

PLAN ELEMENTS

Residential
Commercial
Transportation
Urban Design
Community Plan Land Use Map
Community Facilities and Services
Open Space and Recreation
Conservation, Cultural and Heritage Resources

Residential

RESIDENTIAL ELEMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Uptown's 20,275* housing units include a wide variety of housing types, ranging from the large, well-maintained single-family homes of Mission Hills; to high rise condominiums in Hillcrest; to the low-cost, aging apartment complexes found in parts of Park West.

Single-family units comprise 36 percent of the overall housing stock, compared to 57 percent citywide. Only 29 percent of households own their homes contrasted with 49 percent citywide. The value of ownership units is higher than the City average according to the 1980 Census. Monthly rents, on the other hand, are somewhat lower than the city average.

Uptown is characterized by the age and quality of its housing stock. Over 8,000 dwelling units or 40 percent of the existing stock were built prior to 1940. Forty-three dwellings are designated historic sites, and an additional 500 units have been identified as potential historic sites.

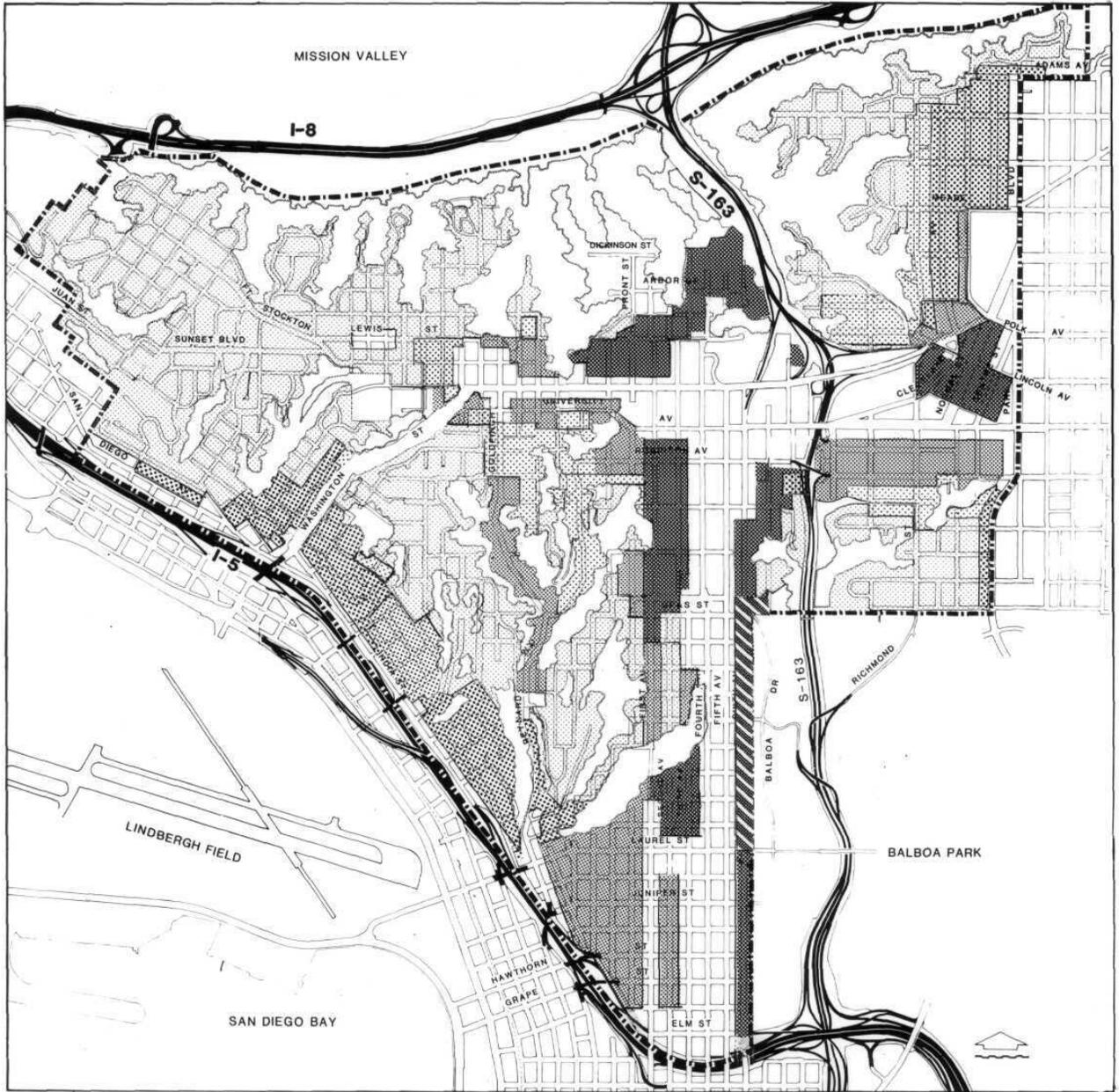
Deteriorating units comprise over five percent of the housing stock, which is nearly double the citywide incidence of three percent. The multifamily area west of Balboa Park between Upas Street and Laurel Street has a disturbingly high 18 percent of dwelling units in deteriorated condition, though less than 0.5 percent of units are dilapidated. The area generally south of Laurel Street is subject to the building height limitations of the Airport Approach Zone Overlay and has a significant impact from airport noise.

POPULATION

Similar to the variations in housing, population characteristics vary considerably both within and between Uptown's neighborhoods. According to the 1980 Census, Mission Hills contains the largest households (2.78 persons per household), highest income households (\$33,591), and lowest percentage of ethnic minorities (four percent). Park West is at the opposite extreme with almost half the household size (1.68 persons), less than one-third the household income (\$9,545), and three times the incidence of minorities (12 percent). At the same time, there is a broad range of neighborhood types within each neighborhood.

Uptown residents on the average tend to be older, live in smaller households, have higher incomes and are less likely to be an ethnic minority when compared to the citywide population. The elderly (over 65) in Uptown comprise 22 percent of the population compared to 10 percent citywide. Conversely, only 14 percent of the population is less than twenty years of age while 29 percent of the City population falls into that category.

* January 1, 1987 estimate, City of San Diego Planning Department.



DENSITY	DU/AC	DENSITY	DU/AC
 LOW	5 - 10	 MED HIGH	29 - 44
 LOW MED	10 - 15	 HIGH	*44 - 73
 MED	15 - 29	 VERY HIGH	*73 - 110

* Maximum densities may only be achieved with parcel accumulation.



RESIDENTIAL LAND USE
UPTOWN Community Plan
 CITY OF SAN DIEGO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

FIGURE
5

The average household size is expectedly low given the age profile, with 1.86 persons per household versus 2.56 persons per household citywide in 1986. Ethnic minorities comprise nine percent of the population compared to 24 percent citywide.

GROWTH AND CAPACITY

Residential development in Uptown has been proceeding at an average of approximately 180 dwelling units per year since 1970, or about one percent of the housing stock per year. While declining family size during the 1970s resulted in a minimal population increase of 157 for that period, a recent increase in the average family size from 1.77 to 1.86 has resulted in a population increase of 3,501 between 1980 and 1986, with a total of 36,562 residents housed in 20,275 dwelling units as of January, 1987. Building permit activity increased significantly in 1986, with permits issued for 626 dwelling units in that calendar year. The estimated buildout capacity for development is 25,410 dwelling units (see Appendix J).

Objectives

- Preserve and enhance the special character of specific, well-defined, low-density neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible, higher density residential or commercial development.
- Locate medium and high density residential development in selected areas with adequate design controls provided to ensure compatibility with existing lower density development.
- Concentrate medium and high density housing:
 - On upper floors as part of mixed use development in commercial areas;
 - Adjacent to commercial areas;
 - Near transit and higher volume traffic corridors.
- Preserve and provide incentives for mixed residential/commercial development at appropriate locations.
- Locate higher density residential development in appropriate areas that are situated to promote safer and livelier commercial districts.
- Ensure adequate transition and buffering between potentially incompatible uses.
- Design and enforce stricter controls and locational criteria on Conditional Use Permits in residential neighborhoods to minimize nuisances generated by nonresidential uses, such as offices in historic structures.
- Develop adequate housing for those with special needs such as the elderly, handicapped persons, those who need nursing care, low-income and homeless persons.

Recommendations

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The following are the ranges of permitted residential densities. Establishing the appropriate density within the designated range should be based upon guidelines in the Urban Design Element and should be addressed in the implementing ordinances.

Low-Density Residential (5-10 dwelling units per acre) - This designation is intended to accommodate detached single-family units under R1 zoning standards. It is applied to existing single-family neighborhoods, which are generally more isolated from public facilities and commercial uses than areas designated for multifamily residential use. All areas designated for low-density residential should also be designated as "single-family protected" neighborhoods, in which only one detached dwelling unit per lot is permitted.

As further described in the Urban Design Element of this plan, special attention should be given to canyon rim properties designated for low-density development. By clustering units onto canyon rims, designated open space areas can be preserved. However, new development should be compatible in scale and character with surrounding uses. Provisions for public access, views and sensitive treatment of hillside areas should also be addressed.

All areas designated for low-density residential use should also be designated as "single-family protected" neighborhoods, in which only one detached dwelling unit per lot is permitted

Low-Medium Density (10-15 dwelling units per acre) - This land use designation is generally applied closer to transportation corridors, often acting as a buffer between single-family neighborhoods and higher density development. It corresponds to R-3000 zoning, the lowest density multifamily zone, permitting one dwelling unit per 3,000 square feet of lot area.

As described under the low-density designation, care should be taken in hillside areas to avoid out-of-scale developments which may result from the clustering of units on canyon rims. Design controls should provide for development on canyon rims at an appropriate scale, while also preserving adjacent open space. Since the appropriate average density of development which straddles open space boundaries may be less than 10 dwelling units per acre, a lower density zone may be appropriate in these cases. This consideration also applies to the higher density multifamily designations found below.

Medium Density (15-29 dwelling units per acre) - This designation corresponds to R-1500 zoning, which permits three to five dwelling units on typical parcels (one dwelling unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area). This density usually results in two-story development, consistent with the existing character of lower density neighborhoods. This type of development can also protect views from the hillside areas.

Medium-High Density (29-44 dwelling units per acre) - This land use density usually abuts major streets or commercial areas. Small-lot development under the corresponding R-1000 zoning often takes the form of a two-story structure with surface parking, though large-lot

developments may rise three stories over first level or underground parking. This designation is limited to areas with vehicular circulation systems capable of supporting traffic generated by this density with minimal impact upon adjacent neighborhoods.

High Density (44-73 dwelling units per acre) - The density for larger sites is that of the R-600 zoning, in which development may range from two stories to four stories with parking below. Smaller sites are limited to the R-800 density. This zoning is applied to the core of the community, generally surrounding the Hillcrest commercial area.

Very-High Density (73-109 dwelling units per acre) - This designation permits a density as high as that permitted in the R-400 zone for large and/or corner sites. Smaller sites should be limited to the R-600 zone density. This designation is limited to Sixth Avenue fronting on Balboa Park.

Commercial/Residential and Office/Residential Designations - These designations permit either residential or commercial use. Residential projects may be developed at densities ranging from medium to very-high density, as described in the Commercial Element of this plan.

Mixed-Use Designations - The mixed-use designations are applied to nodes of commercial use where residential or office use above street level commercial use is appropriate. As redevelopment occurs, new mixed-use development will strengthen and reinforce the qualities of a lively urban commercial and residential activity area. Permitted residential densities vary from medium-high permitted on a portion of India Street to very high in the Hillcrest commercial core. Medium high-to-high density is permitted along Washington Street and University Avenue.

SENIOR HOUSING

Current regulations provide for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to be granted for senior housing, which allows both increased density and decreased parking for such projects. These concessions are based on the smaller family size and lesser number of cars in senior households.

Uptown is an attractive area for this type of project. Bus service is available in many areas, as are neighborhood markets and other shopping. Balboa Park offers programs catering to senior citizens and ample medical facilities are conveniently located within the community. In addition, higher density zoning is available and land prices in some neighborhoods are relatively reasonable. Due to these characteristics, several senior citizen projects have been located in the Uptown area.

Proposed senior housing projects should be reviewed with respect to their impact on the neighborhood. This review should address the impact of the increased density and decreased parking granted for such projects, including the impact of parks, emergency services, neighborhood character and on-street parking. It should be noted that any impacts will be compounded in areas where senior housing projects are concentrated.

SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY

Also known as residential hotels, single room occupancies (SROs) provide affordable housing for lower income households. These projects should be limited to commercially designated areas, and should provide interior common areas such as a lobby and food preparation area to supplement the small living quarters. Adequate parking should be provided based upon need, generally in the range of 0.50 to 1.0 spaces per unit.

SROs should be located with convenient access to public transportation, healthcare and social services, shopping, employment, and recreational facilities. Due to the undesirable potential for concentrating low-income households, SROs should not be concentrated in Uptown, or within a particular Uptown neighborhood. A discretionary permit process should be required to ensure the above conditions.

RE-USE

Under certain circumstances, a CUP may be obtained to convert residential structures to another use, such as counseling services or childcare. Designated historic sites may also convert to general commercial uses with a CUP.

Conversions to nonresidential should generally not be permitted in areas designated for low-density use. The neighborhood impact of such conversions should be carefully assessed. To the extent possible, structural additions should maintain the preexisting character of the residence and neighborhood. Any historical character in particular should be maintained. The impact of the proposed use should also be assessed with regard to parking, traffic, noise or other impacts.

Appropriate off-street parking should be provided along with adequate screening as needed. The availability of transit and other needed services should also be addressed.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

A rezoning program should be undertaken to ensure development consistent with this plan. Revised or tailored zoning regulations are necessary to ensure specific design recommendations found in this element and in the Urban Design Element of this plan. New development and additions should provide adequate parking and be consistent in character with the architectural scale and landscaping of the existing older structures located in the neighborhood.