

COMMERCIAL

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Clairemont Mesa contains several commercially zoned sites evenly distributed throughout the community (**Figures 11 and 12**). These sites comprise approximately 297 acres, of which 251 acres are developed with commercial uses, 23 acres are used for residential purposes, 19 acres contain other uses, and four acres are vacant (**Table 5**). Some of the commercial properties have been developed under the C Zone which has minimal development regulations, such as no off-street parking or setback requirements. In Clairemont Mesa, office and retail commercial consist of four community shopping centers, several neighborhood commercial centers, strip commercial development and visitor uses.

**TABLE 5
LAND USE IN COMMERCIAL ZONES (in acres)**

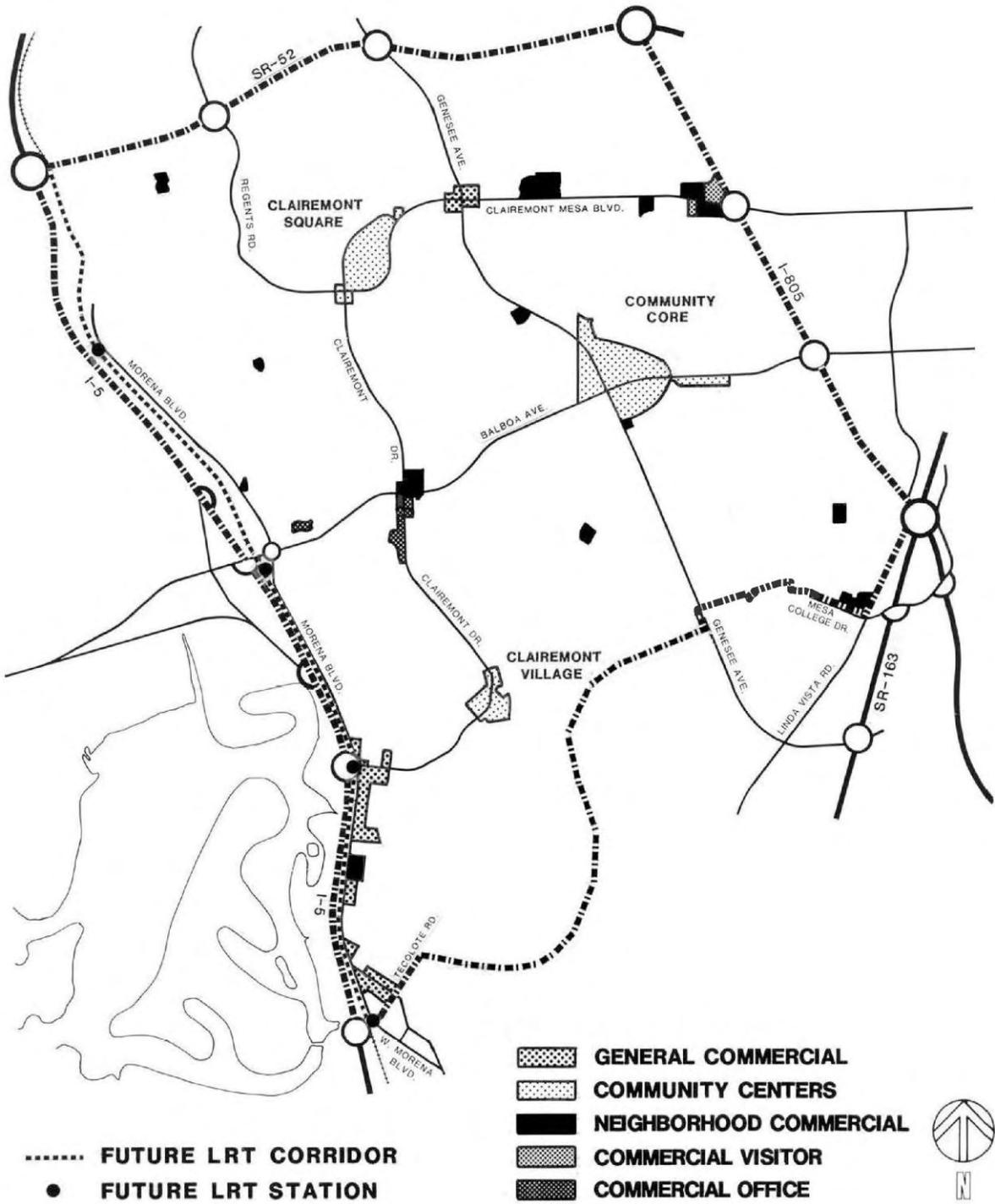
Commercial Zones	Acres in Zone	Residential			Commercial	Other	Vacant
		Total Acres	Single-family	Multifamily			
C	10	3	1	2	10	4	1
C-1	*	0	0	0	*	0	0
CA	191	2	*	2	191	7	0
CN	30	2	0	2	30	3	0
CO	17	13	0	13	17	5	3
CP	3	0	0	0	3	*	0
CR	0	3	3	0	0	0	0
Total:	251	23	4	19	251	19	4

• Less than one acre.

Numbers may not add up due to rounding

COMMUNITY CORE

The community core is located near the intersection of Genesee Avenue and Balboa Avenue (**Figures 11 and 12**). The core area encompasses approximately 105 acres, consisting of Genesee Plaza and Balboa Mesa shopping centers, Balboa Crest (a commercial strip center), and Balboa Towers (a medical office development). Traffic along Balboa Avenue and Genesee Avenue has increased creating some congestion during the early morning and late afternoon periods. In Clairemont Mesa, these two streets are well traveled because they serve as the primary east-west, north-south major thoroughfares other than the freeways which are located at the north, east and west boundaries of the community (see **Transportation Element**).



Commercial Land Use Recommendations
 Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

Balboa Mesa and Genesee Plaza shopping centers consist of 85 acres with over 50 retail stores. These centers are in fair condition and are underutilized with one-story buildings surrounded and separated by excess parking and vacant land. Both centers would benefit from signs that are more compatible with the scale and height of buildings in the center. An improved internal automobile, bicycle and pedestrian circulation system is also needed, in addition to improving the landscaping along the sidewalks on Balboa Avenue.

The surrounding commercial development to the west consists of the Balboa Towers, the presently vacant Clairemont Mesa Community Hospital and four acres of vacant commercially zoned land on Genesee Avenue. Balboa Towers are two relatively new medical buildings that are seven and nine stories tall. A pleasant feature along Genesee Avenue in the core area is the landscaped median and street trees in the public right-of-way. Development to the east consists of a strip commercial area named Balboa Crest. The center is in fair condition and mostly low in scale except for a private school that is nine stories tall.

Community Shopping Centers

The remaining two community shopping centers, Clairemont Square and Clairemont Village, were built in the 1950s. Clairemont Square consists of 52 acres and is in good condition. The center is located adjacent to the intersection of Clairemont Drive and Clairemont Mesa Boulevard. Clairemont Village consists of 25.2 acres and is also in good condition. The center is located on Clairemont Drive between Iroquois Avenue and Burgener Boulevard. The centers have undergone rehabilitation to modernize the sites, however, both shopping centers would benefit from improved signs and pedestrian access to the center from the surrounding development (**Figure 12**).

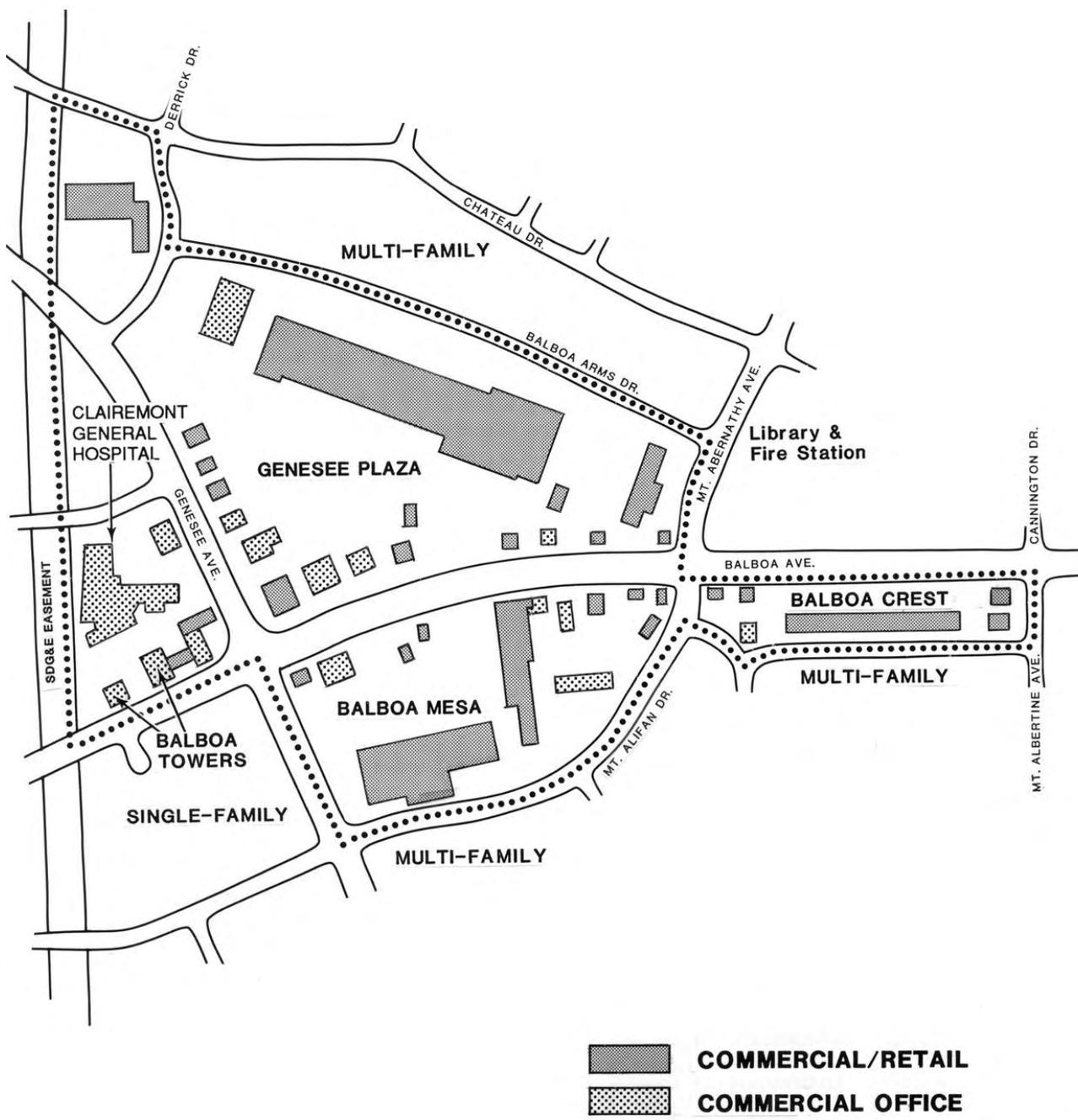
Neighborhood Commercial Centers

Clairemont Mesa had 13 neighborhood commercial centers. Two of these centers have been redeveloped with medium-density residential development. Both of these sites are located in single-family neighborhoods. Out of the remaining 11 neighborhood centers, one site, on the corner of Havasupai and Galatin Way, has a mixture of residential and commercial uses.

The 11 neighborhood centers are evenly distributed throughout the community (**Figure 12**) and range in size from .75 acres to ten acres. Some of the centers are older developments that need to be revitalized to enhance their appearance in the surrounding neighborhoods, while the centers on Moraga Avenue and Geddes Drive, Clairemont Mesa Boulevard and Diane Avenue, and Linda Vista Road and Mesa College Drive have redeveloped with commercial services.

Other Commercial Areas

The commercial strip development along the southern portion of Morena Boulevard between Clairemont Drive and Tecolote Road consists of 31 acres and has a mix of commercial zones (**Figure 12**). Examples of uses in this area include offices, mini-markets, restaurants, car sales and residential development. The area is in need of redevelopment because most of the



Existing Land Uses in the Community Core
 Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

commercial properties were developed under the C Zone which is an obsolete zone with minimal development requirements. The commercial strip would benefit from increased off-street parking and new landscaping which meets current standards, including landscaping in the public right-of-way. The area would also benefit from improved signage because there are many illegal signs still remaining.

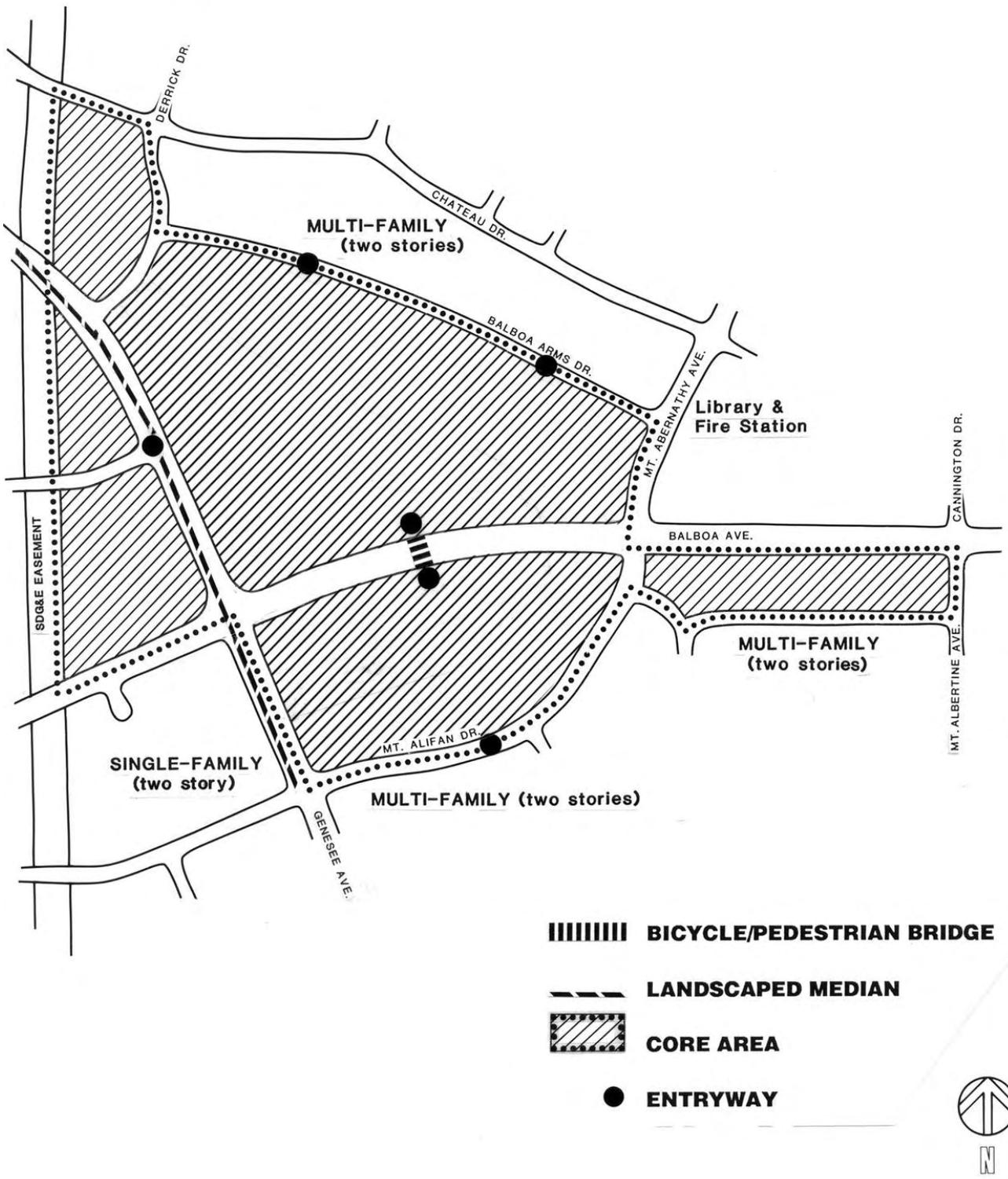
There is one area in the community with a concentration of visitor-oriented commercial uses. The uses include two motels and a restaurant located on Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, west of Interstate 805 (I-805) (see **Figure 12**). This development is relatively new and visible from the freeway. In addition to the commercial development on Morena Boulevard and in the community core, Clairemont Mesa has commercial office development on Moraga Avenue, north of Balboa Avenue and on Clairemont Drive, south of Balboa Avenue (**Figure 12**). The office development is in good condition. The landscaping along Balboa Avenue from the office development on Moraga Avenue provides a scenic entryway into the community. A few of the properties on Clairemont Drive were residential duplexes that have been converted to medical offices, as permitted by the underlying CO Zone.

OBJECTIVES FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Develop the community core as a town center with unique, architectural, sign and landscaping theme with pedestrian walkways and bikeways.
2. Ensure the availability of adequate commercial facilities within the community core to meet the needs of the existing and projected residential population of Clairemont Mesa.
3. Require commercial areas to incorporate landscaping which will help to integrate the commercial development into the surrounding neighborhood.
4. Design commercial areas to best utilize the existing transportation system and provide pedestrian linkages to and within commercial development as well as connections to adjacent uses.
5. Maintain commercial uses in neighborhood commercial centers.
6. Revitalize the commercial area along the southern portion of Morena Boulevard and improve both vehicular and pedestrian access along the Boulevard.
7. Design signs as an integral part of a development project which are informative, compatible with the scale of surrounding development and architecturally compatible with the project and surrounding area.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY CORE – CPIOZ

The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ), Type B with a Planned Commercial Development permit should apply to the community core located on Balboa Avenue and Genesee Avenue (**Figure 38**). Development under the existing CA Zone lacks a pedestrian environment in the core area, including walkways that should provide direct



Community Core Recommendations
 Clairemont Mesa Community Plan

access to adjacent residential neighborhoods. The development should be enhanced with landscaping in the public right-of-way, setbacks and parking lots. The internal automobile and bicycle circulation system and transit stops are also not well defined in the core area. As redevelopment occurs with CPIOZ, emphasis should be placed on creating a pleasant and convenient shopping environment for residents in Clairemont Mesa.

The community core has been defined based on existing land uses, the central location in the community, vacant and underutilized land which provides opportunity for additional growth and circulation. The core area should be the focal point of the community and continue providing commercial services for residents in Clairemont Mesa. The proposed growth of the community core would not encroach into single-family neighborhoods because of existing and well-established multifamily areas that serve as a buffer between the core and nearby single-family areas.

1. Use

Commercial uses only should be permitted in the community core. Residential land uses should not be permitted in order to preserve the core as the commercial center of the community (**Figures 13 and 14**).

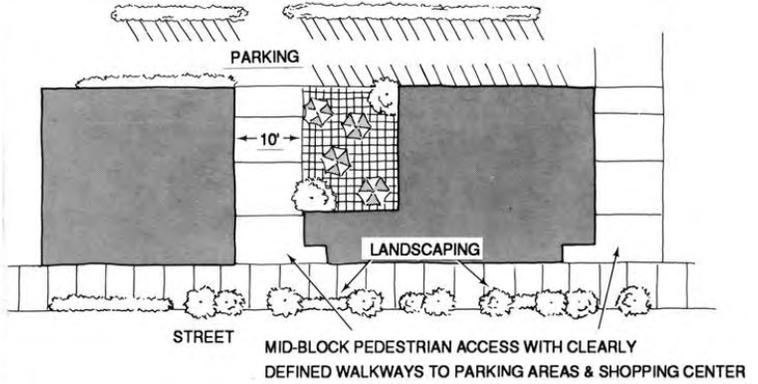
2. Hospital Use

Any expansion of or revision to the use of the existing Clairemont General Hospital will require an amendment to the existing Conditional Use Permit or an equivalent permit process. Any hospital facility developed in the community core, or any reuse of the existing hospital facility should be a community-serving facility.

3. Architectural and Site Design

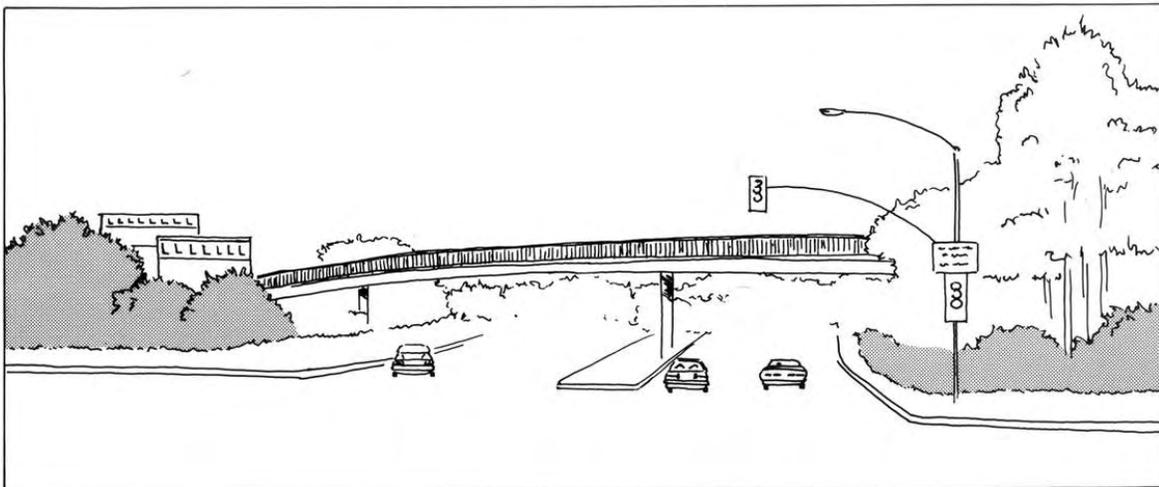
The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) Type B with a Planned Commercial Development permit should apply to the community core. This will help ensure that development will occur with a unifying architectural, sign and landscaping theme, pedestrian walkways and bikeways.

- a. Development in the core should include plazas in a park-like setting. The plazas should be the focal point for the community core (**Figure 15**).
- b. Outdoor restaurants should be located on the ground floor incorporating views and physical access into the plazas. Restaurants will be an important feature in establishing pedestrian activity in the core area.
- c. Direct internal pedestrian, bicycle and automobile linkages to adjacent commercial areas should be incorporated in the site design in order to reduce traffic congestion and circulation conflicts on public streets.
- d. New commercial development should be integrated into existing development to provide direct pedestrian access by linking the public right-of-way and the internal walkways of the core area.



OUTDOOR RESTAURANTS ARE AN IMPORTANT FEATURE IN ESTABLISHING PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY IN THE CORE AREA

AN ENHANCED BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE IMPROVES NON-MOTORIZED CIRCULATION, REDUCES TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND PROVIDES A LANDMARK FEATURE



- e. Internal walkways should be a minimum of ten feet wide and connect to public sidewalks. The walkway should be landscaped with trees, shrubs and ground cover. A bicycle/pedestrian bridge should be constructed over Balboa Avenue to connect the two shopping areas in order to improve pedestrian circulation, reduce traffic congestion and provide a landmark feature for the core area (**Figure 15**). The recommended bridge should accommodate bicyclists, as well as pedestrians, and should be designed in such a manner as to separate the two functions to reduce potential conflicts, that is using both smooth and cobbled pavement surfaces to distinguish between bike and pedestrian ways. The construction of the bridge should be an integral part of the pedestrian, circulation and shopping environment.
- f. Buildings in the core area should have a unified architectural theme and site design, pedestrian access, bicycle and automobile circulation, and public open spaces. Perspectives of the proposed project that show the relationship of the proposed project to adjacent development should be submitted as part of the permit application.
- g. Mexican fan palm trees should be used as a theme street tree in the Community Core, interspersed with broad-headed flowering trees.

4. Parking Design

- a. Parking in the community core should be underground, behind the building or within the building. If parking is located on the first and second levels of the building, automobiles should be screened from the public right-of-way with landscaping, and the facade of the parking structure should be sensitive to the pedestrian environment. The automobile or parking facilities should not be a dominant element of the community core.
- b. Joint parking should be permitted to reduce space used for parking, provided that a parking study identifies what specific parking reductions are proposed, and how such reductions will not adversely affect required levels of available parking spaces. Examples of subjects to be analyzed in the parking study include: existing and proposed land uses; scheduling of business hours; secure bicycle storage facilities for both customer and employees, and, proximity to public transit.
- c. Large surface parking areas should be broken up with landscaped islands and screened from the public right-of-way by landscaping. This can be accomplished through the use of trees, shrubs or mounding, where appropriate, to enhance the visual character of the core area. Large parking areas should also include colored concrete paving (instead of asphalt) as a means to visually enhance surface areas.

5. Circulation

The estimated redevelopment potential of the community core is an additional 119,321 square feet of retail and 31,000 square feet of commercial. If new development exceeds the estimated redevelopment potential of the community core, a traffic study should be submitted in order to mitigate any potential traffic impacts to Balboa Avenue and Genesee Avenue.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLAIREMONT SQUARE AND CLAIREMONT VILLAGE – CPIOZ

The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone, Type B with a Planned Commercial Development permit should apply to Clairemont Square and Clairemont Village in order to ensure that redevelopment will be compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods (**Figure 38**). Development under the existing CA Zone did not provide pedestrian walkways linking the centers to adjacent residential neighborhoods. The centers have many signs, and some of these signs are either too high or too large according to the citywide Sign Ordinance. The internal automobile and bicycle circulation system and transit stops are also not well defined in the centers. As redevelopment occurs with CPIOZ, emphasis should also be placed on creating a pleasant and convenient shopping environment for residents in Clairemont Mesa.

1. Use

Clairemont Square and Clairemont Village should be retained as community commercial centers.

2. Site Design

Any new retail development should be integrated with the existing center to ensure compatibility in height, architecture and site design, signs, landscaping and circulation. New development should be linked to the surrounding residential neighborhood by safe and effective pedestrian access through well-defined entryways.

- a. When adjacent to a residential area, the commercial development should be linked to the neighborhood with landscaping or architectural design so a transition is made.
- b. Commercial development should be connected to surrounding residential areas by pedestrian access between the public right-of-way and the internal pedestrian walkways of the center.
- c. Commercial development in the centers should participate in the landscaping improvements along Clairemont Mesa Boulevard and Clairemont Drive (see **Transportation Element**).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DIANE SHOPPING CENTER – CPIOZ

The Diane Shopping Center should be rezoned to CN with a Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone, Type B. New development may occur only under a Planned Commercial Development permit in order to ensure that any commercial redevelopment in this center will be compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods (**Figure 38**). The CPIOZ will also ensure that this center will not be redeveloped with residential uses, thereby eliminating it as a commercial center. The CN Zone alone permits residential uses to occur on the site and does not require a discretionary permit, which gives the community and the city the opportunity to review the design of the center for neighborhood compatibility.

1. Restriction on Residential Uses

The Diane Shopping Center should be preserved as a neighborhood shopping center. Therefore, no residential uses should be permitted to locate in the center.

2. Architectural and Site Design

All new development should be integrated with the existing center in terms of height, architecture, signs, landscaping and circulation. New development should be linked to the surrounding neighborhoods by safe and effective pedestrian access through well-defined entryways.

- a. Any new development located adjacent to Conrad Avenue or Diane Avenue should provide entrances to establishments from those streets as well as from the shopping center.
- b. Landscaping should be provided along Conrad Avenue and Diane Avenue as part of any redevelopment of the site.
- c. All service and loading areas that are visible from the public right-of-way or from adjacent residences, should be screened by fencing, landscaping, or a combination of both.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WEST CLAIREMONT PLAZA– CPIOZ

The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone, Type B, should apply to the West Clairemont Plaza Shopping Center to ensure that redevelopment of the site is compatible with adjacent residential development, supports use of the Mid-Coast transit line, enhances the community image, and offers commercial services that are walkable to the surrounding community. The site should be developed with a first class retail and professional center. The existing center is characterized by older structures, underutilized parking areas, poor landscaping, and a lack of walkways to and from residential neighborhoods and throughout the site. Transit services are poorly integrated into the site.

1. Use

Retail and commercial services should be encouraged on the site. Professional offices are also permitted. Residential uses may be permitted on the eastern and southern portions of the lot and above the ground floor throughout the site.

2. Architecture and Site Design

Development should occur with a unifying architectural, signage and landscaping theme and comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle pathways.

- a. Development should capitalize on the site's topography. The rise in elevation should be used to provide below-grade parking, capture views, and reduce apparent building mass. Buildings should terrace down from the slope. Great sensitivity should be exercised to minimize view obstruction. Building height is limited to 30 feet.
- b. Pedestrian amenities such as landscaping and wide sidewalks (eight to ten feet wide) should be provided along the Clairemont Drive edge. This street segment should link the Clairemont Community to Mission Bay park through improved pedestrian access and a landscaping theme that visually relates to Mission Bay park.
- c. Development along the Morena Boulevard frontage should be pedestrian-friendly, with building entrances and windows oriented to the street. A direct pedestrian connection should be made to the future trolley station. Landscaping should link the shopping center with the transit station.
- d. The Ingulf Street side shall be developed with sensitivity to the residential areas to the south, minimizing noise impacts and street parking conflicts. Any vehicular entrance on this side should be located between Morena Boulevard and Chicago Street.

3. Transportation Improvements

- a. Provide clear access points to the shopping center. The primary vehicular access should be from Clairemont Drive. Consolidate curb cuts.
- b. Pedestrian pathways should occur throughout the site. The pathways should be landscaped and protected from vehicular interference.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTERS

1. Rezone

Rezone the two centers on the corner of Clairemont Mesa Boulevard and Limerick Avenue and Clairemont Mesa Boulevard and Diane Avenue from CA to CN in order to assure the continuance of commercial services at the neighborhood level (**Figure 38**).

2. Use

Any proposed residential development in neighborhood commercial areas should occur under Planned Commercial Development Permit in order to ensure that commercial services will be provided at the neighborhood level.

- a. Commercial development should be required on the ground floor with any residential uses on the second level of a mixed-use development.
- b. Mixed-use developments should not exceed a density of 29 dwelling units per net residential acre.

3. Design

When adjacent to a residential area, the commercial development should be buffered by a non-transparent fence or wall with landscaping or architectural/site design so a transition is made.

4. Runoff

Any development along a canyon rim should direct runoff away from the canyon. If runoff must be directed into the canyon, erosion and runoff control measures should be employed (see **Residential** and **Open Space Elements**).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER COMMERCIAL AREAS

1. Rezone

The area north of Savannah Street and west of Tecolote Road (referred to as the Tecolote Gateway area) should be rezoned from C, R-400 and M-1A to C-1 in order to be consistent with existing land uses and have improved parking and landscaping standards (**Figures 19** and **38**). The C-1 Zone permits a wide range of consumer goods and services and limited wholesaling and warehousing.

2. Rezone

Rezone the two areas along Clairemont Mesa Boulevard from I-805 to Doliva Drive from CA and CR to CV or an equivalent zone (**Figure 38**). These areas provide existing commercial facilities such as motels, restaurants and other visitor uses, visible from I-805. New development should submit a Planned Commercial Development (PCD) permit in order to provide support uses such as restaurants and recreational facilities.

3. Rezone

Rezone the duplexes on Clairemont Drive, south of Balboa Avenue from R-3000 to CO in order to be consistent with surrounding commercial development (**Figure 38**). The site should redevelop with offices, because the area is close to Balboa Avenue with good access from Clairemont Drive. On-street parking is available on Clairemont Drive and Modoc Avenue.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVICE STATIONS

1. Location

Service stations should be permitted only in areas identified for commercial development (**Figure 38**). A Conditional Use Permit is required to develop or expand gasoline stations. The maximum number of service stations permitted at an intersection should be two, located on diagonal corners in order to provide maximum service to the community, minimize circulation conflicts and to provide diversity, interest and aesthetic entryways at major intersections in the community.

2. Access

When a service station is located adjacent to a commercial center, direct access from that center to the gasoline station should be provided in order to minimize additional circulation conflicts on the street.

3. Landscaping

- a. Landscaped buffers should be provided along each street frontage adjacent to the public right-of-way. Landscaping should be consistent with citywide landscaping guidelines.
- b. Stations adjacent to residential development should provide a landscaped strip and a decorative wall adjacent to the residential development.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS

1. Location

Fast food drive-in restaurants should be permitted only in retail areas where such restaurants are compatible with surrounding uses and will not impede circulation on public streets.

2. Access and Circulation

- a. Curb cuts should be minimized to eliminate interference with pedestrian movement and on-street parking.
- b. When fast food restaurants are adjacent to commercial centers, direct access from that center should be provided, in order to minimize circulation conflicts on the street.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SIGNS

1. Location

- a. Signs for various businesses in any shopping center should be clustered upon a directory sign near the main entryway(s) to the center.
- b. In shopping centers, those businesses that are located near the street and are visible from the public right-of-way should only be permitted wall signs.

2. Discretionary Review

A Comprehensive Sign Program (CSP) should be submitted as part of the development review process to integrate signs into the projects. A CSP will help to consolidate signs in commercial areas.

- a. Signs should be well maintained and designed with respect for the scale and character of the street and surrounding development in order to enhance the overall quality of commercial areas. This can be accomplished with low-profile ground signs, wall signs and projecting signs that should be in scale with pedestrians.
 - b. Signs should be integrated into the design of the building and constructed of similar materials.
 - c. Lettering and color of signs should have uniformity throughout the project in order to reduce visual clutter.
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Existing Industrial Zoning Rose Creek/Canyon
 Clairemont Mesa Community Plan