

UNIVERSITY  
COMMUNITY PLAN

**Regional Location Map**  
University Community Plan

**2**  
FIGURE



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## REGIONAL CONTEXT

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The traditional concept of the University community planning area as a student-oriented “college town” has undergone a great change in the last decade. The evolution of the community into a major “urban node” has been facilitated by the development of the University Towne Centre as a regional shopping center, the expansion of the Torrey Pines “science/research” concept to include corporate headquarters, and the accessibility of the community to the regional transportation system (**Figure 2**). Thus, while present and anticipated uses in many ways are complementary to the functions of UCSD, the design and scale of the community are more oriented toward providing a professional environment rather than one that caters specifically to student needs. Some of this orientation may result from UCSD’s status as a nationally respected research university. This trend has become a concern of many residents of the community. The current prospects for the community, as evidenced by recent project approvals, is one of high-intensity, innovative, mixed-use development on a scale unmatched by any new urbanizing community of the City. While any loss of potential downtown uses to an urbanizing area such as the University community incrementally erodes efforts to redevelop downtown, the drawing power that the community has demonstrated in attracting new jobs and industries is an asset to the City as a whole. It can also be argued that the function of the University area as an education, research, health services and office park center is dissimilar to the financial, government and cultural functions that are predominant in the downtown area. On the whole, however, the development of a high-intensity University area may be of benefit to the region to the extent that it precludes sprawl or unplanned premature development in the peripheral areas of the City.

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## PLANNING AREA BOUNDARIES

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The University community planning area encompasses approximately 8,500 acres. As **Figure 3** indicates, the area is bounded by Los Peñasquitos Lagoon and the toe of the east-facing slopes of Sorrento Valley on the north, the tracks of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, NAS Miramar and Interstate 805 (I-805) on the east, State Route 52 (SR-52) on the south, and Interstate 5 (I-5), Gilman Drive, North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla Farms and the Pacific Ocean on the west. Neighboring communities include Torrey Pines, Mira Mesa, Clairemont and La Jolla. It should be noted that the planning area contains two state-controlled properties—UCSD and Torrey Pines State Reserve—which lie outside the zoning jurisdiction of the City.

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## **GENERAL AREA SETTING**

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Internally, the University community planning area is characterized by its dominant existing uses, its topography and its major environmental constraints. Taken together, these factors will continue to control the development of the community.

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### **I. DOMINANT EXISTING USES**

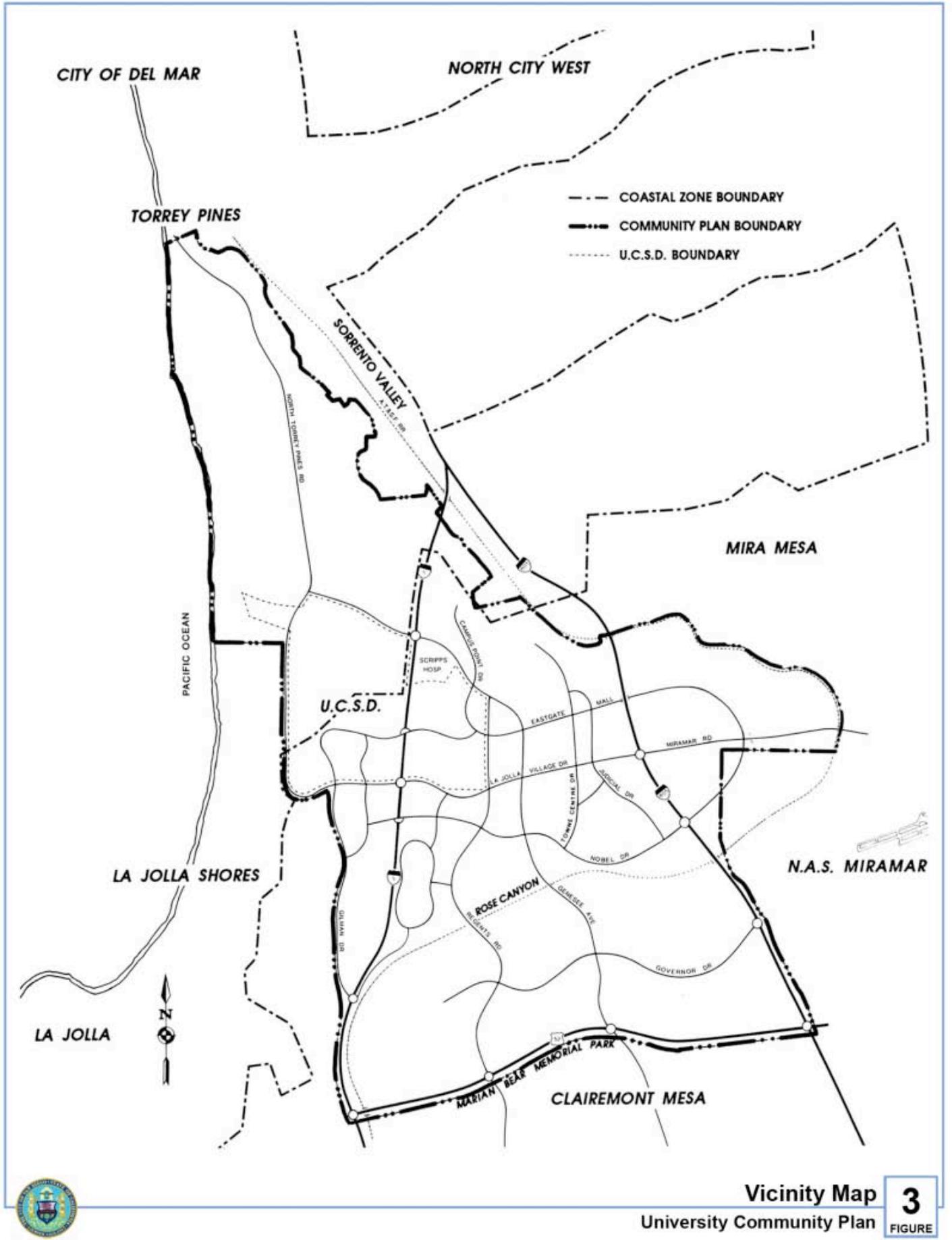
Historically, UCSD has been the focal point of the community. Its continuing evolution has established much of the scale, intensity and pace of private development in the community. A second major focus has been developed in the form of the University Towne Centre, which functions as a major regional commercial center as well as a social center for the community. The research, corporate headquarters and medical centers in the northern portion of the planning area, the major parkland resources of the Torrey Pines, Rose Canyon and San Clemente Canyon areas, and the urbanized South University residential area make up the other major existing uses in the community.

### **II. TOPOGRAPHY**

The landform of the University community planning area is highly varied, consisting of such major topographic features as coastal bluffs, canyon systems, areas of rolling topography and mesa tops. The coastal bluffs are the most scenic landform in the community and lie entirely within the Torrey Pines State Reserve and Torrey Pines City Park. Major canyon systems in the community include Sorrento Valley, Soledad Canyon, Rose Canyon and San Clemente Canyon. In the vicinity of the Towne Centre, the topography is a series of side canyons and rounded ridges which form the transition from the more pronounced major canyons to the mesa tops which generally lie in the vicinity of Miramar Road, north of University Towne Centre and north of UCSD.

### **III. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS**

The environmental constraints which exist in the University community planning area originate from both natural and man-made sources. Major natural constraints are imposed by the habitat and scenic values of the slope areas associated with the coastal zone and the canyon open space systems. Significant man-made constraints include the overflight impacts associated with NAS Miramar, limitations on access and traffic handling capability and air quality considerations.



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## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

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In December 1956, the Regents of the University of California presented a report to the State Legislature entitled, “A Study of the Need for Additional Centers of Public Higher Education in California.” This report emphasized the steadily increasing enrollment at all branches of the University and recommended that priority be given to the selection of sites for new general campuses to accommodate the growing need for higher education facilities.

It was estimated that a need existed within Southern California for two new major campuses to accommodate an eventual enrollment of 25,000 students each. Twenty-three different sites within the general San Diego metropolitan area were given careful consideration prior to the selection of a site on the Torrey Pines Mesa north of La Jolla.

On July 18, 1958, the Board of Regents passed a resolution which stated “... that a Master Plan of land use in the area can give assurances of necessary housing and community development for services and convenience of a large campus.” In response to the Board of Regents’ statement and the recommendation of the City Planning Commission, the San Diego City Council endorsed the planning concept by adopting Resolution No. 149364 on August 14, 1958, to “... prepare the new Master Plan of the area adjacent to the proposed La Jolla site of the University of California, including a compatible land use plan and a local highway system to adequately serve the proposed University and its environs.” The original Master Plan was adopted by the City Council in January 1960.

Most of the University community’s growth during the 1960s occurred in the primarily single-family South University area. During this period, three plan amendments were approved by the City Council in 1961, 1963 and 1965, which reflected modifications in the requirements of the University, the surrounding community and the region. A new plan was drafted in the late 1960s and adopted in 1971.

Subsequent to the adoption of the 1971 plan, the Town Centre core evolved from concept to reality, the impact of the NAS Miramar aircraft noise and accident potential was clearly defined, land market conditions changed in the area, UCSD student population projections were revised and facilities financing proposals contained in the General Plan were pursued through the adoption of new Council policies. In response to these changing conditions, the Planning Department was directed to revise the University Community Plan. For the purpose of providing citizen input, the Council recognized the University Community Planning Group (UCPG) composed of residents, property owners, business people and representatives of UCSD. This effort resulted in the adoption of the 1983 community plan.

In March of 1985, the City Council reviewed and approved a work program to update the 1983 Plan. In conjunction with the Plan update, the City Council voted to adopt an Emergency Building Limitation Ordinance restricting development in the University community to the level specified in the 1983 Plan. This ordinance was adopted to ensure that during the update development would not occur which might preclude a workable circulation system.

The primary goal of the work program for the Plan was to revise the 1980 Land Use Forecast (Appendix 3 of the 1983 Plan). In the 1983 Plan, the community was divided into subareas and assigned land uses and development intensities which were tested in a community-wide traffic forecast. The update of this forecast has corrected errors, incorporated changes in land use and development intensity assumptions and provides a means of implementing the changes.

At the Planning Commission's direction, the Planning Department tested various land use and development intensity assumptions for inclusion in the traffic study. As a result of these studies and numerous workshops, the Planning Department recommended land uses and development intensity allocations in the Development Intensity Element. These land uses and development intensities were modified by the City Council based on recommendations by the University Community Planning Group and requests by various property owners upon adoption of the Plan on July 7, 1987 (R-268789). The City Council also directed at that time that all development in the northern portion of the community be approved through a discretionary permit and that an Urban Design Element be prepared for the Plan. The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) Type B was applied to those properties not otherwise subject to discretionary review in the northern portion of the community, and the plan amended to identify said properties on January 12, 1988 (Resolution No. R-270138 and Ordinance No. 0-17016). The Urban Design Element has also been incorporated as of January 16, 1990 (Resolution No. R-274998).

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## **OVERRIDING PLAN GOALS**

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A series of general goals for the development of land have been established by the General Plan. In the context of the General Plan, the goals are applied to the analysis of citywide alternative plan schemes.

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### **I. GENERAL PLAN GOALS**

Broadly speaking, the goals used for alternatives analysis in the General Plan are directed toward four basic areas of concern, including: (1) facilitating and providing capital improvements for appropriate new growth in an efficient manner, (2) encouraging economically, socially and racially balanced communities, (3) minimizing the environmental and design consequences of urban development, and (4) providing for a development framework which is compatible with regional plans and programs. The following is a summary of the General Plan Goals:

#### **A. Residential Growth**

1. Management of the growth of the region through appropriate population assimilation without artificial constraints or limitations on growth increases.
2. Recognition that a proper development management system operates as a positive intervention to appropriately distribute growth with suitable environmental and physical performance standards.

#### **B. Fiscal-Economic**

1. Reduction in costs of development—particularly public capital and operational costs and stabilizing the tax structure of the City by discouraging urban sprawl.
2. Making more efficient use of existing community facilities and improvements.

#### **C. Balancing Social and Community Characteristics in All Areas**

1. Balanced housing for all communities and income levels.
2. Proximity of place of employment and residence.
3. Recognition of community and individual economic, social and physical values.
4. The “quality of life” in new neighborhoods through provision of adequate public facilities at time of development.

**D. Preservation and Enhancement of Established Neighborhoods**

1. Establishment of performance standards to guide the conservation of valued existing neighborhood characteristics.
2. Encouragement of private finance mechanisms for preservation of established neighborhoods.
3. Encouragement of infill within City neighborhoods where vacant land and adequate public facilities exist.

**E. Preservation of Environmental Quality**

1. Management of natural resources—floodplains, vegetation, aquifers, slopes, hillsides, canyons, coastal and waterfront areas.
2. Preservation of open space and vistas.
3. Reduction of air, noise and water pollution.

**F. Maintaining a Viable Housing Market**

1. Elimination of administrative delay in the processing of land development permits.
2. Identification of areas which can urbanize in a 20-year period in order to move from a system of unknowns to an ordered and prioritized land use and legal system.
3. Creation and maintenance of a stable inventory of residential land which provides certainty that development can occur.
4. Encouragement of a steady level of housing starts (absent private market interferences) to assure continuing construction industry activity and employment.
5. Creation of new development opportunities in selective areas bypassed by market forces through governmental incentives.

**G. Encouragement of Inter-Regional Cooperation**

Development of a framework for the City and region which requires intergovernmental cooperation between local, county and regional agencies in which critical regional problems can be resolved such as:

1. Boundary adjustment (spheres of influence).

2. Allocation of regional residential growth.
3. Provision for utility extensions (sewer and water).
4. Coordination of the major public improvement of special districts.
5. Location of regional, commercial and industrial centers.
6. Establishment of transportation systems.
7. Social, fiscal-economic and housing considerations.
8. Air and water quality decisions.

## **II. COMMUNITY GOALS**

In the same fashion that the General Plan goals establish useful criteria for evaluating community plan alternatives in light of the external or regional context of the planning process, the following goals are particularly suited to the University community. These goals are also important guidelines in the selection of a community plan and the design of its unique features.

### **A. Overall Community Goals**

1. Foster a sense of community identity by use of attractive entry monuments in private developments.
2. Create a physical, social and economic environment complementary to UCSD and its environs and the entire San Diego metropolitan area.
3. Develop the University area as a self-sufficient community offering a balance of housing, employment, business, cultural, educational and recreational opportunities.
4. Create an urban node with two relatively high-density, mixed-use core areas located in the University Towne Centre and La Jolla Village Square areas.
5. Develop an equitable allocation of development intensity among properties, based on the concept of the “urban node.”
6. Provide a workable circulation system which accommodates anticipated traffic without reducing the Level of Service below “D.”

## **B. Housing Goals**

1. Provide a broad range of housing types and costs to accommodate various age groups, household sizes and compositions, tenure patterns (renter/owner-occupied) and income levels.
2. Encourage housing for students and employees of the University and life sciences-research facilities.
3. Locate higher density housing nearest the University, the Towne Centre core and La Jolla Village Square.
4. Provide affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households by encouraging the following efforts of the City of San Diego:
  - a. Utilization of selected City-owned properties for housing development;
  - b. Utilization of federal rental subsidy programs and state mortgage assistance programs; and
  - c. Stimulation of greater use of modular and other innovative cost-saving building techniques.
5. Encourage religious and other nonprofit organizations to develop and operate rental and cooperative housing for low- and moderate-income households.
6. Encourage a mixture of residential, commercial and professional office uses.
7. Encourage the provision of non-structured recreation areas such as open grassed playing fields.

## **C. Employment Goals**

1. Promote job opportunities within the University community.
2. Encourage the development of life sciences-research facilities which maximize the resources of the University.

## **D. Commercial Goals**

1. Provide a complete range of goods and services for the residents of the University community.
2. Concentrate community activities such as retail, professional, cultural, recreational and entertainment within the Towne Centre and La Jolla Village Square.

3. Accommodate professional offices and laboratory facilities and services to complement the University, the Towne Centre and the life sciences-research facilities.
4. Strategically locate neighborhood convenience centers throughout the residential areas.

#### **E. Open Space Goals**

1. Preserve the present amenities of San Clemente, Rose Canyon and other primary canyons within the community.
2. Preserve the natural environment including wildlife, vegetation and terrain.
3. Permit uses within canyons which are strictly compatible with the open space concept.
4. Ensure that all public improvements such as roads, drainage channels and utility services and all private lessee developments are compatible with the natural environment.

#### **F. Public Facilities and Services Goal**

Ensure that schools, parks, police and fire protection, sewer and water, library and other public facilities are available concurrently with the development which they are to serve.

#### **G. Transportation Goals**

1. Develop a transportation system designed to move people and goods safely and efficiently within the community, including linkages with other communities, and with due consideration for energy conservation.
2. Encourage the adequate provision of public transit between major activity areas such as the University, the Towne Centre and La Jolla Village Square.
3. Provide pedestrian paths and bikeways to accommodate the community and complement the citywide systems.
4. Encourage alternative modes of transportation by requiring developer participation in transit facility improvements, the Intra-Community Shuttle Loop and the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system.
5. Ensure implementation of City Council Policy 600-34, Transit Planning and Development.

## **H. Community Environment Goals**

1. Provide attractive community entryways.
2. Minimize the impact of aircraft noise and the consequences of potential aircraft accidents.
3. Foster individuality and identity of area throughout the community.
4. Ensure that the physical development of the community takes advantage of the site and terrain.
5. Encourage architectural styles and building forms suited to San Diego's landscape and climate.
6. Limit traffic conditions which produce congestion and air pollution.
7. Provide street and median trees along streets within the community.

## **I. Industrial Goals**

Emphasize the citywide importance of and encourage the location of scientific research uses in the North University City area because of its proximity to UCSD.



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## PLAN SUMMARY

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### I. LAND USE

The Plan as illustrated in **Figure 4** is a generalized visual representation of the major land use proposals as set forth in the Plan elements which follow. Obviously, it does not stand alone and the text of the Plan is equally necessary in interpreting the intent of the City of San Diego with respect to the University community.

This Plan is an update of the 1983 University Community Plan which established the land use and development intensities for the community. The emphasis of this Plan is to respond to the community-wide land use needs and achieve a balance of uses while providing a future circulation system which accommodates the level and types of development expected at buildout. The final implementation of the land uses shown is intentionally not tied to any targeted date.

A further refinement of the land use proposals shown on the community plan map is the land use table which is included in the **Development Intensity Element** of the Plan. It is the purpose of this table to establish the permitted intensity of uses and to coordinate that intensity to the future public facilities of the community. The summary of uses and acreages in **Table 1** is derived from totaling the land use types in the land use and development intensity table.

### II. PROPOSALS

A summary of the major development policies and land use proposals contained in this Plan which affect the land uses shown on the community plan map include:

#### A. Traffic and Transportation

The land use proposals in the Plan are tied to a travel forecast conducted in 1986, and revised to include the development intensities adopted by the City Council on July 7, 1987. In fact, the **Transportation Element** of this Plan establishes the travel forecast as the recommended ceiling of development intensity in the community. As discussed in the Development Intensity Element of the Plan, it is not, however, intended that traffic generation be the sole basis on which projects are judged.

In July of 1985 a survey of landowners was conducted to determine existing and proposed development for the University community. The Planning Department reviewed this information, and the land use files of the City, and proposed land uses and development intensities supportive of the goals of the Plan. Higher densities were proposed for the two relatively high-intensity, mixed-use urban core areas, while lower intensities were proposed towards the edges of the community. The land uses and development intensities included in the community plan were tested in the 1986 traffic forecast. (A final forecast was prepared following the adoption of the Plan.)

Street improvements and other public facilities in support of the 1986 forecast (as revised), above and beyond the 1983 Plan, will be incorporated as part of the North University City Public Facilities Financing Plan and Facilities Benefit Assessment. Further studies on transit improvements and financing are currently being reviewed. These studies include the Metropolitan San Diego Short Range Transit Plan, the North University City Intra-community Shuttle Loop Financing Plan and the Mid-Coast Light Rail Transit (LRT) alignment studies.

**B. NAS Miramar Overflight Impacts**

Land use proposals, as well as the **Noise** and **Safety Elements** of the Community Plan Draft, have been prepared in conformance with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for NAS Miramar. The plan references the Navy's easement acquisition and enforcement program as a controlling land use planning factor in the areas both east and west of Interstate 805.

**C. UCSD Long Range Development Plan**

This Plan more fully recognizes the importance of UCSD in the community by considering on-campus uses as designated by the University's Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) and by seeking to provide appropriate linkages and design interfaces between the campus and the community. The plan includes uses that are supportive of the University's basic goals of instruction and research.

**D. Urban Design**

An **Urban Design Element** has been added to the Plan, enhancing and replacing the Subarea Elements which were designated in the 1983 community plan for the purpose of refining land uses and design standards. This element provides a future vision of the University community and recommendations to achieve that vision. The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) has been applied to implement the urban design guidelines as well as the Development Intensity Element. The **Development Intensity Element** identifies properties to be reviewed under the CPIOZ.

**E. Housing/Community Balance**

In accordance with the Housing Element of the General Plan, proposals in the Plan call for the development of affordable housing within the community and recommends the use of City-owned properties for this purpose. The Plan also identifies density bonuses as a means of encouraging developers to provide moderate-income housing.

**F. State Coastal Act**

The land use and site preparation guidelines contained in the Plan are consistent with the adopted proposals contained in the North City Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan. The Planning Commission and City Council adopted these proposals affecting the Coastal Zone in March 1981.

## G. Progress Guide and General Plan

This Plan includes a consistency analysis, describing how the Plan conforms to the General Plan. This analysis is in the **General Plan Consistency Element** of this Plan.

**TABLE 1  
UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY PLAN LAND USE SUMMARY**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Use Description</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Dwelling Units</b>
<b>Residential</b>		<b>(1,525)</b>	
	5-10 Units/Acre	718	5,718
	10-15 Units/Acre	100	1,446
	15-30 Units/Acre	547	12,245
	30-45 Units/Acre	99	4,284
	45-75 Units/Acre	61	4,586
<b>Commercial</b>		<b>(396)</b>	
	Neighborhood	36	
	Community	30	
	Regional	103	
	Visitor	51	
	Office	176	
<b>Life Sciences/Research</b>		<b>(713)</b>	
	Scientific Research	646	
	Hospitals	67	
<b>Industrial</b>		<b>(575)</b>	
	Restricted	347	
	Business/Industrial Park	228	
<b>Parks/Open Space</b>		<b>(2,813)</b>	
	Neighborhood	45	
	Community	42	
	Sports Complex	20	
	Golf	359	
	Resource-Based	394	
	Open Space	1,116	
	State Park	837	
<b>Schools</b>		<b>(1,233)</b>	
	Elementary	61	
	Junior High	28	
	Senior High	40	
	UCSD	1,104	
<b>Public Facilities</b>		<b>(36)</b>	
<b>Other</b>	Freeway Rights-of-Way, etc.	<b>(1,201)</b>	
	<b>Total Community</b>	<b>8,492</b>	
	<b>Total Community Dwelling Units</b>		<b>28,279</b>

Note: The acreages in this table were derived from a digitization of the 800 scale community plan map prepared by SANDAG.