

Chollas Triangle Section of the Eastern Area Neighborhoods Element

Chollas Triangle is an approximately 36-acre site within the Eastern Area and is bounded by 54th Street to the west, Chollas Creek to the south and east, and University Avenue to the north. The area has been studied as part of a Smart Growth Incentive Program Grant funded by the San Diego Association of Governments to provide specific land use, mobility, and urban design recommendations to encourage a mixed-use transit-oriented village supported by public/civic/park space, open space, and creek enhancements within the Chollas Triangle Site. Chollas Triangle is envisioned as a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood center that celebrates Chollas Creek and promotes the use of multimodal transit along University Avenue and 54th Street. The site has the potential to serve as a major destination for surrounding neighborhood residents. The Community Plan has been amended to help implement the goals and recommendations developed through the process. This section below provides additional recommendations for implementation.

Goal

- To create an active neighborhood village with an integrated mixture of residential, commercial, and recreational uses.
- To create an open space system and development pattern that connects adjacent neighborhoods to and through Chollas Triangle.

The landscape character of the community is defined by its hills, canyons and bluffs. While these features create a beautiful and dramatic urban pattern, they often create barriers between neighborhoods. A primary goal of this plan is to acknowledge these features and design a harmonious open space system and development pattern that connect adjacent neighborhoods to and through Chollas Triangle.

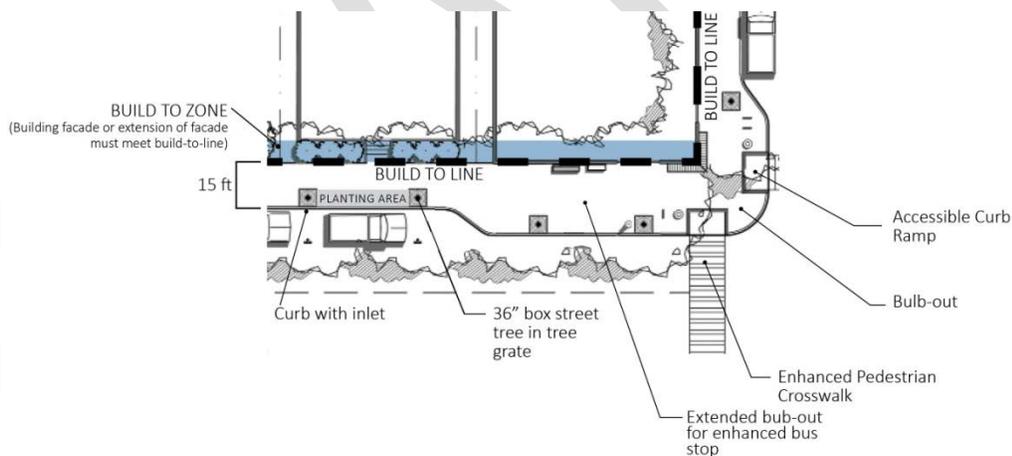
Chollas Triangle CPIOZ

The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ), Type-B applies to the Chollas Triangle Site (Figure 12.1). CPIOZ Type-B applies to the Chollas Triangle site to refine and help implement the policies of the Community Plan and the CC-3-5 zone applied to lands designated Neighborhood Village. Development shall conform to the use and development regulations of the CC-3-5 zone except where superseded by this CPIOZ.

Development proposals on parcels identified as CPIOZ Type B require discretionary review to determine if the development proposal is consistent with the community plan and these supplemental regulations. Development proposals on any parcel identified as CPIOZ Type-B shall be required to obtain discretionary approval processed as a Site Development Permit, in accordance with the Municipal Code. Applications for development on CPIOZ Type-B parcels shall meet the purpose and intent of these supplemental development regulations. Exceptions

from these regulations for development that is minor, temporary, or incidental and is consistent with the intent of this CPIOZ may be granted by the City Manager in accordance with the procedures of the Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone within the Municipal Code Section 132.1403. Applications for development on a parcel located in CPIOZ Type-B will require a Process three Site Development Permit and shall address the design and compatibility of the project in relation to surrounding development, including conformance with the following regulations.

1. Allow for a maximum of 130,000 square feet of non-residential development within lands designated as Neighborhood Village.
2. Building heights shall not exceed 65 feet.
3. Residential use and residential parking are allowed anywhere on the ground floor except along University Avenue where the ground floor street wall shall be a commercial use.
4. A minimum of 70% of the ground floor street wall shall be developed with commercial uses along University Avenue.
5. Build-to-lines are established on all street frontages to encourage a consistent building edge.



- a. Along University Avenue and 54th Street, the building edges shall be located along these lines. Recessed entries shall be restricted to maintain the continuity of the build-to-line especially on University Avenue. Exception: When a transit stop is present, the building edge may be placed a maximum of 20 feet from the curb.
6. On any drives internal to developments, all building edges, front entries, or stoops should be located facing the street. All internal drives shall create attractive pedestrian environments.
 - a. Like public streets, drives internal to developments shall have parallel or angled parking contiguous with the sidewalk. Trees providing shade to pedestrians will

be planted every 30 feet and will be planted between the curb and the internal street wall.

7. Design commercial development to attain a 60% ground-floor transparency to highlight interior activity from the street.
8. Transfer of Development Rights - Development rights may be transferred within land uses designated as Neighborhood Village in conjunction with the Site Development Permit required for development in the CPIOZ Type-B area, restricting both the sending and receiving sites. The development intensity may not be transferred to any other land uses.

LAND USE

The Chollas Triangle site is designated Neighborhood Village to allow for housing and convenience shopping in a mixed-use setting, civic uses and services serving an approximate three mile radius. A more intensive commercial and mixed-use development pattern is identified for the street frontage along University Avenue, with uses transitioning to less intense residential development and Chollas Creek Park to the south. In order to create a vibrant neighborhood, a variety of household types, sizes and price points are encouraged including, rowhomes, condos, apartments, and lofts. The entire site allows for no more than 486 multi-family dwelling units and 130,000 square feet of non-residential square footage.

Development along University Avenue should transition from solely commercial uses near the University Avenue / 54th Street intersection to mixed-use residential further east. This pattern is intended to provide suitable sites for commercial users who desire corners at busy intersections as well as to reduce noise impacts on residential units. All commercial uses along University Avenue should have active ground floor uses and transparent facades to promote an active, pedestrian-oriented street. The land use designation allows for a large format commercial building intended to accommodate a neighborhood grocery store. Commercial uses should front the street and locate parking internally. Residential development should include entrances that front public streets, specifically 54th Street and Lea Street, as well as Chollas Creek Park as illustrated within this section. Smaller building footprints are better suited along streets with gentle slopes and curves with parking located within the interior of the site.

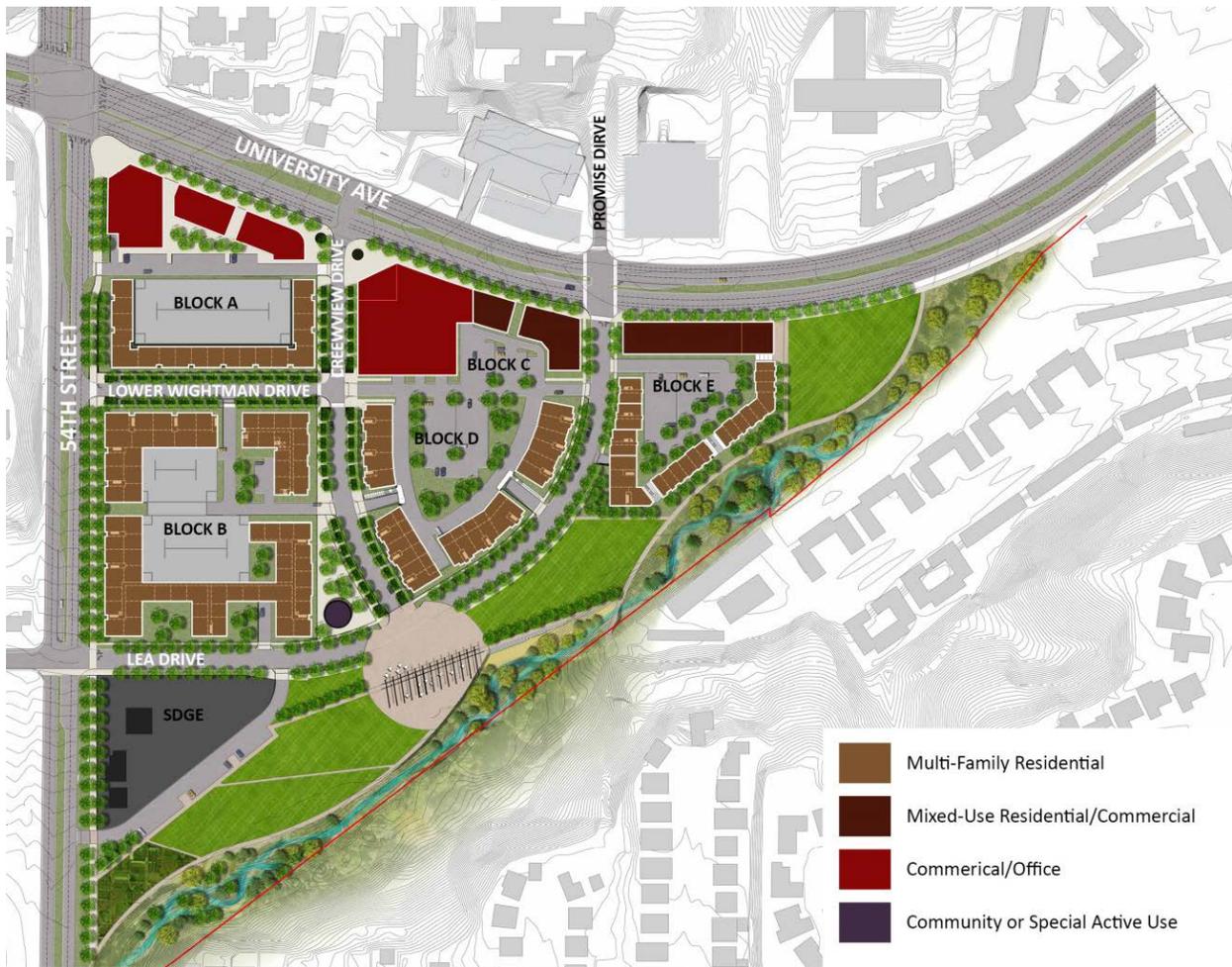
MP Figure 12.1 - Land Use Plan



Recommendations

- Designate parcels fronting University Avenue as Neighborhood Village to allow a mixture of multi-family housing and commercial uses along a major transportation corridor.
- Commercial uses along University Avenue should have transparent facades to promote an active, pedestrian-oriented street.
- Commercial uses should front the street and locate parking internally.
- Residential development should include entrances that front public streets, specifically 54th Street and Lea Street, as well as Chollas Creek Park.
- Encourage convenience shopping with a pedestrian orientation at the corner of 54th Street and University Avenue.
- Locate more intense uses, such as office and commercial businesses, along University Avenue.
- Allow for the ability to develop commercial anchor retail, such as a neighborhood grocery store, that fronts University Avenue.
- Provide a variety of housing types adjacent to active park uses located at the southern and eastern areas of Chollas Triangle.

MP Figure 12.2 - Illustrative Site Design*

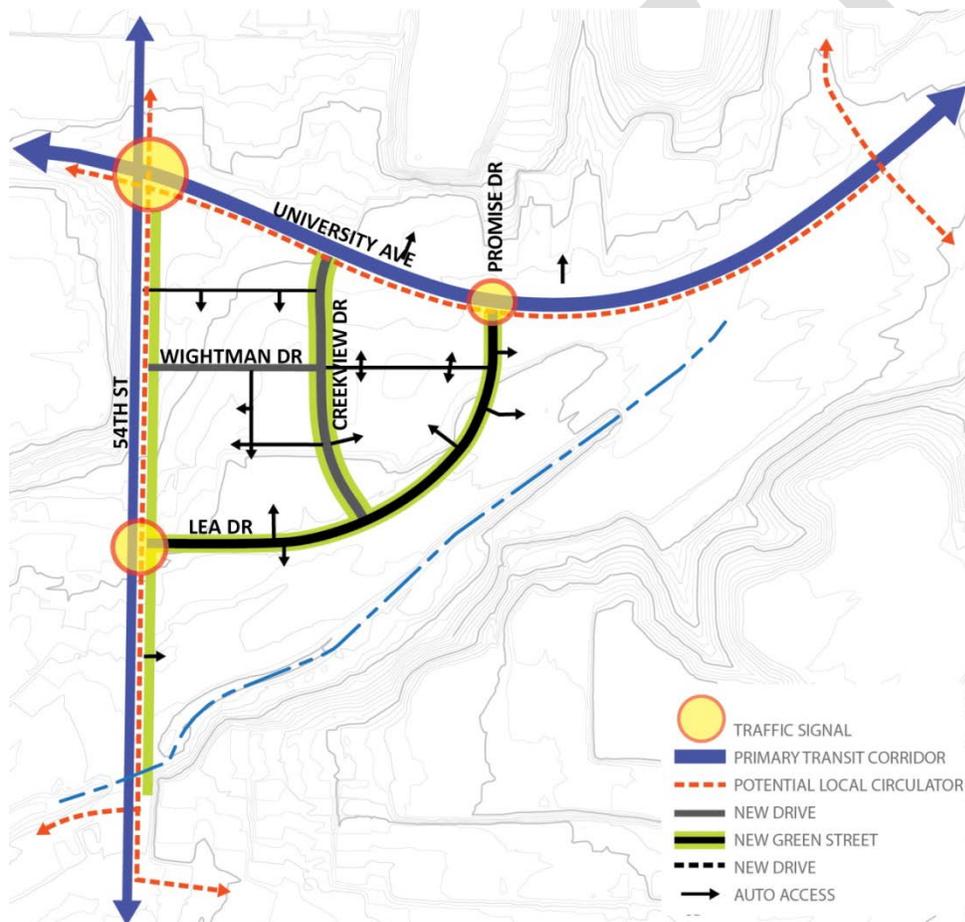


* For illustrative purposes only – image is shown as an example of how the site could be potentially developed.

MOBILITY

A fundamental step in achieving the community vision is to create an urban framework that encourages a more human scale, walkable development pattern. The mobility network introduces a smaller scale street and block pattern intended to function as part of the open space system. Streets are designed to enhance pedestrian connections through the site and Chollas Creek Park. Design elements include wide sidewalks, street lighting, generous landscape zones and shade trees that create safe, comfortable pedestrian connections. On-street parallel parking is identified throughout the development to calm traffic and serve as a buffer between traffic lanes and pedestrian zones. Curb extensions and striped pedestrian crosswalks should be incorporated at intersections to minimize pedestrian crossing distance where feasible.

MP Figure 12.3 - Circulation Pattern



A north-south connection, identified as Creekview Drive in the Figure 12.3, is intended to serve as a prominent connection from University Avenue to Chollas Creek Park. This is envisioned as a pedestrian priority connection with trees, pedestrian amenities and water quality planters. The Plan recommends development along the western

edge maintains a north/south orientation and form. This building orientation provides views to Chollas Creek and allows for a large public plaza with the potential for a special use site at the edge of the park.

Lea Drive connects 54th Street to University Avenue at the existing Promise Drive location. This alignment forms the northern edge of the park, creating a highly visible and accessible open

space. Buildings should front Lea Drive to take advantage of creek and park views and provide informal observation on the park.

Development within the site should capitalize on the regional bus connectivity, particularly at the intersection of University Avenue & 54th Street. The southeast corner of this intersection is envisioned as an enhanced transit plaza with ample room and comfortable waiting areas for transit patrons. Amenities should include, bus shelters, seating, trash cans, bicycle parking and transit information.

Improvements to the University Avenue and 54th Street intersection will enhance pedestrian safety and connect the project site to adjacent neighborhoods, businesses and open space. The University Avenue Mobility Study has identified elimination of the channelized right turns on the westbound and southbound approaches of this intersection. This will improve safety by shortening pedestrian crossing distances, improving visibility and reducing conflicts between all modes of transportation.

The vacation of Chollas Parkway and the realignment of Lea Street to a two lane collector street that connects University Avenue and 54th Street will reduce cut-through traffic, improving the pedestrian environment and overall livability for residents. A new signalized intersection will be located at University Avenue and Promise Drive, eliminating the need for the existing complicated intersection at University Avenue and Chollas Parkway.

Non-contiguous sidewalks with ample landscape zones should be provided to create a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment should be provided on all internal development streets as well as any public streets that interface with the CPIOZ area. On-street parking will provide an additional buffer between traffic lanes and pedestrians.

The Chollas Triangle design principles promote an active and pedestrian scale street environment that encourages street activity and walkability. The existing, expansive parking lots will be replaced by dispersed surface lots behind buildings, on street parking, or in parking structures. Ample bike parking should be provided near bus stops, commercial areas and multifamily development. Improved connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods will make cycling more convenient and encourage transit use. Consideration should be given to designating bicycle parking areas for short and long-term use at commercial and residential locations.

Recommendations

- Provide metered parallel parking along University Avenue
- Provide for an enhanced transit plaza at 54th Street and University Avenue through comfortable walk and wait environments for transit riders.
- Design streets that include pedestrian amenities such as non-contiguous sidewalks, street trees, and street furniture.
- Extend the public realm into the site through the incorporation of pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks and street trees.

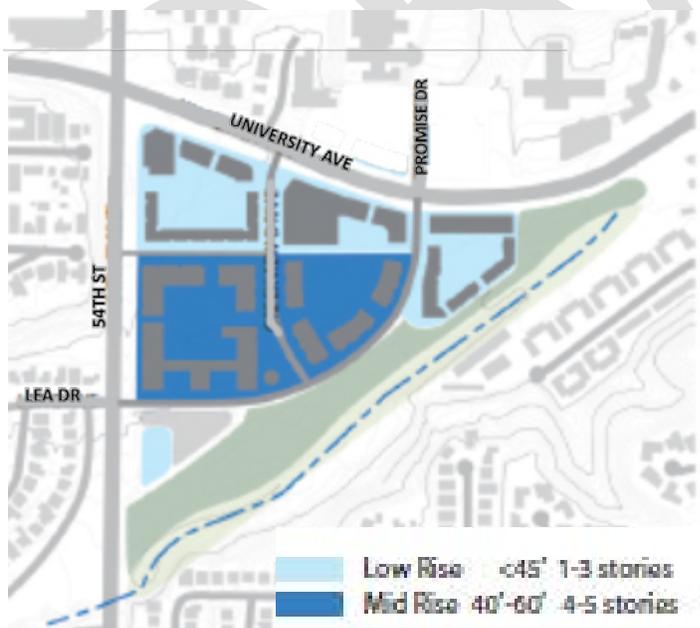
- Minimize pedestrian / automobile conflict by creating pedestrian friendly intersections that incorporate bulb outs, pedestrian refuge areas and reduce crossing distances where appropriate.
- Create a safe, human-scale pedestrian and bicycle network.

URBAN DESIGN

The Chollas Triangle site has the opportunity to serve as a destination and focal point within Mid-City that celebrates Chollas Creek. New development that implements this vision should include buildings that front streets with parking located behind buildings or in parking structures. Where feasible, tuck under parking, underground parking, or parking structures should be situated into the existing topography to minimize visual impact on surrounding uses. Design treatments including quality articulated façades, building step-backs, porches and stoops serve to break up the mass and form of buildings and create an interesting street edge. Residences should include front porches and balconies at upper levels, allowing private exterior space for each dwelling unit.

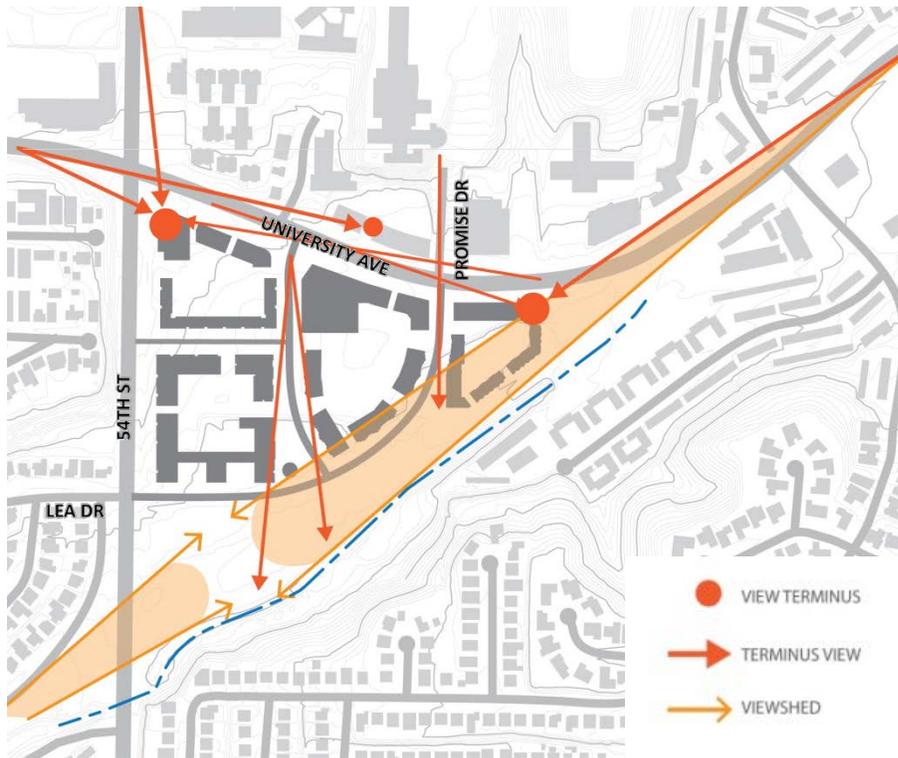
Significant building setbacks should be incorporated along University Avenue. A setback distance of 15 - 20 feet from the curb to building face should create a comfortable pedestrian environment along a major corridor. Street trees should be provided in a regular interval of 30-35 feet to provide continuous shading for pedestrians. Ground floor transparency should be maximized to create pedestrian level interest and a visual connection between the street and interior spaces, enabling a strong sense of community and increasing informal oversight of public areas.

MP Figure 12.4 – Urban Form



Building heights should transition from lower (1-3 stories) commercial/mixed-use buildings along University Avenue to taller (4-5 stories) residential buildings along the park. Existing grades slope to the south and east, with an existing grade difference of 25'-50' between University and Chollas Creek. Locating taller buildings at the lower site elevations minimizes both the effect of higher buildings on the surrounding neighborhoods, and the formation of a potential 'building canyon' along University Avenue.

MP Figure 12.5 – Important Views into the Site



Building location and orientation frame views into the site and to the creek. Special uses and public spaces should be located to take advantage of views to adjacent canyons and hillsides. Signature architecture and/or landscape elements are encouraged at important view termini to strengthen the identity of Chollas Triangle within the community.

Recommendations

- Encourage signature architecture at major view corridors to establish a unique identity for Chollas Triangle.
- Incorporate green infrastructure (pervious paving, flow through planters, bio-retention swales, etc.) as a means to cleanse storm water run-off prior to entering Chollas Creek.
- Minimize urban heat island affect through building design, roof design and site landscaping.
- Design lot and blocks to encourage a pedestrian-scale development pattern.
- Utilize topography to enhance views and minimize grading.
- Locate parking behind buildings or in park decks.
- Utilize topography to enhance prominent views into and out of the site.

OPEN SPACE

A primary focal point of Chollas Triangle is the creation of an approximately five-acre active use neighborhood park in the location of the vacated Chollas Parkway. The new park will provide an identity for Chollas Triangle and will include a mix of passive and active open space uses as well as restored riparian habitat along Chollas Creek.

Chollas Creek Park serves as a major community focal point, and should be designed to accommodate a variety of users. The over-arching park design concept is to create a series of independent, yet connected spaces along Chollas Creek. These spaces alternate between active/passive uses and native riparian areas. This concept helps create a string of varied experiences as users move through the park.

An open space buffer that extends 50 feet from the edge of the natural stream line of Chollas Creek to the lands designated for park use is established to serve as a transition between active and passive open space uses.

Chollas creek should be restored in a manner that balances the need for native habitat/riparian zones with opportunities for people to interact with the creek. The creek banks should be shallow to allow for creek views and access. The open space is designed as a series of 'expansion' and 'compression' areas adjacent to the creek channel. The expansion areas are broad zones that allow the creek to meander and braid during low flows and serve as detention areas when the creek floods. The compression areas focus the creek channel at strategic locations that bring people to the water near the plazas or open lawn areas. This pattern creates differing environments that encourage people to engage the creek in a variety of ways. Informal paths or boardwalks in the expansion zones allow people to explore the native landscape and access the creek, with drop structures at strategic locations to create overlooks and places of visual and audible interest within the park.

A plaza should be located along Lea Street and the southern terminus of Creekview Drive. The plaza is a highly flexible space intended to serve the community year round, offering both programmed and informal uses such as: public gatherings, outdoor concerts, farmers markets, and informal gathering.

A series of open, level lawn areas allow for informal active uses such as soccer, lawn games, picnics, etc. These linked 'rooms' create a series of distinct experiences along Chollas Creek. The southwest portion of the park should be reserved for uses that meet specific community needs and activate the park. These uses could include a community garden or dog park.

MP Figure 12.6 – Open Space Network



* Park design shown for illustrative purposes only

A wide multi-use path will wind through Chollas Creek Park providing a much needed pedestrian and bike friendly connection that links neighborhoods southwest of Chollas Triangle with retail amenities located to the northeast. The Lea Drive and 54th Street intersection will be signalized to allow the multi-use path to connect to the southwest with the planned bike route within the Chollas Creek Open Space corridor.

A multi-use path along the eastern edge of 54th Street will connect transit stops and commercial uses at University Avenue with the park and trails network to the south. It will provide an inviting edge that is intended to encourage development to front 54th Street, further strengthening the pedestrian experience. The multi-use path will be the first piece of a larger north/south bicycle and pedestrian system linking El Cajon Boulevard, Colina Del Sol Park, Chollas Creek Park and ultimately Chollas Lake Park.

Recommendations

- Create a neighborhood park with a mixture of active and passive uses.
- Provide a public street along the park to ensure public access.
- Enhance Chollas Creek as a community amenity through the restoration of natural habitat along the creek and the creation of a buffer from non-compatible uses.
- Allow for uses to include picnic areas, multi-purpose turf areas, walkways, and landscaping within the active park area
- Provide a multi-use bicycle/pedestrian path that connects 54th Street to University Avenue and 58th Street through Chollas Creek Park.