1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Background

The San Diego General Plan, adopted in 2008, is a comprehensive "blueprint" for San Diego's growth over the next 20 years. Central to the plan is the "City of Villages" strategy, which focuses growth into pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use activity centers linked to an improved regional transit system. Infill development is promoted to conserve regional open space, promote transit, and revitalize existing communities. The General Plan identifies over 50 community planning areas in the city—including the Southeastern San Diego Neighborhoods—for which community plans are to be developed or updated to provide more localized policies.

Plan Purpose and Process

The Community Plan is designed to guide growth and development within Southeastern San Diego. This Plan is a revision of the previous Southeastern San Diego Community Plan. The Southeastern San Diego Community Plan was originally adopted in 1969, was comprehensively updated in 1987, and has undergone several amendments in the intervening years. The purpose of this plan includes:

- Evaluating what land use changes have occurred since the previous update
- Analyzing changes in demographics that may inform current and future land use needs, including demand for housing and commercial development
- Working with community members and stakeholders to determine key issues and desires, establishing a vision, goals, and policies for reviewing development proposals and public projects
- Providing guidance to the City of San Diego, public agencies, property owners, and private developers to design projects that enhance the character of the community
- Providing strategies and specific implementing actions to help ensure the land use vision is accomplished
- Ensuring that policies and recommendations remain in harmony with the General Plan and citywide policies

While this Plan sets forth procedures for implementation, it does not establish regulations or legislation, nor does it rezone property. Controls on development and use of public and private property including zoning, design controls, and implementation of transportation improvements are included as part of the plan implementation program. The rezoning actions and overlay zones recommended in the Implementation Element of this Plan were enacted concurrently as part of the plan adoption. Zoning used to implement this community plan complies with the General Plan policies (See GP LU-F.1) and proposals within this Plan have been coordinated with and are consistent with the General Plan. Periodic comprehensive reviews of the General Plan may affect the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan.

This Plan should not be considered a static document. It is intended to provide guidance for the orderly growth and development of the Southeastern San Diego community. In order to respond to unanticipated changes in environmental, social or economic conditions and to remain relevant to community and City needs, the Plan must be monitored and amended when necessary. Two additional steps are included as part of the adoption: Implementation and Review. Implementation is the process of putting Plan policies and recommendations into effect. Review refers to the process of monitoring the community development and growth conditions and recommending changes to the Plan as these conditions change.

Guidelines for implementation are provided in the Plan, but the actual work must be based on a cooperative effort of private citizens, developers, city officials and other agencies. It is contemplated that the residents of Southeastern San Diego and other private citizen and business organizations will provide the continuity needed for a sustained, effective implementation program.

The Southeastern San Diego Community Plan update process unfolded in five phases:

- **Phase 1:** Evaluation of past planning studies as well as existing conditions which resulted in the creation of the Existing Conditions Report
- **Phase 2:** Community visioning and issue identification, undertaken collaboratively with community members and stakeholders that utilized the work that was completed in Phase 1
- **Phase 3:** Development of land use and transportation alternatives that explored various ways in which the vision could be achieved
- **Phase 4:** Evaluation of alternatives by community members to identify a preferred option. The preferred plan provided the bridge to development of detailed goals, policies and proposals in the Community Plan
- **Phase 5:** Preparation of the draft Community Plan, refined with community input before presentation to the Planning Commission and then City Council for final adoption

Environmental Impact Report

The Southeastern San Diego Community Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides a programmatic assessment of potential impacts occurring with the implementation of the Community Plan, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Because Southeastern San Diego is a highly urbanized area, the nature of impacts primarily relates to the changes in land use, use intensity and traffic rather than effects on natural resources. Potential impacts were anticipated during preparation of the Community Plan, and many of the policies and implementing regulations were designed to reduce or avoid such impacts.

Plan Organization

The Southeastern San Diego Community Plan contains nine elements and an Implementation Section and include: Land Use; Mobility; Urban Design; Economic Prosperity; Public Facilities, Services and Safety; Recreation; Conservation and Sustainability, Historic Preservation; and Arts and Culture.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Celebrate and preserve Southeastern San Diego's distinctive historic roots and historic districts, and enhance the community's identity with strategic new higher density residential, compatible mixed-use development, and streetscape improvements along major corridors and at key sites.
2. Improve and maintain the community's streets and infrastructure and create a circulation system that supports the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and vehicles, and enhance connections to surrounding neighborhoods and beyond. Provide parking convenient to retail and restaurant uses while reducing the automobile emphasis in the community over time.
3. Flourish as a desirable, livable, and inclusive community, with safe streets, building on existing high quality community assets.
4. Make the community healthy and self-sustaining by ensuring compatibility between industrial and residential uses, providing access to healthy foods, and facilitating home-grown businesses and jobs.

The Plan and its coordinating Elements are organized as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** includes an overview of the project and history of the community, outlines the planning area, and discusses the existing planning context, including the adopted and ongoing planning efforts and policies.
- **Chapter 2: Land Use** contains detailed descriptions and distributions of land uses, historic resources, a delineated Community Village, and specific policies for the development of commercial, industrial, and institutional uses, and a discussion of environmental justice issues.
- **Chapter 3: Mobility** describes existing and future conditions related to streets, vehicles, and parking, as well as bicycles, pedestrians, and public transit.
- **Chapter 4: Urban Design** describes community character and identity and explores urban form, including public spaces and village design, neighborhood and community gateways and linkages, building types and massing, streetscape and pedestrian orientation, and other unique aspects of the community.
- **Chapter 5: Economic Prosperity** links economic prosperity goals with land use distribution and employment land use policies, including specific policies aimed at supporting existing and new businesses to preserve and create job opportunities for residents, primarily through commercial, industrial and office development incentives.
- **Chapter 6: Public Facilities, Services and Safety** identifies and proposes public facilities and services needed to serve existing and future residents, including educational facilities, public safety services, and infrastructure systems. This element also addresses key environmental topics including: natural hazards, air quality, emissions, noise, and hazardous materials.
- **Chapter 7: Recreation** contains recommendations addressing parks and recreation facilities and opportunities, preservation, accessibility and open space lands.
- **Chapter 8: Conservation and Sustainability** addresses policies related to: managing and preserving the natural resources of the community, climate change, and urban agriculture.
- **Chapter 9: Historic Preservation** describes education opportunities and preservation of significant historical resources and historical districts.
- **Chapter 10: Arts and Culture** describes the artwork, music and other cultural expressions that express the community character and enrich the public realm.
- **Chapter 11: Implementation Plan** explains the different mechanisms through which the community vision can be realized, including the necessary actions and key parties responsible. This element also includes a discussion of the Public Facilities Financing Plan update and any zoning changes that may occur concurrently with the Community Plan Update.

In addition, each Element contains the following key sections:

- **Introduction:** Provides a summary of key community issues specific to the chapter topic
- **Goals:** Expresses the broad intent and results of implementing policies, recommendations and guidelines
- **Discussion:** Explains the importance of the issue and its relevance to the community
- **Policies:** Reflects the specific direction, practice, guidance, or directives that may need to be developed further and/or carried out through implementing plans by the City or other governmental agencies

1.2 Vision and Guiding Principles

Public Participation

In order to ensure that the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan was a community-driven update, the City conducted an extensive community outreach process, where a wealth of valuable community information was received through a variety of avenues, including workshops, meetings and community outreach sessions at various places in the community. During each phase of the process broad public input was obtained through a series of meetings where residents, employees, property owners, as well as representatives of advocacy groups and the surrounding neighborhoods, weighed in on issues and provided recommendations, concerns, and preferences.

To ensure that outreach activities reached a broad spectrum of the population, outreach materials were available in English and Spanish, and bilingual interpretation was available at community workshops. Through these meetings, the community confirmed its Vision and developed a set of Guiding Principles that were used as criteria in crafting each of the Plan Elements.

Community Vision

Southeastern San Diego is a diverse, inclusive, and vibrant place to live and work, experiencing a renaissance while celebrating its distinct history. The community promotes economic well-being, with a job-ready population, active employment areas, and cottage industry, and investment by property owners. The low-density character of its neighborhoods is maintained, while the corridors are enhanced with a vibrant mix of retail, restaurant, and cultural uses, jobs, and higher density housing, along the transit corridors. Parks are safe, well-maintained, and full of community-serving amenities. The community benefits from its strong connections to the rest of the region. Movement within the community is enhanced with good north-south connections and attractive, well-lit, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, making it easy to get around car-free.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

5. Respect the low-density character of existing neighborhoods, while supporting investment by property owners and providing housing at a range of densities and affordability in the community.
6. Develop a mix of residential, light industrial, retail, restaurant, and cultural uses and a variety of amenities and services to support a balanced and vibrant community.
7. Enhance existing parks with improvements to landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways and play facilities, promote joint use of parks with schools, and provide new parks and gathering places.
8. Ensure that Southeastern San Diego's families are well served by schools within the community, and provide opportunities for education and job training for all community members.
9. Develop sustainable practices in new development, mobility, water and energy conservation in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

1.3 Community Profile

Social and Historical Context

The built environment in Southeastern San Diego had its start with the Mexican land grants in the San Diego area, namely Pueblo Lands and Ex-Mission Rancho de San Diego de Alcalá, which would serve as the base for all future development in the plan area. American settlement of San Diego began in 1850 with the subdivision of "New San Diego," and was solidified in 1867 when Alonzo Horton purchased 800 acres in downtown San Diego and began selling the lots at his real estate office. Southeastern San Diego was a patchwork of subdivisions and additions in the 1870s. It was common practice for entrepreneurs and land speculators to buy one or more blocks of Pueblo Lands and subdivide them into smaller parcels for resale. Block and parcel size varied by subdivision, and some of the street grids did not align. San Diego city leaders also tried to attract a railroad to further spur development in the city.

In 1885, the California Southern Railroad, a subsidiary of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe line, established a line between San Diego and National City. The Santa Fe Railroad also constructed a spur from San Diego to San Bernardino, providing the city's first transcontinental connection. San Diego's population tripled as a result of the arrival of the railroad. The city underwent a decade-long building boom, but actual settlement of the new subdivisions in Southeastern San Diego did not match the rate of land sales. After the boom, residential growth was slower but steady into the early twentieth century because of the neighborhood's proximity to downtown, the rail lines, and the bay. Residential development during this early period was primarily concentrated west of 28th Street, and included both modest wood-frame workers' cottages and large estates built by San Diego's elite.

The 1915 Panama-California Exposition and military buildup during World War I called international attention to San Diego and brought new people to the city, many of whom settled in Southeastern San Diego. During the 1920s and 1930s, the plan area experienced denser and more ethnically diverse residential development. The increasing popularity of the private automobile introduced new building types such as garages, gas stations, and bungalow courts, and allowed people to settle areas further from the city center without necessarily relying on fixed rail line transportation systems. The popularity of the Craftsman style and Spanish-inspired revival styles (Spanish Eclectic, Mission Revival, and Pueblo Revival) further changed the look of the plan area.

World War II and the postwar era was a period of major physical growth and change in Southeastern San Diego. Military build-up stimulated the economy and brought thousands to San Diego, but the resulting population boom also caused a severe housing shortage. With large tracts of rural land available so close to the center city, postwar developers quickly saw the potential to create new suburbs in the Chollas Valley to relive the shortage.

The postwar era also included important demographic shifts in the plan area. Restrictive zoning and discriminatory covenants in other parts of the city reinforced segregated living conditions that had begun in the 1920s, and Southeastern San Diego became home to a majority of San Diego's poor and non-white residents during the postwar era.

FIGURE 1-1: Regional Location

COMMUNITY FAST FACTS

- INSERT

Finally, the construction of four freeways—Highway 15, Highway 94, Interstate 5, and Interstate 805—required large swaths to be razed in the 1950s and 1960s, effectively eliminating the once-fluid edges of the neighborhood. The freeways not only demolished some of the area's oldest buildings, but also displaced families and businesses and exacerbated social issues. Socioeconomic consequences caused by the freeway construction included segregation of lower-income and ethnic minorities; reduction in existing affordable housing stock; and separation of communities from services such as stores, churches, and schools.

Most recently, Southeastern San Diego remains one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in all of San Diego, continuing the population migration trends that began in the 1920s. In recent years, demolition and deterioration of older housing stock combined with numerous urban infill projects have changed the built environment in the plan area. Large areas that exhibit cohesive historic character no longer exist, but there are many individually exceptional properties and smaller clusters of significant houses that tell the important stories of Southeastern San Diego's past.

Location and Boundaries

Located just east of Downtown San Diego, the Southeastern San Diego community is located proximate to major employment and commercial centers in the South Bay and Downtown and linked to them by trolleys and buses. It is surrounded by several other community planning areas: Golden Hill and City Heights to the north, and Encanto Neighborhoods to the east. It also lies near major recreation facilities in Balboa Park and San Diego Bay. Although the community is divided by its freeways, the access that they provide is a key resource for the community.

The planning area encompasses 2,950 acres, not including 121 acres of unincorporated San Diego County land (Greenwood Cemetery) in the eastern portion of the planning area. The Southeastern San Diego community lies south of State Route 94 (SR-94), between Interstate 5 (I-5) and Interstate 805 (I-805), and north of the city limits of National City. Neighborhoods contained in Southeastern San Diego include Sherman Heights, Grant Hill, Stockton, Mt. Hope, Logan Heights, Mountain View, Southcrest and Shelltown.

TABLE 1-1: HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS (2012)

CHARACTERISTIC	SOUTHEASTERN SAN DIEGO PLANNING AREA	CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Population	57,041	1,321,315
Households	14,477	510,160
Median Age	27	34
Median Household Income (2010)	$33,057	$66,652

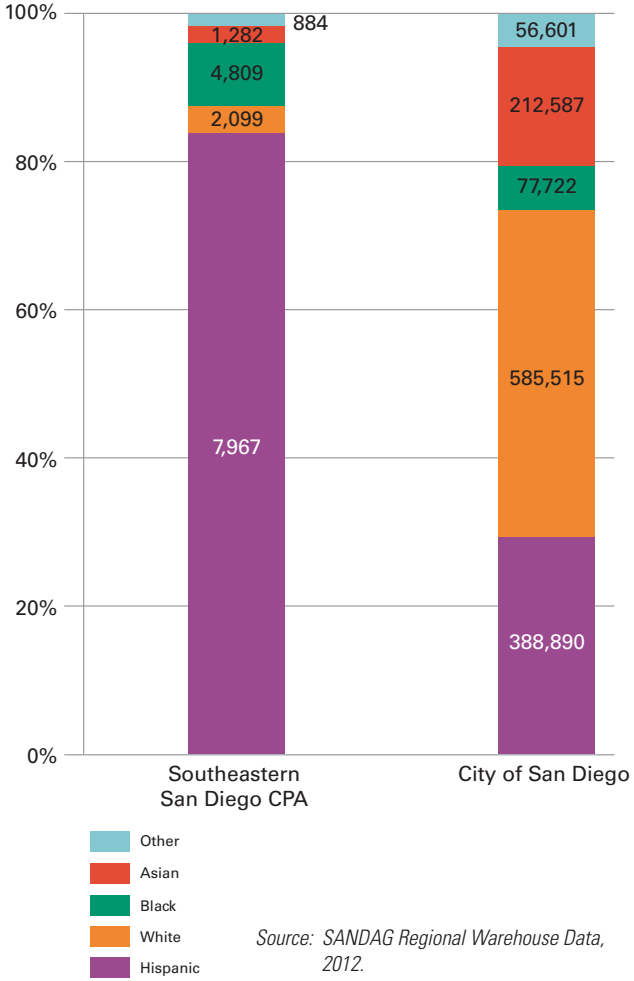
Source: SANDAG Regional Warehouse Data, 2012.

Demographic Profile

The Southeastern San Diego Community Planning Area is home to over 57,000 residents. Compared to the city overall, Southeastern San Diego has a somewhat younger population, with a median age of 27 years. In fact, 33 percent of Southeastern's population is under 18 years old. Households in Southeastern also have substantially lower incomes—at $33,000—just half of the citywide median. According to the 2011 American Community Survey (Five-Year Estimates), only 46 percent of the adult population (25 and over) has completed high school.

Over 84 percent of residents in Southeastern are Hispanic compared with 29 citywide. Eight percent of residents in Southeastern are Black and four percent are White. According to the 2011 American Community Survey (Five-Year Estimates), 78 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home (primarily Spanish), including 47 percent who speak English "less than well."

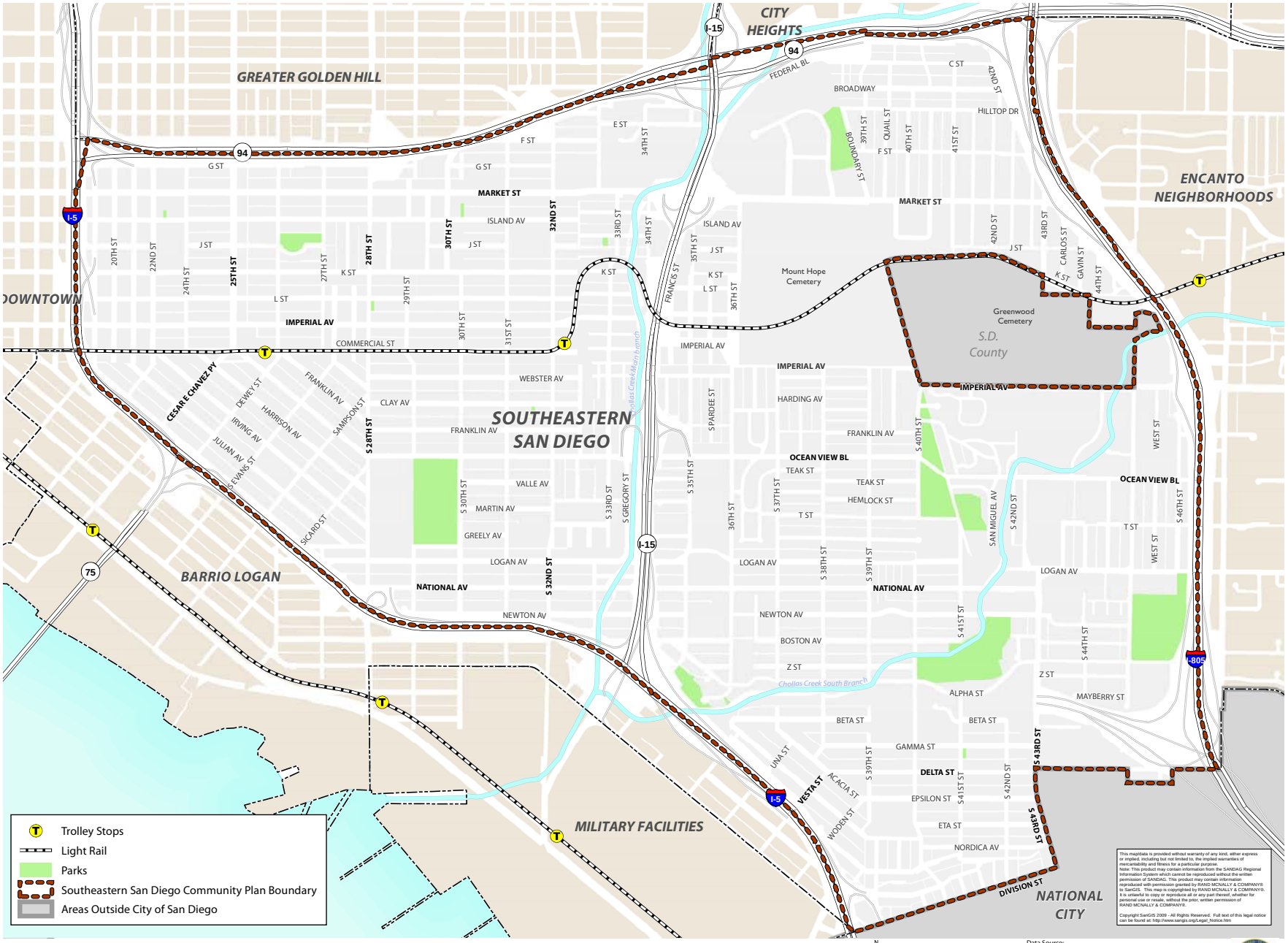
CHART 2-1: RACE AND ETHNICTY IN ENCANTO NEIGHBORHOODS AND SAN DIEGO (2012)



Source: SANDAG Regional Warehouse Data, 2012.

WORKING DRAFT

FIGURE 1-2: Southeastern San Diego and Surrounding Neighborhoods



WORKING DRAFT

FIGURE 1-3: Specific Southeastern San Diego and Planning Boundary

1.4 Planning Framework

Relationship to the General Plan

The City of San Diego General Plan, adopted in 2008, is the comprehensive constitution for San Diego's growth and development over the next 20 years, and is the foundation upon all land use decisions in the City are based. The Southeastern San Diego Community Plan intends to express the broad citywide vision and development framework provided in the General Plan through community-level recommendations, goals, and policies. The two documents work together to establish the framework for growth and development in Southeastern San Diego.

Central to the General Plan is the City of Villages strategy, which focuses growth into compact, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use activity centers linked to an improved regional transit system that provides better connections between homes, jobs and services throughout the region. Infill development is promoted to conserve regional open space, promote transit, and revitalize existing communities. A Community Village designation has been has been identified in Southeastern San Diego, and additional information is included in the Land Use Element.

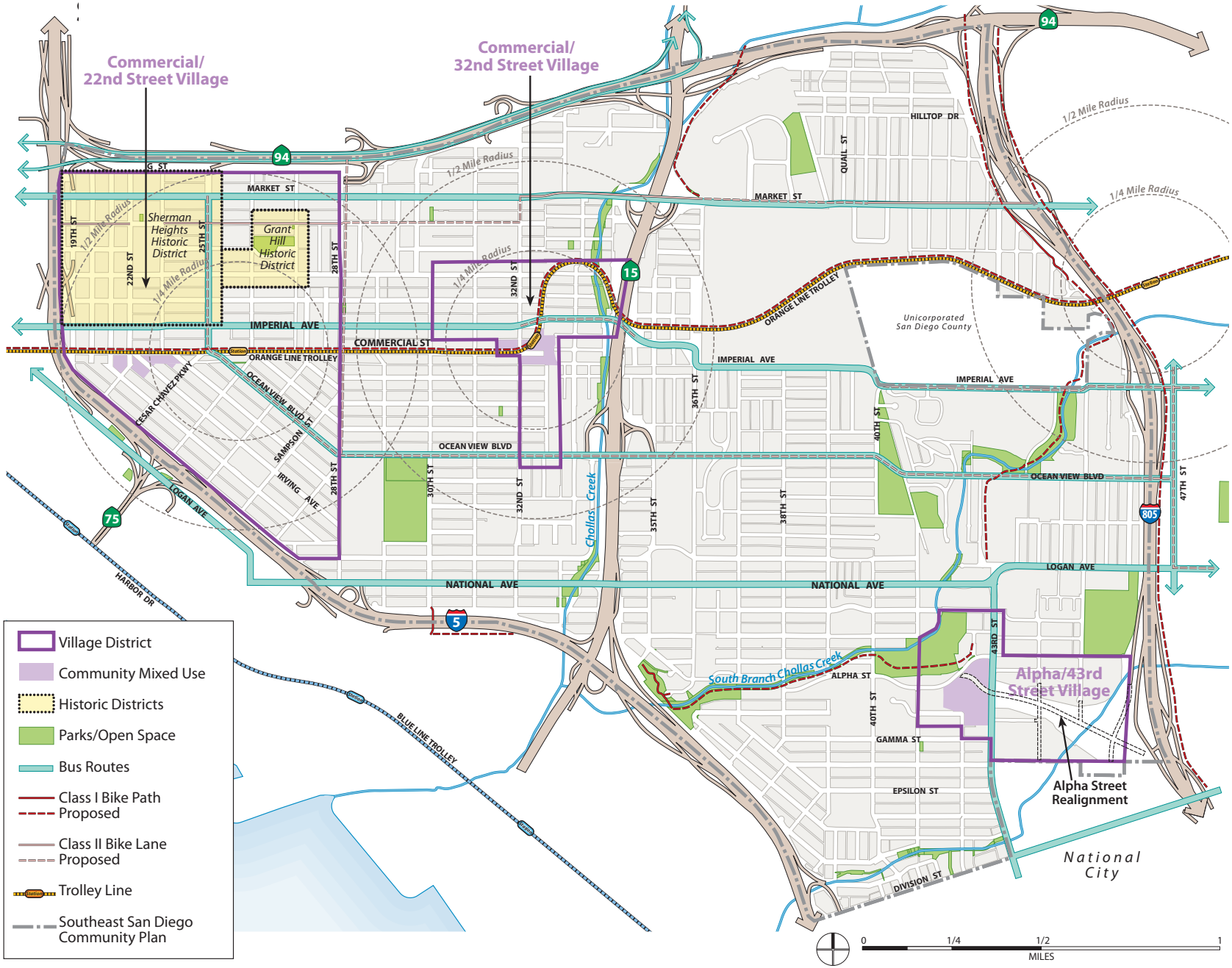
INSERT Table 1-2: General and Community Plan Elements

GENERAL PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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

WORKING DRAFT

FIGURE 1-4: Planning Framework



Relationship to the Municipal Code

The Community Plan and the General Plan work together to guide growth and development in Southeastern San Diego, while the Municipal Code serves to implement the Community Plan policies and recommendations through zoning and development regulations and controls pertaining to land use density and intensity, building massing, landscaping, streetscaping and other development characteristics. With the expectation of the projects occurring on property owned by other government agencies, all development in Southeastern San Diego must comply with the Municipal Code.

Other Related Land Use Plans and Documents

A variety of important planning efforts and studies have been undertaken in the Southeastern San Diego Planning area boundaries and are referenced throughout the community plan. These planning efforts and studies include:

- Commercial/Imperial Corridor Master Plan
- National Avenue Master Plan
- Chollas Creek Enhancement Program
- Grant Hill Revitalization Action Program
- Sherman Heights Revitalization Action Program
- Bronze Triangle Master Plan
- Greater Logan Heights: Our Next Chapter

1.5 How to Use the Community Plan

The Southeastern San Diego community plan provides a long-range physical development guide for elected officials, property owners and citizens. The plan contains specific goals and policies to provide direction on what types of future uses and public improvements should be developed in the Southeastern San Diego. When using this community plan to develop projects or determine what uses are appropriate for a site, the applicable zoning regulations found in the City's Land Development Code along with the Southeastern San Diego Public Facilities Financing Plan should also be reviewed to ensure full implementation of this plan.