

Land Use and Community Planning Element





Land Use and Community Planning Element

Purpose

To guide future growth and development into a sustainable citywide development pattern, while maintaining or enhancing quality of life in our communities.

Introduction

The Land Use and Community Planning Element (Land Use Element) provides policies to guide the City of San Diego's growth and implement the City of Villages strategy within the context of San Diego's community planning program. The Land Use Element addresses land use issues that apply to the City as a whole. The community planning program is the mechanism to refine citywide policies, designate land uses, and make additional site-specific recommendations as needed. The



The Land Use Element establishes the structure to respect the diversity of each community and includes policy direction to govern the preparation of community plans. The element also provides policy direction in areas including zoning and policy consistency, the plan amendment process, coastal planning, airport-land use planning, annexation policies, balanced communities, equitable development, and environmental justice.

Land Use - Present and Planned

Parks, open space, and recreation areas comprise nearly 28 percent of the existing land uses in the City. Residential acreage forms the next largest use of land, at nearly 24 percent of the total City acreage. Tables LU-1, Existing Land Uses, and LU-2, Adopted Community Plan Land Uses, summarize the City's acreage distribution in terms of existing uses and planned land use designations as they are grouped into seven General Plan land use categories (see also Section B). Existing uses represent those uses as they are currently developed throughout the City. Planned land uses are the recommended land use designations as identified in the adopted community plans. It should be noted that existing uses may not always match the planned land use designations for certain sites as specified in the adopted community plans. For example, a site may have agricultural uses on it while the planned land use designation calls for residential use. Existing uses may be located on sites with planned land use designations that allow other types of uses that have not yet been implemented in accordance with the adopted community plans.



TABLE LU-1 Existing Land Uses (May 2006)

General Plan Land Use Category	Existing Uses	
	Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	6,055	2.8
Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services	7,887	3.6
Industrial Employment	8,928	4.1
Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities ¹	37,103	16.9
Multiple Use	--	--
Park, Open Space and Recreation ²	60,654	27.6
Residential	52,389	23.9
Roads / Freeways / Transportation Facilities ³	31,291	14.3
Water Bodies ³	6,932	3.2
Vacant ³	8,002	3.6
Total	219,241	100.0

1 This land use category includes 26,547 of existing acres of military use.

2 This land use category includes 2,578 acres of water bodies that are recreational areas and located within park and open space areas.

3 Not a General Plan land use category, however, it is included to provide an accurate account for total acreage in the City. Water bodies identified here are not for recreational purposes. Includes vacant undevelopable and potentially developable land.

Source: San Diego Association of Government's (SANDAG's) Regional Land Use Database

TABLE LU-2 Adopted Community Plan Land Uses (May 2006)

General Plan Land Use Category	Existing Uses	
	Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	3,809	1.7
Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services	5,475	2.5
Industrial Employment	12,278	5.6
Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities ¹	37,184	17.0
Multiple Use	4,534	2.1
Park, Open Space and Recreation ²	62,692	28.6
Residential	55,842	25.5
Roads / Freeways / Transportation Facilities ³	30,495	13.9
Water Bodies ³	6,932	3.2
Vacant ³	—	—
Total	219,241	100.0

1 This land use category includes 26,547 of existing acres of military use.

2 This land use category includes 2,578 acres of water bodies that are recreational areas and located within park and open space areas.

3 Not a General Plan land use category, however, it is included to provide an accurate account for total acreage in the City. Water bodies identified here are not for recreational purposes.

Source: SANDAG's Regional Land Use Database



A review of Tables LU-1 and LU-2 reveal the following land use changes if planned land use designations are implemented in accordance with adopted community plans:

- Agriculture—which is currently mostly located in the extreme northern and southern portions of the City, will experience a decline.
- Multiple Use—this category will emerge within the central urbanized communities and downtown area. (Additional areas of multiple use development would be anticipated as community plans are updated and village sites are designated.)
- Residential—this category will experience the greatest increase in use.
- Industrial—these lands are mostly found in the northern and southern portions of the City where research and development, manufacturing, warehouse and distribution facilities have traditionally been established due to availability of large parcels of land and ease of access to major freeway corridors. A small increase in industrial land area would occur upon community plan implementation.
- Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services—these uses are evenly distributed throughout the City in order to address the commercial related needs of the various community planning areas, and will continue to be evenly dispersed in the City per adopted land use plans.
- Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities—this category will experience the least amount of change, as the majority of lands designated for these types of facilities are being fully utilized to accommodate these uses.

Vacant land that is identified on Table LU-1 is comprised of lands considered to be developable (for example, stand alone parking lots not associated with a specific use), as well as undevelopable vacant land in the City.

**TABLE LU-3 Breakdown of Vacant Developable Land
in Terms of Existing Community Plan Land Use Designations (May 2006)**

General Plan Land Use Category Planned Land Uses	Vacant Developable Acres	% of Total
Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services	617	9.3
Industrial Employment	2,107	31.7
Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities	702	10.6
Multiple Use	423	6.4
Residential	2,788	42.0
Total Acres (Vacant Developable)	6,756	100.0



Table LU-3, Breakdown of Vacant Developable Land, includes data specific to developable vacant land in the City and how it is designated per the adopted land use plans in order to allow for future growth and development. It shows that 43 percent of the total vacant developable land in the City is designated for residential uses while another 31 percent is designated for industrial related uses.

Since the majority of the City is developed, infill development and redevelopment will play an increasingly significant role in providing needed housing, jobs, and services in our communities. Guidance for how this development should occur is provided by the City of Villages strategy.

A. City of Villages Strategy

Goal

- ◆ Mixed-use villages located throughout the City and connected by high-quality transit.

Discussion

The City of Villages strategy is to focus growth into mixed-use activity centers that are pedestrian-friendly, centers of community, and linked to the regional transit system. The strategy draws upon the strengths of San Diego's natural environment, neighborhoods, commercial centers, institutions, and employment centers. The strategy focuses on the long-term economic, environmental, and social health of the City and its many communities. It recognizes the value of San Diego's distinctive neighborhoods and open spaces that together form the City as a whole. Implementation of the City of Villages strategy is an important component of the City's strategy to reduce local contributions to greenhouse gas emissions, because the strategy makes it possible for larger numbers of people to make fewer and shorter auto trips (see also Mobility Element, Introduction, and Conservation Element, Section A).

What is a Village?

A "village" is defined as the mixed-use heart of a community where residential, commercial, employment, and civic uses are all present and integrated. Each village will be unique to the community in which it is located. All villages will be pedestrian-friendly and characterized by inviting, accessible, and attractive streets and public spaces. These spaces will vary from village to village and may consist of: public parks or plazas, community meeting spaces, outdoor gathering spaces, passive or active open space areas that contain desirable landscape and streetscape design amenities, or outdoor dining and market activities. Individual villages will offer a variety of housing types and rents/prices. Over time, villages will be increasingly connected to each other by an expanded regional transit system. The village land use pattern and densities help make transit operate more efficiently, which in turn allows for improved and more cost effective transit services. The mix of land use should also include needed public facilities such as schools, libraries, or other community facilities as appropriate in each community.



Village Types and Mixed-Use Locations

Implementation of the City of Villages strategy relies upon the designation and development of village sites. The hierarchy of village types and development areas is described below.

Downtown - Downtown San Diego has a unique role to play in the 21st century development of the San Diego region. In addition to being the administrative, legal, cultural, and entertainment center in the region, Downtown also offers the most convenient and extensive transit connections and has emerged as an exciting pedestrian environment. The Downtown Community Plan provides detailed site specific land use recommendations. Due to its unique role in the region, the Downtown community will continue to have a planning framework that is specialized to its context.

Subregional Employment Areas - Subregional Employment Areas are major employment and/or commercial districts within the region containing corporate or multiple-use office, industrial, and retail uses with some adjacent multifamily residential uses. Existing Subregional Districts include the Mission Valley/Morena/Grantville and University/Sorrento Mesa areas.

Urban Village Centers - Urban Village Centers are higher-density/intensity areas located in subregional employment districts. They are characterized by a cluster of more intensive employment, residential, regional and subregional commercial uses that maximize walkability and support transit.

Community and Neighborhood Village Centers - Community and Neighborhood Village Centers should be located in almost every community plan area. They are community- and neighborhood-oriented areas with local commercial, office, and multifamily residential uses, including some structures with office or residential space above commercial space. Village Centers will contain public gathering spaces and/or civic uses. Uses will be integrated to the maximum extent possible in order to encourage a pedestrian-oriented design and encourage transit ridership. Community and Neighborhood Village Centers range in size from just a few acres to more than 100 acres. Community Village Centers are intended to serve a larger area than Neighborhood Village Centers. Community Village Centers may also have a more significant employment component than a neighborhood village.

Transit Corridors - The City contains a significant number of linear commercial areas that are lively and vital, pedestrian-friendly, and home to a rich variety of small businesses, restaurants, and homes. They are located along streets and major roads and are served by higher frequency transit service. These transit corridors provide valuable new housing opportunities with fewer impacts to the regional freeway system because of their available transit service.



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Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), this figure shows existing areas that already exhibit village characteristics and areas that may have a propensity to develop as village areas based on having certain existing or planned characteristics; it does not take the place of site-specific planning. These characteristics include the location of parks, fire stations, transit routes, and existing and community plan designated land uses. Actual village locations will be designated in community plans with the input from recognized community planning groups and the use of locational criteria established under the policies section. Community plans will also house site-specific design guidelines to ensure the successful implementation of each site. Many community plans already identify sites suitable for mixed-use and provide extensive design and development policy guidance for development of those sites.

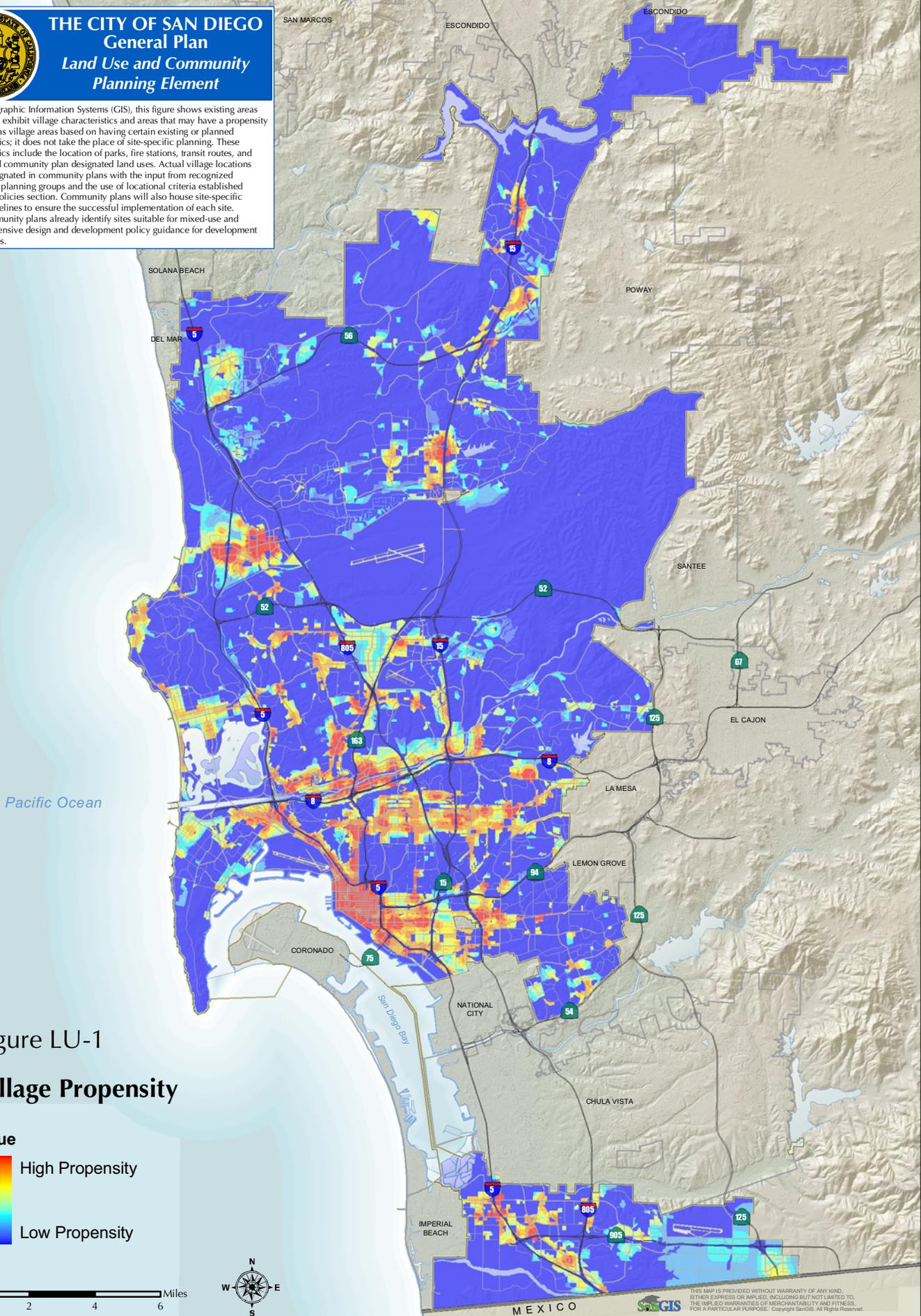
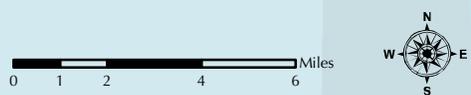
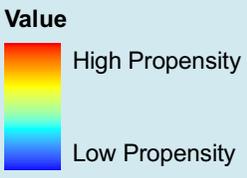


Figure LU-1
Village Propensity



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Factors to consider when locating village sites include: community plan-identified capacity for growth, existing public facilities or an identified funding source for facilities, existing or an identified funding source for transit service, community character, and environmental constraints. Some of these factors, including the location of parks, fire stations, and transit routes, have been mapped as shown on Figure LU-1, the Village Propensity Map. This figure is based upon existing and community plan-designated land uses. By overlaying the facilities factors with the land uses, the Village Propensity Map illustrates existing areas that already exhibit village characteristics and areas that may have a propensity to develop as village areas. It is an illustrative tool, not a land use map; actual village locations will be designated in community plans with the input from recognized community planning groups and the general public. The methodology used for determining village propensity can be found in Appendix B, LU-1. Community plans will also contain site-specific design guidelines to ensure the successful implementation of each site.

Policies

Village Types and Locations

- LU-A.1. Designate a hierarchy of village sites for citywide implementation.
- a. Affirm the position of Downtown San Diego as the regional hub by maintaining and enhancing its role as the major business center in the region and encouraging its continued development as a major urban residential center with the largest concentration of high-density multifamily housing in the region.
 - b. Encourage further intensification of employment uses throughout Subregional Employment Districts. Where appropriate, consider collocating medium- to high-density residential uses with employment uses (see also Economic Prosperity Element).
 - c. Designate Neighborhood, Community, and Urban Village Centers, as appropriate, in community plans throughout the City, where consistent with public facilities adequacy and other goals of the General Plan.
 - d. Revitalize transit corridors through the application of plan designations and zoning that permits a higher intensity of mixed-use development. Include some combination of: residential above commercial development, employment uses, commercial uses, and higher density-residential development.
- LU-A.2. Identify sites suitable for mixed-use village development that will complement the existing community fabric or help achieve desired community character, with input from recognized community planning groups and the general public.



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- LU-A.3. Identify and evaluate potential village sites considering the following physical characteristics:
- Shopping centers, districts, or corridors that could be enhanced or expanded;
 - Community or mixed-use centers that may have adjacent existing or planned residential neighborhoods;
 - Vacant or underutilized sites that are outside of open space or community-plan designated single-family residential areas;
 - Areas that have significant remaining development capacity based upon the adopted community plan; and
 - Areas that are not subject to major development limitations due to topographic, environmental, or other physical constraints.
- LU-A.4. Locate village sites where they can be served by existing or planned public facilities and services, including transit services.
- LU-A.5. Conduct environmental review and focused study during the community plan update process, of potential village locations, with input from recognized community planning groups and the general public, to determine if these locations are appropriate for mixed-use development and village design.

Village Land Use Mix and Design

- LU-A.6. Recognize that various villages or individual projects within village areas may serve specific functions in the community and City; some villages may have an employment orientation, while others may be major shopping destinations, or primarily residential in nature.
- LU-A.7. Determine the appropriate mix and densities/intensities of village land uses at the community plan level, or at the project level when adequate direction is not provided in the community plan.
- a. Consider the role of the village in the City and region; surrounding neighborhood uses; uses that are lacking in the community; community character and preferences; and balanced community goals (see also Section H).
 - b. Achieve transit-supportive density and design, where such density can be adequately served by public facilities and services (see also Mobility Element, Policy ME-B.9). Due to the distinctive nature of each of the community planning areas, population density and building intensity will differ by each community. This can be attributed to each community's development patterns, household size, and population. SANDAG prepares and maintains long term demographic forecasts for population, housing, and employment. Each community plan contains existing and forecasted demographic data. As the recommended



community plan land use designations and implementing zoning are applied to each community during the community plan update process, associated population density and building intensity standards will be established.

c. Evaluate the quality of existing and planned transit service.

LU-A.8. Determine at the community plan level where commercial uses should be intensified within villages and other areas served by transit, and where commercial uses should be limited or converted to other uses.

LU-A.9. Integrate public gathering spaces and civic uses into village design (see also Urban Design Element, Policies UD-C.5 and UD-E.1).

LU-A.10. Design infill projects along transit corridors to enhance or maintain a “Main Street” character through attention to site and building design, land use mix, housing opportunities, and streetscape improvements.

LU-A.11. Design and evaluate mixed-use village projects based on the design goals and policies contained in the Urban Design Element.

B. General Plan Land Use Categories

Goal

- ◆ Land use categories and designations that remain consistent with the General Plan Land Use Categories as community plans are updated and/or amended.

Discussion

As of 2006, the City's community plans used approximately 160 different land use designations to plan for the intensity and distribution of land uses. However, many of these designations share similar definitions. To retain the diversity of plan land uses, while striving for citywide consistency in nomenclature, these 160 community plan designations have been grouped into 26 recommended community land use designations. For purposes of illustrating land use distribution at the citywide level, these 26 designations are further grouped into seven General Plan land use categories as follows: Parks, Open Space and Recreation; Agriculture; Residential; Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services; Industrial Employment; Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities; and Multiple Use.

The General and Community Land Use Categories, Table LU-4, establishes the linkage between General Plan land use categories and a menu of 26 standardized community plan designations that are to be applied through the community plan process. Table LU-4 also includes descriptions, special considerations, and General Plan density ranges for each of the designations. These



standardized designations will be applied as community plans are updated or amended. Land uses such as those existing community plan designations that are not necessarily defined as a Village land use, but identified in the Multiple Use General Plan category, can be further tailored to meet community needs through specific recommendations in plan text and/or footnotes on a land use map to denote emphasis or to limit uses. The relationship between the 26 land use designations compared to the existing (2006) community plan land use designations can be found in Appendix B, LU-2. Standardized designations were developed so that, over time, community plans will share a common terminology, enabling better citywide land use analysis and measurement against regional programs.

Due to the distinctive nature of each of the community planning areas, population density and building intensity will differ by each community. This can be attributed to each community's development patterns, household size, and existing population. SANDAG prepares and maintains long-term demographic forecasts for population, housing, and employment. Each community plan contains existing and forecasted demographic data. As the recommended land use designations and implementing zoning are applied to each community during the community plan update process, associated population and building intensity standards will be established.

General Plan Land Use and Street System Map

The General Plan Land Use and Street System Map (see Figure LU-2) depicts the distribution of the General Plan land use categories and identifies the planned freeways, expressways, arterials, and collector streets needed to serve vehicular transportation demand resulting from the buildout of the City in accordance with this General Plan. The map is based upon a composite of the more detailed land use and circulation system maps adopted for each community. The land use categories depicted on this map are not precise enough to guide project level development; however, together they serve as a tool to assist in citywide and regional analysis. It will be the role of the community plans to refine General Plan goals and policies into site-specific recommendations that will guide the development of each community.



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The General Plan Land Use Map depicts generalized land use within the City of San Diego. The information is a composite of the land use maps adopted for each of the community, specific, precise, subarea and park plan areas. It is intended as a representation of the distribution of land uses throughout the city; although consistent with, it is not a replacement or substitution for community or other adopted land use plans. Please refer to the relevant community or other adopted land use plan documents for more detail regarding planned land uses and land use planning proposals.

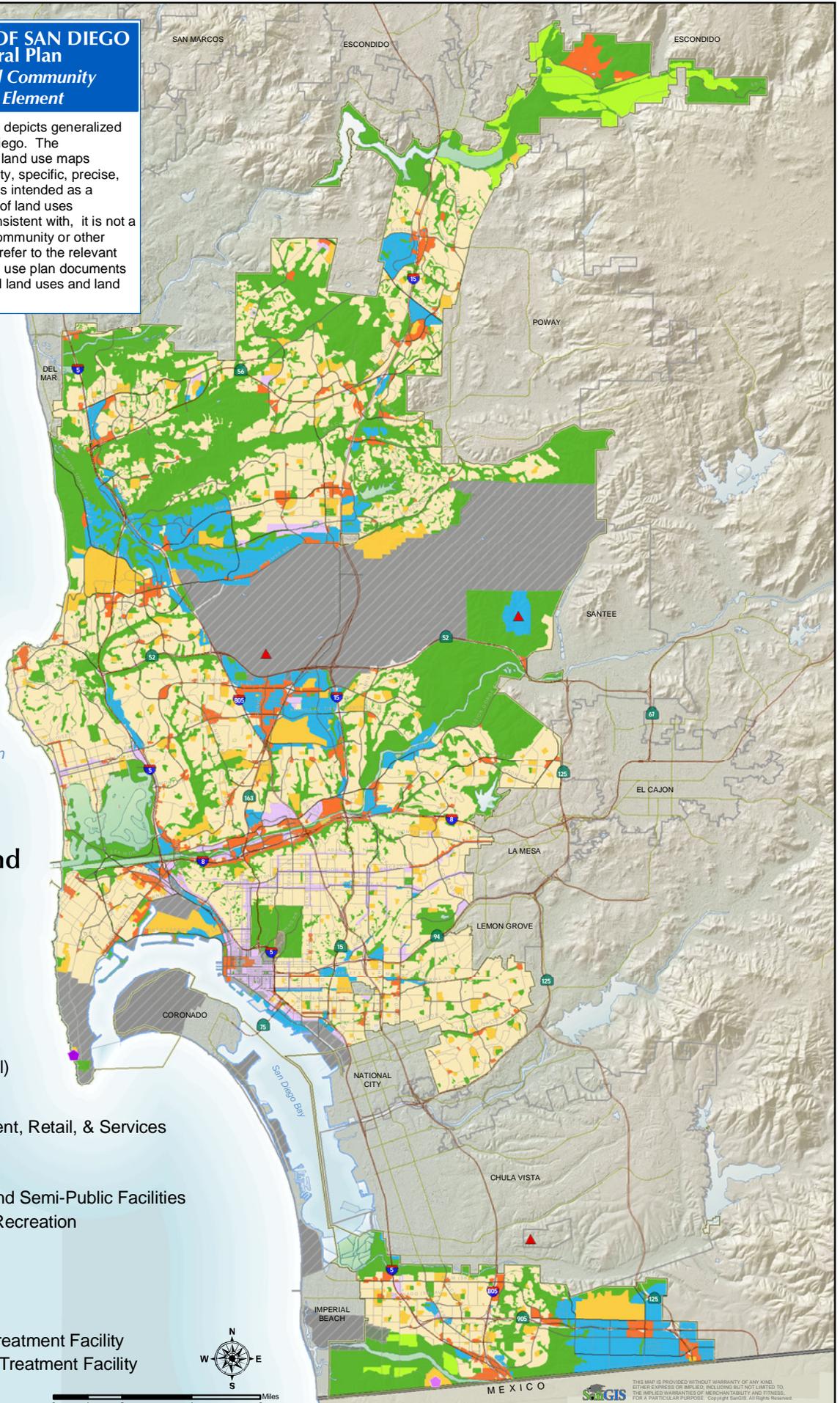


Figure LU-2
General Plan Land Use and Street System

Street System

- Freeways
- Prime Arterials
- Major Arterials
- Collectors (local & rural)

General Plan Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial Employment, Retail, & Services
- Multiple Use
- Industrial Employment
- Institutional & Public and Semi-Public Facilities
- Park, Open Space, & Recreation
- Agriculture

Other Features

- Military Use
- ▲ Active Landfill
- ◆ Existing Wastewater Treatment Facility
- ◆ Proposed Wastewater Treatment Facility



0 1 2 Miles

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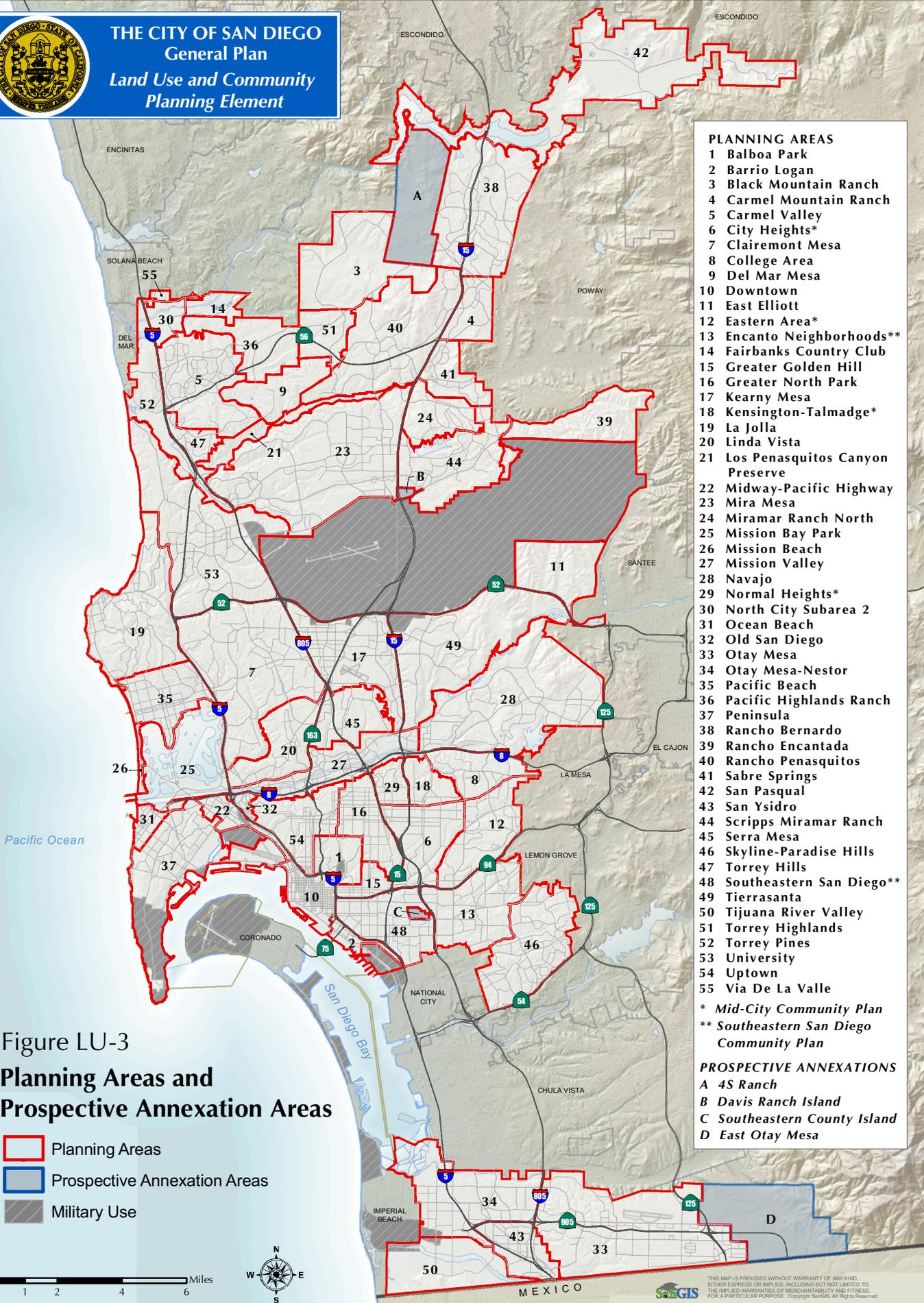


Policies

- LU-B.1. Use the recommended Community Plan Designations identified on Table LU-4 so that over time, all community plans will use a common nomenclature to describe similar land uses and densities.
- a. Use community plan text and graphics to provide greater specificity than is provided on Table LU-4, as needed.
 1. Identify the lower and upper ends of the allowable density ranges in community plans, with environmental review.
 2. Allow community plans to analyze and define a more narrow residential density range within the ranges established on Table LU-4.
 3. Use icons to identify various types of institutional uses.
 4. Establish standards for population density and building intensity for each land use designation as community plans are updated.
- LU-B.2. Identify a more refined street system than is included in the General Plan Land Use and Streets Map through the community plan update and amendment process (see also Mobility Element, Section C).
- LU-B.3. Plan for and develop mixed-use projects where a site or sites are developed in an integrated, compatible, and comprehensively planned manner involving two or more land uses.



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- PLANNING AREAS**
- 1 Balboa Park
 - 2 Barrio Logan
 - 3 Black Mountain Ranch
 - 4 Carmel Mountain Ranch
 - 5 Carmel Valley
 - 6 City Heights*
 - 7 Clairemont Mesa
 - 8 College Area
 - 9 Del Mar Mesa
 - 10 Downtown
 - 11 East Elliott
 - 12 Eastern Area*
 - 13 Encanto Neighborhoods**
 - 14 Fairbanks Country Club
 - 15 Greater Golden Hill
 - 16 Greater North Park
 - 17 Kearny Mesa
 - 18 Kensington-Talmadge*
 - 19 La Jolla
 - 20 Linda Vista
 - 21 Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve
 - 22 Midway-Pacific Highway
 - 23 Mira Mesa
 - 24 Miramar Ranch North
 - 25 Mission Bay Park
 - 26 Mission Beach
 - 27 Mission Valley
 - 28 Navajo
 - 29 Normal Heights*
 - 30 North City Subarea 2
 - 31 Ocean Beach
 - 32 Old San Diego
 - 33 Otay Mesa
 - 34 Otay Mesa-Nestor
 - 35 Pacific Beach
 - 36 Pacific Highlands Ranch
 - 37 Peninsula
 - 38 Rancho Bernardo
 - 39 Rancho Encantada
 - 40 Rancho Penasquitos
 - 41 Sabre Springs
 - 42 San Pasqual
 - 43 San Ysidro
 - 44 Scripps Miramar Ranch
 - 45 Serra Mesa
 - 46 Skyline-Paradise Hills
 - 47 Torrey Hills
 - 48 Southeastern San Diego**
 - 49 Tierrasanta
 - 50 Tijuana River Valley
 - 51 Torrey Highlands
 - 52 Torrey Pines
 - 53 University
 - 54 Uptown
 - 55 Via De La Valle
- * Mid-City Community Plan
 ** Southeastern San Diego Community Plan
- PROSPECTIVE ANNEXATIONS**
- A 4S Ranch
 B Davis Ranch Island
 C Southeastern County Island
 D East Otay Mesa

Figure LU-3
**Planning Areas and
 Prospective Annexation Areas**

- Planning Areas
- Prospective Annexation Areas
- Military Use



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TABLE LU-4 General Plan and Community Plan Land Use Categories

General Plan Land Use	Recommended Community Plan Designation	Use Considerations	Description	General Plan Density Range (du/ac) ¹
Park, Open Space, and Recreation	Open Space	None	Provides for the preservation of land that has distinctive scenic, natural or cultural features; that contributes to community character and form; or that contains environmentally sensitive resources. Applies to land or water areas that are undeveloped, generally free from development, or developed with very low-intensity uses that respect natural environmental characteristics and are compatible with the open space use. Open Space may have utility for: primarily passive park and recreation use; conservation of land, water, or other natural resources; historic or scenic purposes; visual relief; or landform preservation.	N/A
	Population-based Parks	None	Provides for areas designated for passive and/or active recreational uses, such as community parks and neighborhood parks. It will allow for facilities and services to meet the recreational needs of the community as defined by the community plan.	N/A
	Resource-based Parks	None	Provides for recreational parks to be located at, or centered on, notable natural or man-made features (beaches, canyons, habitat systems, lakes, historic sites, and cultural facilities) and are intended to serve the citywide population as well as visitors.	N/A
	Private/Commercial Recreation	None	Provides for private recreational areas or commercial recreation areas that do not meet the definition of population-based or resource-based parks, but that still provide recreational opportunities.	N/A
Agriculture ¹	Agriculture	None	Provides for areas that are rural in character and very low-density or areas where agricultural uses are predominant. This designation is intended to accommodate a wide range of agriculture and agriculture-related uses such as: dairies; horticulture nurseries and greenhouses; raising and harvesting of crops; raising, maintaining and keeping of animals; separately regulated agriculture uses; and single dwelling units when applicable.	(Low-density residential estates) 1 du/10 ac - 1 du/ac



TABLE LU-4 General Plan and Community Plan Land Use Categories (continued)

General Plan Land Use	Recommended Community Plan Designation	Use Considerations	Description	General Plan Density Range (du/ac) ¹
Residential ¹	Residential - Very Low	None	Provides for single-family housing within the lowest-density range.	0 - 4 du/ac
	Residential - Low	None	Provides for both single-family and multifamily housing within a low-density range.	5 - 9 du/ac
	Residential - Low Medium	None	Provides for both single-family and multifamily housing within a low- medium-density range.	10 - 14 du/ac
	Residential - Medium	None	Provides for both single-family and multifamily housing within a medium-density range.	15 - 29 du/ac
	Residential - Medium High	None	Provides for multifamily housing within a medium-high-density range.	30 - 44 du/ac
	Residential - High	None	Provides for multifamily housing within a high-density range.	45 - 74 du/ac
	Residential - Very High	None	Provides for multifamily housing in the highest density range.	75+ du/ac
Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services ^{1,2,3}	Neighborhood Commercial	Residential Permitted	Provides local convenience shopping, civic uses, and services serving an approximate three mile radius. Housing may be allowed only within a mixed-use setting.	0 - 44 du/ac
		Residential Prohibited	Provides local convenience shopping, civic uses, and services serving an approximate three mile radius.	N/A
	Community Commercial	Residential Permitted	Provides for shopping areas with retail, service, civic, and office uses for the community at large within three to six miles. It can also be applied to Transit Corridors where multifamily residential uses could be added to enhance the viability of existing commercial uses.	0 - 74 du/ac
		Residential Prohibited	Provides for shopping areas with retail, service, civic, and office uses for the community at large within three to six miles.	N/A
	Regional Commercial	Residential Permitted	Serves the region, within five to 25-plus miles, with a wide variety of uses, including commercial service, civic, retail, office, and limited industrial uses. Residential uses may occur only as part of a mixed-use (commercial/residential) project.	0 - 74 du/ac
		Residential Prohibited	Serves the region, within five to 25-plus miles, with a wide variety of uses, including commercial service, civic, retail, office, and limited industrial uses.	N/A
	Office Commercial	Residential Permitted	Provides for office employment uses with limited, complementary retail uses. Residential uses may occur only as part of a mixed-use (commercial/residential) project.	0 - 44 du/ac
Visitor Commercial	Residential Permitted	Provides for the accommodation, dining, and recreational uses for both tourists and the local population. This designation is intended for land located near employment centers and areas with recreational resources or other visitor attractions. Residential uses may occur only as part of a mixed-use (commercial/residential) project.	0 - 74 du/ac	



TABLE LU-4 General Plan and Community Plan Land Use Categories (continued)

General Plan Land Use	Recommended Community Plan Designation	Use Considerations	Description	General Plan Density Range (du/ac) ¹
	Heavy Commercial	Residential Prohibited	Provides for retail sales, commercial services, office uses, and heavier commercial uses such as wholesale, distribution, storage, and vehicular sales and service. This designation is appropriate for transportation corridors where the previous community plan may have allowed for both industrial and commercial uses.	N/A
Institutional and Public and Semi-Public Facilities ⁴	Institutional	None	Provides a designation for uses that are identified as public or semi-public facilities in the community plan and which offer public and semi-public services to the community. Uses may include but are not limited to: airports, military facilities, community colleges, university campuses, landfills, communication and utilities, transit centers, water sanitation plants, schools, libraries, police and fire facilities, cemeteries, post offices, hospitals, park-and-ride lots, government offices and civic centers.	N/A
Multiple Use	Neighborhood Village	Residential Required	Provides housing in a mixed-use setting and convenience shopping, civic uses as an important component, and services serving an approximate three mile radius.	15 to 44 du/ac
	Community Village	Residential Required	Provides housing in a mixed-use setting and serves the commercial needs of the community-at-large, including the industrial and business areas. Integration of commercial and residential use is emphasized; civic uses are an important component. Retail, professional/administrative offices, commercial recreation facilities, service businesses, and similar types of uses are allowed.	30 to 74 du/ac
	Urban Village	Residential Required	Serves the region with many types of uses, including housing, in a high-intensity, mixed-use setting. Integration of commercial and residential use is emphasized; larger, civic uses and facilities are a significant component. Uses include housing, business/professional office, commercial service, and retail.	30+ du/ac (upper limit is to be determined by the adopted land use plan and associated implementing ordinances).
	Downtown	None	Provides a range of single and multiple uses in a setting of high intensity appropriate to downtown's unique role as the regional center. Integration of commercial, residential, civic, institutional, and open space uses is emphasized.	Density range to be determined by the adopted land use plan and associated implementing ordinances. ⁵



TABLE LU-4 General Plan and Community Plan Land Use Categories (continued)

General Plan Land Use	Recommended Community Plan Designation	Use Considerations	Description	General Plan Density Range (du/ac) ¹
Industrial Employment ^{1,2}	Scientific Research	Office Use Limited	Provides for activities limited to scientific research, product development and testing, engineering, and any other basic research functions leading to new product development with limited light manufacturing. Office uses, except corporate headquarters, are not permitted, except as accessory to the primary use or as direct support for scientific research uses. This designation would not permit storage and distribution uses.	N/A
	Technology Park	Office Use Limited	Allows high technology related to applied sciences, including: light manufacturing, research and development, corporate headquarters, and storage and distribution uses. This designation also allows office uses which provide administrative, sales, and service functions directly related to these high technology uses. It is appropriate to apply in light industrial areas with some office development.	N/A
	Business Park	Office Use Permitted	Allows office, research and development, and light manufacturing uses. This designation would not permit storage and distribution uses except as accessory to the primary use. It is appropriate to apply in portions of communities primarily characterized by single- and multi-tenant office development with some light industrial uses.	N/A
	Business Park-Residential	Office Use Permitted	Applies in areas where employment and residential uses are located on the same premises or in close proximity. Permitted employment uses include those listed in the Business Park designation. Multifamily residential uses are optional with the density to be specified in the community plan. Development standards and/or use restrictions that address health and compatibility issues will be included in future zones.	Residential densities are to be determined by the adopted land use plan and associated implementing ordinances.
	International Business and Trade	Office Use Permitted	Combines the uses permitted in both the Business Park and Light Industrial designations. Allows single- and multi-tenant office, research and development, light manufacturing, and storage and distribution uses. It is appropriate to apply in portions of communities adjacent to the border, other ports of entry, or areas in transition to higher intensity industries.	N/A
	Light Industrial	Office Use Limited	Allows a wider variety of industrial uses by permitting a full range of light manufacturing and research and development uses, and adding other industrial uses such as storage and distribution and transportation terminals. Multi-tenant industrial uses and corporate headquarters office uses are permitted. Otherwise, only limited office or commercial uses should be permitted which are accessory to the primary industrial use. Heavy industrial uses that have significant nuisance or hazardous effects are excluded.	N/A



TABLE LU-4 General Plan and Community Plan Land Use Categories (continued)

General Plan Land Use	Recommended Community Plan Designation	Use Considerations	Description	General Plan Density Range (du/ac) ¹
Industrial Employment ^{1,2} Continued	Heavy Industrial	Office Use Limited	Provides for industrial uses emphasizing base sector manufacturing, wholesale and distribution, extractive, and primary processing uses with nuisance or hazardous characteristics. For reasons of health, safety, environmental effects, or welfare these uses should be segregated from other uses. Non-industrial uses, except corporate headquarters, should be prohibited.	N/A

¹ Residential density ranges will be further refined and specified in each community plan. Residential densities may also be narrowed within the density ranges established for the Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services General Plan land use category in this table. Community plans may also establish density minimums where none are specified in the Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services General Plan Land Use category. Calculation of residential density is to be rounded to the nearest whole number if the calculation exceeds a whole number by 0.50 or more in most cases. In all other remaining instances, such as in the coastal areas, calculation of density is to be based on established policies and procedures. Whenever a plus (+) sign is identified next to a density number, the upper limit may be further specified in a community plan without causing the need for amending the General Plan, upon evaluation of impacts. For uses located within an airport influence area, the density ranges should be consistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and Air Installation Compatible Use Zone study or steps should be taken to overrule the Airport Land Use Commission.

² Consult the Economic Prosperity Element for policies related to the commercial and industrial land use designations.

³ Commercial land use designations may be combined to meet community objectives.

⁴ Community plans will further define the specific institutional use allowed on a particular site.

⁵ The Downtown Community Plan provides building intensity standards.



C. Community Planning

Goals

- ◆ Community plans that are clearly established as essential components of the General Plan to provide focus upon community-specific issues.
- ◆ Community plans that are structurally consistent yet diverse in their presentation and refinement of citywide policies to address specific community goals.
- ◆ Community plans that maintain or increase planned density of residential land uses in appropriate locations.
- ◆ Community plan updates that are accompanied by updated public facilities financing plans.
- ◆ Community plans that are kept consistent with the future vision of the General Plan through comprehensive updates or amendments.

Discussion

Roles and Relationships - General Plan and Community Plans

The City has more than 50 planning areas, as illustrated on Figure LU-3, Planning Areas Map. The community planning program has a long and diverse history, with the earliest community plans being adopted in the 1960s. Each document is a unique reflection of the issues and trends facing the community and corresponding strategies to implement community goals.

Some planning areas have additionally benefited by the inclusion of even smaller area plans called "precise plans" or "specific plans." These plans were created to aid these areas due to unique characteristics or needs, or timing of development. They are also part of the General Plan and use of the term "community plan" in the General Plan includes these plans.

Community plans represent a significant and vital component of the Land Use Element since they contain more detailed land use designations and site-specific policy recommendations than is possible at the citywide level. This structure is necessary because of the City's diverse geography, development patterns, and cultural and ethnic communities, and other variations. The Housing Element (under separate cover) further characterizes the City's diverse communities into seven typologies: coastal, downtown, limited to military/environment, master-planned suburban, newer urban, pre World War II, and post World War II. These areas are identified in the Housing Element on Figure 5, Community Typologies. While the community plan addresses specific community needs, its policies and recommendations must be in harmony with other community plans, the overall General Plan, and citywide policies. Overall, the General Plan and community plans are intended to be used as a means to maintain or improve quality of life, and to respect the essential character of San Diego's communities.



In order to maintain consistency with the Housing Element of the General Plan and state housing law, community plans must continue to identify areas appropriate for both single-family and multifamily development, in new growth areas, as well as in already-developed areas where it may be appropriate to modify existing development patterns. Community plans are the vehicle for implementing state law pertaining to provision of housing opportunities, and meeting the City's housing needs and regional share goal. Regional share goals are determined for each local jurisdiction within the San Diego region by SANDAG. These goals are the projected share of regional housing needs for all income groups, calculated for each five-year Housing Element cycle. As community plans designate land uses and assign densities, they must preserve or increase planned capacity of residential land uses to ensure compliance with the City's regional share goal. Implementation of community-based goals may cause a shift in densities within or between community planning areas, but together they must maintain or increase overall housing capacity.

Preparation and Format of Community Plans

Community plans are to be updated on a regular basis. Community plans are to apply the land use designations discussed in Section B (see Table LU-4, General and Community Plan Land Use Categories) and provide community-specific designated land uses and on-the-ground recommendations that will make possible the implementation of community goals and the General Plan. In some communities, existing land use designations and implementing zoning may change as a result of the update process. As a result, established structures or uses that were in compliance with the applicable regulations at the time of their development may no longer comply with existing regulations. When this occurs, the community plans should provide direction on whether there are specific nonconforming structures or uses that could be retained or expanded without adversely affecting the community plan. The Land Development Code describes such uses or structures as "previously conforming" and includes procedures to address how they are regulated. Community plans must be structured to work in concert with the General Plan and to avoid redundancies between the documents. For example, the General Plan contains overall policies for public spaces, while the community plan would identify specific sites where the public space should be located. Community plans also provide the level of information and community-specific detail that is needed in order to review and assess proposed public and private development projects.

The Community Plan Preparation Manual is a companion document to the General Plan. The manual provides information on process, recommended timeline and steps necessary to carry out the preparation of a community plan. In addition, the manual includes a recommended table of contents with all the major headings or chapters that need to be addressed in the plan. Typically, a community plan will include an introduction or executive summary that addresses the plan vision and environmental setting, and chapters or typical plan elements that cover major community issues, with plan recommendations and implementation measures.

Public input is essential in ensuring that tailored community needs are addressed in the community plan. Stakeholders in a community, along with the recognized community planning group, play a major role and are key partners in creating a plan that sets forth a joint vision for the future of a community.



Public Facilities Planning

The City must carefully balance how to accommodate growth while also requiring the timely provision of public facilities. Each community must have the opportunity to establish, through its adopted community plan and public facilities financing plan, a specific framework to prioritize the provision of needed public facilities and services. Additionally, each new development proposal must be carefully evaluated to determine both its benefit to, and impact upon the community to ensure that it contributes to public facilities commensurate with the level of impact. More information on providing facilities and services can be found under the Public Facilities, Services, and Safety Element.

Plan Implementation

Community plans and public facilities financing plans are frequently used by recognized community planning groups, community stakeholders, the City Council, the Planning Commission, City staff, property owners, developers, other public agencies, and others. Therefore, community plans must be understandable documents that deliver clear recommendations which will be implemented via their translation into everyday decisions made pertaining to their communities. Plan implementation will occur through a variety of mechanisms including private and public development projects and programs, application of zoning and development regulations, and public and private partnerships (see also LU Section F).

Policies

- LU-C.1. Establish each community plan as an essential and integral component of the City's General Plan with clear implementation recommendations and links to General Plan goals and policies.
- a. Develop community plan policies that implement citywide goals and address community or neighborhood-specific issues; such policies may be more detailed or restrictive than the General Plan as needed (see also LU-C.1.c. and LU-C.2.).
 - b. Rely on community plans for site-specific land use and density designations and recommendations.
 - c. Maintain consistency between community plans and the General Plan, as together they represent the City's comprehensive plan. In the event of an inconsistency between the General Plan and a community plan, action must be taken to either: 1) amend the community plan, or 2) amend the General Plan in a manner that is consistent with the General Plan's Guiding Principles.
- LU-C.2. Prepare community plans to address aspects of development that are specific to the community, including: distribution and arrangement of land uses (both public and private); the local street and transit network; location, prioritization, and the provision of public facilities; community and site-specific urban design guidelines; urban design guidelines addressing the public realm; community and site-specific



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recommendations to preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources; and coastal resource policies (when within the Coastal Zone).

- a. Apply land use designations at the parcel level to guide development within a community.
 1. Include a variety of residential densities, including mixed use, to increase the amount of housing types and sizes and provide affordable housing opportunities.
 2. Designate open space and evaluate publicly-owned land for future dedication and privately-owned lands for acquisition or protection through easements.
 3. Evaluate employment land and designate according to its role in the community and in the region.
 4. Designate land uses with careful consideration to hazard areas including areas affected by flooding and seismic risk as identified by Figure CE-5 Flood Hazard Areas and Figure PF-9 Geo-technical and Relative Risk Areas.
- b. Draft each community plan with achievable goals, and avoid creating a plan that is a "wish list" or a vague view of the future.
- c. Provide plan policies and land use maps that are detailed enough to provide the foundation for fair and predictable land use planning.
- d. Provide detailed, site-specific recommendations for village sites.
- e. Recommend appropriate implementation mechanisms to efficiently implement General Plan and community plan recommendations.
- f. Establish a mobility network to effectively move workers and residents.
- g. Update the applicable public facilities financing plan to assure that public facility demands are adjusted to account for changes in future land use and for updated costs associated with new public facilities.

LU-C.3. Maintain or increase the City's supply of land designated for various residential densities as community plans are prepared, updated, or amended.

LU-C.4. Ensure efficient use of remaining land available for residential development and redevelopment by requiring that new development meet the density minimums of applicable plan designations.

LU-C.5. Draft, update, and adopt community plans with a schedule that ensures that a community's land use policies are up-to-date and relevant, and that implementation can be achieved.

- a. Utilize the recognized community planning group meeting as the primary vehicle to ensure public participation.



- b. Include all community residents, property owners, business owners, civic groups, agencies, and City departments who wish to participate in both land use and public facilities planning and implementing the community vision.
 - c. Concurrently update plans of contiguous planning areas in order to comprehensively address common opportunities such as open space systems or the provision of public facilities and common constraints such as traffic congestion.
- LU-C.6 Review existing and apply new zoning at the time of a community plan update to assure that revised land use designations or newly-applicable policies can be implemented through appropriate zones and development regulations (see also LU Section F).

D. Plan Amendment Process

Goals

- ◆ Approve plan amendments that better implement the General Plan and community plan goals and policies.
- ◆ Clearly define the process for amendments to community plans.
- ◆ Allow for changes that will assist in enhancing and implementing the community's vision.

Discussion

The General Plan is a comprehensive and long-range document; it is adopted to express a citywide vision for the future and to guide how that vision is implemented through private and public development. Although the vision remains constant, the means of its achievement are more subject to changing demographics, technologies, economics, and federal and state laws. As such, the General Plan must be a flexible document, allowing for changes that ultimately assist in enhancing and implementing the vision. Too many, too frequent or inappropriate changes, however, can diminish the expressed vision, and sidetrack its implementation. Additionally, the City's approach to community-based land use plans means that any changes to land use or density or intensity is made to one of the City's 50+ community plans. An amendment to a precise plan or specific plan is also a community plan and General Plan amendment.

It is necessary, therefore, to establish a fair, orderly, and well defined process to govern how amendments occur. This process will ensure that all proposed amendments are reviewed for internal consistency with the vision, values and goals of the General Plan. The General Plan Amendment Manual, a companion document to the General Plan, contains specific guidance on when an amendment is required, issues to be addressed through processing, and recommended timelines.



Initiation

The City is unique among jurisdictions in that the process to amend the General Plan requires either Planning Commission or City Council initiation before the plan amendment process and accompanying project may actually proceed. While it is the first point of consideration by a decision-maker (the Planning Commission or City Council), it is a limited decision. It is neither an approval nor denial of the plan amendment and accompanying development proposal (some plan amendments are presented without a development proposal). The purpose of the hearing is not to discuss the details of the development proposal, but rather focus upon the more fundamental question of whether the proposed change to the General Plan is worthy of further analysis based upon compliance with the initiation criteria (provided below).

Although applicants have the right to submit amendment requests to the City, not all requests merit study and consideration by City staff and the decision-makers. The initiation process allows for the City to deny an application for amendment if it is clearly inconsistent with the major goals and policies of the General Plan. Most importantly, the initiation process allows for early public knowledge and involvement in the process as a whole. Additionally, the Planning Commission has the opportunity to advise City staff to evaluate specific factors during the processing of the proposed plan amendment.

Public Hearing Process

After initiation, a plan amendment may be processed and brought forward to public hearing, subject to the permit processing, environmental review, and public hearing procedures specified in the Land Development Code. The Planning Commission and the City Council will consider the factors as described in LU-D.10 and LU-D.13 in making a determination to approve or deny the proposed amendment during the public hearings.

Policies

Land Use Plan Amendment

- LU-D.1. Require a General Plan and community plan amendment for proposals that involve: a change in community plan adopted land use or density/intensity range; a change in the adopted community plan development phasing schedule; or a change in plan policies, maps, and diagrams. (Note: state law mandates that General Plan and community plan amendments are not to be required for projects utilizing state mandated housing density bonuses.)
- LU-D.2. Require an amendment to the public facilities financing plan concurrently with an amendment to the General Plan and community plan when a proposal results in a demand for public facilities that is different from the adopted community plan and public facilities financing plan.
- LU-D.3. Evaluate all plan amendment requests through the plan amendment initiation process and present the proposal to the Planning Commission or City Council for consideration.



- LU-D.4. During a community plan update process, community plan amendment requests will be accepted until the final land use scenarios have been established.
- LU-D.5. Maintain and update on a regular basis a database of land use plan amendments approved by the City in order to create an annual report for tracking of land use plan amendments.

Technical Amendment Initiation

- LU-D.6. Initiate a technical amendment without the need for a public Planning Commission hearing when the City determines, through a Single Discipline Preliminary Review, that the proposed amendment is appropriate in order to:
 - a. Correct a map or text error, and/or omission made when the land use plan was adopted or during subsequent amendments and/or implementation;
 - b. Address other technical corrections discovered during implementation;
 - c. Ensure the public health, safety, and welfare;
 - d. Establish the location and design of a public facility already identified in the adopted Capital Improvements Program;
 - e. Comply with changes in state or federal law or applicable findings of a court of law; or
 - f. Revise language concerned solely with a process or procedural matter or an appendix to update information.
- LU-D.7. Subject technical amendments to the processing procedures identified in the General Plan Amendment Manual.

Criteria for Initiation of Amendments

- LU-D.8. Require that General Plan and community plan amendment initiations (except those determined to be technical as specified in LU-D.6) be decided by the Planning Commission with the ability for the applicant to submit a request to the City Clerk for the City Council to consider the initiation if it is denied.
- LU-D.9. Recognize the ability of the City Council to initiate a General Plan and community plan amendment when direction is received through a vote of the City Council without demonstration of meeting the initiation criteria to prepare a plan amendment.
- LU-D.10. Require that the recommendation of approval or denial to the Planning Commission be based upon compliance with all of the three initiation criteria as follows: a) the amendment request appears to be consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan and community plan and any community plan specific amendment criteria; b) the proposed amendment provides additional public benefit to the



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community as compared to the existing land use designation, density/intensity range, plan policy or site design; and c) public facilities appear to be available to serve the proposed increase in density/intensity, or their provision will be addressed as a component of the amendment process.

- LU-D.11. Acknowledge that initiation of a plan amendment in no way confers adoption of a plan amendment, that neither staff nor the Planning Commission is committed to recommend in favor or denial of the proposed amendment, and that the City Council is not committed to adopt or deny the proposed amendment.

Plan Amendment Processing

- LU-D.12. Evaluate specific issues that were identified through the initiation process, whether the proposed amendment helps achieve long term community goals, as well as any additional community-specific amendment evaluation factors.
- LU-D.13. Address the following standard plan amendment issues prior to the Planning Commission decision at a public hearing related to: level and diversity of community support; appropriate size and boundary for the amendment site; provision of additional benefit to the community; implementation of major General Plan and community plan goals, especially as related to the vision, values and City of Villages strategy; and provision of public facilities.
- LU-D.14. Consider consolidating multiple concurrent land use plan amendment proposals to analyze and assess the impacts of the development projects and the land use changes cumulatively.

E. Planning for Coastal Resources

Goals

- ◆ Certification of community plans as the City of San Diego's Local Coastal Program (LCP) Land Use Plans.
- ◆ Preservation and enhancement of coastal resources.

Discussion

The land uses and implementing zones, which are adopted as part of each community plan update, meet the Coastal Act's requirement that coastal land use provisions be sufficiently detailed to indicate the kind, location, and intensity of land uses. Coastal protection and enhancement strategies vary within each of the 18 planning areas within the Coastal Zone, but all are prepared consistent with a standardized framework of issues modeled upon the Coastal Act policies. Community planning areas wholly or partially located within the Coastal Zone include: Barrio Logan/Harbor 101, Ocean Beach, Carmel Valley, Otay Mesa/Nestor, Del Mar



Mesa, Pacific Beach, La Jolla, Pacific Highlands Ranch, Midway/Pacific Highway Corridor, Peninsula, Mira Mesa, Torrey Hills, Mission Bay Park, Tijuana River Valley, Mission Beach, Torrey Pines, University, and Proposition A Lands – formerly known as “North City Future Urbanizing Area” (See Section J).

Within the Coastal Zone, there are several categories of land associated with different types of permit authority. The City has the authority to issue Coastal Development Permits for areas of the Coastal Zone where the Coastal Commission has certified the LCP land use plan and related Implementation Program in the form of code regulations. This constitutes a majority of the area within the Coastal Zone and these areas are known as “Coastal Commission certified areas.” These certified areas can lie within appealable as well as non-appealable areas. For instance, if a coastal development permit falls within the appealable area, then the decision involving this development is appealable to the Coastal Commission. On the other hand, if a coastal development permit falls within the non-appealable area, then the final decision rests with the City and is not appealable to the Coastal Commission.

“Areas of deferred certification” constitute another category of land in the Coastal Zone. In these areas, the Coastal Commission has not yet certified the City’s land use plan, and therefore retains coastal development permit authority. There are also “areas of original jurisdiction” or “Coastal Commission permit jurisdiction” that are not a part of the City’s LCP and where the Coastal Act intends jurisdiction and permit authority to remain with the Coastal Commission.

Policies

- LU-E.1. Incorporate community-specific policies into Coastal Zone community plans during community plan updates and/or amendments to address the Coastal Act policies’ direction regarding biological resources and geologic stability, circulation, parking, beach impact area, public access, recreational opportunities, visitor-serving, and visual resources.
- LU-E.2. Ensure consistency of all coastal planning policies with the regional, citywide, and other community-specific planning policies included in each General Plan Element.
- LU-E.3. Ensure that community plans contain policies to implement Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and that the Land Development Code contains provisions to fully implement those policies.

F. Consistency

Goal

- ◆ Zoning concurrent with community plan updates and amendments to ensure consistency with community plan land use designations.
- ◆ Zones or development regulations to better implement updated community plans.



Discussion

As the *California General Plan Guidelines 2003* state, "the success of a general plan, and in particular the land use element, rests in part upon the effectiveness of a consistent zoning ordinance in translating the long-term objectives and policies contained in the plan into everyday decisions." Despite the fact that state law exempts charter cities from a zoning consistency requirement, it is the City's practice to apply zoning that is consistent with community plan land use designations to ensure their implementation.

The City's adopted land use plans provide guidance and set the framework for the implementing regulations found in the Land Development Code. The Land Development Code structure was established purposefully to enable the addition of use packages or development regulation packages when plan policies call for zoning solutions beyond those already adopted in the code.

Policies

- LU-F.1. Apply existing or new Land Development Code zone packages or other regulations as needed to better implement the policy recommendations of the General Plan; land use designations of the community plans; other goals and policies of the community plans; and community-specific policies and recommendations.
- LU-F.2. Review public and private projects to ensure that they do not adversely affect the General Plan and community plans. Evaluate whether proposed projects implement specified land use, density/intensity, design guidelines, and other General Plan and community plan policies including open space preservation, community identity, mobility, and the timing, phasing, and provision of public facilities (see Public Facilities Element, Section C).
- LU-F.3 Create and apply incentive zoning measures to achieve the desired mix of land uses and public benefits.
 - a. Continue to provide incentives to development proposals that contribute to the provision of affordable housing, environmental enhancement, urban design, and energy conservation, as well as those that provide public facilities and amenities over and above regulatory requirements.
 - b. Ensure that the granting of development incentives does not result in an adverse impact upon health, welfare, and safety of the surrounding community or upon any designated cultural and/or historic resource.
 - c. The provision of development incentives should be re-evaluated on a regular basis to be certain that the granting of incentives remains in proportion with the benefits derived.



G. Airport Land Use Compatibility

Goal

- ◆ Protection of the health, safety, and welfare of persons within an airport influence area by minimizing the public's exposure to high levels of noise and risk of aircraft accidents.
- ◆ Protection of public use airports and military air installations from the encroachment of incompatible land uses within an airport influence area that could unduly constrain airport operations.

Discussion

Airports affect future land uses and, at the same time, land uses can affect airports in that incompatible land uses can restrict airport operations or lead to the closure of an airport. The City evaluates the siting and expansion of public and private-use airports, heliports, and helipads/helistops. The state requires that the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority Board, as the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), prepare Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans for each public-use airport and military air installation in the county. For military air installations, the state also requires that the ALUC prepare the compatibility plans consistent with the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone study prepared by the military. Refer to the Mobility Element, Section H for the location and description of the airports and military air installations in the City.

A compatibility plan addresses compatibility between airports and future land uses that surround them by addressing noise, overflight, safety, and airspace protection concerns to minimize the public's exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards within the airport influence area for each airport over a 20-year horizon. Since the ALUC does not have land use authority, the City implements the compatibility plan through land use plans, development regulations, and zoning ordinances.

When a compatibility plan is amended or updated, the City is required to submit the land use plans (general plan and community plans) that are within an airport influence area to the ALUC for a consistency determination. At the same time an action is proposed to amend or update a land use plan, airport plan, development regulation, and zoning ordinance within an airport influence area, the City is required to submit these actions to the ALUC for a consistency determination prior to adoption of the action. The City can revise the proposed action or amend the affected land use plans to meet the ALUC's determination, or the City Council may overrule their determination by a two-thirds vote if it makes specific findings that the proposed action is consistent with the purposes of: protecting public health, safety, and welfare; minimizing the public's exposure to excessive noise; and minimizing safety hazards within areas surrounding the airport. When a compatibility plan is amended or updated, the City is required to submit development projects that are within an airport influence area to the ALUC for a consistency determination prior to the City Council amending the affected land use plans to meet the ALUC's determination, or the City Council overruling the ALUC determination.



Compatibility Factors

The compatibility factors (safety, airspace protection, noise, and overflights) vary by airport. Though the intent to protect public health, safety, and welfare is the same, land use policies are specific to each airport and community plan. The following sections identify the planning process and factors the City would consider when evaluating General Plan and community plan policies and future land use designations to ensure consistency with a compatibility plan.

Safety

When designating future land uses, the City evaluates the consequences and severity of an accident if one were to occur, the number of people in high accident risk areas, the proposed land use densities and intensities, and the consistency with the compatibility plan for the area. The City evaluates critical land uses and infrastructure in high accident risk areas to limit future locations. Critical land uses include children's schools, child care centers, hospitals, convalescent homes, places of worship, and other uses in which the mobility of occupants is effectively limited. Critical infrastructure includes power plants, electrical substations, public communications facilities, and other facilities in which the damage or destruction of the facility would cause adverse effects to public health and welfare beyond the vicinity of the facility.

Airspace Protection

Although the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has no authority to regulate or control the use of land around airports, using defined height standards, it informs development project applicants, the Airport Land Use Commission, and the City whether a proposed development would be an obstruction to air navigation and, if so, whether the obstruction would create a hazard. The FAA requires that project applicants notify the FAA prior to seeking a permit for construction. If the FAA determines that a proposed development is a hazard to air navigation, the state requires that the proposed development obtain state approval and the ALUC requires that the development obtain a consistency determination with the compatibility plan for the area. The particular hazards of concern are structures that pose an airspace obstruction, land uses that create wildlife hazards, particularly related to birds, and land use characteristics that create visual or electronic interference with air navigation. The FAA relies on the state and cities to implement its height standards as defined in Code of Federal Regulations Title 14, Part 77. For existing or future uses, airport operators can purchase or have aviation easements dedicated from a property owner to prohibit the development of structures or growth of trees, or prohibit visual and electrical interference in the acquired airspace.

Noise

Refer to the Noise Element for an additional discussion regarding airport noise associated with aircraft operations within the City, and the Land Use - Noise Compatibility Guidelines for determining land use compatibility.



Overflights

Overflights of aircraft can be bothersome to people who are sensitive to the presence of aircraft overhead. Depending on the location, dedication of avigation easements or recorded deed, notices can be required to assure that future property owners are aware of the possibility that aircraft operating may be overhead. The state also requires real estate disclosures for all property transactions within an airport influence area.

Policies

- LU-G.1. Work with the ALUC to develop policies that are consistent with the state and federal regulations and guidelines, that balance airport land use compatibility goals with other citywide and regional goals, and that emphasize the major airport land use compatibility factors.
- LU-G.2. Submit all amendments and updates to the General Plan, community plans, specific plans, airport plans, development regulations and zoning ordinances affected by an airport influence area to the ALUC to ensure that they are consistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan or have the City Council take steps to overrule the ALUC.
- LU-G.3. Submit the General Plan, community plans, and specific plans affected by an airport influence area to the ALUC after the adoption or amendment to an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan to ensure that they are consistent or have the City Council take steps to overrule the ALUC.
- LU-G.4. Submit development projects affected by an airport influence area to the ALUC after the adoption or amendment to an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan to ensure that they are consistent up until the time that the ALUC has determined the General Plan, community plans, and specific plans consistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan or have the City Council take steps to overrule the ALUC.
- LU-G.5. Implement the height standards used by the FAA as defined by Code of Federal Regulations Title 14, Part 77 through development regulations and zoning ordinances.
- LU-G.6. Require that all proposed development projects (ministerial and discretionary actions) notify the FAA in areas where the proposed development meets the notification criteria as defined by Code of Federal Regulation Title 14, Part 77.
 - a. Require that all proposed development projects that are subject to FAA notification requirement provide documentation that FAA has determined that the project is not a Hazard to Air Navigation prior to project approval.
 - b. Require that the Planning Commission and City Council approve any proposed development that the FAA has determined to be a Hazard to Air Navigation once state and ALUC requirements are satisfied.



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- LU-G.7. Evaluate the siting and expansions of airports, heliports, and helipads/helistops on the basis of aviation and land use need and potential safety and noise impacts on existing and planned surrounding land uses.
- LU-G.8. Submit all airport/heliport master plans and development plans to the ALUC prior to City Council adoption.
- LU-G.9. Coordinate with the Navy and Marine Corps to ensure that future land use and General Plan community plan, specific plan, development regulations and zoning ordinances amendments are consistent with the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone study for military air installations.
- LU-G.10. Encourage civilian and military airport operators, to the extent practical, to:
- Ensure safe airport operations to minimize noise and safety concerns;
 - Purchase land within the airport runway protection zone, given available funding sources, to protect airport operations; and
 - Obtain avigation easements or deed restrictions from property owners within the airport influence area to prevent air navigation obstructions and increase awareness of aircraft operating overhead.

H. Balanced Communities and Equitable Development

Goals

- ◆ Ensure diverse and balanced neighborhoods and communities with housing available for households of all income levels.
- ◆ Community and neighborhood-specific strategies and implementation measures to achieve equitable development.

Discussion

"Balanced communities" typically refer to communities that have a diverse collection of housing types that are suitable for households of various income levels. Balanced communities can contribute toward achievement of a fair and equal society, and have the additional advantage of providing more people with the opportunity to live near their work. The City adopted Council Policy 600-19 in 1972 to foster balanced community development in the City, with a primary objective to distribute low and moderate-income housing throughout the City. However, this policy has proven difficult to implement. More recent initiatives to increase the supply and distribution of affordable housing include the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (adopted in



2003), the City of Villages strategy (2002), the Housing Element update (2006), and the remainder of the General Plan update (2008).

The Inclusionary Housing Ordinance requires all new residential developments of two units or more to provide affordable housing through a variety of methods. The required affordable housing units are either provided on the same site as the market-rate units, on a different site within the same community planning area, or through developer payment of in-lieu fees which are deposited into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for priority use in the same community planning area from which the funds were collected. The determination to utilize these funds to assist in the development of affordable housing project elsewhere would be conducted by the Housing Commission.

The City of Villages strategy also strives to increase housing supply and diversity through the development of compact, mixed-use villages in targeted areas. This strategy helps to achieve some of the jobs/housing benefits of balanced communities at a broader scale by encouraging better links from homes to jobs and services throughout the region. Through an interlinked network of villages - jobs, housing, and specialized services could be made more accessible to each other even if they are not located in the same community. It is anticipated that individual villages located throughout the City will offer unique mixes of uses and services, as well as opportunities for affordable housing and employment. Village sites are to contribute to citywide needs and are to function as an integrated part of the community and City.

Implementation of the City of Villages strategy carries a risk of gentrification. The term gentrification has various definitions. The definition used here is "the process by which higher-income households displace lower-income residents of a neighborhood, changing the essential character and flavor of that neighborhood."¹ The negative aspects of gentrification can be minimized if equitable development is achieved. Equitable development is defined as "the creation and maintenance of economically and socially diverse communities that are stable over the long term, through means that generate a minimum of transition costs that fall unfairly on lower-income residents."²

Balanced commercial development in the City's communities and quality of life assets, such as recreational opportunities, mobility, unique neighborhoods, and an active public life are important components vital to the future of San Diego. As San Diego's population grows and developable land decreases, many communities have experienced changes in the mix of commercial land uses because of rising rents. There are actions that can be taken to address the shortages of more affordable commercial spaces available to new entrepreneurs and growing businesses. The community plan update process will provide an opportunity to identify what type of business growth is desirable in each community through a public process.

¹ Maureen Kennedy and Paul Leonard, *Dealing With Neighborhood Change: A Primer on Gentrification and Policy Changes*. (The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, April 2001) p.5.

² Kennedy and Leonard, p.4.



Policies

- LU-H.1. Promote development of balanced communities that take into account community-wide involvement, participation, and needs.
- a. Plan village development with the involvement of a broad range of neighborhood, business, and recognized community planning groups and consideration of the needs of individual neighborhoods, available resources, and willing partners.
 - b. Invest strategically in public infrastructure and offer development incentives that are consistent with the neighborhood's vision.
 - c. Recognize the important role that schools play in neighborhood life and look for opportunities to form closer partnerships among local schools, residents, neighborhood groups, and the City with the goal of improving public education.
 - d. Ensure that neighborhood development and redevelopment addresses the needs of older people, particularly those disadvantaged by age, disability, or poverty.
 - e. Provide affordable housing opportunities within the community to help offset the displacement of the existing population.
 - f. Provide a full range of senior housing from active adult to convalescent care in an environment conducive to the specific needs of the senior population.
- LU-H.2. Provide affordable housing throughout the City so that no single area experiences a disproportionate concentration.
- LU-H.3. Provide a variety of housing types and sizes with varying levels of affordability in residential and village developments.
- LU-H.4. Strive for balanced commercial development (see also Economic Prosperity Element, Section B).
- a. Support communities' efforts to identify the desired business growth model for their area and implement a strategy to achieve that goal.
 - b. Encourage greater opportunities for local ownership of businesses and/or assets.
 - c. Ensure that commercial districts are balanced and do not exclude the retail, employment, and service needs of local residents.
 - d. Encourage local employment within new developments and provide entrepreneurial opportunities for local residents.



- e. Assist existing business owners in accessing programs that can provide financial assistance and business consulting services. Such programs include Small Business Administration loans, façade renovation, and other Redevelopment Agency financial assistance.
- f. Consider, in redevelopment and community plan update and amendment processes, where businesses displaced by commercial gentrification can be relocated.

LU-H.5. Strive for accessible and equitably distributed social services throughout the City.

LU-H.6. Provide linkages among employment sites, housing, and villages via an integrated transit system and a well-defined pedestrian and bicycle network.

LU-H.7. Provide a variety of different types of land uses within a community in order to offer opportunities for a diverse mix of uses and to help create a balance of land uses within a community (see also LU-A.7).

I. Environmental Justice

Goals

- ◆ Ensure a just and equitable society by increasing public outreach and participation in the planning process.
- ◆ Equitable distribution of public facilities, infrastructure, and services throughout all communities.
- ◆ Improve mobility options and accessibility in every community.
- ◆ Promote and ensure environmental protection that will emphasize the importance of safe and healthy communities.

Discussion

Environmental justice is defined in federal and state law as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and income levels with respect to the development, adoptions, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.” Environmental justice is achieved when everyone, regardless of race, culture, gender, disabilities, or income, enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards. Furthermore, it is also achieved when everyone has equal access to, and meaningful participation in, the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work. It is more than an important goal in land use and transportation planning; it is a prerequisite in obtaining federal transportation funds and other grant monies. Additionally, the state of California has an expectation that local governments will adopt policies to ensure the provision of the equitable distribution of new public facilities and services,



and to expand opportunities for transit-oriented development, among other considerations. The City of Villages strategy and emphasis on transit system improvements, transit-oriented development, and the citywide prioritization and provision of public facilities in underserved neighborhoods is consistent with environmental justice goals. The following policies are designed to address environmental justice through broadening public input, determining the benefits and burdens of transportation projects, and designing and locating public facilities that are accessible to all. Broadening public input means obtaining comments and opinions from the community in the beginning stages of a process and ensuring that the public understands the pros and cons of available options. This will allow the community to be able to make an informed decision based on their direct participation in the process and understanding of options.

Policies

Planning Process

- LU-I.1. Ensure environmental justice in the planning process through meaningful public involvement.
 - a. Assure potentially affected community residents that they have opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their environment and health, and that the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process.
 - b. Increase public outreach to all segments of the community so that it is informative and detailed in terms of process and options available to the community.
 - c. Consult with California Native American tribes to provide them with an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to cultural places.
- LU-I.2. Balance individual needs and wants with the public good.
- LU-I.3. Implement development policies to protect the public health, safety, and welfare equitably among all segments of the population. Address the needs of those who are disenfranchised in the process.

Public Facilities

- LU-I.4. Prioritize and allocate citywide resources to provide public facilities and services to communities in need. Greater resources should be provided to communities where greater needs exist (see also Public Facilities Element, Policy PF-B.3).
- LU-I.5. Strive to achieve meaningful participation for all community residents in the siting and design of public facilities.



LU-I.6. Provide equal access to public facilities and infrastructure for all community residents.

Transportation

LU-I.7. Treat all people fairly with respect to the development, adoption, implementation and enforcement of transportation policies, plans, and projects.

LU-I.8. Expand public outreach on transportation policy, projects, and operations in order to get input from ethnic minorities, low-income residents, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other under-represented communities. Ensure that people who are directly affected by a proposed action are given opportunities to provide input.

LU-I.9. Design transportation projects so that the resulting benefits and potential burdens are equitable. Some of the benefits of transportation programs include improved accessibility, faster trips, more mobility choices, and reduced congestion. Common negative consequences include health impacts of air pollution, noise, crash-related injuries and fatalities, dislocation of residents, and division of communities.

LU-I.10. Improve mobility options and accessibility for the non-driving elderly, disabled, low-income and other members of the population (see also Mobility Element, Section B).

- a. Work with regional transit planners to implement small neighborhood shuttles and local connectors in addition to other services.
- b. Increase the supply of housing units that are in close physical proximity to transit and to everyday goods and services, such as grocery stores, medical offices, post offices, and drug stores.

LU-I.11. Implement the City of Villages concept for mixed-use, transit-oriented development as a way to minimize the need to drive by increasing opportunities for individuals to live near where they work, offering a convenient mix of local goods and services, and providing access to high quality transit services.

Environmental Protection

LU-I.12. Ensure environmental protection that does not unfairly burden or omit any one geographic or socioeconomic sector of the City.

LU-I.13. Eliminate disproportionate environmental burdens and pollution experienced by historically disadvantaged communities through adherence to the environmental justice policies in Section I and the following:

- a. Apply zoning designations that separate industrial and sensitive receptor uses as presented on LU Table 4.
- b. Preserve prime industrial land for the relocation of industrial uses out of residential areas (see also Economic Prosperity Element, Section A).



Land Use and Community Planning Element

- c. Promote environmental education including principles and issues of environmental justice (see also Conservation Element, Section N).
 - d. Use sustainable development practices (see also Conservation Element, Section A).
- LU-I.14. As part of community plan updates or amendments that involve land use or intensity changes, evaluate public health risks associated with identified sources of hazardous substances and toxic air emissions (see also Conservation Element, Section F). Create adequate distance separation, based on documents such as those recommended by the California Air Resources Board and site specific analysis, between sensitive receptor land use designations and potential identified sources of hazardous substances such as freeways, industrial operations or areas such as warehouses, train depots, port facilities, etc. (See also Appendix C, EP-2)
- LU-I.15. Plan for the equal distribution of potentially hazardous and/or undesirable, yet necessary, land uses, public facilities and services, and businesses to avoid over concentration in any one geographic area, community, or neighborhood.
- LU-I.16. Ensure the provision of noise abatement and control policies that do not disenfranchise, or provide special treatment of, any particular group, location of concern, or economic status.

J. Proposition A – The Managed Growth Initiative (1985)

Goal

- ◆ Future growth and development that is consistent with current land use intensity or that is subject to a “phase shift” process to approve increased intensity.

Discussion

The Managed Growth Initiative

In 1985, the electorate approved Proposition A, an initiative amending the Progress Guide and General Plan (1979 General Plan) to require approval of a majority vote of the people for shifting land from the Future Urbanizing to the Planned Urbanizing Area phase of growth or development. The ballot measure further provided that the “provision restricting development in the Future Urbanizing Area shall not be amended except by majority vote of the people, and except for amendments which are neutral or make the designation more restrictive in terms of permitting development.” The full text is included in Appendix B, LU-3.

By 2005, phase shifts, per Proposition A and the 1979 General Plan, have occurred for the land determined to be appropriate for more urban levels of development within the planning horizon of this General Plan. The City also completed planning efforts to address land use in the remainder of the Future Urbanizing Area subject to its jurisdiction. The City Council adopted a



comprehensive update to the San Pasqual Valley Plan that requires the preservation of the San Pasqual Valley for agricultural use, open space, and Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) (see Conservation Element for more detail). Additionally, the City adopted a specific plan for Del Mar Mesa that severely limits residential development to rural densities and sets aside over half of the plan area as MHPA. Furthermore, federal, state, county, and other jurisdictions have participated with the City in planning for open space and habitat preservation in the San Dieguito and Tijuana River Valley. Proposition A lands also include military and other lands not subject to the City's jurisdiction. In the past, the City Council has chosen to follow the development intensity restrictions and the requirement for a vote of the people to approve an amendment to shift the area from Future to Planned Urbanizing Area as specified in Proposition A, upon receipt of jurisdiction over former military installations.

As described, the phased development areas system has, for the most part, become an outdated system to address future growth and development. The City has grown into a jurisdiction with primarily two tiers, see Figure LU-4, Proposition A Lands Map:

- Proposition A Lands – (as previously defined) characterized by very low-density, residential, open space, natural resource-based park, and agricultural uses; and
- Urbanized Lands – characterized by older, recently developed, and developing communities at urban and suburban levels of density and intensity.

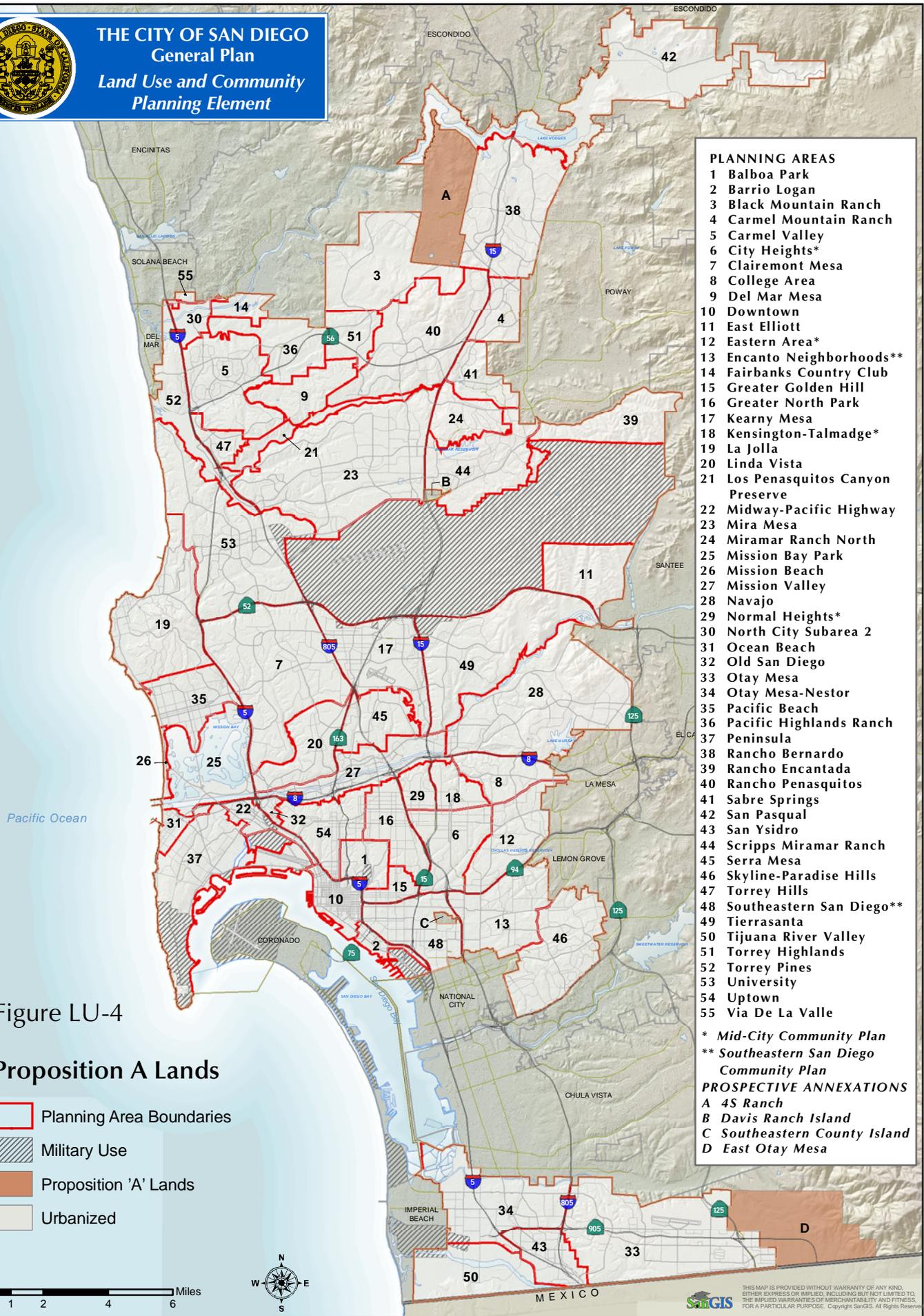
As of 2006, communities formerly known as Planned Urbanizing were largely completed according to the adopted community plan, and of that group, the oldest were beginning to experience limited redevelopment on smaller sites. For information on how the tier system was linked to public facilities financing, see the Public Facilities Element Introduction and Section A.

Policies

- LU-J.1. Identify non-phase shifted lands as Proposition A lands and no longer refer to them as Future Urbanizing Area.
- LU-J.2. Follow a public planning and voter approval process consistent with the provisions of this Land Use Element for reuse planning of additional military lands identified as Proposition A lands, and other areas if and when they become subject to the City's jurisdiction.



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
General Plan
Land Use and Community
Planning Element



- PLANNING AREAS**
- 1 Balboa Park
 - 2 Barrio Logan
 - 3 Black Mountain Ranch
 - 4 Carmel Mountain Ranch
 - 5 Carmel Valley
 - 6 City Heights*
 - 7 Clairemont Mesa
 - 8 College Area
 - 9 Del Mar Mesa
 - 10 Downtown
 - 11 East Elliott
 - 12 Eastern Area*
 - 13 Encanto Neighborhoods**
 - 14 Fairbanks Country Club
 - 15 Greater Golden Hill
 - 16 Greater North Park
 - 17 Kearny Mesa
 - 18 Kensington-Talmadge*
 - 19 La Jolla
 - 20 Linda Vista
 - 21 Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve
 - 22 Midway-Pacific Highway
 - 23 Mira Mesa
 - 24 Miramar Ranch North
 - 25 Mission Bay Park
 - 26 Mission Beach
 - 27 Mission Valley
 - 28 Navajo
 - 29 Normal Heights*
 - 30 North City Subarea 2
 - 31 Ocean Beach
 - 32 Old San Diego
 - 33 Otay Mesa
 - 34 Otay Mesa-Nestor
 - 35 Pacific Beach
 - 36 Pacific Highlands Ranch
 - 37 Peninsula
 - 38 Rancho Bernardo
 - 39 Rancho Encantada
 - 40 Rancho Penasquitos
 - 41 Sabre Springs
 - 42 San Pasqual
 - 43 San Ysidro
 - 44 Scripps Miramar Ranch
 - 45 Serra Mesa
 - 46 Skyline-Paradise Hills
 - 47 Torrey Hills
 - 48 Southeastern San Diego**
 - 49 Tierrasanta
 - 50 Tijuana River Valley
 - 51 Torrey Highlands
 - 52 Torrey Pines
 - 53 University
 - 54 Uptown
 - 55 Via De La Valle
- * Mid-City Community Plan
 ** Southeastern San Diego Community Plan
- PROSPECTIVE ANNEXATIONS**
- A** 4S Ranch
B Davis Ranch Island
C Southeastern County Island
D East Otay Mesa

Figure LU-4

Proposition A Lands

- Planning Area Boundaries
- Military Use
- Proposition 'A' Lands
- Urbanized





K. Annexations and Reorganizations

Goals

- ◆ Identification of prospective annexation areas to limit urban sprawl, avoid duplication of urban services in an efficient manner, and preserve open space.
- ◆ Annexation of county islands within the City boundaries.

Discussion

Prospective annexation areas include two county islands of unincorporated land within the City, and unincorporated areas that share common geographic features and are bordered by the same natural boundaries as the contiguous City area (see Figure LU-5). Land located within these prospective areas can be reviewed for the possibility of annexation upon the initiative of either the landowner or the City. Additionally, discussions regarding reorganizations or boundary adjustments between the City and other adjacent jurisdictions will occur over time and will require further evaluation.

Policies

- LU-K.1. Identify prospective annexation areas for long-range planning purposes that will avoid duplication of services with special districts; promote orderly growth and development and preserve open space, as necessary, on its periphery; and promote a more cost-efficient delivery of urban services to both existing areas that already have urban services and future development areas that require urban service extensions from contiguous City areas.
- LU-K.2. Evaluate whether or not to submit an annexation application to the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).
- a. Analyze the present and planned land uses for the proposed annexation.
 - b. Assess the present and future need for urban services and facilities.
 - c. Review the fiscal impact of the proposed annexation to the City.
 - d. Identify whether the proposal represents an orderly and logical extension of City boundaries.
 - e. Assess the ability of the City to provide urban level services.
 - f. Determine whether the proposal would induce residential growth.
 - g. Determine whether the proposal would provide provisions for affordable housing.
 - h. Determine whether the proposal would provide provisions for open space.
 - i. Evaluate the effect of the annexation to any relevant social or economic aspects of interest.



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- j. Verify and determine the level of support on the part of affected property owners and area residents.
- LU-K.3. Include areas, upon their annexation, in the appropriate community planning area, and ensure that future development implements the policies and recommendations of the General Plan and applicable community plan.
- LU-K.4. Pursue annexation of the county islands listed below based upon a review of the preceding factors, and the fact that the City has provided efficient delivery of urban services, roadways and other major public facilities to these areas for many years: the Davis Ranch, an approximately 77-acre property, designated for industrial use, located adjacent to Interstate 15 within the Scripps Miramar Ranch Community Planning Area; and the Mount Hope Cemetery, an approximately 100-acre property, designated as a public cemetery, located within the Southeastern San Diego Community Planning Area.