

THE NEIGHBORHOODS

The following sections provide more detailed existing conditions, objectives and recommendations for each of the six neighborhoods in the Uptown community. The following is a description of the location of these neighborhoods (See Figure 18).

1. Mission Hills includes the area of Uptown generally west of Reynard Way, Curlew Street and Dove Street. This neighborhood includes the areas known as South Mission Hills.
2. Hillcrest is bounded by Washington Street on the north, Curlew Street and Dove Street on the west, Upas Street and Balboa Park on the south and Park Boulevard on the east. The area known as Marston Hills near Balboa Park and University Avenue east of State Route 163 is included in this neighborhood.
3. The medical complex consists of the area north of Washington Avenue between Dove Street and State Route 163.
4. Park West is located south of Upas Street, east of Reynard Way, west of Balboa Park and north of Interstate 5. It includes the areas known as Bankers Hill, Crescent Knoll and Reynard Hills.
5. University Heights includes the area north of Washington Street and east of State Route 163. The Uptown Community Plan boundary at Park Boulevard actually bisects University Heights before extending easterly into the Greater North Park community plan area.
6. Middletown is bounded by Horton Avenue and Titus Street to the east, Laurel Street and Reynard Way to the south, Interstate 5 to the west and Witherby Street to the north. Historic Middletown is also found in adjacent community plan areas across Interstate 5.

MISSION HILLS

The Mission Hills area is generally defined as the area south of the Mission Valley community plan area, west of Curlew Street and Reynard Way, north of Horton Avenue and east of the Old San Diego community plan area.

Existing Conditions

Mission Hills is primarily a residential community consisting of single-family residences interspersed with multifamily dwellings. Figure 19, the Image Inventory, highlights the features in Mission Hills which combine to form its existing image. Due to the numerous canyons, the community is characterized by curvilinear, non-continuous streets. Some of the streets are very narrow and have limited sight distance. Several through streets, however, do exist and are frequently traveled. It is along these streets that various neighborhoods emerge. Architectural styles include neo-classical which was popular during the early 1900s, and large hacienda-type structures of the 1920s and 1930s Mission Revival style. The majority of residences, although

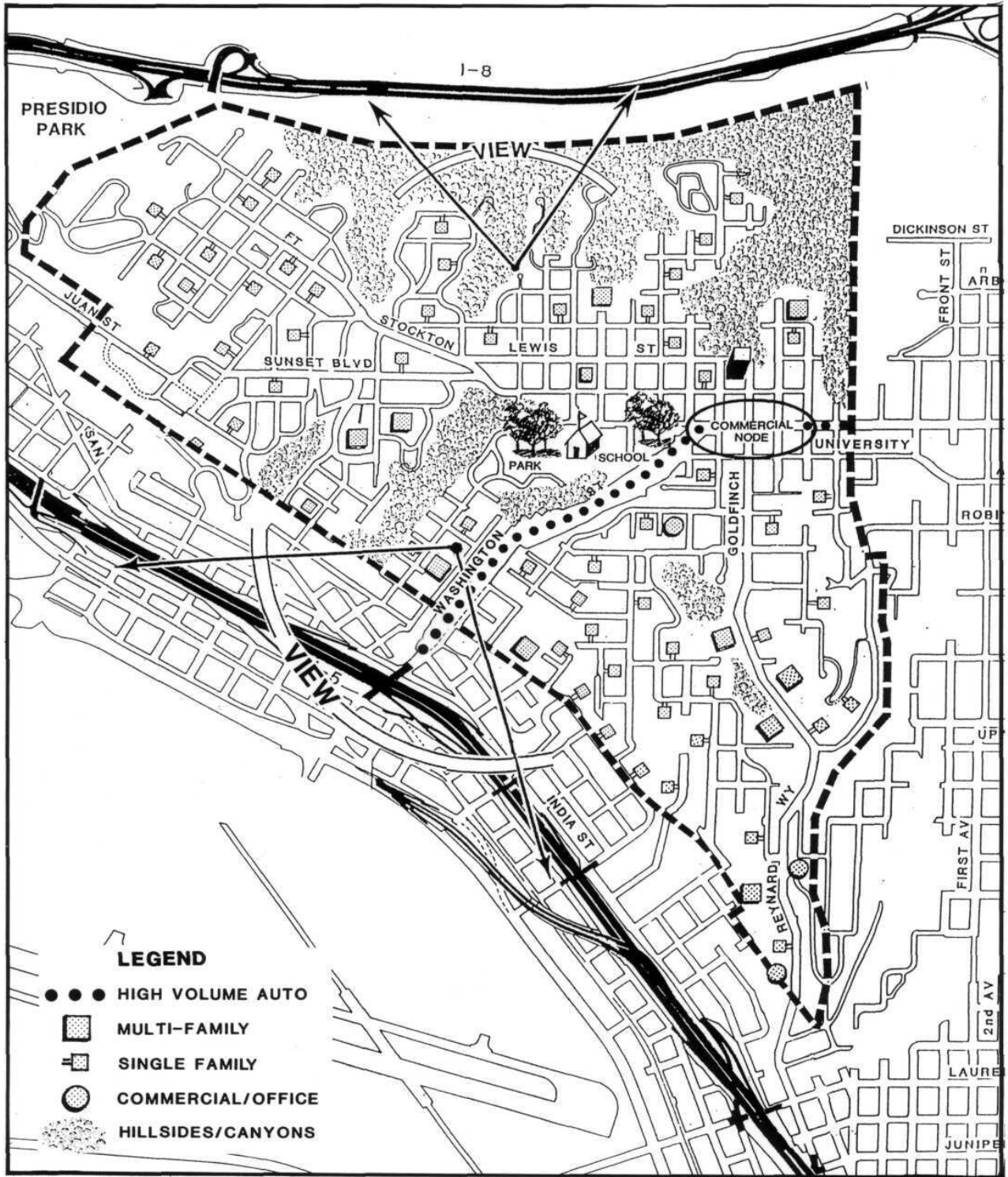


Image Inventory - MISSION HILLS
UPTOWN Community Plan
 CITY OF SAN DIEGO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

FIGURE
19

old, are well maintained; in fact, some fine examples of San Diego's most elegant homes are located in Mission Hills. In addition, small-scale bungalows can be found in every neighborhood. Many of these bungalows are now being used as rental properties.

The majority of multifamily developments have been built within the last 10-15 years. Most contain approximately 6-10 dwelling units and are located primarily along through streets and at the canyon rims. A senior citizen residential high-rise exists at Ibis Street and Fort Stockton Drive.

Landscaping in the area, both within the public right-of-way and on private property, is mostly well established and carefully maintained. Some neighborhoods have developed a street tree theme which is based upon the primary tree found within the area. For instance, the homes set back into the eroding hillsides along Reynard Way and Curlew Street are interspersed with Eucalyptus trees. Palms are the primary street tree found along the neighborhood streets on the mesa near Fort Stockton Street. Large Fig trees and California Pepper trees can also be found scattered throughout the neighborhoods. Beautiful, established stands of Eucalyptus trees exist in Pioneer Park and near the intersection of Washington Street and Washington Place. The commercial node along West Lewis Street has a well-developed street tree theme of Jacaranda trees.

Several small office and commercial areas exist throughout Mission Hills. A few small businesses are located along the higher vehicle intensity neighborhood streets; some of these businesses are contained in renovated and converted houses. Washington Street from Dove Avenue to Washington Place, having a high intensity of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, provides the hub of commercial activity in Mission Hills. This activity center extends south on Goldfinch to University Avenue and north to Fort Stockton Drive. A variety of neighborhood services are provided including drug stores, florists, gift shops and clothing stores along with various professional offices. These shops, in addition to a variety of restaurants, attract both residents of the area and those from outside Mission Hills. There are a few commercial businesses at the west end of Washington Street.

Washington Street is a major entrance into the Mission Hills area. Traffic flows at a relatively high speed on this somewhat barren section of roadway. On the canyon rim overlooking this roadway and with views toward the bay are residences and the Ulysses S. Grant Elementary School.

On-street parking is available on both sides of most residential streets. Most of the narrow, curving streets, however, do not provide on-street parking and a minimum of off-street parking is available. Parallel parking is available on both sides of Washington Street within the commercial node, in addition to a large surface lot at the corner of Fort Stockton and Goldfinch. Several churches in the area have relatively small surface lots which have impacted on-street parking in the adjacent neighborhoods. Metered parking is common in the commercial nodes; this assists in monitoring short-term parking.

Amenities include four- to five-foot-wide pedestrian sidewalks throughout much of the residential areas. Curb to storefront walks exist in both the Washington Street and India Street

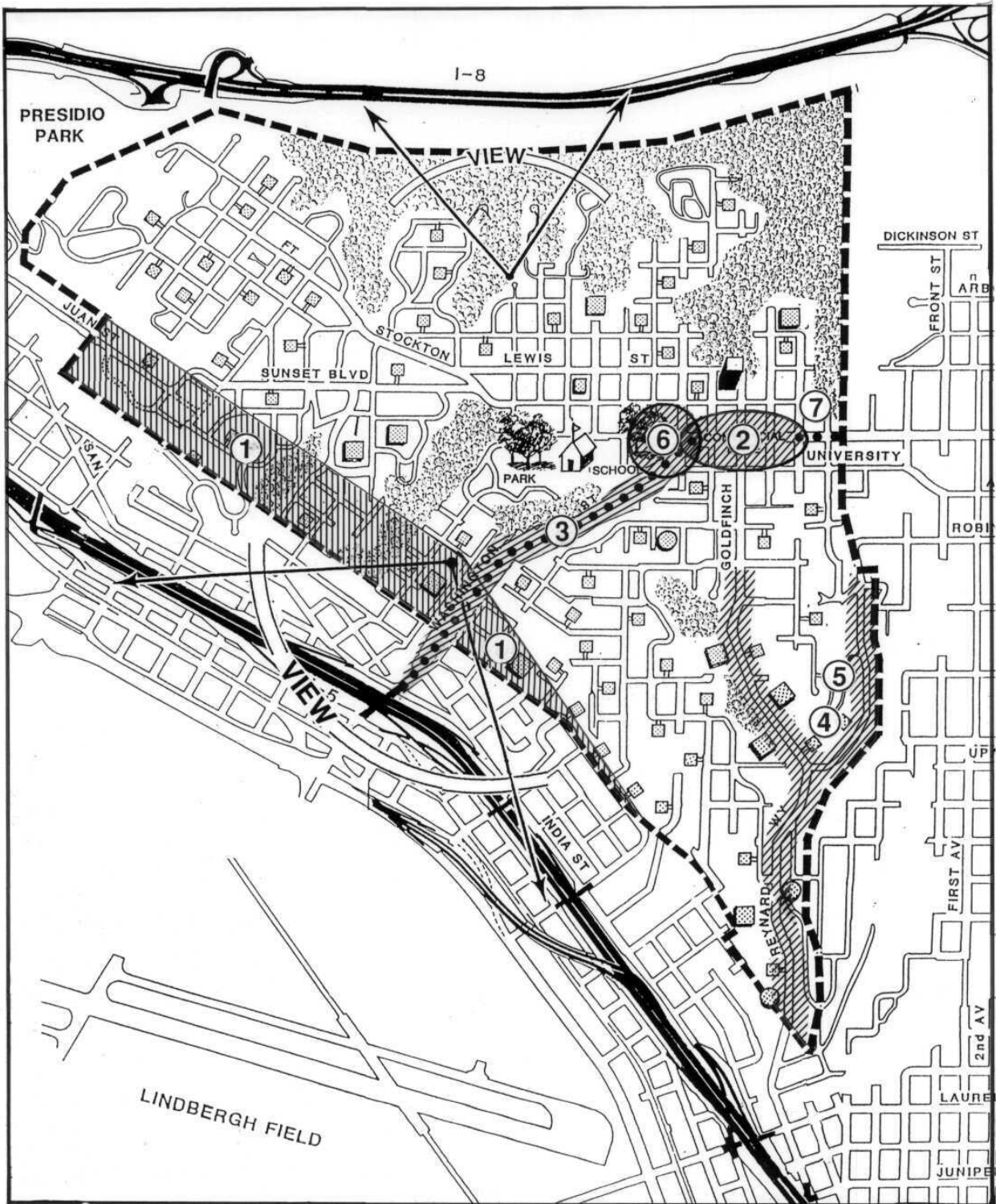
commercial nodes. Established, well-maintained vegetation and large street trees provide greenery throughout most of the area.

Numerous canyons provide open space and enable many residences to remain relatively secluded. While a limited number of homes can enjoy locations along the ravines, views into most canyons are available by vehicle and foot. Views of downtown are accessible from several locations throughout the area. The west sloping hillsides provide magnificent views of San Diego Bay, and the canyon rims to the north produce wide sweeping views of Mission Valley. To preserve public views, the 30-foot Uptown Height Limitation Zone was adopted in August, 1985 for that area northwesterly of the Interstate 5 and Washington Street interchange.

Objectives

The following objectives are specific to Mission Hills and are in addition to the general objectives for the Uptown community found on page 75 and 76 of the Urban Design Element.

- Improve the appearance of existing commercial structures throughout Mission Hills and mitigate the visual conflicts found within the commercial areas.
- Promote smooth traffic flow along Washington Street in the commercial node and reduce auto/pedestrian conflicts.
- Preserve views from the western slopes.
- Increase the number of public parks in Mission Hills by supporting mini-parks.



Recommendations - MISSION HILLS
UPTOWN Community Plan
 CITY OF SAN DIEGO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

FIGURE
 20

Recommendations

The following recommendations are specific to Mission Hills and are in addition to the recommendations for the Uptown community found on pages 75 through 83 of the Urban Design Element.

1. Tailored zoning should incorporate a 30-foot height limit for both commercial and residential uses on the westerly slopes of Mission Hills, in addition to other design controls such as setbacks, building coverage, bulk limitations and unit clustering to preserve the natural slopes, maximize the design quality and retain public views (Figure 20). General boundaries are Interstate 5 on the west; Old Town on the north; the existing interim height limit boundaries on the east, and Washington Street on the south. The method of measuring building height should preclude altering of existing grade for the purpose of achieving greater height.
2. Expand the neighborhood commercial services and mixed-use development within the commercial node surrounding Washington and Goldfinch Streets, in addition to improving the pedestrian quality of this area.
3. Develop a landscaping plan and implementation strategy to visually upgrade Washington Street from Washington Place to India Street.
4. Increase the landscaping in the public right-of-way along Reynard Way and Curlew Street to add interest and minimize erosion.
5. Establish pocket parks on available public land along Reynard Way and Curlew Street to expand and connect the current open space system.
6. Explore the feasibility of providing a pedestrian bridge over Washington Street in the area west of Goldfinch Street.
7. Methods should be explored to eliminate billboards, such as to require the removal of existing billboards when a property redevelops or in conjunction with any discretionary review of the property.