# 8 CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

One of the aims of both the City of San Diego General Plan and the Community Plan is to ensure that future generations will be able to use and enjoy resources to achieve and maintain a healthy and diverse environment and economy. The Plan supports sustainability through policies and land use guidance that give rise to economic resiliency, resource conservation, renewable energy, and enhancement of habitat and the urban forest. This element of the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan provides the conservation and sustainability goals and policies to effectively manage, preserve, and use the natural resources in the community.

## GOALS

1. Scenic resources and public access that are enhanced and accessible.
2. A comprehensive urban forest planting program that provides incentives in order to save energy, sequester carbon, reduce the urban heat island effect, and reduce storm water runoff by mitigating urban run-off, while minimizing the use of precious potable water.
3. Reduction of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming, resulting in improved air quality.
4. Energy and water efficient development and on-site production of renewable energy, including but not limited to solar power.
5. A land use strategy and mobility options that promote public health and welfare.
6. Cleaner storm water discharges into Chollas Creek.
7. Minimal exposure of commercial and industrial noise to noise-sensitive land uses.
8. Reduction of excessive rail, truck and other motor vehicle traffic noise levels that impact noise-sensitive land uses.
9. Urban agriculture opportunities that foster an increase in food system security.
10. Convenient opportunities to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables in all neighborhoods.
11. A land use framework that preserves creek corridors as open space and limits potential flooding hazards.
12. Improve and stimulate investments in this area.

**TABLE 8-1: CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS ALSO COVERED IN OTHER PLAN ELEMENTS**

| CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY TOPIC AREAS | LAND USE | URBAN DESIGN | ECONOMIC PROSPERITY | PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES | RECREATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Open Space | X | | | | X |
| Design guidelines for canyon rim development | | X | | | |
| Protection of visual resources | | X | | | |
| Las Chollas Creek watershed | | | | | X |
| Water resource management | | | | X | |
| Urban forestry | | X | | | |
| Community gardens and urban agriculture | X | | X | | |

As shown in Table 8-1, the Conservation and Sustainability Element is closely linked with other Plan elements. Protection of open space for habitat and visual enjoyment overlaps with open space values in the Urban Design Element; the Public Facilities, Services, and Safety Element; and the Recreation Element. Protection of Chollas Creek also has important recreational benefits as a trail system. Low-impact stormwater management helps to protect water resources, and is a storm drainage strategy described in the Public Facilities, Services, and Safety Element. Developing a greater urban tree canopy has benefits for wildlife and reduces the heat island effect, while also contributing to the community's identity, as discussed in the Urban Design Element.

# 8.1 Sustainability

## Climate Change and Sustainable Development

The Conservation Element of the San Diego General Plan discusses climate change and provides a broad range of policies designed to promote sustainability and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (see policies CE-A-1 through CE-A-13). Although climate change is a global issue, individual communities can help reduce the emissions that contribute to climate change and devise local plans to adapt to anticipated changes. The General Plan bases its goals and policies regarding climate change and natural resources on a number of basic principles that are intended to guide future development in ways that conserve natural non-renewable resources through sustainable development practices. This model of development considers a balance between natural resources and economic prosperity while protecting public health, safety and welfare and reducing our environmental footprint.

The City's main responsibility when implementing State climate change laws and guidelines comes from its authority to regulate land use. Through sensible land use regulation that reduces the number of vehicle miles travelled and promotes sustainable building and development practices, the City can achieve a meaningful reduction in carbon emissions. Actions that reduce dependence on the automobile by promoting walking, bicycling and transit use are key aspects of any strategy to reduce carbon emissions. In addition, the creation of clean, renewable, and sustainable local energy resources provides environmental benefits and increases economic certainty and stability for residents and business alike. The General Plan addresses sustainable energy in policies CE-I.1 through CE-I.13.

Strategies included in the Conservation Element address development and use of sustainable energy types, including solar; reuse or recycling of building material; adaptively retrofitting and reusing existing buildings; constructing energy efficient buildings with healthy and energy-efficient interior environments; creating quality outdoor living spaces; improving materials recycling programs; and, sustainable local food practices. General Plan policies will help guide future development in the community, which will generally occur on previously-utilized lots rather than on undeveloped land with high natural resource values.

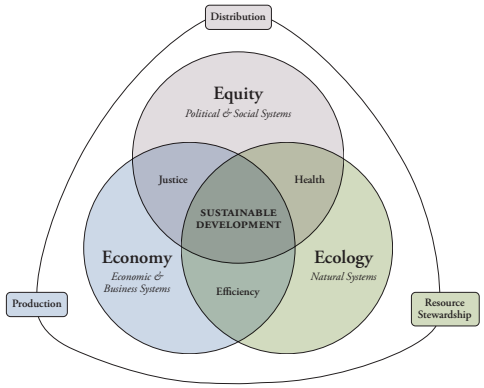
## Land Use and Transportation

### Transit-Oriented Infill

The City of Villages strategy in the City's General Plan focuses growth into compact, mixed-use centers linked to the regional transit system, and preserves open space lands. Southeastern San Diego is one of the oldest communities in the city. As such, development has occurred over time and "filled-in" much of the area with stable, well-established neighborhoods and commercial districts. Opportunities remain to develop vacant or under-utilized parcels, mostly along the main commercial corridors in the community. Infill development would both address the negative overall image that vacant lots produce, and support a vibrant and coherent environment that is not fully realized today.

The Plan lays the groundwork for mixed-use infill development along the Commercial/Imperial, National Avenue, Market Street, and 43rd Street corridors, replacing existing freeway ramps and vacant land.

**FIGURE 8-1: Sustainable Development Diagram**




*Like a stool that needs three legs to stand up, sustainability can only be achieved if the three 'legs' that support it are all strong. These 'legs' are sometimes called the "three Es of sustainability": ecology, economy, and equity.*

### Priority to Enhance Existing Infrastructure

Instead of building new infrastructure, the Plan prioritizes improvements to existing roads and new investments in already-developed areas. Channeling investment to the community's existing infrastructure can improve quality of life by bringing the new jobs, services, and amenities needed for Southeastern San Diego residents.

## Sustainable Energy

Use of fossil fuels for energy is the primary contributor to GHG emissions. The United States, with less than 5 percent of the world population, consumes about 20 percent of global energy. Among states, California is the second largest consumer of energy, though the state's per capita energy consumption is relatively low, in part due to mild weather that reduces energy demand for heating and cooling, and in part due to the government's energy-efficiency programs and standards. An important part of sustainable energy is energy conservation, which refers to efforts made to reduce energy consumption in order to preserve resources for the future and reduce pollution.

### Energy Efficiency

Energy conservation can be achieved through increases in energy efficiency in conjunction with decreased energy consumption and/or reduced consumption from conventional energy sources. Sustainable energy usually includes technologies that improve energy efficiency. Employing sustainable or "green" building techniques can help the City of San Diego achieve overall net-zero energy consumption by 2020 for new residential buildings and by 2030 for new commercial buildings, a goal established by the California Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan of 2008 (updated in 2011). Green building techniques include orienting buildings to minimize the need for heating and cooling; improving the efficiency of mechanical and electrical systems using current technology; using energy-efficient appliances and lighting; using cool roofing materials such as reflective tiles, membranes and coatings; and generating energy using renewable technologies such as rooftop solar.

*The Community Plan lays the groundwork for mixed-use infill development around the community's Trolley stations.*

## Renewable Energy

The Plan supports the City's pursuit of sustainable energy sources, such as hydroelectricity, geothermal, solar, and wind power, to meet the community's energy needs. Creation of clean, renewable, and sustainable local energy resources provides environmental benefits and increases economic certainty and stability for residents and business alike. The expansion of solar energy production and other renewable technologies can aid in the production of local, renewable energy in Southeastern San Diego.

## Policies

**P-CS-1:** Implement applicable General Plan sustainable development and resource management goals and policies as discussed in its Conservation Element Sections CE-A, I, and CE.L.3. (See also Urban Design Element.)

**P-CS-2:** Design new development and build upon the existing street grid network that typifies Southeastern San Diego to create an enhanced pedestrian-oriented public domain in order to provide residents with attractive alternatives to driving, thus reducing vehicle miles travelled and fostering a healthy community (see Mobility Element).

**P-CS-3:** Reduce project level greenhouse gas emissions to acceptable levels through project design, application of site-specific mitigation measures, and/or adherence to standardized measures outlined in the City's adopted citywide Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Plan.

**P-CS-4:** Create a meaningful visually and functionally cohesive outdoor gathering space for multi-family development projects that considers protection from excess noise, shadow impacts, and maximizes the positive effects of prevailing breezes to reduce heat and provide natural ventilation to individual residences.

**P-CS-5:** Encourage the use of solar energy systems to supplement or replace traditional building energy systems.

**P-CS-6:** Promote development that qualifies for the City's Sustainable Buildings Expedite Program.

**P-CS-7:** Educate residents and businesses on efficient appliances and techniques for reducing energy consumption.

**P-CS-8:** Provide and/or retrofit lighting in the public right-of-way that is energy efficient.

**P-CS-9:** Provide information on programs and incentives for achieving more energy efficient buildings and renewable energy production.

**P-CS-10:** Promote development of alternative fuel vehicle charging and filling stations throughout the community and include charging stations in new mixed-use, commercial, industrial and multi-family development.

**P-CS-11:** Support the expansion and architecturally integrated energy generation in new and retrofitted buildings including integrated photovoltaic systems, kinetic, wind, geothermal and new developing technologies.

*Open space, hillsides, and diverse views contribute significantly to the identity and health of the community.*

## 8.2 Resource Management and Preservation

Landform and natural features in Southeastern San Diego contribute to a sense of place and provide views and view corridors to Downtown, San Diego Bay, National City, the mountains, and other neighborhoods from several vantage points in the community. In hilly areas, development steps with the hillside rather than projecting over it or digging into it, and the City grid is maintained. Chollas Creek weaves through the community, providing a natural link that has not been fully appreciated and used. It has tremendous potential as a habitat and recreational open space corridor and as a major pedestrian and bicycle connection.

Southeastern San Diego is comprised of a series of terraces that rise from just a few feet above sea level to over 180 feet above sea level in the northeast. This series of terraces has been cut by streams into three upland areas. The western portion of the community has a rolling appearance, and contains a prominent knoll at Grant Hill Park. The eastern portion of the community is divided from the western portion by the Main Branch of Chollas Creek, which roughly parallels State Highway 15. This portion has flatter terrain, descending from the lightly rolling highland area in the north to a relatively level area in the south near the confluence of the Main and South Branches of Chollas Creek. Elevations in Southeastern San Diego range from approximately 180 feet above mean sea level (MSL) at Mount Hope, in the northeastern part of the Planning Area, to approximately 40 feet MSL in the southwestern part of the Planning Area. The regional topography slopes to the southwest (USGS, 2012a & b). Southeastern San Diego is primarily underlain by old and very old paralic deposits and the San Diego Formation. Young alluvium is present in the vicinity of streams.

### Open Space, Landforms, and Hillsides

Open space serves as visual relief to urban development, adding character and identity to a community and its individual neighborhoods. The Plan seeks to provide and enhance a community-wide system of open space and recreational areas which link public, private, passive, and active uses. State law recognizes that open space land is a limited and valuable resource that should be conserved wherever possible. The Conservation Element of the City's General Plan discusses open space in terms of the preservation of natural resources, managing urban runoff, enhancing urban forestry, sustaining water resources, understanding geology, and as a component of sustainable development and a buffer from climate change (CE-B.1, CE-B.5).

Figure 8-2 shows the open space, hillsides, and views in Southeastern San Diego. Rolling topography, small canyons, and the Chollas Creek system lend topographic relief to the overall urbanized character of Southeastern San Diego. Some canyons and hillsides in the community serve a passive open space function, as shown on Figure 8-1. A significant open space slope is formed by the south face of Grant Hill Park, midway between 25th and 28th streets. Major slope areas also include the frontage of State Highway 94, the gap through which Market Street enters the subarea from the west, slopes in the southern portion of Mount Hope Cemetery, and a canyon north of Otto Square.

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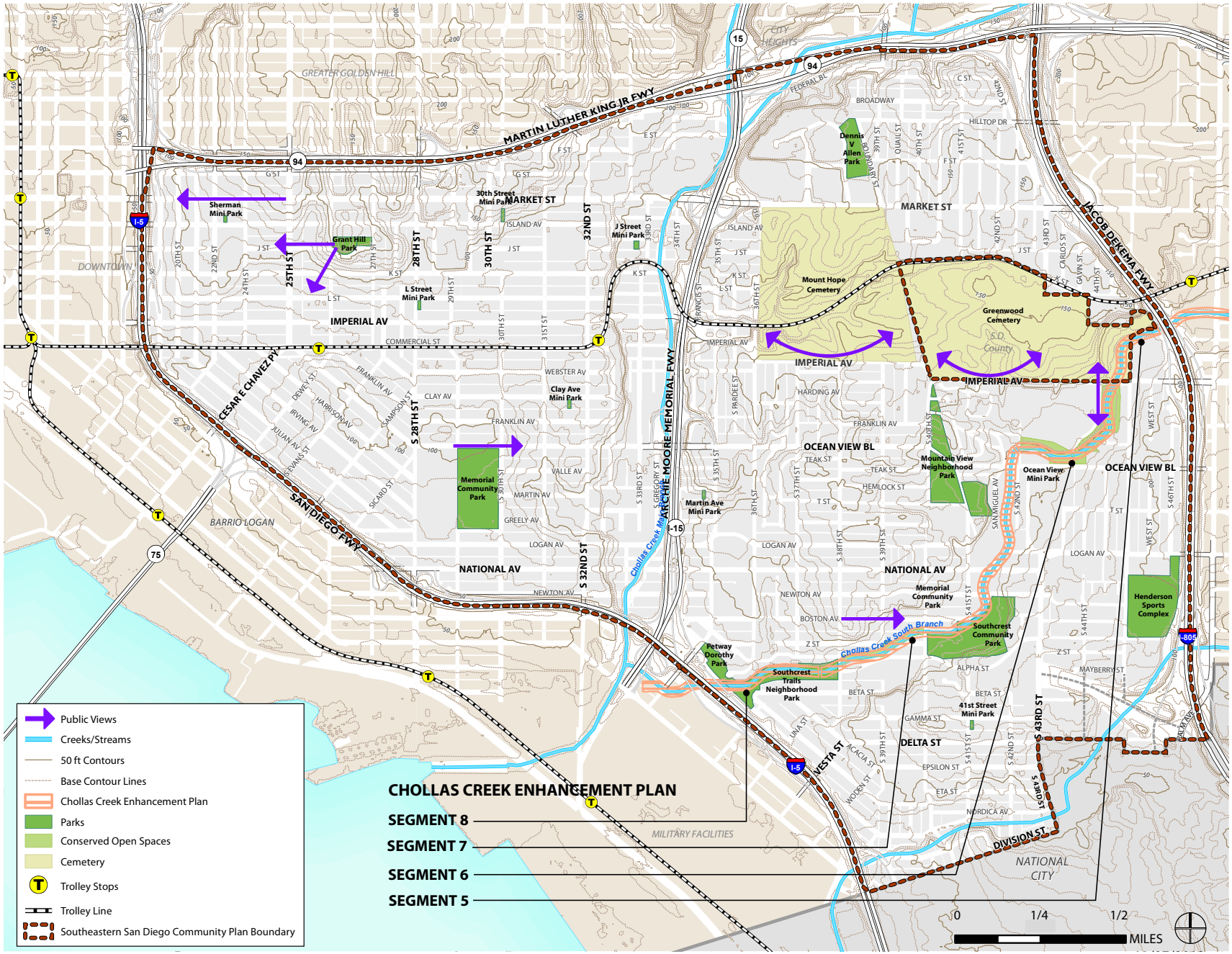
## FIGURE 8-2: Open Space, Hillsides, and Views in Southeastern San Diego



*Views from Grant Hill Park are among the community's scenic assets (top). View toward the mountains on Market Street (bottom).*

The community's two major cemeteries are important open space assets. In particular, Greenwood sets a high standard in landscaping and maintenance and is readily visible from many sections of the community.

While the Plan, zoning, and other regulations provide the legal framework for open space protection, the residents of the Southeastern San Diego also play an important role in determining the ultimate success of the preservation and restoration programs. Many residential neighborhoods adjoin Chollas Creek and canyon areas, providing an opportunity not only for visual enjoyment of these unique areas but also involvement in protection (i.e., reporting vandalism to the appropriate authorities), education and restoration efforts.

## Scenic Resources and Public Views

The Plan seeks to preserve and enhance scenic resources and public views. Types of scenic resources the Plan considers include:

- Viewshed: generally unobstructed panoramic view from a public vantage point
- Scenic Overlook: view over private property from a public right-of-way
- View Corridor: view along public rights-of-way framed by permitted development

Southeastern San Diego has a number of important scenic resources and public view shed vantage points. Several of the hills in the planning area provide vantage points from which one can gain panoramic views of the community, Downtown, and the San Diego Bay and beyond. The most prominent scenic view is from the 2.6-acre Grant Hill Park. Scenic views are also found in the Sherman Heights and Grant Hill Historic Districts, and the Stockton and Mountain View neighborhoods. Figure 8-2 illustrates the public views that have been identified within the community.

## Water Resource Management

The General Plan's Conservation Element discusses water resources management in policies CE-D.1 – D.5, and addresses a balanced water conservation strategy that includes measures such as implementation of landscape regulations for efficient use of water, development of watershed management plans, and participation in regional efforts to maintain and increase reliable water supplies with minimal environmental effects. Water conservation is an important aspect of environmental sustainability. The section below discusses the water resources present in the Southeastern San Diego community, while the provision of water is discussed in the Public Facilities, Services, and Safety Element.

### Chollas Creek Watershed and Wetlands

Chollas Creek weaves through the community, providing a natural link that has not been fully appreciated and used, but has tremendous potential as a habitat and recreational open space corridor, and as a pedestrian and bicycle connection. In 2002, the City initiated a more detailed program for the South Branch portion of the creek and has proceeded to carry out improvements.

The Chollas Creek Enhancement Program, adopted in 2002, calls for restoring disturbed areas; avoiding future channelization; developing a system of linear trails, access points, and enhanced sidewalks where routes must

follow streets; and ensuring that development preserves connections and addresses the corridor. The program includes a 20-year phasing schedule, and identifies the South Branch as the first phase, due to its potential for restoration and its exposure to a wide swath of neighborhoods and commercial areas.

The South Branch Implementation Program identifies eight segments, four of which are within Southeastern San Diego, as shown in Figure 8-2. Of these segments, improvements to Segment 6 have been completed following Program guidance, as part of the Imperial Marketplace development. These improvements included bank stabilization, re-vegetation, landscaping and trails. Enhancement or restoration actions planned or underway for other segments include:

- Segment 5 – Widening and re-vegetation of the channel in the vicinity of the YMCA, north of Imperial Avenue, and creating trails along the channel banks;
- Segment 7 – Making streetscape and public art improvements along San Pasqual Street and trail improvements along the creek through Southcrest Park and parallel to Alpha Street; and
- Segment 8 – Complete development of a linear park in Southcrest Trails Park and comprehensively restore the creek bed.

Planned enhancements to open space along Chollas Creek are also discussed in Chapter 7 Recreation.

## Urban Runoff Management

Chollas Creek is an impaired water body on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments. It is subject to three Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) thresholds, which represent the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still safely meet water quality standards. Therefore, managing urban runoff is important in the Southeastern San Diego community for the health of both the creek ecosystem and the residents.

Urban runoff occurs when water from rainfall or man-made operations flows over impervious surfaces and then makes its way into the storm conveyance system from where it can eventually reach the San Diego Bay or enter into waterways such as Chollas Creek. Urban runoff carries pollutants that are picked up by the water as it flows over urban surfaces. These pollutants include but are not limited to oils, grease, trash, pesticides, organic waste, and metals. The General Plan addresses urban runoff management in policies CE-E.1 through CE-E.7.

Increased pollution can be generated from the daily activities of new residents and businesses. The increased direct runoff and daily activities could result in further water quality degradation and flooding concerns. In addition, if not controlled, development activities have the potential to cause soil erosion and sedimentation, which may result in increased rates of surface runoff, decreased water quality, and related environmental damage.

*Chollas Creek provides a natural link with potential as a habitat and recreational open space corridor (top). As it travels over impervious surfaces, urban runoff can pick up harmful pollutants (bottom).*

*Functional wildlife corridors and habitat linkages support biodiversity (top) while vegetated swales can help reduce and clean runoff (middle). Local air quality is affected most significantly by motor vehicles (bottom).*

In May 2013, the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board unanimously approved a new regional Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, which implements a watershed-based approach to stormwater management with an increased reliance on Low Impact Development (LID). This permit applies to new development in the San Diego region, including the Southeastern San Diego community. The City of San Diego established the Storm Water Standards Manual to provide guidance on the required water quality improvements for new development and redevelopment projects, and the required construction Best Management Practices (BMPs). Techniques to reduce urban runoff include decreasing the amount of impervious surfaces, planting shade trees and drought- tolerant vegetation, and using high- efficiency irrigation.

## Air Quality

Suitable air quality is important in fostering a healthy living environment. Poor air quality creates health problems for groups with sensitivities such as children, the elderly, and persons with respiratory problems. Local air quality is affected most significantly by motor vehicles and other fossil-fuel burning vehicles, accounting for approximately 80 percent of air pollution emissions in the San Diego region. In addition to mobile sources, stationary sources also contribute to air pollution in the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB). Stationary sources include gasoline stations, power plants, dry cleaners, and other commercial and industrial uses. The General Plan's Conservation Element addresses air quality in the San Diego Air Basin and includes policies designed to improve air quality on a citywide level.

Southeastern San Diego consists of various air quality sensitive land uses located in close proximity with commercial and industrial land uses. There are numerous instances where potentially sensitive receptors may be located adjacent to commercial and industrial land uses (collocation). Toxic air contaminants are generated by a number of sources, including stationary sources such as dry cleaners, gas stations, combustion sources, and laboratories; mobile sources such as automobiles; and area sources such as landfills. The existing mix of land uses and small amount of undeveloped land limit opportunities for reducing impacts due to collocation.

## Biological Diversity

By maintaining functional wildlife corridors and habitat linkages, Southeastern San Diego can contribute to regional biodiversity and the viability of rare, unique or sensitive biological resources throughout the area. In addition, limiting access and use to appropriate areas and promoting aquatic biodiversity and habitat recovery by re-naturalizing stream channels can also contribute to the area's biological diversity. These efforts could be assisted through the expansion and implementation of the City's Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) Subarea Plan, which currently does not cover any land in Southeastern San Diego but could be expanded to include parts of the neighborhood.

## Urban Forestry

Street trees and private tree planting and maintenance programs are relatively low cost, low-technology methods for improving the visual landscape, improving air quality, reducing energy consumption, managing ur-

ban runoff, increasing groundwater recharge, and improving water quality. Trees can provide shading and cooling for adjacent buildings as well as for pedestrians. Trees can reduce energy consumption by naturally cooling the urban environment, reduce storm water runoff through absorption of water by the trees, enhance or create visual corridors, and improve air quality by converting carbon dioxide into oxygen. The General Plan's Conservation Element contains the goal of protecting and expanding a sustainable urban forest in policies CE-J.1 through CE-J.5.

An Urban Ecosystem Analysis prepared for the communities of San Diego in 2003 by the American Forests Organization concluded that San Diego has lost "green infrastructure" as development occurred in previous decades. This has created more heat islands while natural areas have been reduced including the removal of trees with large canopies that provide shade. At the time of the study, Southeastern San Diego had about nine percent tree canopy, which is shown in Figure 8-3: Tree Canopy and Habitat, with existing trees, open and park space, and habitat restoration areas.

The Urban Ecosystem Analysis recommended a target of 25 percent tree canopy overall, 30 percent tree canopy in suburban residential, 20 percent tree canopy in urban residential, and 10 percent in central business districts. A target of 20 percent tree canopy overall in Southeastern San Diego could greatly increase the benefits provided by trees in the community. Street trees also have the opportunity to be a defining characteristic of streets and neighborhoods, and help enhance the community's identity. The Urban Design Element of this plan discusses the development of a Street Tree Master Plan and implementing the Plan through the development process to meet this target and increase the community's tree canopy.

## Waste Diversion

An effective integrated waste management strategy conserves raw materials and energy, ensures that waste materials do not become a health threat, and reduces the need for new disposal facilities. The General Plan addresses waste management in policies PF-I.1 through PF-I.5.

Reuse of building materials, use of materials that have recycled content, or use of materials that are derived from sustainable or rapidly renewable sources can reduce the amount of waste generated in Southeastern San Diego. In addition, including features in buildings to facilitate recycling of waste generated by building occupants and associated refuse storage areas can also assist in reducing the amount of waste generated in the community.

## Policies

### Open Space, Wetlands, and Landform Preservation Policies

**P-CS-12:** Maintain Best Management Practices in all development to limit erosion and siltation.

**P-CS-13:** Preserve and protect open space by preventing incompatible uses, such as off-road activities and off leash dog areas.

*Trees can provide shading and cooling for buildings, pedestrians, and cyclists, as well as contribute to habitat.*

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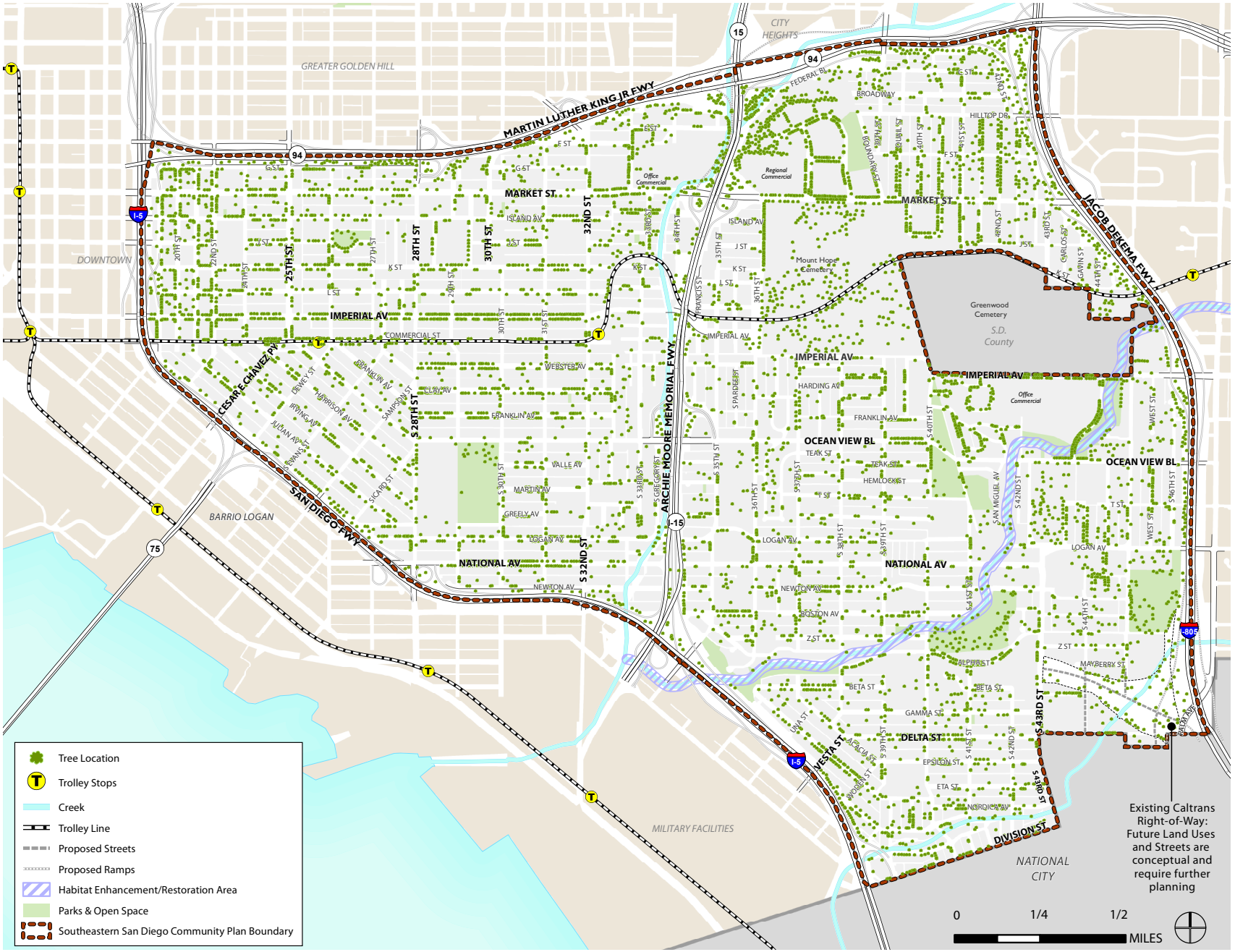
## FIGURE 8-3: Tree Canopy and Habitat



## Chollas Creek Open Space, Wetlands, and Landform Preservation Policies

**P-CS-14:** Implement the recommendations contained in the Chollas Creek Enhancement Program such as removing concrete channels in Chollas Creek, where feasible, to create a more natural function and appearance, and establishing trails and other passive recreation amenities.

**P-CS-15:** Remove invasive species from Chollas Creek and restore habitat.

## Scenic Resources & Public Views

**P-CS-16:** Select new street trees for their ability to provide a canopy and framing of public views. (See Urban Design Element Street Tree discussion and recommendations.)

**P-CS-17:** Preserve the panoramic view offered by Grant Hill Park.

**P-CS-18:** Ensure unobstructed access to open space and canyon trailheads that provide public vantage points (i.e., views and vistas) and access.

**P-CS-19:** Evaluate the need for modified or increased setbacks when building adjacent to public view angles. Reject or object to reduced setbacks that obscure established public vantage points unless alternative or improved public views are proposed.

## Urban Runoff Management

**P-CS-20:** Encourage development to use Low-Impact Development (LID) practices such as bioretention, porous paving, and green roofs, that slow runoff and absorb pollutants from roofs, parking areas and other urban surfaces.

**P-CS-21:** Incorporate bioswales or other LID design practices where there is sufficient public rights-of-way throughout the community, and focus specific efforts to capture storm water along roadways in close proximity to Chollas Creek. Implement these features where appropriate, as they may be infeasible due to soil conditions and impacts to utilities.

**P-CS-22:** Encourage private property owners to design or retrofit landscaped or impervious areas to better capture storm water runoff.

**P-CS-23:** Repair and maintain drainage outfalls and brow ditches that discharge directly to or are within open space lands.

**P-CS-24:** Encourage, through redevelopment and retrofitting, phasing out of commercial and industrial building materials such as galvanized roofs that leach metals into storm water runoff.

**P-CS-25:** Reduce, through redevelopment and retrofitting, the amount of uncovered industrial and commercial areas where the work activity may contribute pollutants.

**P-CS-26:** Encourage neighborhood practices for preventing and removing buildup of trash and pet waste on land surfaces.

## Water Resource Management

**P-CS-27:** Implement applicable General Plan water resources management and water quality goals and policies as discussed in the Conservation Element Sections CE-D.1-D.5 and Urban Design Element.

**P-CS-28:** Encourage new development to incorporate as many water-wise practices as possible in their design and construction, including: encourage recycled and/or gray

water irrigation systems; retrofit public spaces and public rights-of-way with low-water use vegetation and/or alternative permeable surface materials that meet adopted landscape regulations; and ensure that any 'community greening' projects utilize water-efficient landscape.

**P-CS-29:** Conserve water through the provision of water-efficient infrastructure, drought tolerant plantings, greywater usage, and the extension of the municipal reclaimed water to support public parks and landscaped areas.

**P-CS-30:** Conserve water through the planting and maintenance of trees, which will provide for the capture of precipitation and runoff to recharge groundwater, in addition to providing shading for other landscaping to reduce irrigation requirements.

Trees will help address a major concern in compliance with the Regional Water Quality Control Board permits. The Southeastern San Diego Neighborhoods drain into Chollas Creek, and contribute to its impaired status. Tree planting and maintenance should provide incremental improvements to the creek's water quality. Through root systems and canopies, trees reduce the velocity of urban runoff, increase groundwater recharge, and reduce erosion and sedimentation.

## Air Quality

**P-CS-31:** Implement the General Plan air quality policies found in the Conservation Element Section F through land use organization, economic development policies, and landscape policies.

**P-CS-32:** Promote retention of existing, or addition of new, drought resistant trees to absorb pollutants.

**P-CS-33:** Educate businesses and residents on the benefits of alternative modes of transportation including public transit, walking, bicycling, car and van pooling, and telecommuting.

**P-CS-34:** Create incentives to encourage relocation of incompatible uses that contribute to poor air quality.

**P-CS-35:** Encourage street tree and private tree planting programs throughout the community to increase absorption of carbon dioxide and pollutants.

## Urban Forestry

**P-CS-36:** Utilize the Street Tree Master Plan in the Urban Design Element of this plan to apply to private development and to utilize when pursuing greening grants or implementing community planting projects.

**P-CS-37:** Increase the overall tree canopy cover throughout the Southeastern San Diego community to the citywide generalized target goal of 20 percent in the urban residential areas and 10 percent in the business areas so that the natural landscape is sufficient in mass to provide significant benefits to the city in terms of air and water management.

**P-CS-38:** Require new development retain significant and mature trees unless they are diseased and pose a threat to safety and welfare.

**P-CS-39:** Work with the City's Community Forest Advisory Board and the Urban Forester (should the position be reinstated) to resolve issues that may arise in individual development projects.

**P-CS-40:** Replace street trees that are 'missing' or have been removed to restore a 'visual resource' or 'continuous canopy.'

**P-CS-41:** Support public outreach efforts to educate business owners, residents, and school children on the care of and environmental benefits of shade-producing street trees.

### Waste Diversion

**P-CS-42:** Encourage multi-story developments to include solid waste and recycling management measures, such as dual trash/recycling chutes, in development plans to facilitate compliance with recycling regulations.

**P-CS-43:** Promote recycling facilities that are well maintained, attractive in appearance, and help promote waste reduction in the community.

## 8.3 Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture

### Urban Agriculture And Food Security

The Southeastern San Diego Community Plan supports local agriculture, farmers' markets, and eating locally-grown food. These objectives touch on community concerns about other issues such as environmental quality, local economic development, neighborhood revitalization, and community connectedness. A sustainable food system perspective is particularly suited to approach food from all these perspectives, by looking at the broader picture and targeting several areas of influence: food access and quality, production (farms and gardens), procurement (markets, stores, and city policies), transport (shipping methods and fuels, packaging, and other factors), and consumer and business decision-making.

Urban gardening can have a multitude of benefits. It is a strategy for creating local healthy food systems and fighting chronic obesity related illness. It is also a carbon reduction and stormwater runoff strategy. It is a way to productively use underutilized sites and promote interactions between neighbors. All future community gardens in Southeastern San Diego should become attractive focal points that bring the neighborhood together as a way to interact, recreate and create a sustainable food system within the community.

Southeastern San Diego has the potential to provide multiple sites for community gardens that contain individual and shared-plot spaces. For instance, land owned by San Diego Gas and Electric, the Metropolitan Transit System, Caltrans, the City of San Diego, and the San Diego Unified School District may have remnant parcels that could be used as community gardens. Sections of public parks, in particular areas not well suited to active recreational uses, may also be good locations for community gardens.

Community gardening may also be an appropriate temporary use on private parcels that may be developed in the future, in all zones where allowed, including residential and commercial zones. Gardens may also be created with private sponsors, for use in the long-term, and produce may be sold on site in the gardens. On lots where contamination might be an issue, practices have been developed for aboveground gardening. Near freeways, sheltered, closed-system gardening can protect air quality and prevent runoff hazards. The availability of water, access and safety may be challenges for some sites.

*Farmers' markets and community gardens can be focal points that bring the neighborhood together and create a sustainable food system.*

## Policies

### Urban Agriculture and Food Security

**P-CS-44:** Promote the inclusion and development of urban agriculture in Southeastern San Diego.

**P-CS-45:** Locate community gardens in Southeastern San Diego where there is sufficient demand, appropriate land, and where they will not generate adverse impacts on adjacent uses.

**P-CS-46:** Develop and maintain partnerships with organizations that provide services, programs, and activities that would complement a community gardening program in Southeastern San Diego.

**P-CS-47:** Locate community gardens on publicly-owned properties whenever possible.

**P-CS-48:** Seek small publicly-owned sites not suitable for recreation use as opportunities for community gardens where individuals can supplement their food supply.

**P-CS-49:** Identify commercially-designated lots that may be appropriate for commercial farms where a business person may create income by selling locally-produced agricultural products.

**P-CS-50:** Identify potential urban agriculture sites such as under-utilized lots, public property and vacant land.

**P-CS-51:** Encourage new developments to identify space for food production, including rooftop gardens. Consider development incentives for projects that provide public community gardens.