

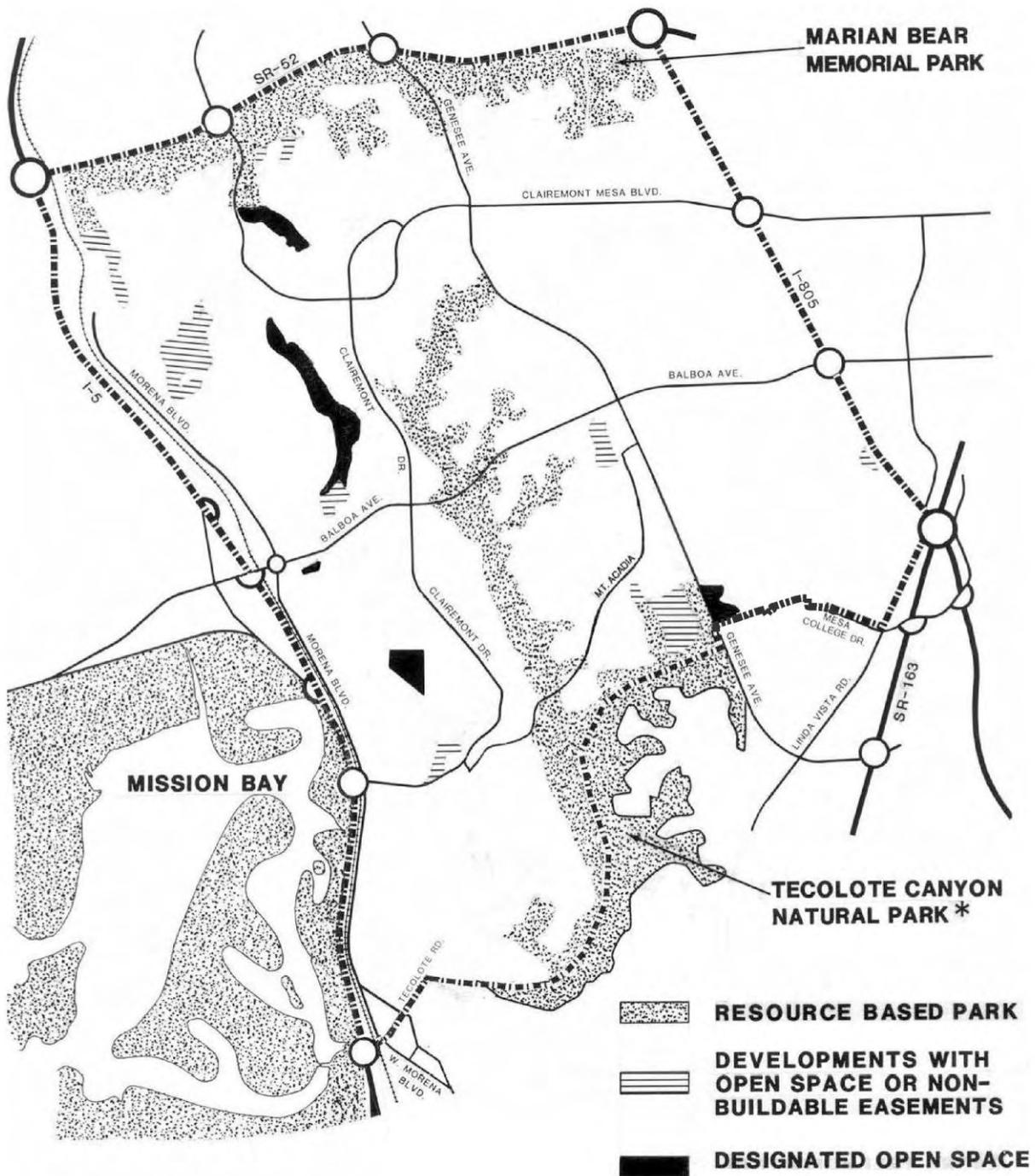
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## **OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

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### **OBJECTIVES FOR OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

1. Preserve and enhance Marian Bear Memorial Park, Tecolote Canyon Natural Park, Stevenson Canyon and the finger canyons to provide visual open space and community identity.
2. Reduce runoff and the alterations of the natural drainage system.
3. Minimize the contamination of Rose Creek and Tecolote Creek from urban pollutants and erosion.
4. Protect the resource value of canyon areas and plant and animal wildlife within the community.
5. Establish residential development guidelines in areas adjacent to the open space system to prevent the intrusion of incompatible development.
6. Prevent residential landscaping from modifying the biological resources of canyon areas by using plant species that are non-invasive and compatible with the native vegetation.
7. Protect the resource value of artifacts and paleontological remains and the community's heritage for future generations.



\*TECOLOTE CANYON NATURAL PARK MASTER PLAN, ADOPTED MAY 1983

**Recommended Open Space**  
**Clairemont Mesa Community Plan**

## OPEN SPACE

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### EXISTING CONDITIONS

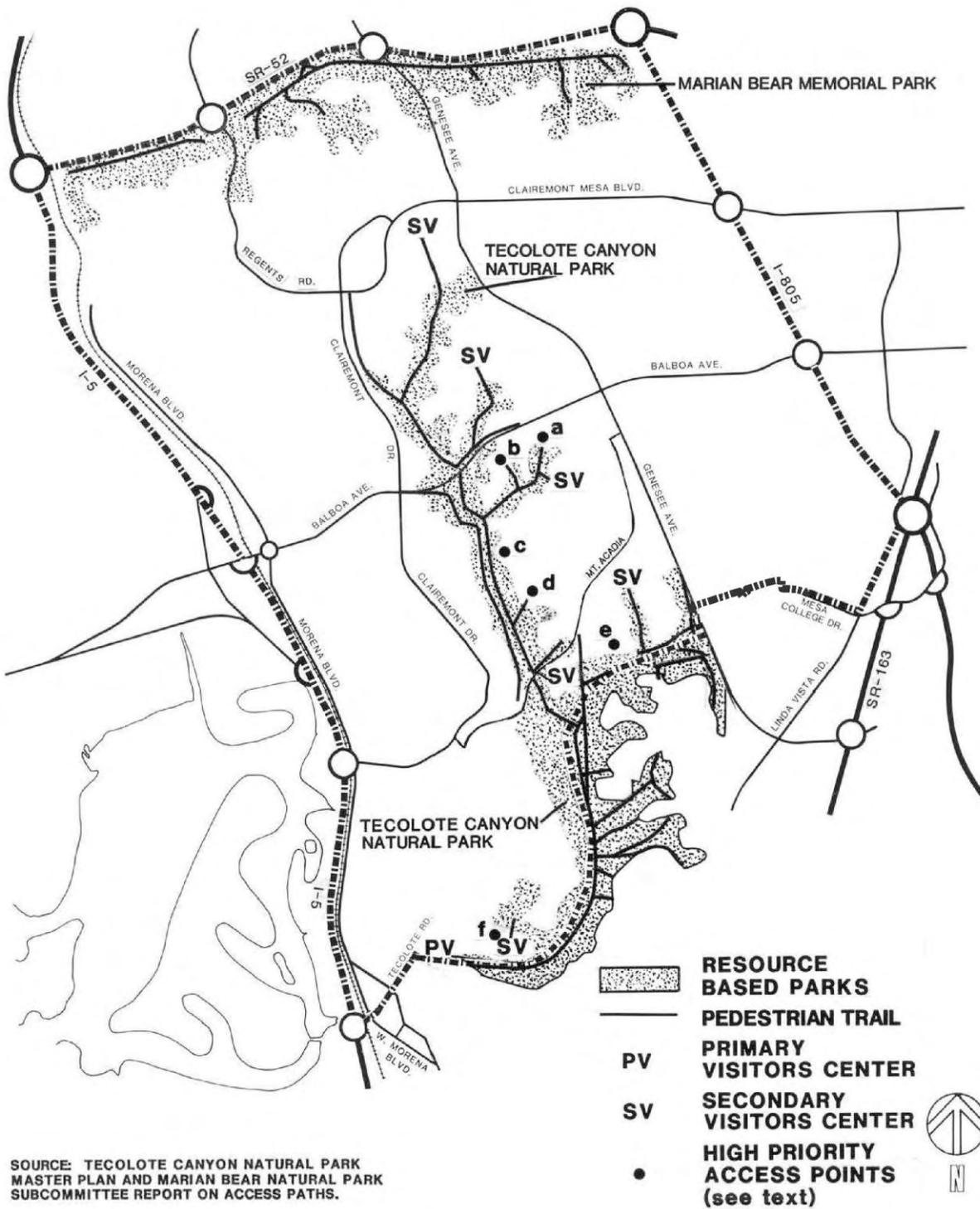
Tecolote Canyon and San Clemente Canyon are regional resource-based open space systems that are immediately related to the Clairemont Mesa community. Tecolote Canyon was dedicated as the Tecolote Canyon Natural Park in 1977, and San Clemente Canyon, later renamed to Marian Bear Memorial Park, was acquired by the City in 1960. Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Marian Bear Memorial Park are resource-based parks (**Figure 32**), defined as parks located at the site of distinctive scenic, natural or cultural features and intended for citywide use. The purpose of both parks is to maintain the existing native California flora and fauna of these canyons, located within the San Diego urban setting.

Tecolote Canyon Natural Park consists of approximately 903 acres that bisect the community. The canyon is approximately six miles long and varies between one-quarter and one-half-mile in width. The main entrance to the park is from the visitor center near Tecolote Park and Recreation Center in the Linda Vista community. Tecolote Park and Recreation Center has restrooms, picnic areas and parking and is adjacent to pedestrian trails accessing the southern portion of the canyon (**Figures 32 and 33**).

There are many existing secondary pedestrian access points into the canyon from neighborhood parks and other locations in Clairemont Mesa and Linda Vista.

Tecolote Canyon has experienced severe erosion and siltation problems resulting from rim development and the storm drainage system that empties into the canyon. On May 24, 1983, the City adopted the Tecolote Canyon Natural Park Master Plan which is the prevailing planning document for the dedicated park, consisting of guidelines for the optimum development and use of Tecolote Canyon Natural Park. The Plan is supportive of the goals of the master plan which include: preserving the open space to provide visual enjoyment and natural habitat; establishing a maintenance program within the park to preserve the quality of open space; establishing criteria and guidelines for the development of rim properties; and, providing an accessible natural park to meet the needs of residents in Clairemont Mesa and other communities. While the Plan makes no recommendations for management of the park, it does recommend means by which development along the canyon rim will have a minimal impact on the park; these recommendations are consistent with the Tecolote Canyon Rim Development Guidelines that were adopted by the City on January 13, 1987.

Marian Bear Memorial Park is located south of SR-52 and consists of approximately 467 acres (**Figures 32 and 33**). Prior to adoption of the Clairemont Mesa Plan (1989), Marian Bear Memorial Park was part of the University planning area. The University plan was amended simultaneously with the adoption of the Plan to remove Marian Bear Memorial Park from the University planning area and place it in the Clairemont Mesa planning area with SR-52 as the new northern boundary. Because SR-52 separates the University community from the park, and the northern neighborhoods of Clairemont Mesa



are immediately adjacent to and overlook the park, this park is more logically contained in the Clairemont Mesa planning area. Regents Road and Genesee Avenue provide the main access points to Marian Bear Memorial Park for both pedestrian and automobile traffic. Each entrance provides parking, picnic areas, and restroom facilities for the public. The main pedestrian trail west of Regents Road, which parallels the creek bed, has a well-marked nature trail (**Figure 31**). Marian Bear Memorial Park is similar to Tecolote Canyon Natural Park in that it provides an accessible natural park for residents in Clairemont Mesa, University and other communities.

Located adjacent to Clairemont Mesa is a third resource-based park, Mission Bay Park (**Figure 32**). Access into the park from the community is via Clairemont Drive and Tecolote Road.

Other open space areas in Clairemont Mesa include open space easements and privately owned canyons, three of which are currently on the City's open space retention list (**Figure 32**). The City's open space purchases will be made on the basis of open space deficiencies in communities and will not necessarily be purchased in the order presented on the retention list. These retention areas include Stevenson Canyon, a finger canyon of San Clemente Canyon and a finger canyon of Tecolote Canyon. Development has occurred in some of the privately owned canyons that were previously designated as open space in the 1970 community plan (see **Residential Element**).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPEN SPACE AND RESOURCE-BASED PARKS**

### 1. Rezoning

- a. Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Marian Bear Memorial Park, which are City-owned, dedicated parklands, should be rezoned from R1-5000/HR and R1-15000/HR to OS-R in keeping with the purpose of this zone (**Figure 38**).
- b. The City-owned portions of Stevenson Canyon (approximately 18 acres) and Padre Canyon (approximately five acres) should be rezoned from R1-15000 HR to OS-OSP. This comprises the southern one-third of Stevenson Canyon and the southern one-half of Padre Canyon.
- c. Privately owned areas which should be designated with very low residential densities (one dwelling unit per 40,000 square feet) in order to preserve existing canyon and natural open space systems include approximately 39 acres comprising the northern two-thirds of Stevenson Canyon, a finger canyon of Tecolote Canyon, a finger canyon of San Clemente Canyon and approximately five acres comprising the northern one-half of Padre Canyon (**Figure 38**).
- d. New development along the rim of Tecolote Canyon, San Clemente Canyon and all designated open space must be in accordance with the Tecolote Canyon Rim Development Guidelines and Hillside Review Overlay Zone to protect the open space system.

## 2. Master Plans

- a. A master plan for Marian Bear Memorial Park should be developed by the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department and the Marian Bear Park Advisory Committee in order to establish a long-range comprehensive park program for the management and preservation of the resource-based park.
- b. The Tecolote Canyon Natural Park Master Plan is the prevailing document for the management and preservation of the resource-based park and should be used as a guide for the future development of the park.

## 3. Park Rangers

Park rangers should be assigned to Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Marian Bear Memorial Park to ensure their protection and provide educational/interpretive programs.

## 4. Acquisitions

Acquire open space through open space easements and continue administering the City's acquisition program in accordance with the criteria established by the Park and Recreation Department.

## 5. Revegetation

As part of development permit approval, requirements should be established in the environmental review process for the rehabilitation of disturbed on-site open space areas. Plans should be reviewed by the Park and Recreation Department to ensure that plantings will be compatible with the native vegetation and will not be intrusive into existing open space.

## 6. Design

Any development proposed within or adjacent to the designated open space areas should be subject to development standards of the Hillside Review Overlay Zone and Design and Development Guidelines and the Tecolote Canyon Rim Development Guidelines in order to protect the natural resources and preserve community identity.

- a. All public improvements such as roads, drainage channels and utility service and maintenance facilities should be developed in a manner that minimizes the visual and physical impacts of such improvements on the open space system.
- b. Public property leased by the City should conform to the same development guidelines that apply to private property.

## 7. Streets to be Retained for Public Access

The six “highest priority and high priority” access points to Tecolote Canyon Natural Park from Clairemont Mesa, identified in the Tecolote Canyon Natural Park Master Plan should not be vacated (**Figure 33**). These include:

- a. South end of Mt. Culebra Avenue (dedicated street)
- b. South end of Mt. Bagot Avenue (street reservation)
- c. West end of Mt. Ashmun Drive (dedicated street)
- d. West end of Mt. Ariane Drive (dedicated street)
- e. South end of Mt. Carol Drive (dedicated street)
- f. North end of Goldboro Street (dedicated street).

8. School Sites

Canyon areas adjacent to school sites and former school sites should be preserved in their natural state. If school sites should redevelop, those portions of the site that are adjacent to a designated open space area should be developed in a manner that is sensitive to the canyon area.



## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

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### EXISTING CONDITIONS

The designated open space areas in the community, Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Marian Bear Memorial Park, contain sensitive habitat areas (**Figure 34**). These habitats contain sensitive biological species that include three native plant communities: Coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and riparian woodland. These plant communities are found on steep canyon walls, canyon bottoms, along streambeds and in the finger canyons that provide a quality wildlife habitat. The flora and fauna of Tecolote Canyon Natural Park are similar to those found in Marian Bear Memorial Park.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. Preservation

In order to preserve the native flora and fauna, development should not be permitted in the open space areas. If development does occur on property with sensitive environmental areas, development should be clustered and located away from sensitive plant and animal habitats.

2. Revegetation

Disturbed areas should be revegetated with native plant species placed in appropriate soils in accordance with the mitigation requirements specified by a qualified biologist during the environmental review process.

3. Preservation of Trees

Significant native tree stands should be preserved as part of the protection of sensitive habitat areas.

## **WATER RESOURCES**

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### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Clairemont Mesa is located within the Peñasquitos Hydrologic Unit, an area of approximately 170 square miles extending from the City of Poway to the east and La Jolla to the west. There are no permanent streams located within the community. However, intermittent streams in the area include San Clemente Creek and Rose Creek, forming the north and northwest boundaries of the planning area, and Tecolote Creek, which bisects the community and forms the southern boundary of the planning area (**Figure 34**). Drainage from the entire community ultimately flows into Mission Bay.

During periods of heavy rainfall, runoff has created erosion and siltation problems at the discharge points of Rose Creek and Tecolote Creek. The City of San Diego budgeted one million dollars in the 1987 Capital Improvements Program for erosion control in Tecolote Canyon. The Improvements Program included the restoration of 25 sites in the canyon which were chosen on the basis of the severity of erosion, safety, aesthetics and cost of the restoration.

Water quality in Rose Creek has been affected by the chemicals and heavy metals resulting from the industrial activities in Rose Canyon. Tecolote Creek, on the other hand, has been affected by sewage, fertilizers and garbage from surrounding residential development. In the past, Mission Bay has been closed because of sewage contamination caused by a breakage in the sewer trunk line along Tecolote Canyon. The sewer trunk line has been repaired and construction of two interceptors, one north of Mission Bay by Damon Street in Pacific Beach and the other by Tecolote Park and Recreation Center in Linda Vista, have been completed to prevent urban pollutants from seeping into Mission Bay.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WATER RESOURCES**

1. Hillside Review Standards

Development of hillsides in the Hillside Review Overlay Zone should conform to the development standards of the Hillside Review Overlay Zone and Design Development Guidelines. Property adjacent to Tecolote Canyon should be subject to and must continue to conform to the Tecolote Canyon Rim Development Guidelines in addition to the citywide Hillside Review Guidelines.

2. Watershed Program

A watershed management or maintenance program should be developed by the City of San Diego Engineering and Development Department and Park and Recreation Department to restore Tecolote Canyon to a physically and biologically stable state.

### 3. Toxic Wastes

The City should adopt regulations to control the use and disposal of toxic wastes to prevent water pollution.

### 4. Floodplain\*

- a. Development in the floodplain of Rose Creek should not encroach into the floodway in order to preserve the biological habitats and not obstruct the flood flow or alter the course of Rose Creek.
- b. Development in the floodplain of Tecolote Creek should have elevated building pads in order to avoid potential flooding (Flood Insurance Rate Map, Federal Emergency Management Agency).

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\*The floodplain is the relatively flat area adjoining the channel of a natural stream or river that is subject to inundation of floodwaters. A floodway consists of the channel of a natural stream or river and portions of the floodplain that carries and discharges the floodwater or flood flow (Figure 32, Zoning Ordinance, Section 101.0101.57 and 58).

## **PALEONTOLOGY AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

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### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Paleontological and archaeological resources have been found on canyon walls where erosion has occurred or development has taken place in the community. Archaeological sites, which were recorded prior to 1930, have all been lost to development. The recorded sites have been identified as scattered winter camps which were occupied by the La Jolla cultural group, dated 7,500 years ago to about 1,500 years ago. Characteristics of the La Jolla culture include fire hearths, shell middens, grinding implements and a lack of pottery. There have also been traces of the San Dieguito, a cultural group dated 12,000 years ago to about 7,500 years ago. These people were nomadic large game hunters and camped on the mesas. It is unlikely that new sites will be found in Clairemont Mesa since most of the level areas are urbanized, except in the undeveloped finger canyons, Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Marian Bear Memorial Park.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PALEONTOLOGY AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

If paleontological and archaeological resources have been determined by a qualified archeologist to exist on a proposed development site, excavation should take place in accordance with the mitigation requirements specified during the environmental review process.

## **GEOLOGIC CONDITIONS**

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### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

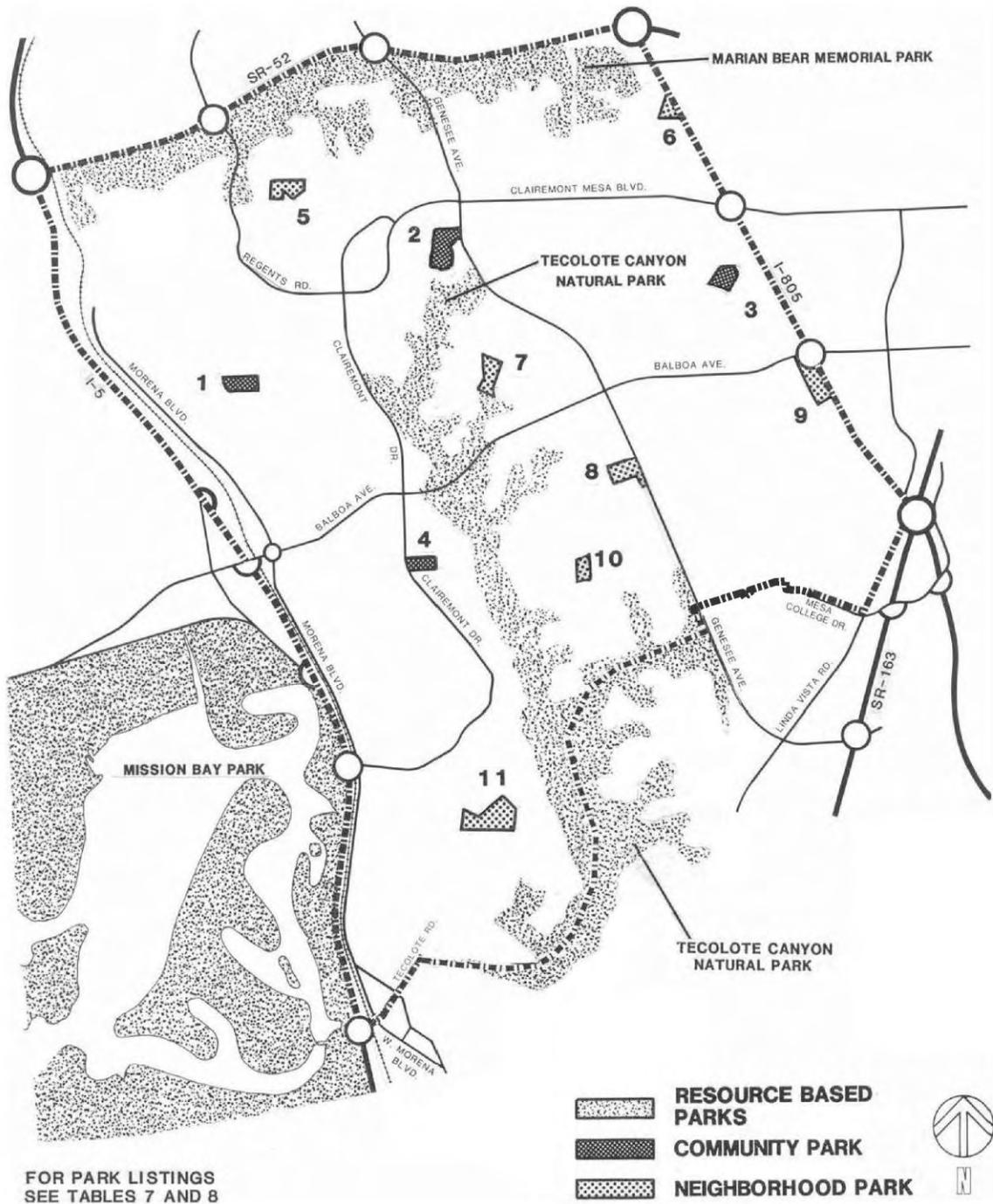
The geology in Clairemont Mesa consists of sedimentary formations. These formations are exposed in the canyons and in cut-slopes associated with roads and urban development. Landslides have occurred along the canyon walls where there are soft expansive clay deposits.

Faulting is relatively common in coastal areas that have sedimentary formations. Earthquake faults in Clairemont Mesa include the Rose Canyon Fault Zone, which lies along the western edge of the community parallel to I-5 (**Figure 34**). The City of San Diego Seismic Safety Study considers this fault system to be potentially active.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GEOLOGIC CONDITIONS**

Any areas identified as geologically unstable by the City Planning Department's Environmental Quality Division should be subject to geological analysis and geotechnical studies prior to development approval without disturbing the project site, where feasible. Unstable land should not be subdivided unless the instability can be corrected in a sensitive manner that is acceptable by the Environmental Quality Division.

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**Recommended Park Facilities**  
 Clairemont Mesa Community Plan