

# East Elliott Community Plan



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

CITY PLANNING AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT



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# EAST ELLIOTT COMMUNITY PLAN

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## EAST ELLIOTT COMMUNITY PLAN

The following amendments have been incorporated into this May 2013 posting of this Plan:

Amendment	Date Approved by Planning Commission	Resolution Number	Date Adopted by City Council	Resolution Number
Elliott Community Plan adopted.			April 29, 1971	R-202550
East Elliott community created with the adoption of the Tierrasanta Community Plan which ceded the western portion of the Elliott community to Tierrasanta community.			July 27, 1982	R-256890
Expanded the Open Space area to coincide with the boundaries of the MSCP; reduced the residential acreage in the community; and increased the acreage associated with the landfill.			March 18, 1997	R-288456
Permitted aggregate extraction and processing associated with the landfill through a Planned Development Permit and corrected the increase in landfill acreage to 493 acres.			April 9, 2002	R-296297
Revised land use acreage on pages 1 and 2			November 10, 2008	R-304353
Added San Diego River Park to Sub-district 3	April 18, 2013	4897-PC	May 20, 2013	R-308200

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## **BACKGROUND**

For many years, the East Elliott area was a portion of the Elliott Community Plan. This plan was adopted in 1971. Subsequently, most of the original Elliott planning area was removed from the Elliott Community Plan and incorporated in the new Tierrasanta Community and Mission Trails Regional Park Plans. The remaining portion of the Elliott community, known as East Elliott, has remained undeveloped. The previous community plan for this area designated scattered unconnected areas of residential development surrounded by open space. Residential and other forms of urban development are impractical and uneconomical in most of East Elliott because of rugged topography, environmental constraints, lack of utility and road connections and other services, a multiplicity of small ownerships and proximity to the Sycamore Canyon Landfill.

East Elliott is dominated by native vegetation including sage scrub, chaparral, native grassland and oak and sycamore woodland and constitutes one of the largest and biologically most important remaining open space areas in San Diego. The topography is characterized by a series of parallel north-south trending canyons and ridges. A number of endangered and threatened wildlife species inhabit this area.

## **LAND USE PLAN**

Due to the natural resources on site and the factors described above which make urban development infeasible in much of East Elliott, a majority of this area is designated for long-term open space use. As such, a majority of the area (2,218 acres out of the 2,862 in the East Elliott planning area) will be one of the most important components of the City's Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP). These open space areas will provide habitat for a number of endangered or threatened wildlife species and will provide corridors for wildlife movement from Mission Trails Park northward into the Miramar area.

An approximately 117-acre area on the eastern fringe of East Elliott, adjacent to a residential area in Santee, is designated for residential use. A maximum of 500 single-family residential units can be constructed in this area. Residential use is designated in this area due to its relatively level terrain and proximity to residential and residential serving land uses in Santee. The residential units should be sensitive and similar to the adjacent development in Santee in terms of siting, scale, density and design. Due to a lack of nearby residential development or services in San Diego and proximity to residential development in Santee, deannexation of this 117-acre area to Santee should be considered if, in the future, Santee favors such an annexation.

Seven acres of commercial office use is designated in the vicinity of State Highway 52 and Mast Boulevard. This property has excellent road access and has potential such as accounting, legal and medical offices to residents of eastern San Diego and Santee.

Five hundred nineteen acres mostly in the Little Sycamore Canyon watershed in the north central portion of the planning area are designated for use as a landfill. . Aggregate mining and processing with the designated landfill area is permitted by Planned Development Permit 40-0765, conditioned upon the mitigation of potential impacts. Potential biological conflicts between the landfill use and adjacent MSCP habitats will be avoided through the landfill operator’s adherence to provisions of the MSCP, especially the MSCP adjacency guidelines. If any residential development is proposed within the area planned for open space, the City will encourage it to be located on lands not adjacent to the landfill. After closure of the landfill, and completion of the State-required post-closure monitoring period, the land use designation of the landfill site shall become open space.

This plan also recognizes the possibility that a portion of the area west of Sycamore Canyon (within the Oak and Spring Canyon watershed), which is designated in this plan for open space use, could be considered for use as a landfill in the future. Many environmental factors will need to be carefully considered prior to a decision to expand the landfill area beyond the 519 acres in Sycamore Canyon.

The land uses designated for the East Elliott area are summarized in the table below and illustrated in the attached land use map.

**LAND USES IN EAST ELLIOTT**

<b>Use</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Open Space	2,218
Residential	117
Commercial	7
Landfill	519
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,862</b>

**OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines are designed to foster preservation and enhancement of the natural open space areas which cover a majority of this planning area:

1. Natural open space areas should remain undeveloped with disturbance limited to trails and passive recreational uses such as walking, hiking and nature study that are consistent with preservation of natural resources.
2. More active recreation uses, including horseback riding and mountain biking, may also be permissible if measures are taken to ensure that biological values are not threatened.

3. Public access to limited areas of particularly sensitive natural open space could be restricted. Examples of locations where access could be controlled include vernal pool areas and identified nesting areas for endangered or threatened animal or bird species.
4. Additional recreational uses may be appropriate along the preserve edge or in the relatively limited open space areas that do not contain sensitive habitat and wildlife. In these areas, horticultural and gardening uses could be permitted on a case-by-case basis. Such uses should not involve construction of permanent structures or paved areas.
5. Open space areas which cover an entire ownership should be preserved through means that include, but are not limited to, acquisition by the City with state and federal assistance or by other large property owners as mitigation lands for environmental impacts anticipated on other properties.
6. Open space areas which cover portions of an ownership and where reasonable development rights still exist on portions of the ownership, should be dedicated by the owner/developer, through an open space/conservation easement. Long-term maintenance should be provided on an individual basis or by an open space management entity that may be formed to implement the MSCP.
7. Disturbed areas designated for open space should be recontoured where feasible, to recreate the natural topography. These areas should also be restored or enhanced where feasible with natural vegetation to return these areas to a natural appearance.
8. At locations where roads, railroads or other urban intrusions traverse open space corridors, provisions should be made to minimize habitat fragmentation and to provide for a continuous open space linkage. In some instances, structures such as bridges or culverts should be sited in lower quality habitat or in disturbed areas to the extent possible.
9. Transition areas should be established between urban uses and the open space system, along traffic corridors and canyon overlooks, where feasible and appropriate. Such transition areas may be developed by providing additional maintenance and planting non-invasive grass, shrubs and trees that provide a sensitive transition between uses.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER PARK**

### **Description**

The San Diego River Park Master Plan (Master Plan) is a comprehensive planning effort to claim the San Diego River as a natural resource and recreational amenity. The Master Plan establishes a Vision, Principles, Recommendations and Design Guidelines for the development of the San Diego River. Key to the success of the San Diego River Park is building a synergy that best serves the entire river valley and its many inhabitants, including people, animals and plants. Therefore, the vision for the San Diego River Park is “Reclaim the valley as a common, a synergy of water, wildlife and people.” The five Principles of the

Master Plan support the vision of the San Diego River Park and all future decisions should be based on these Principles. The Principles include:

- Restore and maintain a healthy river system.
- Unify fragmented lands and habitats.
- Create a connected continuum, with a sequence of unique places and experiences.
- Reveal the river valley history.
- Reorient development toward the river to create value and opportunities for people to embrace the river.

Recommendations for the development of the river are provided in two categories, general recommendations and specific reach recommendations. The general recommendations apply to the entire river area and are written to support the five principles. The specific reach recommendations are divided up into topographic areas of the river that include the estuary, lower valley, confluence, upper valley, gorge and plateau. Each of these reaches has specific recommendations for what should be developed in that part of the river and the East Elliott community contains the plateau reach of the river.

The Design Guidelines of the Master Plan identify how development should be provided and it focuses on two distinct areas: (1) the River Corridor Area, which addresses recreational opportunities, including a public pathway corridor along the River, picnic areas, scenic and interpretive overlooks, fitness stations, seating, as well as habitat, vegetation, and water quality conditions; and (2) the River Influence Area, which addresses how the built environment should relate to the River. These two areas have been defined to ensure that development of the San Diego River Park will correlate with the surrounding built environment while preserving and enhancing the natural environment.

### **Relationship to East Elliott**

The San Diego River crosses the City of San Diego's municipal boundary in the eastern portion of the East Elliott Community Plan Area and flows through the Carlton Oaks Golf Course. A dike along the southern edge of Carlton Oaks Golf Course and SR-52 to the south and west separates the river and the golf course. Other than golf, recreational resources are minimal, but an informal pedestrian trail exists on the north side of the river. Future development projects along the river, identified in the San Diego River Park Master Plan, that are planned for the East Elliott Community are listed below under Proposals. Development within the River Corridor Area and the River Influence Area of the San Diego River Park Master Plan area to be in accordance with the Mission Trails Design District Ordinance and Design Manual and consistent with the San Diego River Park Master Plan Design Guidelines.

### **Goal**

IMPLEMENT THE SAN DIEGO RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN VISION, PRINCIPLES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES THROUGH FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.



## **Proposals**

1. Through feasibility study and associated environmental document determine the best location for the San Diego River Pathway connecting Mission Trails Regional Park to the City of Santee, along with connections to West Hills Parkway. Include in the study where a completely soft surface trail could be provided separate from the paved pathway to accommodate variety of users.
2. Land not currently used as golf course should be set aside for open space or the river pathway with an easement that allows for public access on private land.
3. Connect the City of San Diego River Pathway to the City of Santee River Pathway and provide a trail kiosk to identify the connection.
4. Capitalize on existing tree galleries in golf course to create a buffer along the river and remove exotic vegetation from the river corridor.
5. Construct the San Diego River Park Pathway from Carlton Oaks Golf Course, extending west under West Hills Boulevard and SR-52, to connect to Mission Trails Regional Park trail system.

