



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Overview

### Background

Southeastern San Diego is a vibrant, diverse community located just east of Downtown San Diego. The western portion of the area was settled early in the city's history and was directly connected to the city center by streets and the railroad. The community was home to both large estates, where San Diego's elite lived, and modest cottages, where many working families lived. After World War II, with large tracts of rural land available in the eastern portion of the community, Southeastern San Diego experienced major physical and population growth. It was one of the few communities in San Diego with housing available to working class families and non-white residents. In the postwar period, freeways were also constructed around and through the neighborhood, bringing great changes to the neighborhood. Today, Southeastern San Diego is one of the most culturally diverse and inclusive neighborhoods in San Diego. The community's distinct history and cul-

ture, legacy of diversity, and well-connected location have shaped its past and will continue to inform its future, through this Community Plan and the land use and development in the decades to come.

### 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



*Southeastern San Diego is located just east of Downtown, and linked to it by surface streets and the Trolley.*

- 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 is a living 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.

Policies 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.

### 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.



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## Plan Organization

The Southeastern San Diego Community Plan contains nine elements, an Implementation Section, and Specific Plans for the designated Village Areas. 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 and noise 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, 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.

### 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.

## 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.



*During each phase of the process broad public input was obtained through a series of meetings, including a visioning workshop in April 2013 (top and middle) and an open house in July 2014 (bottom.)*

## 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.

## COMMUNITY 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.
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, which would serve as the base for all future development. American settlement of San Diego began in 1850.

In the 1880s, with the arrival of railroads, the city underwent a building boom. Residential development during this early period was primarily concentrated west of 28th Street. The 1915 Panama-California Exposition and military buildup during World War I brought new people to the city, many of whom settled in Southeastern San Diego. During the 1920s and 1930s, the area experienced denser and more ethnically diverse residential development.

The city again grew rapidly in the post-World War II years, which saw the creation of new suburban development in the Chollas Valley. 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. Southeastern San Diego today remains one of the most ethnically diverse and historic communities in San Diego.

### 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 trol-

leys 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. See Figure 1-1.

The planning area encompasses 2,930 acres, not including 121 acres of unincorporated San Diego County land (Greenwood Cemetery). As shown in Figure 1-2, the 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.

### Demographic Profile

Southeastern San Diego is home to over 57,000 residents. Compared to the city overall, the community has a somewhat younger population, with a median age of 27 years. In fact, 33 percent of the community's population is under 18 years old. Households in Southeastern San Diego also have substantially lower incomes— at \$33,000—just half of the citywide median.

Over 84 percent of residents in Southeastern are Hispanic compared with 29 percent citywide (see Chart 2-1). According to the 2011 American Community Survey (Five-Year Estimates), 78 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home.



*Much of Southeastern San Diego was first developed beginning in the 1880s. The community became denser and more ethnically diverse during the 1920s and 1930s.*

FIGURE 1-1: REGIONAL LOCATION

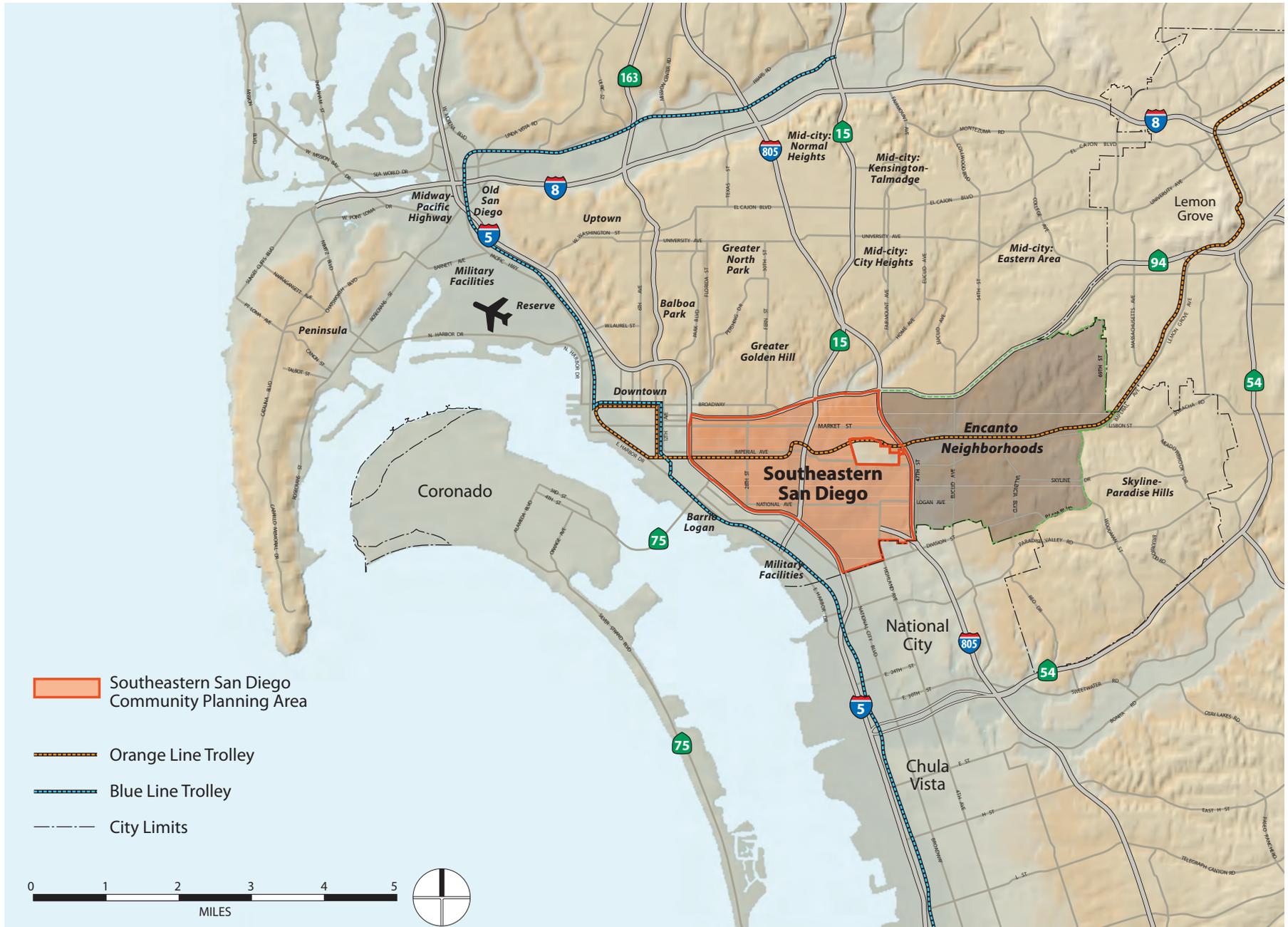
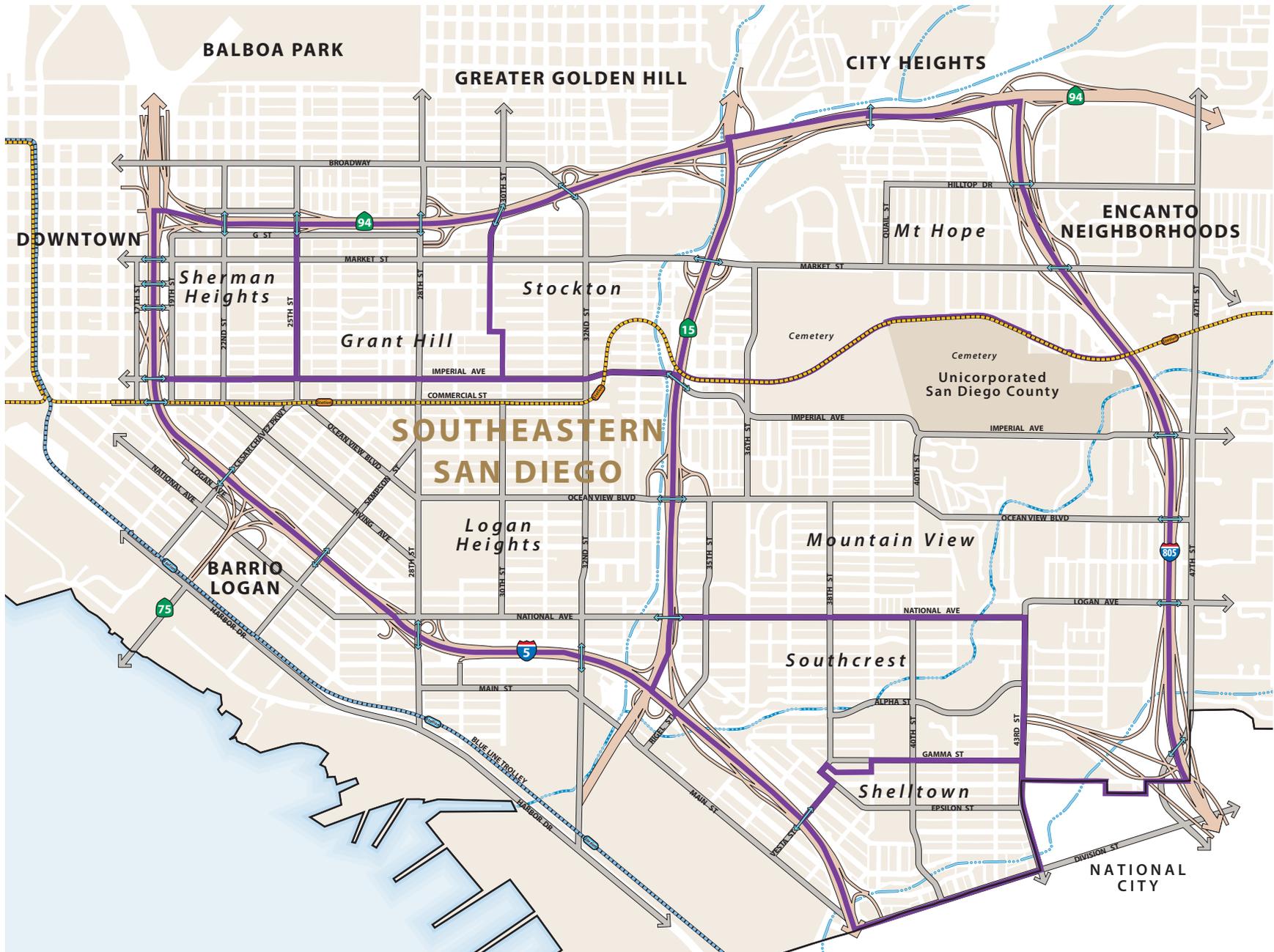


FIGURE 1-2: SOUTHEASTERN SAN DIEGO PLANNING AREA AND NEIGHBORHOODS





*Neighborhood plans and master plans for key corridors are incorporated into this Plan. The Plan supports the City's goal to focus growth into mixed-use activity centers linked to the transit system.*

## 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. Figure 1-3 shows the community's Trolley and bus routes, and indicates "Village" areas where higher-density and mixed-use development is facilitated by the community plan. Historic districts are also shown.

### 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.

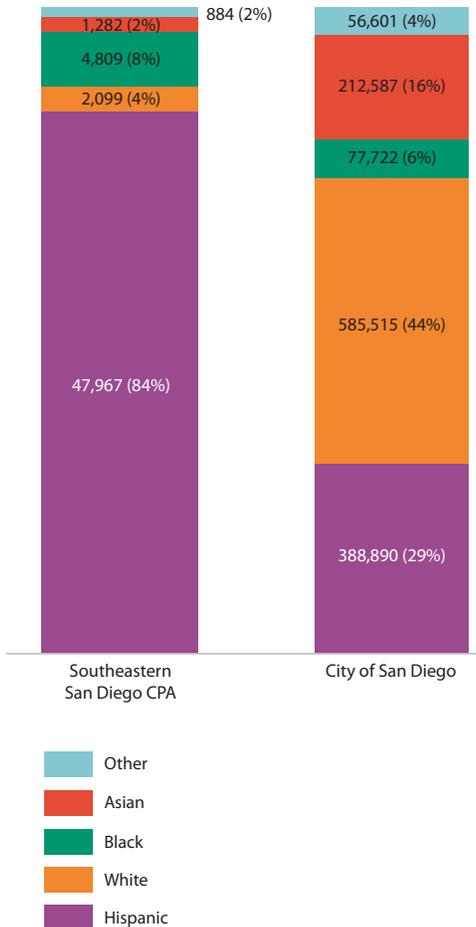
### Other Related Land Use Plans and Documents

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.



WORKING DRAFT: April 1, 2014

**CHART 1-1: RACE AND ETHNICITY IN ENCANTO NEIGHBORHOODS AND SAN DIEGO (2012)**



Source: SANDAG Regional Warehouse Data, 2012.

**TABLE 1-1: GENERAL AND COMMUNITY PLAN ELEMENTS**

GENERAL PLAN ELEMENT	COMMUNITY PLAN ELEMENT
Introduction	Introduction
Strategic Framework	Introduction
Land Use and Community Planning	Land Use
Mobility	Mobility
Urban Design	Urban Design
Economic Prosperity	Economic Prosperity
Public Facilities, Services, and Safety	Public Facilities, Services, and Safety
Recreation	Recreation
Conservation	Conservation and Sustainability
Noise	Land Use
Historic Preservation	Land Use

## 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