
INTRODUCTION

THE RANCHO PEÑASQUITOS COMMUNITY

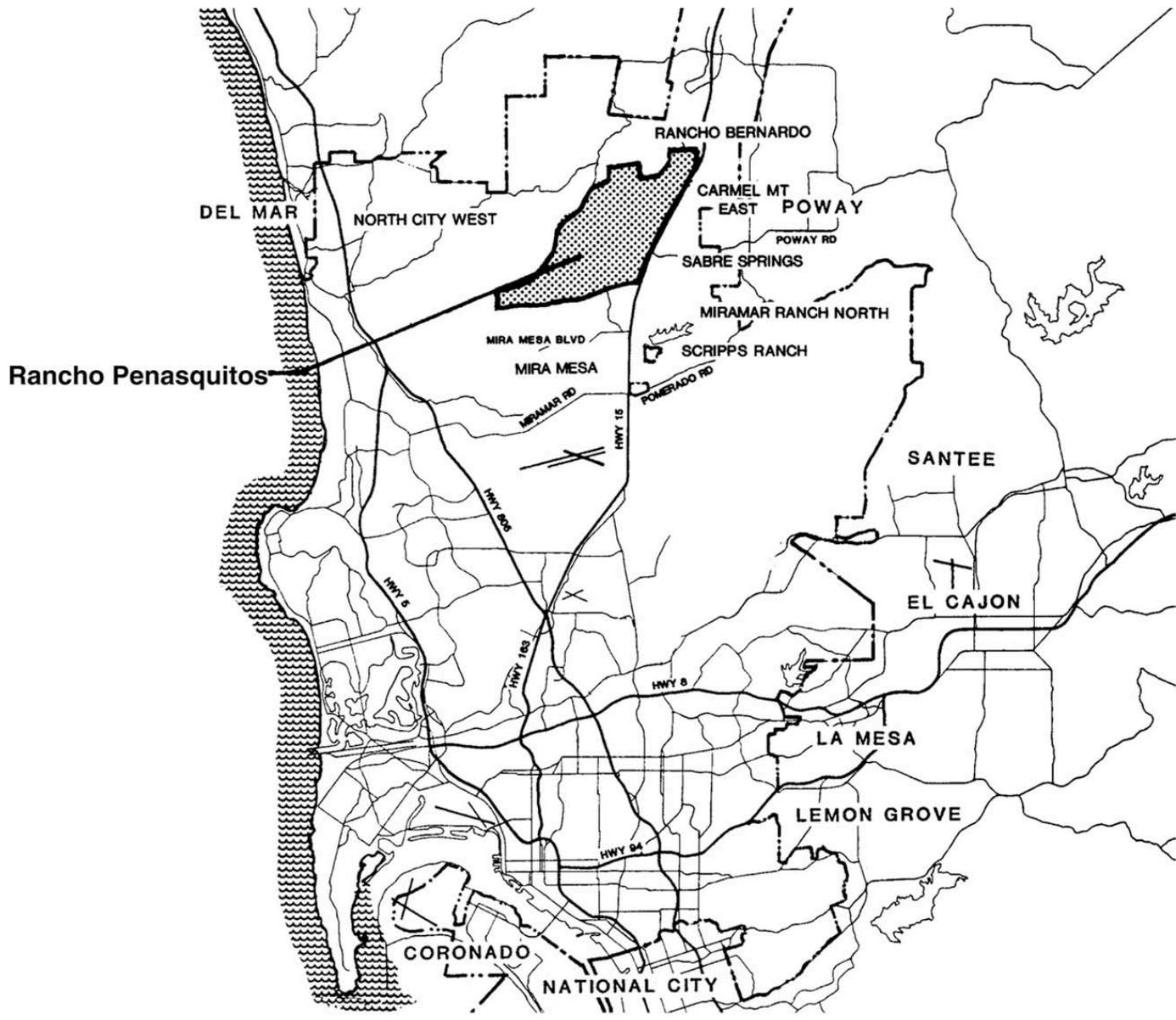
The Rancho Peñasquitos community is located in the northeastern portion of the City of San Diego. Rancho Peñasquitos lies 17 miles north of downtown San Diego and eight miles south of the City of Escondido. It is bounded on the east by the communities of Carmel Mountain Ranch and Sabre Springs, on the south by the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and the Mira Mesa community, and on the west and north by lands designated as future urbanizing and the Rancho Bernardo community planning area (see **Figure 1**).

Interstate 15 (I-15) provides the eastern boundary of the planning area and State Route 56 (SR-56) traverses east-west through the south-central portion of the community. Rancho Peñasquitos encompasses approximately 6,500 acres and had a January 1991 population of 42,500 people residing in about 14,242 dwelling units. At full buildout, Rancho Peñasquitos is expected to have a population of 46,000-50,000 people residing in approximately 15,800 dwelling units.

The community is topographically diverse and is physically characterized by numerous canyons, hillsides and ridges. Black Mountain, rising to an elevation over 1,500 feet, is located in the northern portion of the community. In contrast, the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, which demarks the southern boundary of the community, has an elevation of less than 200 feet. As a result of this topographic relief, most of the residential subdivisions have been developed with curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Development has occurred, for the most part, on the ridges with canyons left in open space.

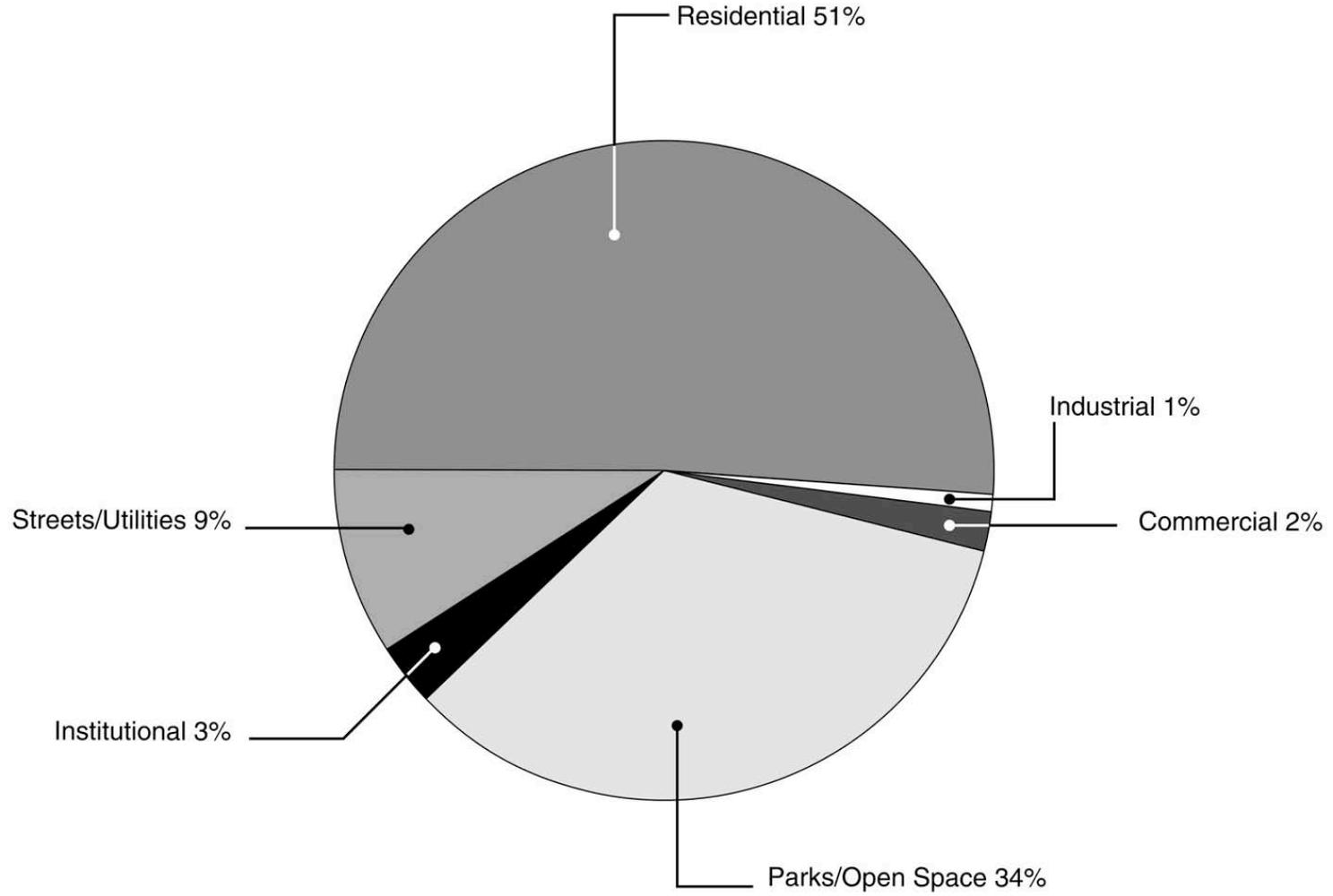
The Rancho Peñasquitos community is identified in the Progress Guide and General Plan (General Plan) as a planned urbanizing community. Approximately 51 percent of the land area in Rancho Peñasquitos is recommended for residential use. Of that acreage, 76 percent is single-family and 24 percent is multifamily. Two percent of the land area in Rancho Peñasquitos is designated for commercial uses. Parks and designated open space areas comprise 34 percent of the community. In addition, this Plan designates an undeveloped 10.23-acre parcel for industrial use as a recreational vehicle (RV) and mini-storage site.

By 1991, the community was approximately 85 percent built out with development approvals for about 90 percent of the land area designated for residential use. Most of the remaining development in Rancho Peñasquitos will be single-family homes and a limited amount of commercial development. Construction is now underway to improve the access to I-15 and to improve internal vehicular circulation within the area.



Vicinity Map
 Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan

1
 FIGURE



Recommended Land Use
Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan

3
FIGURE

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan (Plan) is a revision of the Peñasquitos East Community Plan which was adopted by the City Council on October 17, 1978, by Resolution No. 222051.

From 1985 through 1987, Rancho Peñasquitos experienced significant residential development at a rate twice that of previous years. At the time, this growth was problematic because basic public facilities and services were not being provided at a rate sufficient to adequately serve the community's burgeoning population. Public facility deficiencies included: an inadequate street system, overcrowded schools, insufficient library space and lack of adequate parks and park acreage. As a result of these problems, a comprehensive update to the 1978 community plan was initiated in February 1987.

This Plan emphasizes the preservation of the unique character of Rancho Peñasquitos' topography and establishes design guidelines for the sensitive development of hillside areas. Density restrictions have been applied to hillsides and designated open space areas. The Plan emphasizes the importance of providing public facilities in phase with development. This fundamental policy is interwoven throughout the Plan.

Many of the problems facing Rancho Peñasquitos are also concerns of other communities of San Diego. While the directions established by this Plan may not be appropriate for other areas, the intent has been to reassess the potential of this community to handle additional growth and to direct the extent and location of that growth.

In order to respond to unanticipated changes in environmental, social or economic conditions, the Plan must be continually monitored and amended when necessary to remain relevant to community and city needs. It is intended to provide guidance for the orderly development of the Rancho Peñasquitos community.

Once adopted, two additional steps will follow: implementation and review. Implementation is the process of putting Plan policies and recommendations into effect. Review refers to the process of monitoring the community and recommending changes to the Plan as conditions in the community change. Guidelines for implementation are provided in the Plan, but the actual work must be based on a cooperative effort of private citizens, City officials and other agencies. The Rancho Peñasquitos Community Planning Board, landowners and other private citizen organizations should provide the continuity needed for a sustained, effective implementation program.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Plan was developed in accordance with the legislative framework and policy guidelines enacted by the state of California and the City of San Diego. A summary of the more significant legislation is listed below:

- Section 65450 of the Governmental Code of the state of California (State Planning and Zoning Act) gives authority for the preparation of community plans and specifies the elements which must appear in each plan. It also provides a means for adopting and administering plans.

- Government Code Chapter 4.3 requires that local governments and agencies provide incentives to developers to include affordable units in housing projects. The City has prepared an ordinance which would establish an Affordable Housing Density Bonus, which allows an increase in density in a given zone to be granted for projects in which a portion of the total housing units are for low- or moderate-income persons.
- The California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, requires that environmental documents be prepared for all community plans. Separate, detailed environmental impact reports are also required for all projects which may adversely affect the environment, including actions related to implementing this Plan.
- The Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) was developed in 1977 to achieve a level of air quality in the San Diego Air Basin that would meet federal air quality standards set forth in the National Clean Air Act. As a result, the RAQS recommends that air quality considerations are included in all land use and transportation plans.
- The citywide Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances regulate the development of land and subdivision of land in preparation for development.
- In addition to legislation, the City Council has adopted a number of policies to serve as guidelines in the decision-making process. Many of the policies relate directly to planning issues and should be used in implementing Plan recommendations.
- The General Plan of the City of San Diego establishes goals, guidelines, standards and recommendations which serve as the basis for the goals, objectives and recommendations of the Plan.

PLAN FORMAT

Substantial residential growth in Rancho Peñasquitos requires a plan that will guide development and provide for the needs of existing and future residents. The policies are based upon an analysis of existing conditions in the community and the major issues identified by the community during the numerous planning group meetings in Rancho Peñasquitos.

This is an action-oriented plan which describes specific policies and directions designed to achieve the goals identified by the community.