

BACKGROUND

Existing Land Use and Zoning
Relationship to Surrounding Communities

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EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING

The Uptown community plan area was initially zoned in the 1930s. It was at this time that commercial zoning was established in Hillcrest and along Fourth and Fifth Avenues, and multifamily zoning (R-400) was applied to major portions of the community. The multifamily zone originally allowed the construction of more than two dwelling units on a lot with no maximum limit on the number of dwelling units which could be built. Lower density multifamily zoning and single-family (R1) zoning was also applied throughout Uptown, but predominantly in the Mission Hills neighborhood.

The Hillside Review Overlay Zone has been applied to the steep slope areas in Uptown. This overlay zone is generally applied to areas in excess of 25 percent slope. Development in these areas is subject to additional design and density restrictions.

In 1976, much of the Uptown community plan area was rezoned. Approximately 576 net acres were rezoned from the R-1-5, R-1000 (R-3), and R-600 (R-3A) zones to comply with the proposals and objectives of the adopted Uptown Community Plan and the General Plan, as required by newly enacted State Legislation (AB 1301).

**TABLE 2
EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING**

Category	Land Use		Zoning	
	NET ACRES	PERCENT OF TOTAL	NET ACRES	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Residential	1,243	70%	1,551	87%
Single-Family	(840)	(47%)	(814)	(46%)
Multifamily	(404)	(23%)	(737)	(41%)
Commercial	176	10%	226	13%
Industrial	13	1%	0	0
Vacant/Open Space	180	10%	9	1%
Public/Semi-Public	17	10%		
Total	1,788	100%	1,788	100%

Source: San Diego City Planning Department, 1987

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.



EXISTING ZONING
UPTOWN Community Plan
 CITY OF SAN DIEGO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

FIGURE
3

RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Mission Valley

The Uptown community is bounded on the north by the Mission Valley community plan area. While the high intensity of land uses in Mission Valley contrast with the single-family neighborhoods on the canyon rim, the topographic separation of over 200 vertical feet make the differences inconsequential. The only physical connections are Highway 163 and the limited access road to the Bachman Canyon parking structure.

Greater North Park

The Greater North Park plan area abuts the northeasterly portion of Uptown. These two communities are similar in character, land use, zoning, and social characteristics in the general area of this boundary. The land use plan recommended in the Greater North Park Community Plan is complementary to this Uptown Community Plan.

Balboa Park

This regional park abuts the Uptown community on the southeast. It serves not only the entire San Diego community but Uptown residents as well, offering a wide range of active and passive recreational activities.

Centre City

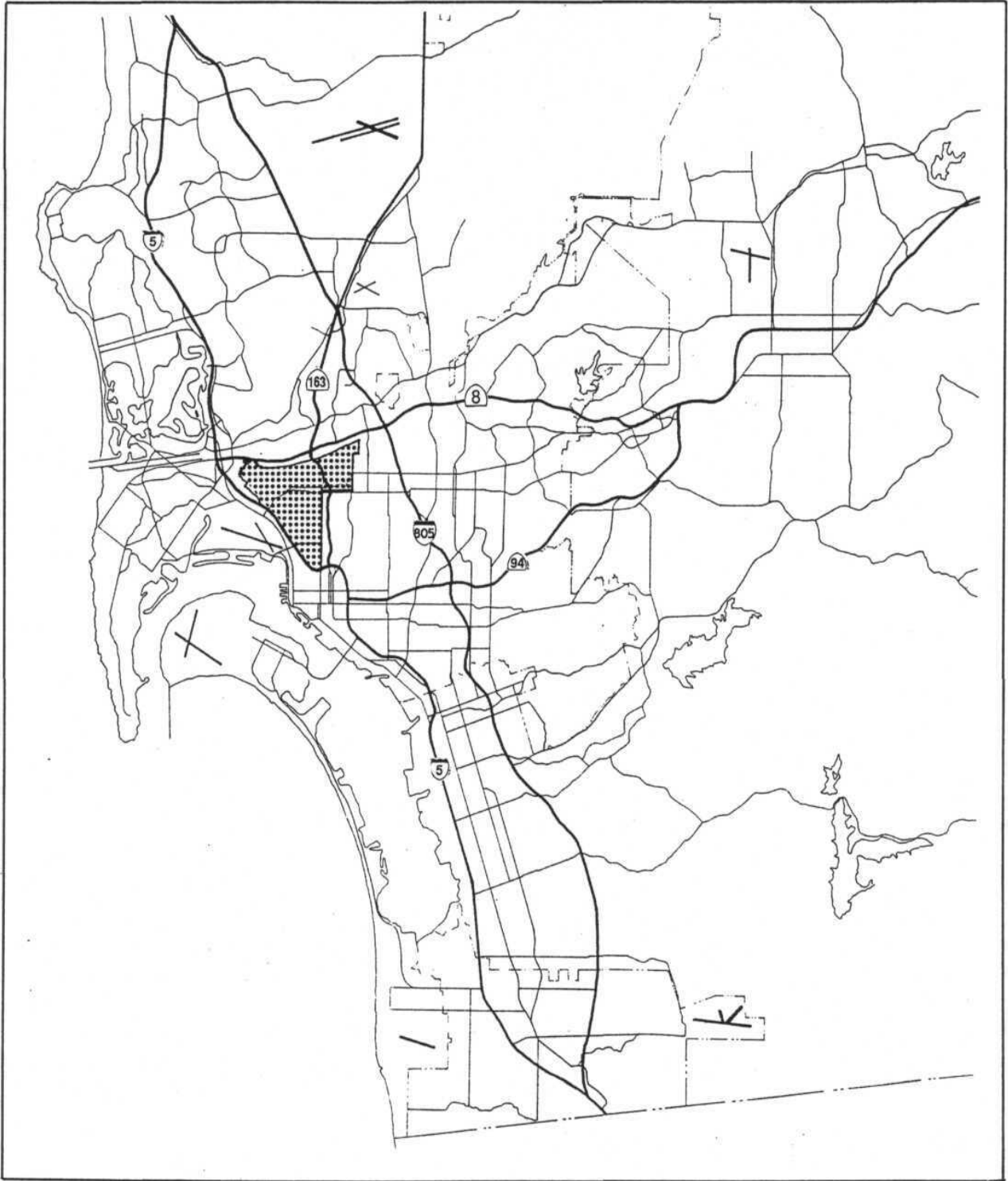
To the south of the Uptown community lies the Centre City area. This area provides significant employment opportunities for Uptown residents, as well as offering a wide array of goods, services, and entertainment opportunities. Uptown is linked to Centre City by various surface streets and extensive public transit service.

Midway-Pacific Highway

This plan area borders the Uptown community along its southwesterly edge and is devoted primarily to commercial and industrial uses related to airport activities. San Diego International Airport separates this linear community from San Diego Bay to the west.

Old Town San Diego

Along the northwesterly portion of the Uptown community is the Old Town San Diego community plan area. This community offers unique charm, restaurants, and shops to all residents of the San Diego region as well as to Uptown residents. It also represents the birthplace of the state of California, providing the community with a sense of cultural heritage.



LOCATION MAP
UPTOWN Community Plan
CITY OF SAN DIEGO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

FIGURE
4

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

Residential Alternatives
Commercial Alternatives

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

Although an infinite number of plan alternatives could be formulated and evaluated, the following alternatives offer a comprehensive variety, satisfying the objectives of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). These alternatives illustrate various feasible approaches to community planning options within the Uptown community in terms of land use classification and development intensity.

RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVES

Existing Plan Alternative

This alternative would continue the pattern of the existing 1975 Uptown Community Plan and the Uptown Medical Complex Plan. These plans recommend a substantial amount of high density (R-600) and very-high density (R-400) residential zoning in Uptown. The major concentration of these designations is found surrounding the Hillcrest commercial core and along Reynard Way. Most low-density residential zoning is located in the Mission Hills-Middletown area.

Existing Zoning Alternative

This alternative would require revision of the existing land use plan to bring it into conformance with existing zoning. This approach would permit the most intense development of all the alternatives, with significantly higher density designations in the Uptown medical complex area, Park West south of Laurel Street, and Mission Hills in the area of Reynard Way.

Average Block Density Alternative

This alternative proposes that new development reflect the average density which presently exists on each residential block. This would result in substantially reduced development potential as compared to the 1975 Plan, since the typical lot is not developed to its maximum permitted density.

Conversely, under this averaging approach some predominantly single-family blocks would be redesignated to permit higher densities if multifamily development exists on those blocks.

Lowest Density Alternative

This alternative establishes maximum permitted densities predicated upon the lowest density developed lot on any given block, exclusive of vacant lots. In effect, this alternative would be a no growth alternative.

High Intensity and Transit Corridor Alternative

This alternative identifies Fourth and Fifth Avenues as high intensity public transit corridors and establishes gradients in zoning density based upon pedestrian accessibility to those streets.

These streets would serve as base streets for establishing zoning density gradients, whereby densities are reduced at greater distances from these streets. Other factors such as the traffic generated by development, pedestrian accessibility, street capacity, neighborhood development patterns, neighborhood preservation programs, development bonus systems and public transit capacities would also be considered in determining the ultimate permitted zoning densities in these corridors.

This alternative approach would require both down zonings and up zonings in order to be implemented. It provides for the preservation of single-family and low-density areas and the establishment of a redeveloped, higher intensity commercial area.

Density Bonus Alternatives (Incentive Zoning)

For most of the residential alternatives examined, the concept of density bonuses could be awarded in return for extraordinary performance with respect to environmental enhancement, urban design, parking, landscaping, or assistance to public transit.

In order for a density bonus system to be successful and not impact the community's public services and facilities, sufficient controls must be utilized. The bonus system should be applied only in those portions of the community where the increased development intensity can be accommodated.

Such a system should be implemented through the use of Planned Residential Developments (PRDs) and Planned Commercial Developments (PCDs), or some other form of discretionary permit.

Recommended Residential Alternative

The recommended residential alternative is a combination of the "High Intensity and Transit Corridor Alternative" and the "Density Bonus Alternative." This combined alternative would redefine residential development patterns in the Uptown community, provide a strong opportunity for the preservation and rehabilitation of single-family and low-density neighborhoods, and emphasize higher density development along existing high intensity corridors. This alternative also would provide needed support to the public transit system and the community's primary commercial areas. In addition, this approach will reward superior residential developments providing added amenities with density bonuses.

COMMERCIAL ALTERNATIVES

Existing Plan Alternatives

Under the existing community plan the commercial use designation is concentrated in Hillcrest with office uses along Fourth and Fifth Avenues and in the medical complex area. Neighborhood commercial uses are also shown in Mission Hills, Middletown, University Heights and Park West.

Existing Zoning Alternative

This alternative would maintain a zoning pattern which supports major commercial development in Hillcrest; major medical and financial offices along Fourth and Fifth Avenues; and financial, insurance and real estate firms in the Park West area. The existing commercial zoning encompasses 213 acres, 38 percent of which is in residential use.

Intensified Commercial Area Alternative

This alternative would provide for a combination of consolidated and intensified commercial activities which would be more specifically defined as to their nature and location in the community. Excessive and unproductive strip commercial areas would be condensed and redefined as either neighborhood or specialty commercial nodes. Portions of the former strip commercial areas would become multiple-use areas incorporating higher density residential development and specialty commercial uses to serve this residential development as well as other residential areas within walking distance.

In addition, this alternative would also allow office development which would be complementary to the retail uses and would provide support to the retail core.

Recommended Commercial Alternative

The recommended commercial alternative is the "Intensified Commercial Area Alternative." This alternative would emphasize the more compact commercial area approach which would be more conducive to pedestrian movement and public transit support. The concentration of the commercial areas would provide the opportunity for higher density residential and multiple-use development along the underutilized strip commercial corridors.