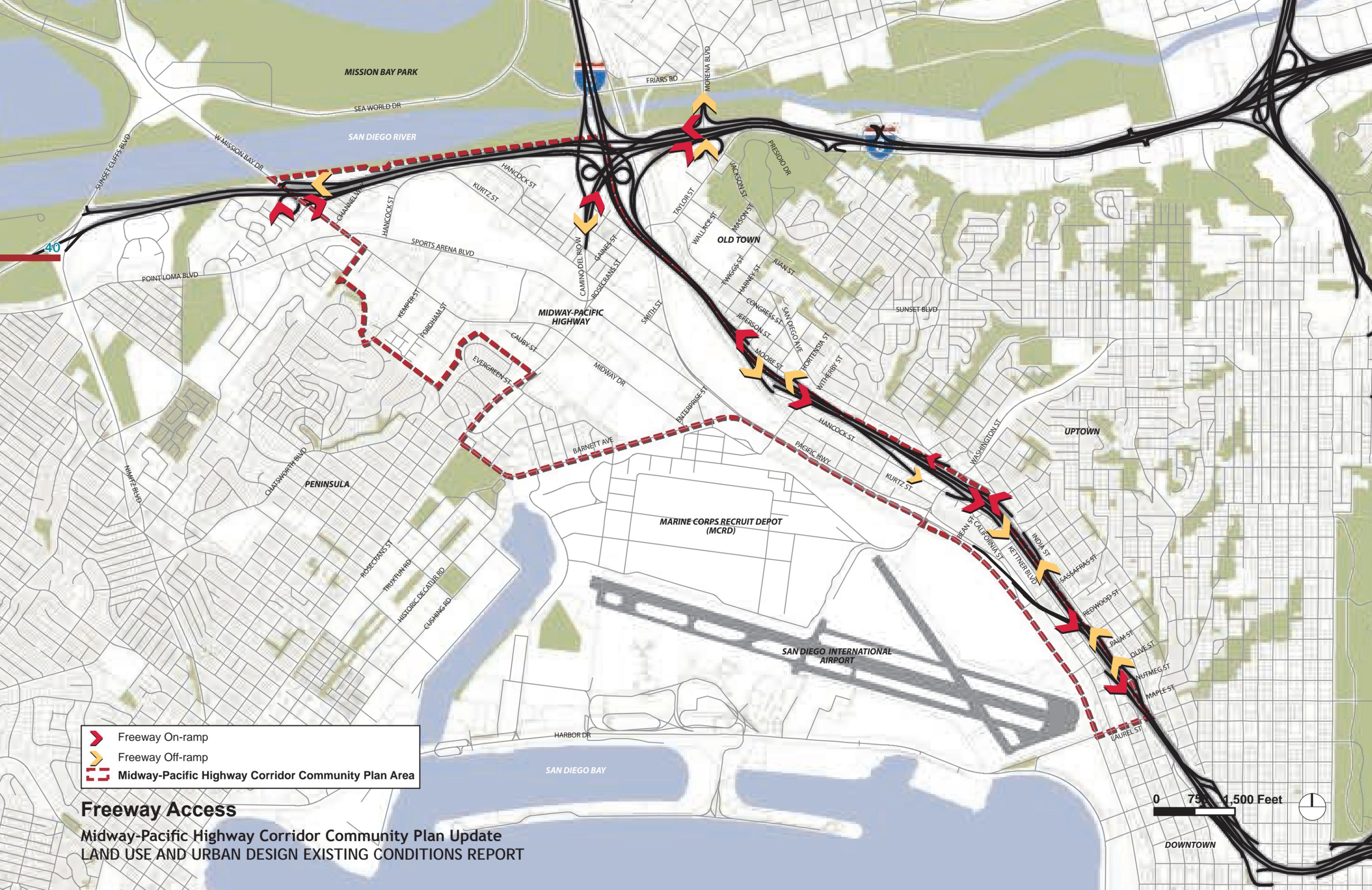


- Bike Lane
- Bus Stop
- Local Bus
- Express Bus
- Coaster / AMTRAK
- Trolley - Blue Line (with stop)
- Trolley - Green Line (with stop)
- ☆ Transit Center
- - - - Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor Community Plan Area

**Rail Transit, Bus Transit, and Bike Lanes**

750 1,500 Feet

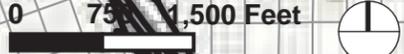




-  Freeway On-ramp
-  Freeway Off-ramp
-  Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor Community Plan Area

**Freeway Access**

Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor Community Plan Update  
 LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT



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**PUBLIC FACILITIES**

Public spaces create opportunities for passive and active recreation, leisure, and entertainment, and help promote a sense of place and community identity. Although the Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor is centrally located and serves as an important destination for commercial activity within San Diego, there are no public parks, plazas, or open spaces. However, strong commercial uses, essential public facilities, and the Sports Arena are important public spaces that provide places away from home and work, where people engage in a variety of activities.

**Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

The City of San Diego provides population-based parks (commonly known as Neighborhood and Community Parks), facilities, and services located in close proximity to residential development and these parks are intended to serve the daily needs of the community. When possible, they adjoin schools in order to share facilities, and ideally are within walking distance of the residents. Population-based parks are to be provided at a minimum ratio of 2.8 useable acres per 1,000 residents. Recreation Centers (17,000 square feet) are provided at a minimum for every 25,000 residents and an Aquatic Complex is provided for every 50,000 residents. For planning purposes park acreage is based on the population in the

year 2030 and these numbers are calculated by SANDAG (2050 forecast). In 2030, the population for Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor community is anticipated to be 7,663 which results in 22 acres of population-based parks, one recreation center and an aquatic center. Currently, the Midway-Pacific Highway Corridor community does not have any existing population based parks, recreation centers or aquatic complexes, and there is a need for park areas to service the community.

Although not part of the study area, the San Diego River Park and Mission Bay Park are located directly to the north. Mission Bay Park has large areas for passive and active recreation as well as a network of trails, and a public boat launch for those that enjoy water sports.

**Police and Fire Rescue**

Public facilities are critical to providing public services to the community and the region. San Diego Fire-Rescue Station 20 is located at 3305 Kemper Street. The San Diego Police Department has Peninsula Storefront at 3750 Sports Arena Boulevard.

**Schools**

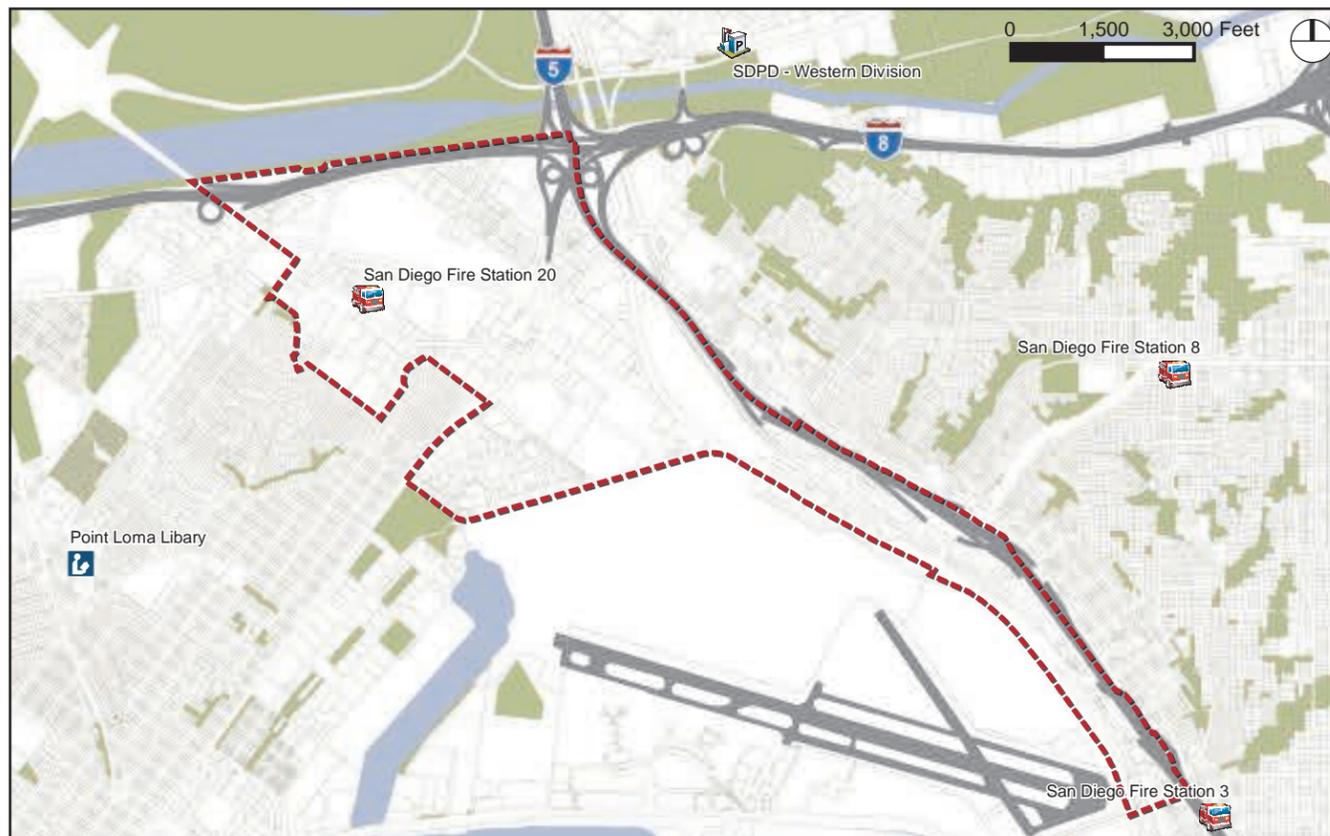
Children in the community are primarily served by three San Diego Unified School District schools: Bernard Elementary, Correia Middle, and Point Loma High. Dewey Elementary, located at

3251 Rosecrans Street, provides education for K-4th grades. For subsequent grade levels, students must attend school located in other areas. The portion of the community north of Pacific Highway is designated as an optional area for Dewey/Grant Elementary Schools and Roosevelt and Dana/Correia Middle Schools. The San Diego Community College West City Campus is located within the community. In addition to the public schools, the St. Charles Borromeo Academy (K-8) is located within the community.

**Other Facilities**

The San Diego Sports Arena (Valley View Casino Center) is a sports and entertainment venue that opened in 1966 and continues to host a variety of events every year. Depending on the event, seating capacity at the Sports Arena ranges from 12,000 to 16,000. Since 1980, Kobey’s Swap Meet has used the parking lot of the Sports Arena on weekends.

The County of San Diego Health Services Complex located at 3851 Rosecrans Street provides public health services to the community and the central area of the City. The Midway Post Office is located at 2535 Midway Drive. The U.S. Postal Service has placed the site on the market.



Community Facilities and Services

