LAND USE & URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

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Land Use & Urban Design Element

Vision

A City where local governmental services, including police, fire and recreation meet the needs of its citizens. Where municipal buildings, parks, streets and other public facilities are well maintained.

A City where sound economic development practices have retained and attracted many successful businesses providing jobs for its citizens and a sound revenue base for City operations.

A City which has maintained and improved its Downtown as a focal point for community activities as well as a place for operating a business, shopping, celebrating and living.

A City where El Cajon Boulevard, Fletcher Parkway, La Mesa Boulevard, Spring Street, and University Avenue have been transformed to tree-lined boulevards accommodating a mix of retail, professional offices, financial centers and moderate density residential projects.

A City where travel is safe and easily accommodated whether it is by mass transit, in an automobile, on a bicycle or as a pedestrian.

Goals:

LAND USE

Goal 1: A safe and healthy community

Goal 2: Residential neighborhoods with strong character and cohesion

Goal 3: Revitalized commercial and industrial districts

Goal 4: An equitable community that meets the needs of all residents

Goal 5: A strong local and Regional economy

Goal 6: A City where the environmental, social and economic needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same

Goal 7: A City that maintains strong relationships across jurisdictions

URBAN DESIGN

Goal 1: A built environment that contributes to the qualities distinguishing La Mesa's unique identity

Goal 2: Well designed development based upon proven urban design principles

Goal 3: A built environment that respects La Mesa's natural environment and climate

Introduction

The Land Use and Urban Design Element addresses the major issues that affect the physical form and development of the community. It offers policy guidance that will help preserve and enhance the quality of life in the City of La Mesa, where the population has been forecast to increase from 58,000 (2010) to approximately 66,000 (2030) during the next twenty years. To support a livable community, the City will need to blend the enduring qualities of the existing community with anticipated growth. This means balancing the preservation of established neighborhoods and new developments. The Goals and Policies of this Element emphasize the following five concepts:

La Mesa Vista

- The City's neighborhoods and facilities should be preserved and improved.
- New development and redevelopment should exhibit high quality design and fit the characteristics of the City's neighborhoods and Districts.
- Land use decisions should support sustainability by conserving valuable resources and planning for future generations.
- Promote local job creation and retention by encouraging new business opportunities.
- Land Use and Urban Design are integrated in this Element to ensure that the physical forms, patterns, and aesthetics of future development advance La Mesa's goals for high quality of life and a more sustainable future.

A Glossary of technical terms is located in the final pages of this Element.

Purpose

California Law requires cities to adopt specific elements in their general plans. This Element fulfills the requirement for Land Use, as defined in Section 65302(a) of the Government Code. The City of La Mesa does not have significant agricultural land, mineral resources, forests, or areas subject to flooding; therefore these topics are not discussed in this Element. Although not required, this Element includes Goals and Policies about urban design. Most future development will be infill or redevelopment of underutilized sites. An Urban Design Program ensures that future development fits in to the existing community.

The Land Use and Urban Design Element serves as a guide for planners, decision makers and the general public about the ultimate pattern of development for the City of La Mesa. This Element's Policies provide the context for short-term actions involving development, public works, and zoning decisions, as well as the long-term vision. The City's General Plan goal is to preserve the past while allowing a level of growth necessary to sustain a viable community. **Table LD-1** summarizes the existing and projected population, housing and job growth for the 2030 horizon year of this General Plan and looks ahead to 2050.

Table LD-1. Future Growth in La Mesa

	2010	2030 (% change)	2050 (% change)
Population	58,150	65,984(13.5%)	77,780 (33.7%)
Housing (units)	25,614	28,104 (9.7%)	32,459 (26.7%)
Jobs	27,579 (2008)	30,407 (10%)	32,018 (16%)

Organization and Content

The Land Use and Urban Design Element is comprised of general land use goals, urban design goals and related objectives and policies. It is valuable to inventory and map land uses to assess current patterns and anticipate future growth and infrastructure needs in La Mesa. The Planned Land Use Map (page LD-28) sets the City's vision for growth. The land use categories listed in the map's legend describe the land use potential of each parcel and reflect existing land use patterns where development has occurred.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

The Land Use and Urban Design Element shares topic areas with the other General Plan Elements and integrates the policies from those Elements of La Mesa's General Plan with the proposed land use patterns designated on the General Plan Land Use Diagram. The Circulation Element outlines goals and policies for a complete transportation system that will be supported by policies in this Element. The Conservation and Sustainability Element, and Recreation and Open Space Element contain policies that protect valuable natural and recreational resources that need to be considered in land use planning. **Table LD-2** provides a full summary of shared topic areas. All Elements were prepared together to ensure internal consistency.

Table LD-2. Relationship with Other General Plan Elements

Land Use Topic Areas	Elements								
	Noise	Conservation/ Sustainability	Health and Wellness	Housing	Circulation	Open Space/ Recreation	Historic Preservation	Public Services and Facilities	Safety
Neighborhood Preservation and Improvement	×	x	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
High-Quality Urban Design		x		×	×	×	×	×	
Healthy Living		×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Mixed-Use, Transit-Oriented Development		×	×	×	×				×
Environmental Sustainability	×	×	×	×	×	×	×		
Infill Development	×	×		×	×				
Social Equity	×	×	×	×	×	×		×	×

NOTE: Each × indicates an intersection of the topic area with the corresponding element.

Physical and Community Characteristics

The City of La Mesa is 9.2 square miles in area and is located 14 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean (See **Figure LD-1**). It is immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the City of San Diego, along both sides of Interstate 8, and 11 miles from Downtown San Diego. The City also shares borders with the cities of El Cajon and Lemon Grove, and an unincorporated section of San Diego County.

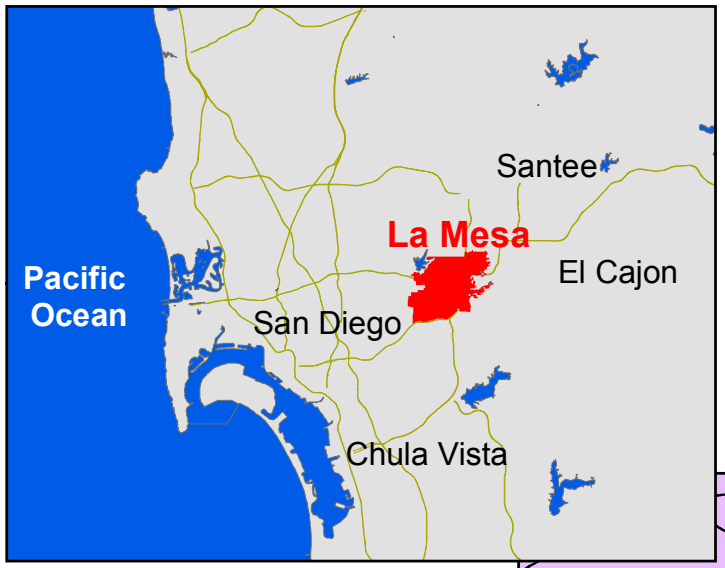
La Mesa is located in an ecological transition zone between the coast and foothills, in a part of western San Diego County dominated by a series of geologic features known as marine terraces. Over the past 2.5 million years, stream erosion cut canyons through these terraces defining communities and sub-regions. Alvarado Creek and Chollas Creek, which are located in La Mesa, are examples of terrace cutting streams. Elevations in La Mesa range from slightly less than 400 feet to over 1000 feet above sea level in the eastern portion of the City. The majority of La Mesa is located between 500 and 700 feet above sea level.

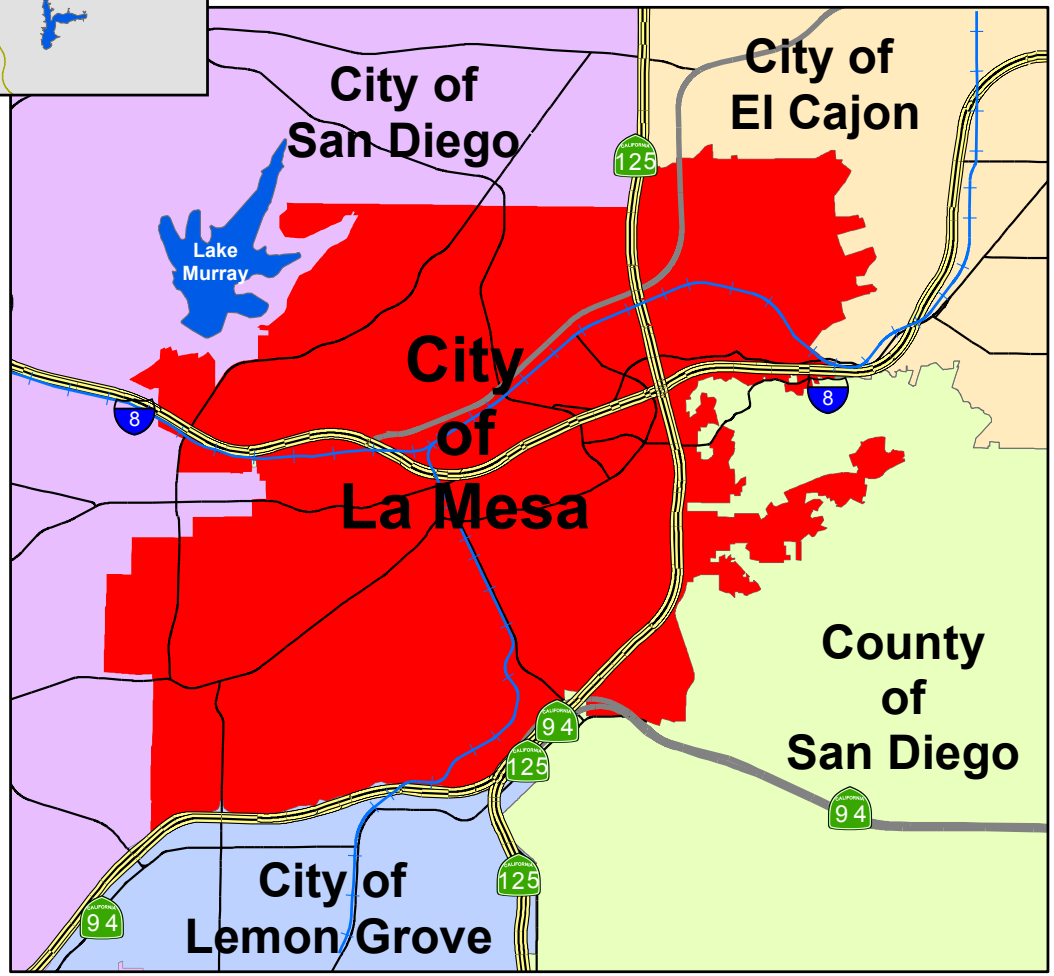
Major transportation corridors and natural scenic resources such as Mt. Helix and Mt. Nebo define the geography of the City and surrounding areas. The City is divided by Highway 125 (north/south) and Interstate 8 (east/west). The transportation network also includes two light-rail trolley lines.

In La Mesa, distinctive street patterns influence how individual sites relate to the public realm and to surrounding private land. The street grid network containing smaller lots is found between I-8 and State Route 94, particularly in west La Mesa. These neighborhoods are more conducive to multiple modes of circulation and mixed-use development, primarily along University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard. The street grid pattern promotes high connectivity and flexibility for new development.

Alvarado Creek provides natural drainage.

City of La Mesa's Location in San Diego County





GENERAL PLAN

VICINITY MAP

Legend

- San Diego Region
- City of La Mesa
- City of San Diego
- City of El Cajon
- City of Lemon Grove
- County of San Diego
- Oceans / Lakes
- Freeways
- Highways
- Light Rail Transit
- Major Road

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-1

La Mesa is known as the Jewel of the Hills with its tree-lined neighborhoods, its Downtown Village, and its walkable streets. **Figure LD-2** shows La Mesa's neighborhoods. The City is enriched by families with deep roots and a long history in the community. Neighborhoods are highly developed and need to be well-served by conveniently located commercial districts and community services and facilities, such as parks, schools, childcare facilities, and religious institutions. Infill development can revitalize the community if consistent with the surroundings and ecologically designed. While certain neighborhoods in La Mesa show signs of deterioration, this Plan's goals and policies are designed to address long-term neighborhood conservation and improvement. Many of the oldest neighborhoods are served by infrastructure that may be undersized or has reached the end of its useful life.

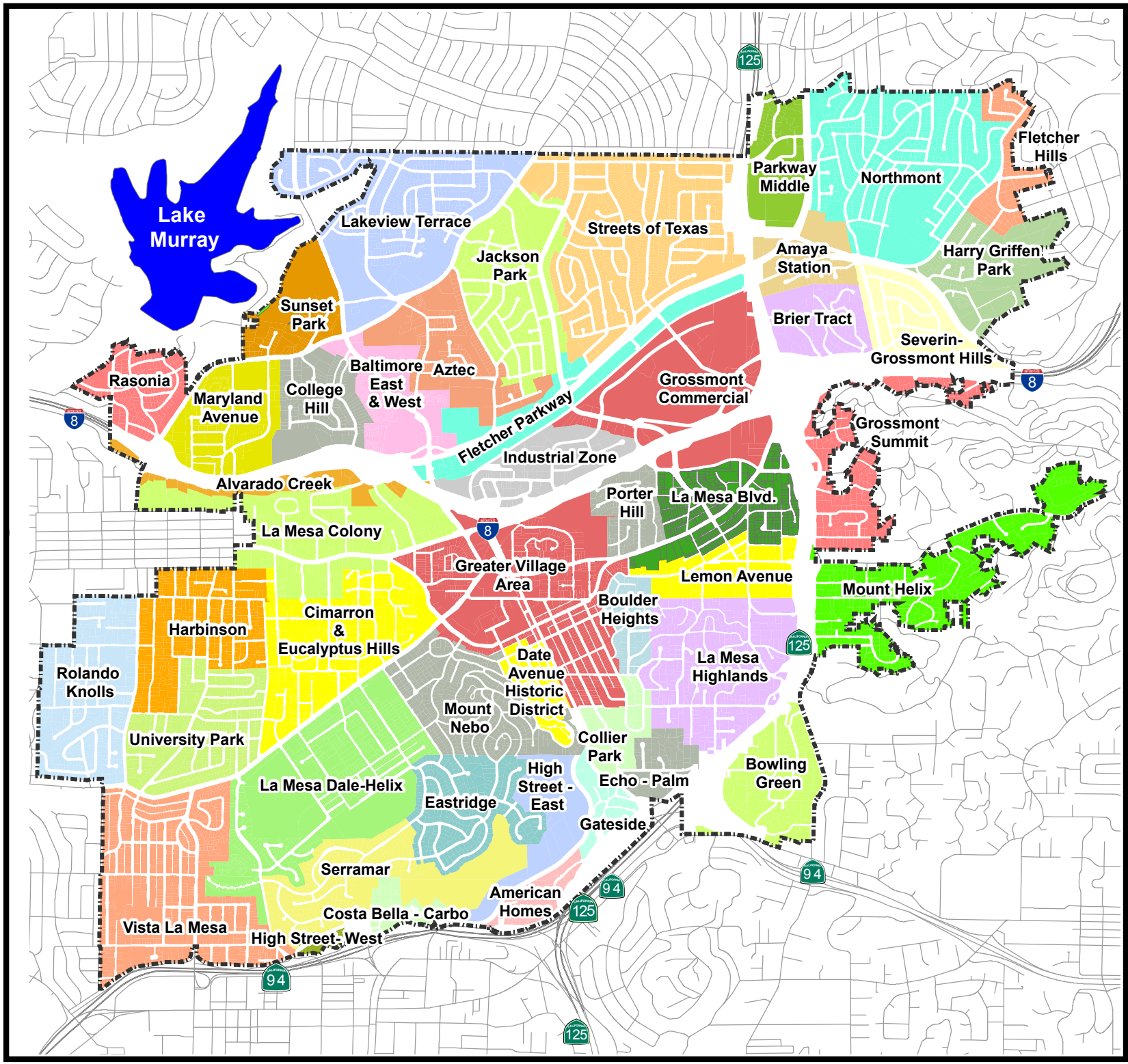
Allison Avenue sidewalks are examples of "complete streets" design.

Future development may need to upgrade infrastructure deficiencies identified during the development review process. When surveyed on community priorities, most residents indicated increased neighborhood police patrols, better enforcement of the speed limit and prevention of drug traffic regardless of where in the City they lived. Increased participation in neighborhood initiatives is encouraged to educate, renew, and reenergize communities so that all residents may benefit from La Mesa's natural setting, sustainable practices, high quality of life, economic opportunities, and unique neighborhoods.

During the next 20 years, the population in the region and in the City will continue to grow. Recent surveys indicate that residents want neighborhood revitalization to emphasize a network of mixed-use transportation corridors and to use commercial nodes as gateways into La Mesa. When walkable destinations and sidewalk infrastructure are lacking, social isolation, limited recreation opportunities and automobile dependence can occur. Because the street pattern is unlikely to change significantly over the next 20 years, the City will be challenged to evaluate proposed development projects relative to what already exists to identify opportunities to connect a project to nearby land uses.

GENERAL PLAN

NEIGHBORHOODS



Neighborhood designations were developed by using a combination of frequently used area descriptions, subdivision map names, street names, local school names,topographic features and administrative boundaries such as zoning overlays.

Feet
0 1,400 2,800 4,200

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-2

Historic Context

The City of La Mesa was settled in the late 1800's after California was annexed to the United States. The City provided a convenient way station for travelers and shipments going east, especially after gold was discovered in Julian. When La Mesa was incorporated in 1912, it had only 700 residents. La Mesa Village was a cluster of residences and businesses centered on the intersection of Lookout Avenue and Chollas Road. Today's University Avenue, then called Chollas Road, was the original wagon road along Chollas Creek and Lookout Avenue is now La Mesa Boulevard.

Downtown La Mesa 1915

The City grew to 2,500 people in 1930; however, growth was stifled during the Great Depression until World War II. The Post-War period resulted in tremendous growth throughout Southern California. In 1950, La Mesa's population was approximately 11,000 and by 1960 it had nearly tripled to over 30,000. Residential neighborhoods developed along the University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard corridors, and on the north side of the City. La Mesa grew in size as well as population during this period. **Figure LD-3** shows the annexation history of the City.

Commercial development activity increased in La Mesa after World War II. In the 1950s the City subdivided and sold land that it owned in the area that is now an industrial area, north of I-8 and southeast of the trolley tracks. In 1961 the 65-acre Grossmont Shopping Center was developed. Today, both the Grossmont Shopping Center site and properties within the industrial area represent potential redevelopment opportunities. As vacant land was consumed by single-family neighborhoods, rising land costs in the older parts of town created an opportunity for higher density residential development.

Downtown La Mesa 2012

Neighborhoods built in the 1950s and 1960s along the north side of Interstate 8 tend to have wider, curvilinear streets, which sometimes end as cul-de-sacs. The northern and eastern suburbs of La Mesa characterized by curvilinear street patterns make connections and the transformation to other land uses more difficult.

Low density single-family neighborhoods on large hillside lots are located south of University Avenue and extend east into unincorporated County land; connections and the transformation to other land uses in this area is also difficult. Thus, large portions of the City are envisioned to remain as stable neighborhoods to be maintained and enhanced as opportunities arise.

For a period of time in the 1950s and 1960s, apartment developments began to encroach on some of La Mesa's historic residential neighborhoods. This trend was reversed in the 1970s as citizens took a more active interest in preserving the heritage of their City. The results of this interest are reflected both in this Element and in the policies contained in the Historic Preservation Element of La Mesa's General Plan.

In the 1970s, large-scale, suburban residential development occurred along with the construction of new public facilities, including La Mesita Park, which opened as La Mesa's Bicentennial Park. The Baltimore Drive Bridge over Interstate 8 was constructed, reuniting north and south La Mesa.

By 1980, with a population of approximately 50,300 residents, it became apparent that certain areas of the City were in need of redevelopment. The City invested in new public infrastructure including streets, sidewalks and storm water management facilities. The mid-1980s also brought light-rail transit through La Mesa. The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) constructed the Orange Line Trolley and four stations within the City limits.

In 1992, the City completed award-winning improvements along Fletcher Parkway in order to attract quality businesses to La Mesa. These improvements resulted in millions of dollars of new private investment along Fletcher Parkway between Grossmont Center Drive and the west City limits.

The City's last large piece of vacant land, 150-acres, located north of SR-94, was developed during the decade of 2000. The "Serramar" project contains 228 large single-family dwellings and a 50-acre open space preserve.

In 2000, construction began on the Green Line trolley service from the Old Town Transit Center to the Grossmont Trolley Station. Completed in 2005 the Green Line added a new station at 70th Street, the fifth trolley station in La Mesa. In 2005, the 23-acre Junior Seau Sports Complex was completed, and redevelopment of the La Mesa Civic Center began.

Five trolley stations are located in La Mesa.

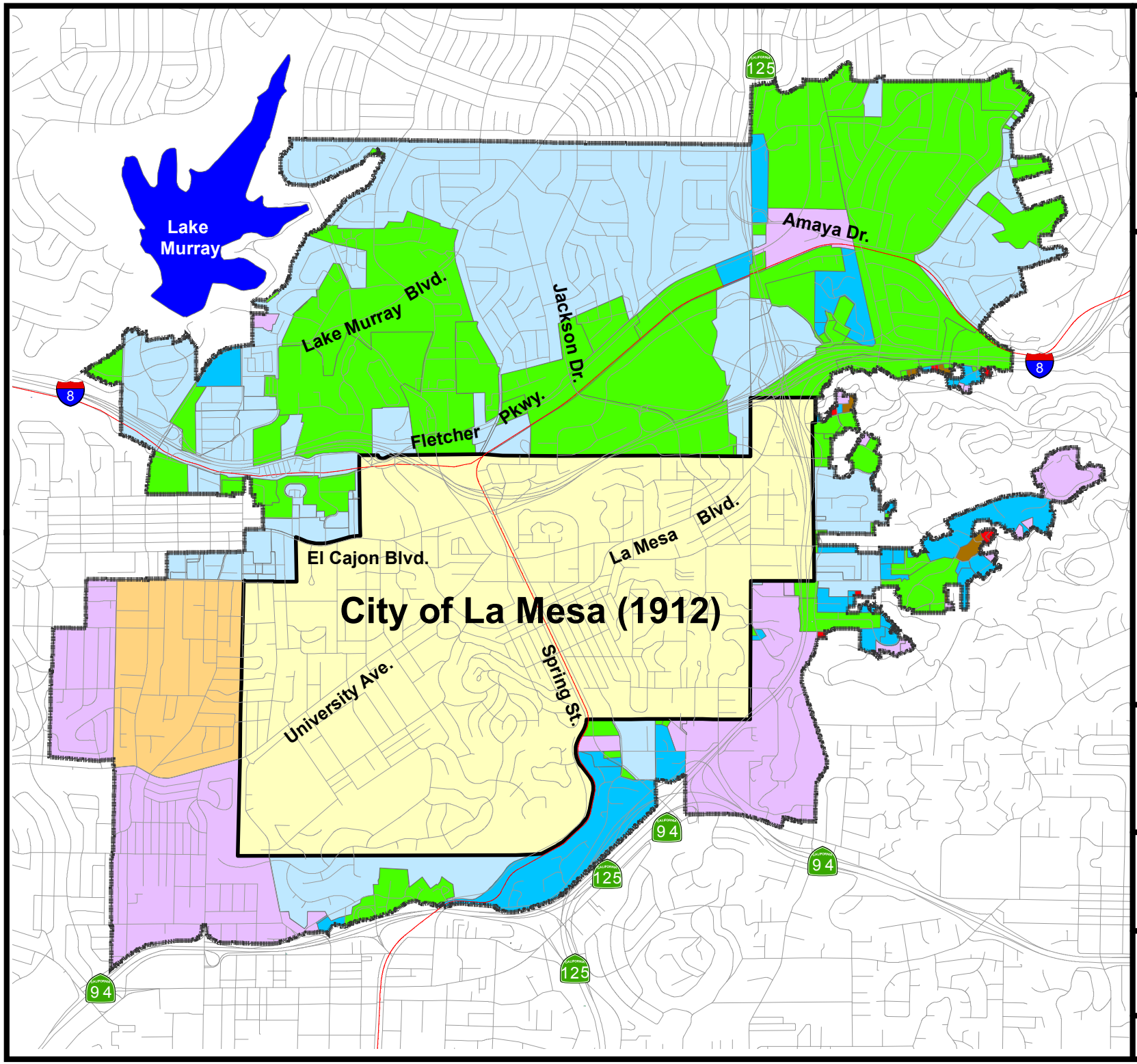
The advent of trolley service in La Mesa has encouraged the concentration of planning efforts around the transit stations to encourage mixed use, Transit-Oriented Developments

(TODs). Examples include the La Mesa Village Plaza in Downtown La Mesa on the west side of Spring Street and the La Mesa Archstone apartment project near the Amaya station. The most recent example of a TOD in La Mesa is the Pravada and Alterra apartment project at the Grossmont Trolley Station. These projects help La Mesa to continue fulfilling the Regional goal to locate housing and employment opportunities close to transit services.

La Mesa's history has influenced the City's land use by establishing transit corridors and community character. Moving forward to the General Plan horizon year of 2030, much of the development proposed in the intervening years will consist of "infill" development. Infill development is the use of vacant or underutilized sites within a previously developed area. This sustainable form of land development was also recommended in the last General Plan Update (1996) because it recycles developed land in context with existing features of the City.

GENERAL PLAN

ANNEXATION HISTORY



Legend

- Incorporated City (1912)
- 1913 - 1945
- 1946 - 1955
- 1956 - 1965
- 1966 - 1975
- 1976 - 1985
- 1986 - 1995
- 1996 - 2012
- City Boundary - 2012
- Lakes
- Roads
- Light Rail Transit

0 1,400 2,800 4,200 Feet

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-3

Land Use

Land use decisions must further the welfare of people and their neighborhoods by creating healthful, sustainable, and attractive environments for present and future generations. This Element integrates land use policies that will ensure that the physical forms, patterns, and aesthetics of future development and redevelopment advance La Mesa's desire for a high quality of life and a more sustainable future.

Sustainability and Climate Change

Climate Change Legislation

Promoting sustainability in the City will have a positive effect on quality of life and help the City meet the requirements set forth by recent climate change legislation. Climate change is a shift in the "average weather" that a given region experiences. This is measured by changes in the aspects that we associate with weather, such as temperature, wind patterns, precipitation, and storms. The aim of most climate change legislation is to reduce GHG (Greenhouse Gas) emissions, which are released into the atmosphere naturally and through human activity. The increasing presence of heat-trapping gases is the result of burning coal, oil, and natural gas, as well as the destruction of forests and other human activities.

In 2006, the State Legislature took a proactive stance against the challenges of climate change with the adoption of the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). The California Air Resource Board (CARB) was charged with developing regulations and market mechanisms that would reduce the State's GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. This represents a 25 percent reduction Statewide, with mandatory caps for significant emission sources that began in 2012.

The "Live Well" initiative encourages local walking groups.

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375), which passed in 2008, is designed to help coordinate land use and transportation planning in an effort to promote sustainability and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The law requires regions to meet their target for reducing GHG emissions associated with passenger vehicle travel. The California Air Resources Board determined that the San Diego Region needs to reduce its emissions by 7% by 2020 and 13% by 2035. Some of the main strategies for reducing emission in La Mesa and the region include supporting mixed-use development, encouraging alternative transportation, promoting energy efficiency, and using Green Building Techniques.

SANDAG's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) outlines a blueprint for ensuring mobility, enhancing quality of life, supporting a prosperous economy, and promoting sustainability, in San Diego County. The 2050 RTP/SCS lays out a plan for investing an estimated $214 billion in local, State, and Federal transportation funds expected to come into the region over the next 40 years. Building on the existing transportation system, the plan outlines future improvements for all transportation types that will put in place an integrated multi-modal system by mid-century.

Sustainability

While previous versions of the General Plan have supported sustainable practices such as mixed-use development and resource conservation, this update includes a more comprehensive approach to sustainability that seeks to reduce our impact on the environment and promote healthy living. La Mesa's efforts to reduce its contribution to global climate change will promote sustainability within the City and meet Regional and State-level targets for reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.

For the City of La Mesa, improving sustainability includes policies to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions, protect the water supply, create vibrant public spaces, support a strong local economy and promote health and wellness for all residents. Land use and urban design decisions influence sustainability because distribution of land use types, their design, accessibility, and intensity has a profound effect on energy use, water use, and transportation choices. Decisions that positively affect the natural environment should work together with the economic environment and also address social equity concerns.

2011 marked the 31st consecutive year that the City of La Mesa has been named a Tree City USA community by the National Arbor Day Foundation, the National Association of State Foresters, and the USDA Forest Service. The award acknowledges the City's commitment to an effective, ongoing community forestry program. Residents recognize that trees in the City's landscape help to consume carbon dioxide so that people can breathe easier. Trees also help to conserve water and provide habitat for wildlife. Most importantly, while increasing property value, more trees will reduce energy use and the heat island effect where building and road surfaces retain the heat from sunlight.

The City must reduce vehicle miles traveled.

La Mesa benefits from excellent access to transportation infrastructure (including three freeways, five light-rail trolley stops and five bus routes) and has a history of providing compact, mixed-use development along its major transportation corridors. Despite these

strides, the City can continue to make improvements. The City's 2005 GHG emissions inventory showed that the transportation sector generates approximately 70% of the La Mesa's total emissions. At current rates, emissions are projected to increase 20 percent by 2020. The benefits from emission reductions accrue incrementally over time, so it is important for the City to support programs and policies that reduce GHG emissions.

GHG reduction measures will have important benefits for the environment and community. La Mesa can reduce GHG emissions through land use and transportation planning decisions that link jobs and residences to alternative modes of transportation. Walking, biking and transit have a positive impact on air quality while offering healthier, more social ways to travel compared to a private automobile.

Bicyclist on Lake Murray Boulevard.

Employment Growth

The region's path towards living more sustainably is clear: focus housing and job growth in urbanized areas where there is an existing, and planned transportation infrastructure. Most importantly, invest in a transportation network that provides residents and workers with transportation options that reduce GHG emissions and implement the Plan through incentives and collaboration.

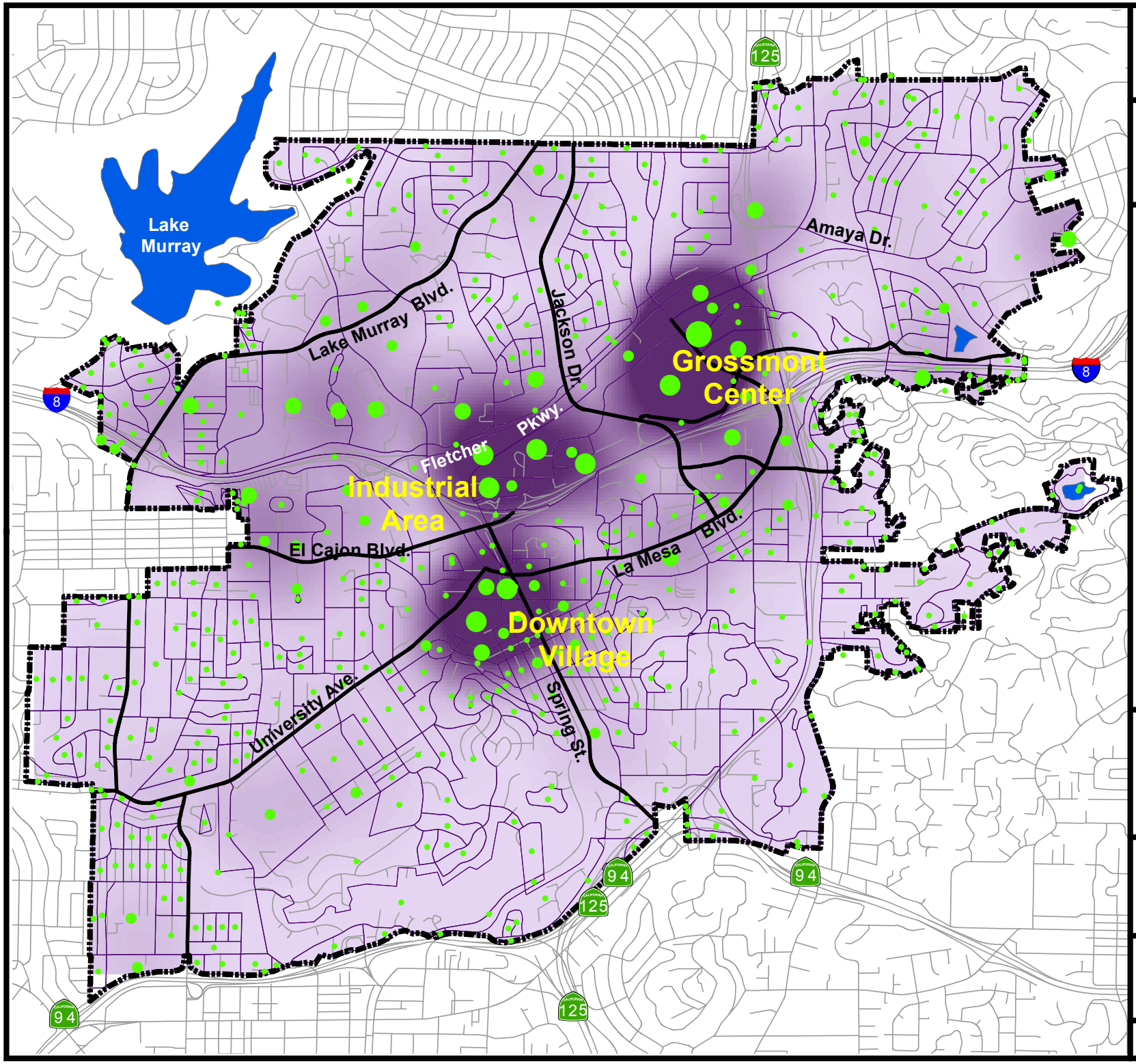
SANDAG's RTP/SCS encourages a land use pattern that accommodates the region's future employment and housing needs. For example, Sharp Grossmont Hospital is one of La Mesa's leading employers, as well as the only Regional hospital in the East County. The hospital is located in the Grossmont area, an urban node that allows residents to live, work and conduct business within the City. The Regional Growth Forecast projects that La Mesa's population will grow by 13.5% by 2030. Nearly 3,000 homes and 3,000 jobs will be added during this period. As residential density increases, local job creation and economic growth help to maintain the quality of life in La Mesa.

Grossmont Medical Emergency Building

The City encourages development that will attract Regional employers to locate in La Mesa. Quality jobs with higher than average wages lead to increased incomes for residents. **Figure LD-4** depicts employment density within the City and helps to identify opportune areas for this development. For example, the Industrial Center is ideally located. If revitalized, this District could increase the number of jobs available. La Mesa's

compact geography and plentiful transportation routes are appealing to retail, professional and industrial businesses serving all of East County. Additionally, local businesses are connected to a market of nearly one half-million persons in a 5-mile radius.

As La Mesa develops into an established Regional employment center, a balanced transportation system is increasingly important, and the City will need to aggressively work to maintain access to Regional bus networks that link to other transit systems and Regional employment centers. The biggest impact can be made by the employer. Transportation demand management plans encourage the reduction of single-occupancy vehicle use during rush hours by providing people with enhanced travel choices. These choices refer to travel mode, travel route and trip departure time. Reducing traffic congestion requires planning for supportive land uses and roadway networks that are conducive to serving alternative modes of transportation. The City can provide this support by (1.) incorporating alternative modes of transportation into improvements proposed in development applications; (2.) allowing for requests for reductions in off-street parking requirements for projects that have a transportation demand management program; and (3.) providing information to residents and business owners on opportunities for walking, bicycling, ride-sharing, and transit. The Conservation and Sustainability and Circulation Elements provide further discussion of sustainable transportation options.



GENERAL PLAN

EMPLOYMENT DENSITY

LEGEND

Total jobs - 2007

- 0 - 67
- 68 - 220
- 221 - 529
- 530 - 1811
- 1812 - 3520

Jobs (per Square Mile)

- High : 39,000
- Low : 0

- Lakes
- Roads
- City Boundary

Feet
0 1,300 2,600 3,900

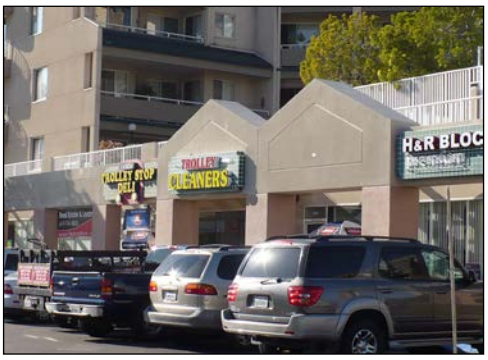
CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-4

Existing Land Use

The existing Land Use Map (**Figure LD-5**) records 2010 development patterns and served as a basis for developing the Land Use Plan. The City's crossroads location is a destination for Regional-serving land uses. Most of the nine square miles within the City limits are devoted to two main uses: single-family homes on individual lots and transportation rights-of-way. While large tracts of single-family developments are located north of I-8, in the west end of the City and on hillsides; over half of the housing units in La Mesa are a part of multi-family developments located in clusters near major arterial streets. **Table LD-3** illustrates the general distribution of Existing Land Uses in the City.

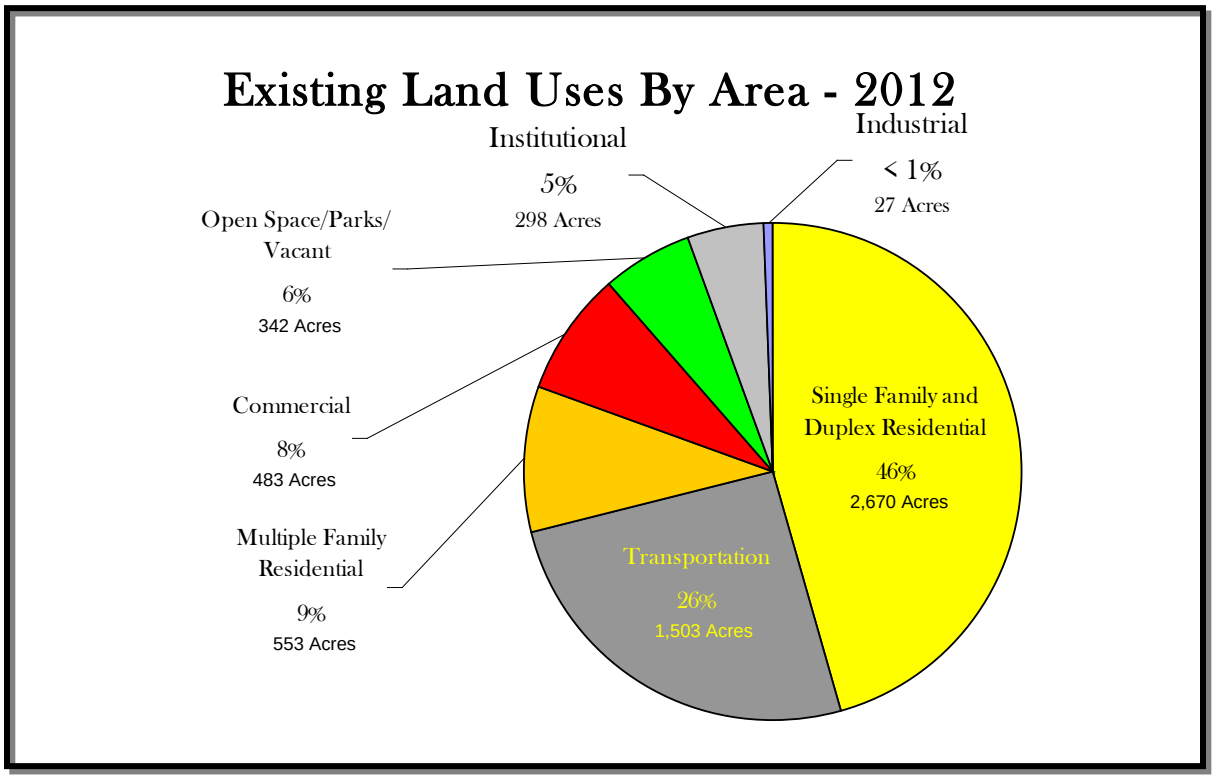


La Mesa Village Plaza features mixed-use development.

Commercial developments include suburban shopping centers, a Regional shopping center, a Downtown shopping village, and strip commercial areas. Within the well-established land use patterns of La Mesa there will be areas needing protection to preserve the community's quality of life and areas that will need reinvestment and redevelopment to remain viable in the region.

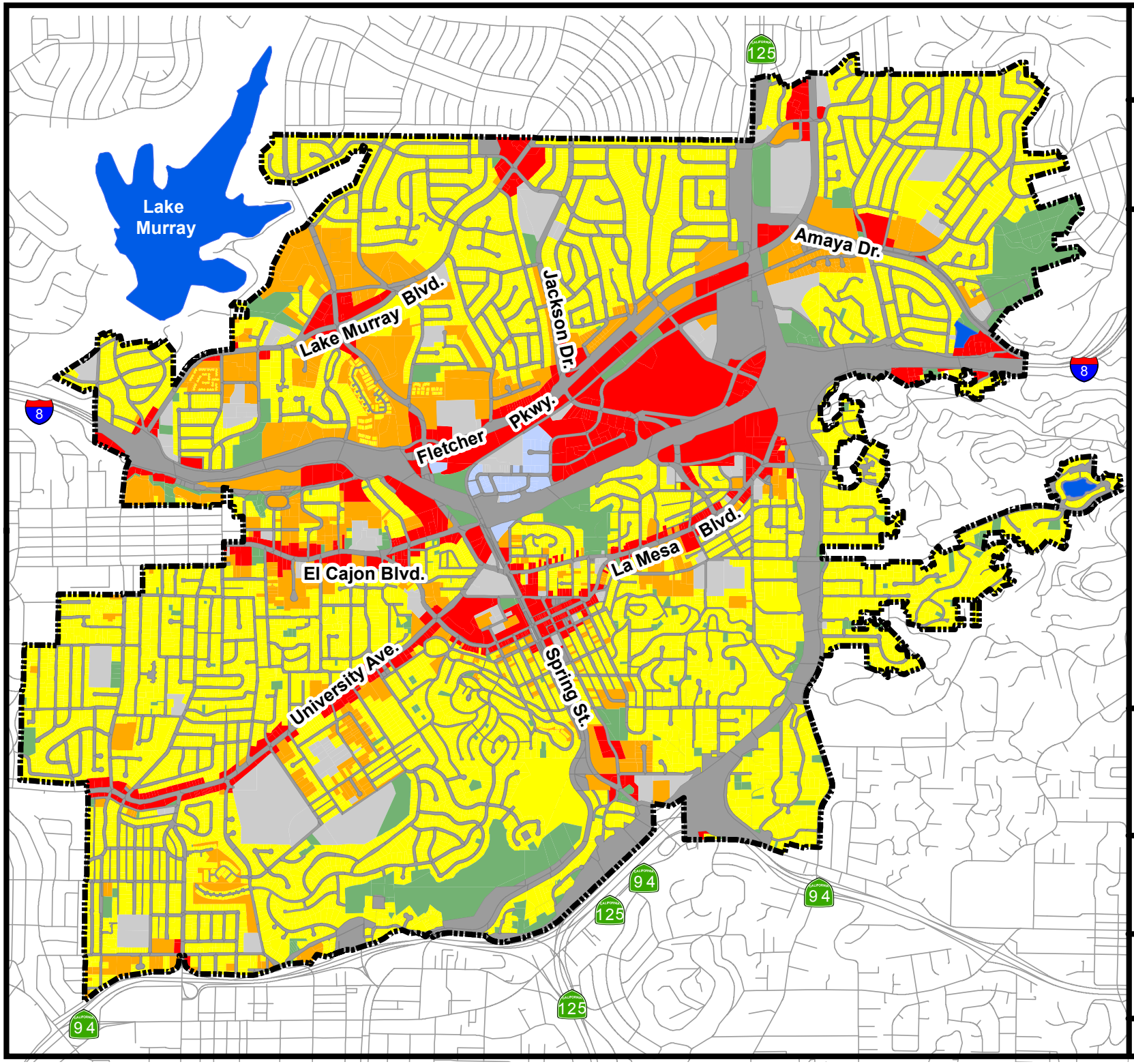
In 2011, a State-mandated revision to the Housing Element of the General Plan was begun. As part of that revision, the estimated residential development potential for vacant and underdeveloped parcels under current policies is 674 dwelling units. A few vacant sites are scattered throughout the City in small parcels, generally less than an acre in size. Since all the easily developed land within La Mesa has been built upon, many land use policies relate to infill development on difficult sites. There is very little industrial development located within the City – 34 acres divided into 78 parcels north of Interstate 8 and east of Spring Street. This land could benefit greatly from redevelopment and modern office buildings in order to enhance its potential as the City's employment area. The remaining land within the City is used for a variety of public or private institutions including schools, parks, and churches. For the most part, the existing land use pattern will remain the same.

Table LD-3. Existing Land Uses By Area



Planned Land Use

The City of La Mesa is highly developed; therefore, future growth will include redevelopment and the recycling of land and buildings as new uses are proposed. In 2012, there were approximately 130 acres of vacant property on 234 parcels, which equals 2.2% of the total land area in La Mesa. Development potential exists near the City's transit stations, within mixed-use corridors, the focus area surrounding the Grossmont Shopping Center and additional opportunity sites discussed on page LD-23.



GENERAL PLAN

EXISTING LAND USE

Legend

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Transportation
- Institutional
- Open Space/Parks /Recreation/Vacant
- Water Features
- City Boundary
- Roads

0 1,300 2,600 3,900 Feet

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-5

Transit Stations

La Mesa transit stations are hubs of activity and are anticipated to be used more intensively in coming years. New infill development is encouraged near each station.

La Mesa Boulevard Station - The Downtown location of this Station intersects major bus routes and provides transit access to the Civic Center, Village Commercial and surrounding residential areas. The Station has limited parking available. The old Police Station, old Post Office site, and Civic Center parking lot areas offer the opportunity to develop compact new uses that complement the variety of uses in the heart of Downtown.

The Green Line trolley stops at 70th street station.

70th Street Station - There is redevelopment potential for more intensive mixed-use projects located near the 70th Street Trolley Station in the Alvarado Creek area. Sites in this area are designated for Regional Serving Commercial uses to contribute to the local economy, such as office, hotel, multi-family or mixed-use development.

Amaya Station - There is potential for infill development on nearby vacant parcels and development opportunity on the north side of Amaya Drive where there is an under-utilized shopping center with lots of surface parking. The south side of the Station features older properties with redevelopment potential.

Spring Street Station – This Station is near 300 military housing units. Additional mixed-use infill development could occur in the area surrounding the Trolley Station.

The Pravada Apartments at Grossmont Station

Grossmont Station – This is a transfer station between the Green and Orange Lines of the Trolley. In 2010, the Pravada and Alterra apartments opened at the Station. Improvements to the Station platform began, including new elevator access from Grossmont Center Drive. With anticipated growth of the Grossmont Medical Campus and Grossmont Shopping Center sites, this Station may remain the heaviest used stop in the City.

Mixed-Use Corridors

Mixed-use development brings safety and vitality to the City's streets and neighborhoods. There is potential for compact redevelopment along the City's main corridors. El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue are bus transit corridors that have underutilized parcels ripe for redevelopment. The "Mixed-Use Urban" land use designation is used along the City's urbanizing transportation corridors, allowing up to 40 units per acre.

Mixed-Use Project at Lemon Avenue

In 2003, the City adopted a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone for lots designated "Mixed-Use Urban," along University Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, portions of La Mesa Boulevard, and near the Spring Street Trolley Station. The Overlay Zone is intended to revitalize older commercial corridors, increase opportunities for infill housing, encourage innovative retail that is less automobile dependent, and help to create pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods where local residents have services, shops, jobs and access to transit within walking distance of their homes.

For new development within the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone, new amenities such as wider sidewalks and street trees are required to create a pedestrian realm. A reduction in the number of parking spaces required may be permitted for mixed-use projects that contain retail, restaurants, office, and other neighborhood-serving uses on the ground floor. Recreation and leisure space must be provided for each residential or Mixed-Use project containing residential uses. The maximum building height within the Overlay Zone is 46 feet, unless the Planning Commission grants a height increase by issuance of a Special Permit. New development and major renovations within the Overlay Zone are subject to design review by the City's Design Review Board. Separate Design Guidelines for properties within the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone have been prepared to insure quality design that is sensitive to surrounding properties. The City's Mixed-Use Corridors encourage multiple activities within these neighborhoods and create opportunities for interaction, economic growth and increased quality of life.

Grossmont Shopping Center Focus Area

The General Plan's Regional Serving Commercial land use designation is applied to areas in the City such as Grossmont Shopping Center, which is suitable for more intense urban activities drawing customers from outside, as well as inside, the City. Grossmont Shopping Center is a Regional-serving mall containing approximately 940,000 square feet of building area including major anchor stores and a movie theater. The Center is located on a 64 acre site bounded by Center Drive to the north, Grossmont Center Drive to the east, Murray Drive to the south, and Jackson Drive to the west. Grossmont Shopping Center was first

developed in the early 1960's, with mall buildings surrounded by surface parking lots and smaller satellite buildings. Since most buildings are located in the middle of the property, various options exist for future expansion or redevelopment with new uses. There is an opportunity for new development on this property to define new vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation patterns, locate new buildings and landmarks within the highly visible site, and unify the architectural and landscape design of the site through the City's Design Review Process as remodeling occurs. The General Plan envisions that this site will become a focus of redevelopment activity within the City's Grossmont Specific Plan area.

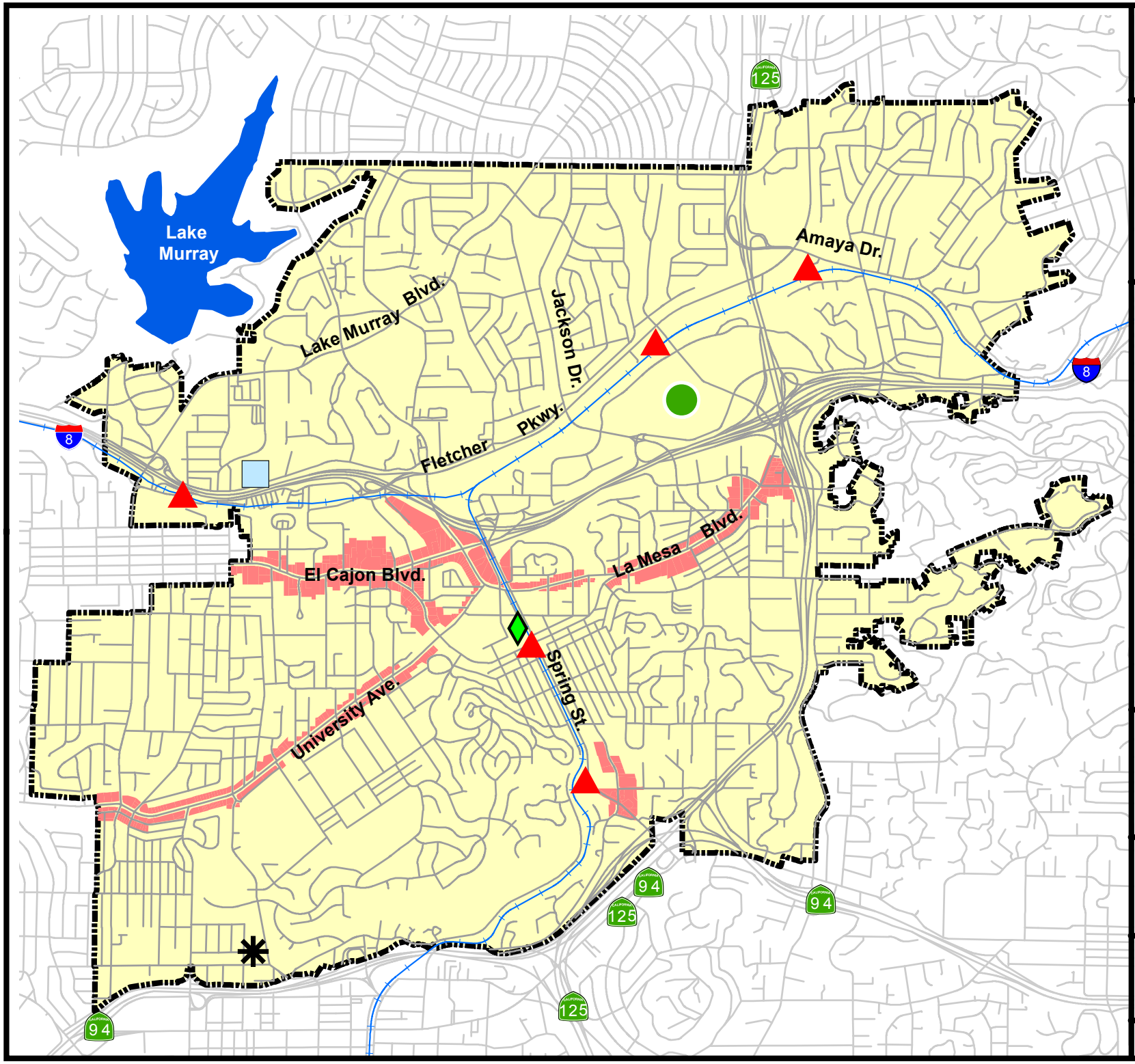
Additional Opportunity Sites

Specific parcels in the City will require further evaluation to align the land use designation with the zone classification.

The site of the former Police Station at the northeast corner of Allison Avenue and Nebo Drive is also an opportunity site. Current General Plan designation and zoning classification is Civic Use. If these were changed to Downtown Commercial, a mixed-use development could be constructed.

In addition to the Land Use and Urban Design Element, the Housing Element also includes an extensive analysis of properties that satisfy the City's need for sites to accommodate new housing development. Analysis of these sites shows that La Mesa has adequate capacity to meet our share of the growth in the region's housing stock.

As future private development proposals are received by the City, the appropriate use of the land will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. **Figure LD-6** shows these development opportunity sites, including the areas covered by the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone.



GENERAL PLAN

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES

Legend

- Mixed Use Overlay
- Grossmont Center
- Former Coleman College Site
- Former Police Station
- Former County PW Facility
- Transit Stations
- Light Rail Transit
- Roads
- Lakes
- City Boundary

0 1,300 2,600 3,900 Feet

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-6

Population Density

Density Standards for each zone establish the development pattern for the community by considering the number of dwelling units and the size of each unit. When discussing population density, it is important to consider the changing average household size. Between 2000 and 2010, the average household size in La Mesa increased from 2.2 to 2.3 persons per household. The City's average household size is estimated to reach 2.35 by 2030. Another factor which affects the population density in residential areas is infill development. Infill development may occur on older properties in need of redevelopment or on oversized lots that have the potential to be subdivided and redeveloped. Additional information about population characteristics and housing needs in La Mesa can be found in the Housing Element of this General Plan.

La Mesa's average household size is expected to continue to increase.

Density Bonuses

State Government Code allows density bonuses for developments that provide affordable housing and senior housing. The amount of the State-granted bonus is based upon the percentage of specialized housing provided. The City will abide by the provisions of State Density Bonus Law (California Government Code Section 65915 – 65918) as amended from time to time. Projects which employ these provisions would be subject to review to ensure that they meet the City's goals of providing housing to underserved communities and the maintenance of neighborhood character and cohesion.

Accessory Dwelling Units

The State has also mandated that second units, as defined by the Government Code and the Zoning Ordinance, shall not be counted against the density limits of the Land Use Element. In La Mesa these second units are referred to as Accessory Dwelling Units and are reviewed and approved subject to the Development Standards of the Municipal Code.

Planned Residential Developments

Within all single-family residential categories, development can occur using the Planned Residential Development (PRD) provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. The development standards for a PRD allow the clustering of development on a site, resulting in projects which can better achieve the objectives of the Urban Design Program. However, the PRD regulations require projects to be compatible with surrounding uses and stay within the density provisions of the underlying zone or the applicable General Plan category.

Transit Oriented Development

Local jurisdictions have worked with SANDAG to develop the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy to mitigate the adverse affects of traffic congestion and reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions. An important part of this strategy is commitment of more of the region's transportation resources to improve the public transit system. Transit systems work best in neighborhoods characterized by dense residential and commercial development. The La Mesa General Plan encourages Transit-Oriented Development, by permitting an intensification of a mix of uses adjacent to trolley stations and along transit corridors.

Mixed-Use Projects

Mixed-use projects may be proposed that include residential components at a density higher than multi-family residential land use designations and zones. Mixed-use can mean a combination of two or more uses on one site or within one structure (residential, retail, office, or institutional). It is envisioned that a typical mixed-use project would have a density of 40 dwelling units per acre, consistent with the densities permitted in La Mesa's Mixed-Use Overlay Zone. However, projects of greater density could be considered on their individual merits. Discretionary review of Site Development Plan applications or review as part of the specific plan process can be used to more precisely establish these standards prior to development. Such projects would still have to meet development standards, design criteria, and be compatible with surrounding uses.

Building Intensity

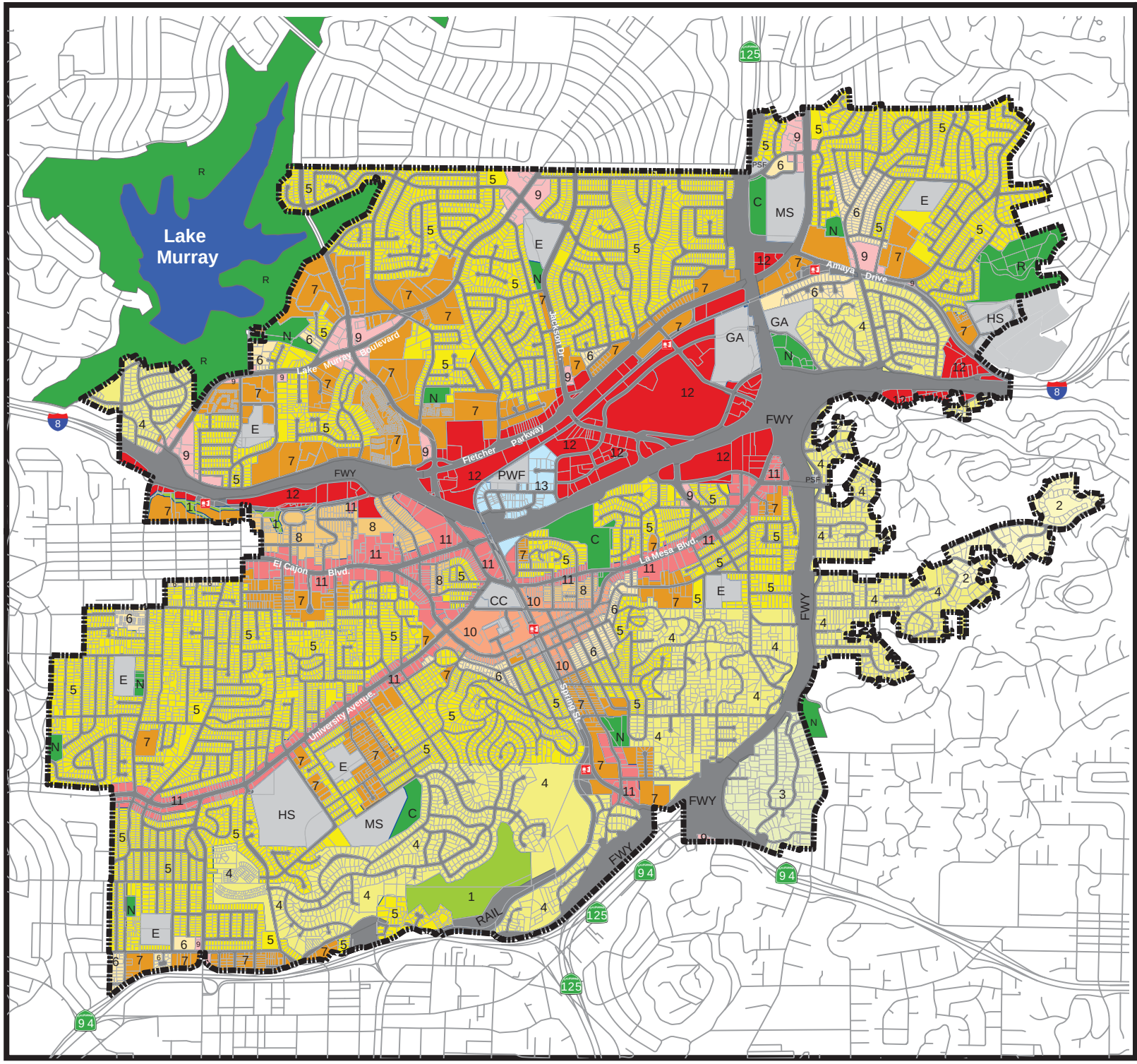
State of California General Plan Guidelines require that cities address building intensity in addition to population density. Building intensity generally refers to the bulk and scale of development; factors including lot coverage and building height are considered in regard to building intensity. Quantifiable standards of building intensity for each land use designation define the most intensive use that will be allowed under each designation. The concentration of use can be defined by one or more quantitative measures that relate directly to the amount of physical development that will be allowed. Building height limitations are an example of a commercial development standard.

A key goal of the General Plan is to insure that new development fits within the context of existing neighborhoods. The "fit" of a proposed project is determined through the development review process and includes a review of specific development standards as well as aesthetic considerations. Non-residential development is regulated in part by the City's Zoning Ordinance, which lists various permitted uses by zone classification as well as Development Standards, including building setbacks and minimum parking ratios. These development standards are used to control the density and scale of development. Aesthetics are reviewed in accordance with adopted City policies such as those contained in the City's Urban Design Program.

Land Use Designations

A primary expression of land use policy in the La Mesa General Plan is the Land Use Map, which illustrates the planned land uses throughout the City (**Figure LD-7**). The land use designations shown on the map illustrate the spatial arrangement of residential, commercial and public uses, which are intended to achieve the Goals and Policies of this General Plan. The Land Use Map utilizes 16 separate designations which provide a wide range of land uses and development intensities. The Land Use Map is used to illustrate the planned distribution of land use patterns throughout the City. A table which correlates each land use designation to its implementing zone classification is shown below as **Table LD-4.**

The Land Use Map is an expression of the Land Use Goals and Policies of the General Plan and should be thought of as a policy statement of the Land Use and Urban Design Element as well. The application of the Land Use designations provides one of the primary tools for implementing the General Plan. Amendments to the Land Use Map will be treated as an amendment of the General Plan and will be required to follow the proper procedures for such changes. Amendments to the Land Use Map will be required to consider the policies of the Land Use and Urban Design Element and must also be found to be internally consistent with the policies within the other Elements of the General Plan.



GENERAL PLAN

PLANNED LAND USE

Legend

- 1 Open Space — See Related Specific Plans
- 2 Rural Residential — 1-2 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 3 Semi-Rural Residential — 3 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 4 Suburban Residential — 4 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 5 Urban Residential — 7-10 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 6 Restricted Multiple Unit Residential — 14 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 7 Multiple Unit Residential — 18-23 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 8 Mixed Density Residential — 7-23 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 9 Local Serving Commercial
- 10 Downtown Commercial
- 11 Mixed Use Urban — 24-40 Dwelling Units per Acre
- 12 Regional Serving Commercial
- 13 Commercial Light Industrial
- Recreation Uses
  - N - Neighborhood Park
  - C - Community Park
  - R - Regional Park
- Public Use
  - CC- Civic Center
  - PSF - Public Safety Facility
  - PWF - Public Works Facility
  - GA - Other Government Agencies
  - E - Elementary School
  - MS - Middle School
  - HS - High School
- Transportation Uses
  - FWY - Freeway
  - RAIL- Trolley Right of Way
  - Trolley Station

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

File: E:\General Plan Update\General Plan Maps and Graphics\ LD-7 Planned Land Use (11x17)

0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

Figure LD-7

A summary of each Land Use designation is provided below:

1. Open Space

This land use designation is assigned to those few remaining areas in and around the City that have value as natural preserves or passive open spaces. Areas within this land use category will be limited in their development options due primarily to environmental and topographical factors. The Open Space Land Use designation has been applied to retain existing desirable natural lands as a permanent open visual asset. The City continues to monitor and protect 50 acres of open space set aside in 2003 as part of the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Implementing Agreement in the Serramar neighborhood to protect a variety of species including the California gnatcatcher. The open space designation also applies to parcels under a variety of ownerships in a narrow band south of and parallel to Interstate 8.

Tungsten Canyon

2. Rural Residential (1-2 DU/AC)

This land use designation is assigned to recognize the large-lot residential estate development in the Grossmont-Mt. Helix area. Development can occur at densities of between one and two dwelling units per acre; however, areas with steep slopes may realize densities less than one unit per acre. Rural characteristics and natural terrain are to be preserved through utilization of grading practices, which create natural appearing land-forms. Mature landscaping shall be preserved when feasible.

3. Semi-Rural Residential (3 DU/ac)

This land use designation is assigned to neighborhoods with single-family detached homes on lots of 14,000 square feet or larger. An example of this designation is the area southeast of State Route 125 known as La Mesa Highlands. Areas in this designation still enjoy some rural characteristics, which are to be preserved in the same manner described in the Rural Residential designation.

4. Suburban Residential (4 DU/acre)

This land use designation is assigned to suburban neighborhoods with lots of 10,000 square feet or larger, which result in lower density developments with space between residences and relatively large yards. Areas such as Eastridge and the lower slopes of Mt. Helix are examples of this type of development. Development in this category will be limited to minor infill resulting from the subdivision of existing lots.

Single-family homes in the Serramar development.

5. Urban Residential (7-10 DU/acre)

This land use designation is assigned to the broadest cross-section of single-family neighborhoods in the City. Most areas are fully built out, with existing development consisting primarily of single-family detached homes on 6,000 square foot lots. Minor infill development may occur in these neighborhoods; however, new development must be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods in terms of density and structure type. In the Rolando Knolls area west of 70th Street, a density of 10 units per acre may be achieved on larger lots as permitted by the zone, which has historically permitted 2 dwelling units per lot.

6. Restricted Multiple Unit Residential (14 DU/acre)

This ;and use designation is assigned to duplex and other small scale multiple-family type developments within the City. It is intended that the Restricted Multiple Unit Residential designation serve in some cases as a buffer between single-family residential areas and more intensive uses such as apartments or commercial developments. In those situations, developments in this designation will be reviewed carefully to ensure that they do not intrude or adversely impact adjacent single-family neighborhoods.

7. Multiple Unit Residential (18 – 23 DU/acre)

This land use designation is assigned to moderately high-density residential development consisting of apartments and multiple-family condominium developments. Areas assigned this land use designation shall generally be located adjacent to streets, which are shown as Major Collector, Arterial, or Arterial Parkway in the Circulation Element. Higher density residential development is also encouraged in areas with access to public transportation or adjacent to commercial development.

Apartments a short walk from Amaya Station.

Some existing developments within this designation, built prior to 1977 under different City standards, may have residential densities in excess of 40 dwelling units per acre. New development in these areas will generally be limited to 18 dwelling unit per net acre, unless density bonus provisions of the Zoning Ordinance or State Law are employed.

The City's current Zoning Ordinance allows for an increase of density in the Multiple Unit residentially zoned properties of 5 additional dwelling units per net acre (for a maximum of the 23 dwelling units per net acre). This bonus is granted to those projects which provide a higher level of amenities such as additional open space area or enclosed off-street parking.

8. Mixed Density Residential (7 - 23 DU/acre)

This land use designation is assigned to the unusual residential mix in the area between El Cajon Blvd and Interstate 8. The intent is to recognize areas which have begun a transition from primarily single-family homes to some higher density residential development. For areas in this designation, the City will attempt to create a pattern of single-family and multiple-family zoning districts, which will allow new development without adversely affecting existing viable neighborhoods. In areas where the single-family residential characteristics are to be preserved, densities above 7 DU's/ac will not be allowed.

9. Local Serving Commercial

This land use designation is assigned to a range of retail commercial and personal service activities which respond to the needs of nearby residential neighborhoods. This designation generally includes shopping centers that offer potential for redevelopment as mixed-use, including residential use. Auto-oriented uses should be limited to gas dispensing and minor maintenance services that do not require extended outdoor storage of vehicles or materials. Building types permitted in this designation generally include one and two-story buildings, either freestanding or in small-scale neighborhood shopping centers.

10. Downtown Commercial

This land use designation promotes a concentrated blend of pedestrian-oriented shops, personal services, professional and government offices, cultural activities, and residential uses. Mixed use that supports the pedestrian character of the Village is encouraged. Cultural activities that engage residents and visitors are encouraged Downtown. Residences above the first floor commercial uses are encouraged. The Downtown Village Specific Plan offers further elaboration on these policies.

Antique Alley in the Downtown Village

11. Mixed Use Urban (40 DU/acre)

This land use designation is assigned to the City's transportation corridors such as University Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard and La Mesa Boulevard. It is intended to allow a more intensive level of commercial development than Local Serving Commercial, but not the high volume Regionally significant activities found in Regional Serving Commercial. By allowing a mixture of residential and commercial uses along established transit routes, the City hopes to encourage new housing that is less dependent upon the automobile for access and creates a livable urban environment.

Uses proposing outside sales and storage, auto-related uses (including vehicle sales, rental and maintenance services) and drive-through facilities are conditionally permitted. Because this designation allows such a variety of uses, which in most cases will be adjacent to residential areas, new developments will be carefully studied during the Design Review Process to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses. In some areas the mix of uses and the scale of development may be limited to reflect adjoining land use patterns or specific plan policies.

12. Regional Serving Commercial

This land use designation is assigned to those areas of the City which are suitable for more intense urban activities, such as high volume retail sales, and other sales and services which are expected to draw local and Regional customers. Areas designated Regional Commercial are served by convenient freeway access and public transportation. Grossmont Center, Fletcher Parkway and Alvarado Road are examples of areas where the designation is applied.

Examples of uses intended in the Regional Commercial designation include retail shopping centers, large office complexes and uses providing services to the traveling public such as restaurants, service stations, hotels, and motels. Entertainment uses such as movie theaters and nightclubs may be conditionally permitted. Within larger areas of the City, which have been designated Regional Serving Commercial; there may be areas which are suitable for mixed-use or high density residential developments. The appropriate mix of uses permitted within these areas will be determined on a case-by-case review or by the amendment or adoption of a specific plan which will also establish the appropriate residential density.

13. Light Industrial

This ;and use designation is assigned to the Center Drive/Commercial Street District, bounded by Interstate 8 and the Trolley right-of-way. This District has historically been La Mesa's industrial center. The goal of this designation is to preserve the area as an employment center by allowing a mix of light industrial, wholesale commercial and construction service uses. When

EDCO facility located in the industrial center.

considering which particular uses are acceptable, the City will encourage those uses which generate employment.

14. Public Uses

This land use designation is assigned to properties which are owned by public agencies and which are reserved for activities serving the general public. Alphabetic abbreviations are used to specify the type of uses anticipated for each of these sites during the life of the Plan. Properties designated for Public Use may, under some circumstances, be zoned and used for other uses provided that the City Council makes a finding that the proposed zone and use are compatible with surrounding uses and therefore consistent with the General Plan. The designations used for this category are:

CC - Civic Center

PSF - Public Safety Facility

PWF - Public Works Facility

E - Elementary School

MS - Middle School

HS - High School

GA - Other Governmental Agencies or Institutional Facilities

TRANSPORTATION USES

TR - Transportation Right-Of-Way

T – Trolley Station

RECREATION USES

N - Neighborhood Park

C - Community Park

R -Regional Park

Table LD-4 has been prepared to illustrate the relationship between land use designations and zoning classifications.

Table LD-4. Zoning Compatibility Matrix

			Zoning Classification												
			R1E	R1R	R1S	R1	R1A	R2	R3	RB	CN	CD	C	CM	M
General Plan Land Use Designation	1	OPEN SPACE	*	*	*	*	*	*	*						
	2	RURAL RESIDENTIAL (1-2 d.u./acre)	C	C											
	3	SEMI-RURAL RESIDENTIAL (3 d.u./acre)		C											
	4	SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL (4 d.u./acre)			C										
	5	URBAN RESIDENTIAL (7-10 d.u./acre)				C	C								
	6	RESTRICTED MULTIPLE UNIT RESIDENTIAL (14 d.u./acre)						C							
	7	MULTIPLE UNIT RESIDENTIAL (18-23 d.u./acre)							C	C					
	8	MIXED DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (7-23 d.u./acre)				C	C	C	C	C					
	9	LOCAL SERVING COMMERCIAL								*	C		*		
	10	DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL								C	*	C			
	11	MIXED USE URBAN (24-40 d.u./acre)							C	C	*	*	C	*	*
	12	REGIONAL SERVING COMMERCIAL								*	*	*	C	C	*
	13	LIGHT INDUSTRIAL											*	C	C
	14	PUBLIC USE	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	15	RECREATION USES	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	16	TRANSPORTATION USES	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
		C = Zone(s) most consistent with the General Plan													
		* = Zones consistent with the General Plan under unique circumstances and/or with special design control.													

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

In addition to establishing the pattern of land used in the City, the Land Use and Urban Design Element provides Goals and Policies for the development and redevelopment of La Mesa which will apply to both residential and non-residential areas.

Goal LU-1: A safe and healthy community.

Objective LU-1.1: Enforce land use regulations to promote the quality of life in the community.

Policy LU-1.1.1: The City shall exercise its police powers related to land use in the best interest of the City to protect the general health, safety, and welfare of all citizens.

Policy LU-1.1.2: Maintain a Code Enforcement Program requiring properties to be well-maintained with healthy landscaping, and kept free of excess debris and storage in front yard areas.

Policy LU-1.1.3: The City shall maintain regulations and procedures to permit the abatement of non-conforming and nuisance uses.

Policy LU-1.1.4: Neighborhoods displaying deterioration should receive a focused effort of private investment and of City resources that provide incentives, assistance, or requirements to improve the area.

Policy LU-1.1.5: The City will maintain its infrastructure through asset management programs and a Capital Improvement Program, such as sewer infrastructure, utilities, and drainage facilities.

Objective LU-1.2: Preserve community identity while promoting safety for residents, employees, and visitors to La Mesa.

Policy LU-1.2.1: Ensure public and private gathering places and activity centers are designed to provide a safe and comfortable environment for users.

Policy LU-1.2.2: As part of the development review process, City departments will review all future development to ensure that safety requirements are met, including building and fire codes, accessibility standards and crime prevention techniques.

Policy LU-1.2.3: Encourage the use of wider sidewalks where higher levels of pedestrian activity occur and the use of non-contiguous sidewalk design where appropriate to help separate pedestrians from auto traffic.

Policy LU-1.2.4: Provide uniform, community identification and directional signage within the public right-of-way to identify the City's neighborhoods and activity centers.

Objective LU-1.3: Prioritize healthy lifestyle choices in land use decisions.

Policy LU-1.3.1: Seek opportunities to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections between neighborhoods and activity centers along easements and other areas where vehicles are not permitted.

Policy LU-1.3.2: Encourage the creation of high-quality community plazas, squares, greens, commons, and community and neighborhood parks,

Goal LU-2: Residential neighborhoods with strong character and cohesion.

Objective LU-2.1: Maintain and preserve single-family neighborhoods while directing growth to mixed-use corridors.

Policy LU-2.1.1: Enhance single-family residential neighborhoods through programs such as Development Review, Code Enforcement, Historic Preservation, and Capital Improvement Programs.

Policy LU-2.1.2: Support infill development and subdivision proposals that reinforce neighborhood strengths and benefit neighborhood identity.

Policy LU-2.1.3: Encourage single-family Planned Residential Developments (PRD) at densities similar to those found in single-family neighborhoods that meet the City's Development Standards, including the provision of parking and open space amenities.

Policy LU-2.1.4: Protect the character of recognized scenic and unique neighborhoods identified by the City's Overlay Zones, such as those areas that have a rural atmosphere or have been impacted by the SR-125.

Policy LU-2.1.5: Implement the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone by promoting the rehabilitation of properties and new development that fits into the context of the existing neighborhoods while meeting the City's Urban Design Objectives for infill development.

Objective LU-2.2: Promote the character of each La Mesa neighborhood as a unique place to live.

Policy LU-2.2.1: Create a superior living environment for multi-family dwellings.

Policy LU-2.2.2: All new development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation within residential neighborhoods shall be constructed to fit within the context of its neighborhood.

Policy LU-2.2.3: Home-based businesses shall be permitted subject to standards which will preserve the residential character of the neighborhoods.

Goal LU-3: Revitalized Commercial and Industrial Districts.

Objective LU-3.1: Maximize the potential of commercial centers in order to attract an appealing mix of new businesses.

Policy LU-3.1.1: The City will continue to promote the continued economic growth of the Grossmont Specific Plan Area through Land Use Policies and Implementation Programs intended to provide the necessary circulation pattern and infrastructure necessary for the development of the Grossmont area as a high density urban sub-center.

Policy LU-3.1.2: Update the Grossmont Specific Plan and Overlay Zone as needed to accommodate future growth of sites within the Plan Area, such as Grossmont Shopping Center, and allow for the potential of additional housing within this urban node.

Policy LU-3.1.3: Update the Downtown Village Specific Plan to reinforce the Downtown area as the symbolic center of the City and address new land use and infrastructure needs.

Policy LU-3.1.4: Parking and circulation shall be adequate to serve the use and location of new development.

Policy LU-3.1.5: Promote more intensive mixed-use and sustainable development in commercial areas consistent with the Urban Design Program.

Policy LU-3.1.6: Provide new site amenities, such as outdoor seating areas, bike racks, landscaping, and street trees as development occurs.

Policy LU-3.1.7: Encourage mixed-use transit-oriented development near public transportation facilities; new construction should be compact in form to take advantage of these transit-rich locations.

Objective LU-3.2: An industrial employment center attractive to customers from both local neighborhoods and Regional communities.

Policy LU-3.2.1: Recognize La Mesa's limited supply of industrial land and encourage clean industries that create a relatively high number of jobs.

Policy LU-3.2.2: Encourage the improvement of the appearance of the Central Industrial Area.

Policy LU-3.2.3: Parking requirements within the Commercial Light Industrial Land Use designation may be satisfied using both off-street parking and existing angled on-street parking due to a lack of adequate off-street parking within this area.

Goal LU-4: An equitable community that meets the needs of all residents.

Objective LU-4.1: Adequate and affordable housing available for all segments of the community.

Policy LU-4.1.1: Opportunities for affordable housing should exist in all residential areas to support the policies and programs for the City's Housing Element.

Policy LU-4.1.2: Ensure that development meets the needs of the aging and disabled population.

Policy LU-4.1.3: Conversion of mobile home parks shall be reviewed for compliance with State regulations for tenant relocation.

Objective LU-4.2: A development review process that balances the needs of all stakeholders.

Policy LU-4.2.1: Changes in patterns of building intensity and population density will be reviewed relative to:

The compatibility of the proposed development with surrounding uses and design objectives.

The adequacy and proximity of public facilities given the scale of the proposed development.

Policy LU-4.2.2: Height limits for non-residential buildings will be specified in each zone. The approval of a Special Permit may allow a building to exceed the specified height limit on a site-by-site basis.

Policy LU-4.2.3: New development shall provide adequate parking. For projects located in the Downtown area or near transit, parking requirements may be reduced. Additionally, differing land uses on the same subject property may utilize shared parking provisions.

Policy LU-4.2.5: Increased residential densities may be allowed by a Site Development Plan subject to a Density Bonus Program set forth in the Municipal Code. Development of senior or lower-income affordable housing may utilize the provisions of State Density Bonus Law as amended from time to time.

Objective LU-4.3: Provide opportunities for community involvement and participation.

Policy LU-4.3.1: Promote citizen involvement and partnerships between residents, community organizations, and agencies, such as local school districts.

Policy LU-4.3.2: Continue to support the City's Boards and Commissions in their role of evaluating land use decisions and host forums for public outreach and participation to involve citizens as part of planning processes.

Goal LU-5: A strong local and Regional economy.

Objective LU-5.1: Promote and maintain La Mesa as a business-friendly Regional employment center.

Policy LU-5.1.1: Land use changes and redevelopment projects should keep the City "business friendly" and economically competitive, while enhancing quality of life.

Policy LU-5.1.2: Develop Regional partnerships to strengthen business opportunities in La Mesa, and assist business owners and developers throughout the Permit Review Process.

Policy LU-5.1.3: Focus business attraction, retention, and expansion efforts on companies and institutions that bring quality jobs and provide benefits and livable wages for La Mesa residents.

Policy LU-5.1.4: Comprehensive site planning is encouraged as part of the redevelopment process for individual properties. These plans should address not only the architectural design of buildings and site amenities but also the upgrading of public infrastructure.

Policy LU-5.1.5: Zoning Standards shall be modified as appropriate to remain responsive to changes in market conditions and employment trends.

Policy LU-5.1.6: Consider opportunities to expand the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone to include under-developed Commercial Districts.

Objective LU-5.2: Preserve and enhance the Downtown Village area as the City's symbolic center by providing a vibrant Commercial, Civic, and Residential District.

Policy LU-5.2.1: Continue communication with business owners to identify opportunities and constraints for developing business Downtown.

Policy LU-5.2.2: Retain and enhance the Civic Center by evaluating City-owned parcels for new uses within the Civic Center.

Policy LU-5.2.3: Utilize the framework of the Downtown Village Parking District and the La Mesa Parking Commission to locate and manage parking in Downtown and evaluate the feasibility of a parking structure when warranted by future parking demand.

Policy LU-5.2.4: Preserve historic buildings in the Downtown Village, and other Commercial areas, through restoration and adaptive reuse, where feasible.

Goal LU-6: A City where the environmental, social, and economic needs of the residents are met without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

Objective LU-6.1: Evaluate the short-term and long-term impact on valuable resources such as water, energy, and open space when making land use decisions.

Policy LU-6.1.1: Reduce the City's Greenhouse Gas Emissions through energy efficient improvements, support for alternative modes of transportation, transportation demand management (TDM) practices and sound waste management practices.

Policy LU-6.1.2: As new building methods and technologies become available, update Building Codes to meet State of California and local energy conservation objectives.

Policy LU-6.1.3: Collaborate with property owners and Helix Water District to promote the use of drought-tolerant landscaping and water efficient irrigation systems as new development and redevelopment occurs.

Policy LU-6.1.4: Provide incentives for Transit-Oriented and Mixed-Use development, such as a parking reduction consistent with Regional Standards, for more intense development and higher density residential uses along major transportation corridors or in areas accessible to transit use.

Policy LU-6.1.5: Development of hillside and hilltop parcels will be evaluated relative to topographic features, scenic resources, sensitive, natural habitats and landscaping, including mature stands of trees, to determine if these features should be retained.

Policy LU-6.1.6: The parcels designated Open Space, located south of the I-8 corridor, shall be subject to the following development standards (Council Resolution No. 16197):

- A full range of residential densities shall be permitted based upon a site-by-site evaluation.
- On parcels which contain more than 50% of the site area within the Open Space designation, encroachment of buildings and grading is allowed.
- A maximum 50% encroachment of projects into the Open Space shall be permitted when found to be consistent with the City's Design Review Program and the loss of Open Space is off-set by the project design.
- Plant materials shall be selected for consistency with surrounding native and ornamental landscaping schemes, and shall meet brush management and fire control objectives.

Goal LU-7: A City that maintains strong relationships across jurisdictions.

Objective LU-7.1: Open communication, cooperation, and collaboration with neighboring communities and relevant agencies.

Policy LU-7.1.1: The City of La Mesa will actively participate in Regional planning efforts, and strive to implement Regional Growth Management Strategies, including SANDAG's Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Comprehensive Plan, which directly relate to City interests.

Policy LU-7.1.2: Collaborate with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority by reviewing local land use proposals for consistency with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans.

Policy LU-7.1.3: Work with the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) when residents outside the City request annexation or connection to City sanitary sewer facilities.

Policy LU-7.1.4: Continue to monitor and support the efforts of the California Air Resources Board and other agencies as they formulate global warming and climate change adaption and mitigation strategies and programs.

Policy LU-7.1.5: Development proposals near the City boundary will be forwarded to the adjacent jurisdiction for review and comment and development in adjacent areas will likewise be monitored to minimize potential effects

Policy LU-7.1.6: All lots created by the California Department of Transportation, within their right-of-way areas, are designated as transportation right-of-way and will require a General Plan Amendment prior to development with non-transportation uses.

Policy LU-7.1.7: The undergrounding of utilities will be required with the development and redevelopment of property. The City will coordinate with utility providers as needed.

Inter-Jurisdictional Coordination

La Mesa will remain a participant in Regional efforts to coordinate the exchange of information between governmental agencies and utility providers leading to mutual agreement upon public and private development activities. In order to make effective land use and transportation planning decisions, La Mesa collaborates with the County of San Diego, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority and the neighboring cities of El Cajon, Lemon Grove, and San Diego. Development activity within neighboring cities will be of interest to La Mesa as they

improve the economic climate of the area. The City will be assisted in this effort by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by all local jurisdictions in 1990. This MOU commits cities in the County to provide notices to adjacent jurisdictions when development is proposed which might impact the neighboring agency.

County of San Diego

The County of San Diego and the City of La Mesa have a Memorandum of Understanding, which provides for review of projects near the County boundary. The City also uses Regional Standards, established by the County, for project review within the City. La Mesa's Community Development Department coordinates with County agencies such as the Health and Human Services Agency Department of Environmental Health Hazardous Materials Division and the Air Pollution Control District.

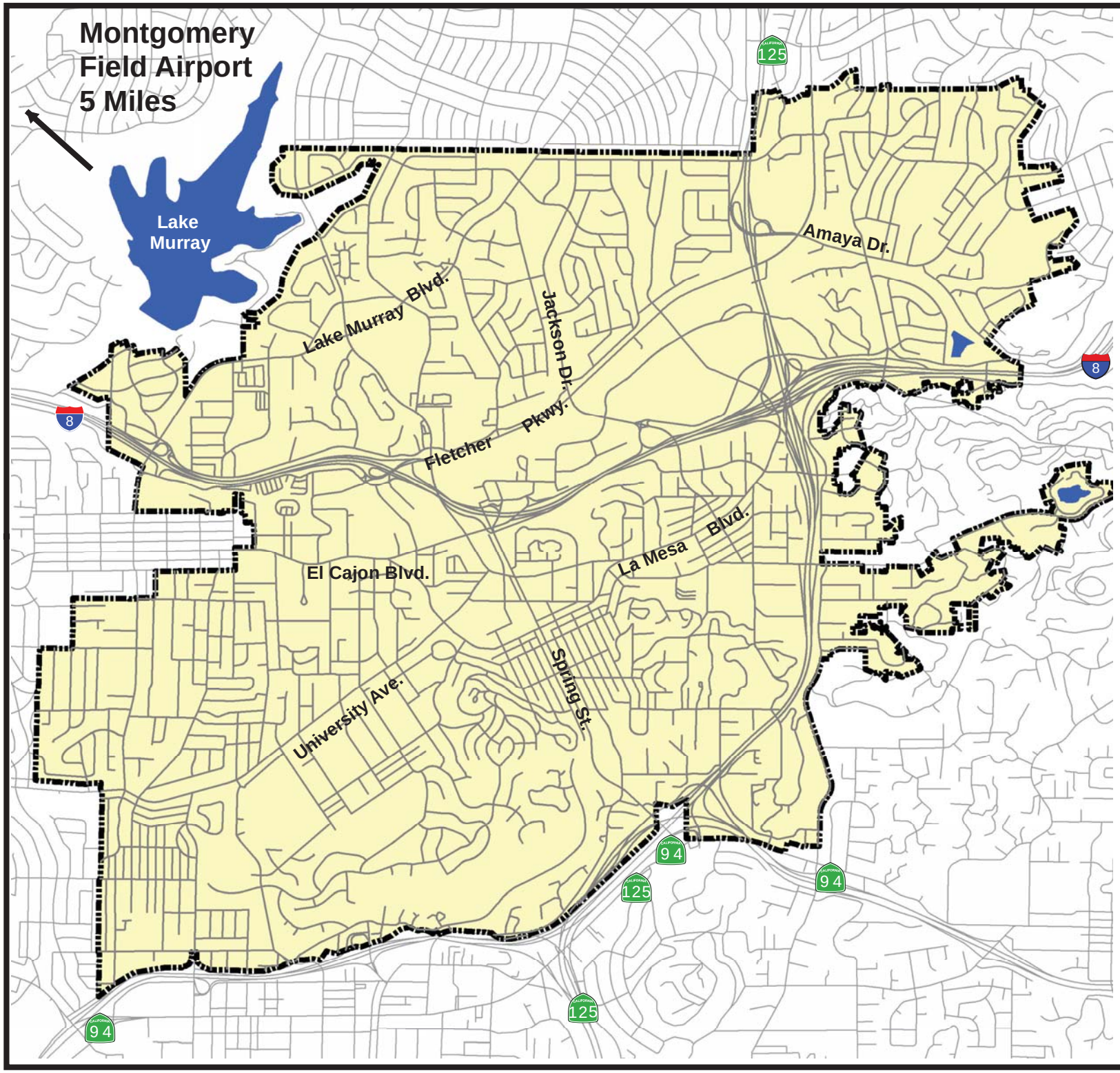
San Diego County Regional Airport Authority

One of the responsibilities of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority is to serve as the San Diego County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) which is responsible for airport land use compatibility planning in the vicinity of the 16 public use and military airports in San Diego County. The City of La Mesa falls within the Airport Influence Area (AIA) for Montgomery and Gillespie Fields.

Gillespie Field Airport

Most of La Mesa lies within Montgomery Field Airport Influence Review Area 2, which is an airport over-flight notification area applicable to new residential development. If any future home development or redevelopment occurs within Airport Influence Review Area 2, a real estate professional is required to disclose, upon property transaction, the fact that airplane over-flights occur from Montgomery Field (see **Figure LD-8**).

The northeastern edge of La Mesa is within Gillespie Field Airport Influence Review Area 2. This area of the City consists of developed single-family residential neighborhoods that cross the municipal boundary between La Mesa and El Cajon. If new housing or housing redevelopment were to occur in this neighborhood, real estate professionals are required to disclose to buyers the fact that airplane over-flights occur from Gillespie Field. The Gillespie Field ALUCP requires the recordation of an overflight notification or, in some cases, an avigation easement to the County of San Diego. The recordation of an overflight notification applies only to new developments, whereas avigation easements apply to any new use of property (see **Figure LD-9**).



GENERAL PLAN

MONTGOMERY FIELD

COMPATIBILITY MAP

Legend

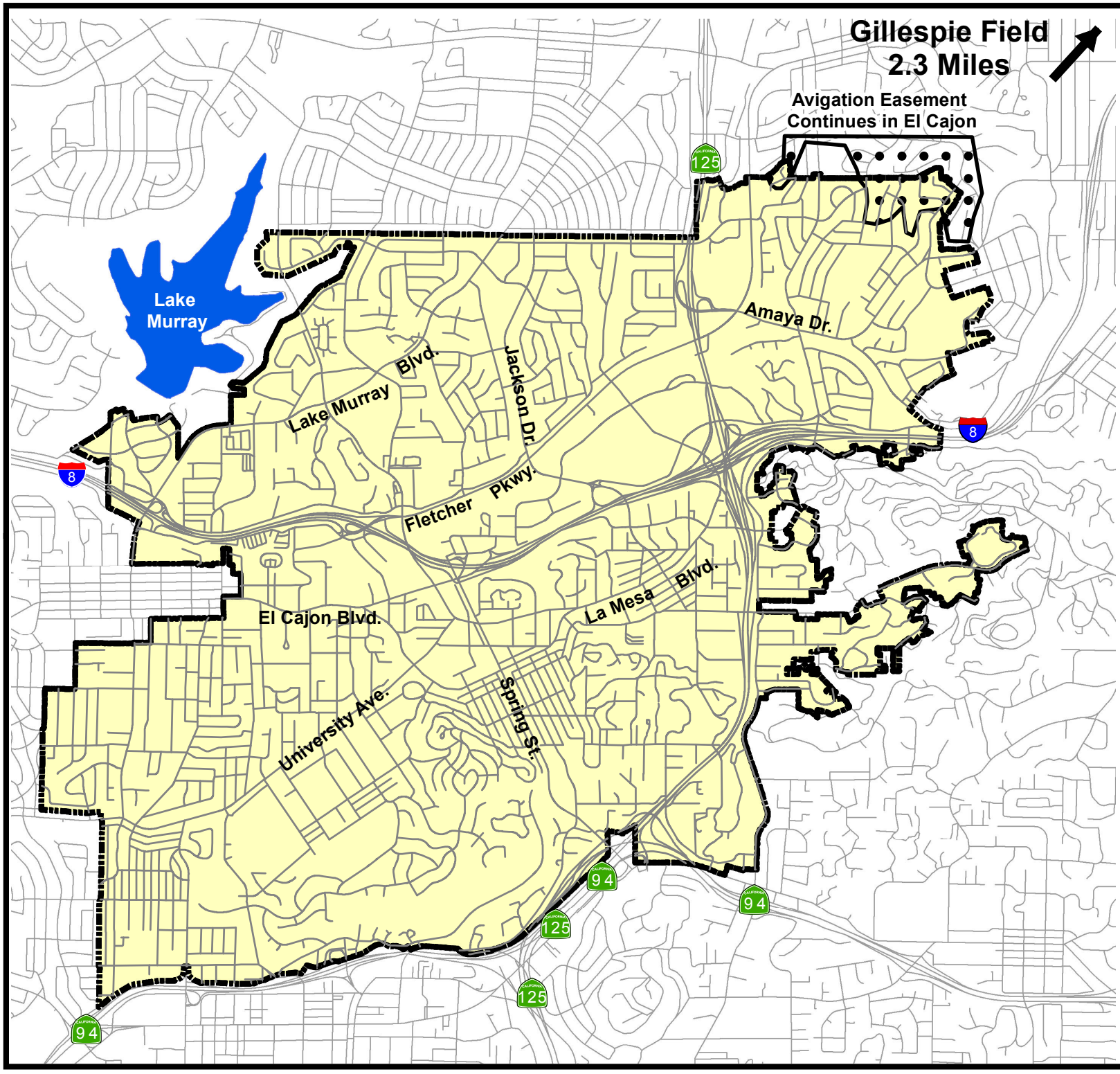
- Montgomery Field Influence Area and FAR Part 77 Area
- Montgomery Field Notification Area
- City of La Mesa
- Lakes
- Roads

0 1,400 2,800 4,200 Feet

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-8



GENERAL PLAN

GILLESPIE FIELD

COMPATIBILITY MAP

Legend

- Gillespie Field Avigation Easement
- Gillespie Field Review Area 2
- Gillespie Field Notification Area
- City of La Mesa
- Lakes
- Roads

Feet
0 1,500 3,000 4,500

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-9

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

SANDAG is the Region's transportation and planning agency representing the region's 18 cities and County government. SANDAG is responsible for providing a strategic Regional planning framework in the form of a Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). The 2004 RCP encourages local governments to increase residential and employment concentrations in areas that are well served by transit connections and to preserve open space. La Mesa's General Plan aligns with these Regional initiatives through policies included in this Land Use Element, as well as in the Circulation Element and Open Space and Conservation Element.

The RCP identifies Smart Growth sites around the region. Smart Growth is a planning concept that focuses on avoiding urban sprawl by allocating attention and resources to create compact, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. SANDAG identified 10 Smart Growth areas in La Mesa. Six of these have existing or planned Smart Growth developments. Four other areas have the potential for Smart Growth as they are located near existing trolley stations and along major corridors.

SANDAG's 2050 RTP outlines a sustainable communities strategy.

SANDAG's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) will implement a long-range vision for highways, bus and trolley service, rail lines, bicycle travel, pedestrian travel, and the movement of goods. La Mesa will directly benefit from local trolley, bus, and freeway improvement projects, while projects across the region will improve connections and accessibility for La Mesa residents traveling outside the City. Senate Bill 375 requires preparation of a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) as part of the region's transportation plan. The SCS shows how future development patterns, infrastructure investments, and transportation policies will allow the region to meet GHG emission reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board. To help meet the reduction targets for the region, La Mesa supports infill development, alternative transportation, and conservation of energy and water resources.

San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission

Sphere of Influence

The San Diego Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) exercises both regulatory and planning functions. LAFCO's major planning task is the establishment of "Spheres of Influence" for the governmental bodies within its jurisdiction. As described by Section 56076 of the Government Code, the Sphere is to be "a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local government agency." In the late 1980's, studies of

the unincorporated area to the east of the City were made to see if additional property should be annexed into the City of La Mesa. Due to fiscal impact concerns, additional lands annexed into the City were limited to single-family home sites with failing septic systems. The City's Sphere of Influence aligns with the municipal boundary. LAFCO determined that the City's Sphere of Influence is co-terminus with the La Mesa municipal boundary.

The City of La Mesa works with San Diego's Local Agency Formation Commission on requests for annexation from private property owners who reside beyond the City. Most annexation cases have come about as requests to access City sewer facilities. In lieu of annexation, requests to connect to City sewer facilities may be considered when septic systems are failing. When a Sphere of Influence is updated, LAFCO performs a Service Review Determination for any changes in municipal services.

Urban Design

To complement La Mesa's beautiful natural setting, the City seeks design excellence within its business districts, residential neighborhoods, and public areas. Urban Design addresses the design of buildings and their relationship to neighboring buildings, open space, streets, and transportation corridors. This Element provides the basis for aesthetic review and regulation of public and private land and structures. The process of Urban Design helps maintain and create quality in the built environment of La Mesa.

Mixed-Use Development on El Cajon Boulevard

In addition to its physical setting, the City takes pride in preserving its historical image as a distinct suburban community within the San Diego Metropolitan Area. As the region has grown and urban growth has engulfed La Mesa, it has taken more of an effort from the City to maintain its identity as a singular community with its own memorable attributes. An important function of this Plan is to establish policies and programs that forge the image of the City as growth continues to occur.

Purpose

The City's Urban Design Program and related Design Guidelines will be used to ensure the built environment contributes to the qualities that distinguish La Mesa as a unique place to live, work, and recreate.

Sustainable infill development and redevelopment that build upon existing neighborhoods will be encouraged due to La Mesa's limited supply of vacant land.

City Policies on urban form and design are a tool to address the natural environment and target new growth to transportation corridors.

Community Image

To guide decisions about individual development projects and assure that they fit within the context of the community, the Community Development Department uses the concept of "Community Image" developed by Kevin Lynch, a noted expert on urban form.

Community Image is a planning tool consisting of an association of visual images which collectively help to identify a city's physical form and character. The Community Image vocabulary includes nine elements briefly outlined in **Table LD-5**. Image studies of this type reflect individual perspectives of a community, but are also a means of recording a general consensus about existing or planned urban design elements of a city. The following major Elements make up La Mesa's Community Image:

Downtown Village in 2010

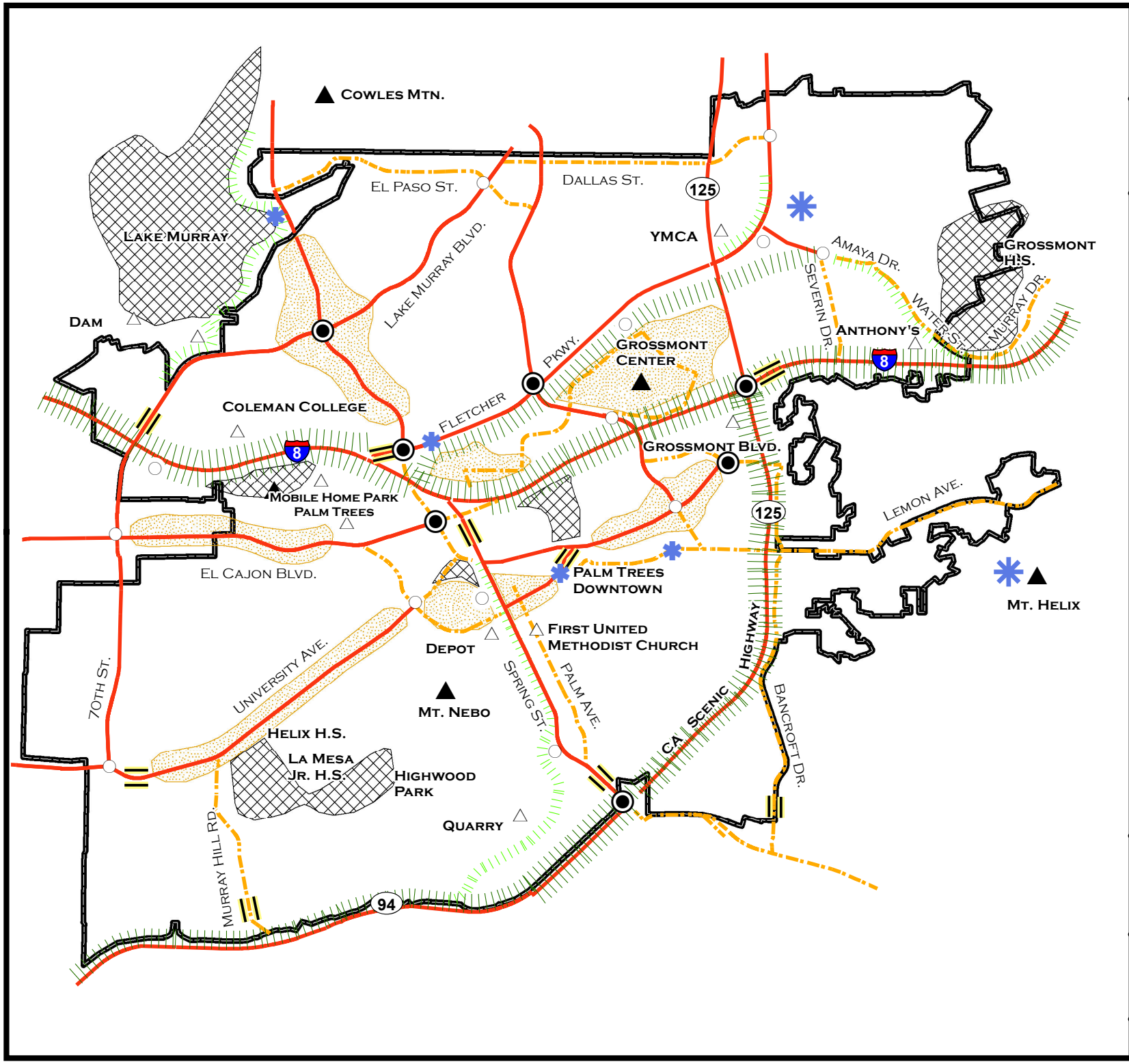
- The Trolley lines are a major circulation path through the City.
- The freeways and Fletcher Parkway are major paths with edges that define major portions of the City.
- The major arterials in the City, University Avenue, La Mesa Boulevard, El Cajon Boulevard, Spring Street, Baltimore Drive, Jackson Drive, and 70th Street are major paths, edges and boundaries for the City's Districts.
- Mount Helix is a major landmark to the east of the City.
- The Grossmont Center and Grossmont Medical Campus comprise a major District. These sites will continue to develop with new uses in future years and represent opportunities for innovative, sustainable design.
- The Downtown Village and Civic Center are major nodes. Both of these areas will be enhanced with new streetscapes and uses for increased pedestrian mobility.
- Many of the "gateways" to the community are poorly defined and do not serve the identifying function they should.
- There are many panoramic views from along and on top of the City's hills.

Using these major Elements of Community Image, an image map of La Mesa is shown in **Figure LD-10**. This map is one of many possible images of the community as the City continues to evolve.

How and where new development occurs may affect the overall image of the City. The design success of new development will also be measured within the context of its immediate neighborhood, on specific site criteria, and on its architectural merits. The Urban Design Goals, Policies and Programs listed herein are meant to insure successful design for the progression of projects in the City as measured on a community-wide, neighborhood, and site specific scale.

Table LD-5. Community Image Elements

PATH	Paths are the channels through the city along which the observer moves. They may be streets, walkways, transit lines, or railroads. People observe the city while moving through it, and along these paths the other environmental elements are arranged and related.
EDGE	Edges are linear elements such as shores, steep slopes, edges of development, or walls that serve as boundaries between two phases or breaks in continuity. Such edges may be barriers which close one region off from another, of they may be seams along which two regions are related and joined together.
LANDMARK	Landmarks are usually either physical objects such as signs, isolated towers, unique buildings; or natural features such as a hill or lake. They may be within the city or at such a distance that they symbolize a constant direction.
DISTRICT	Districts are the medium to large sections of the city which are recognizable as having some common, identifying character. The district character is often identifiable by the unity of land uses and development.
NODE	Nodes are the strategic spots in a city into which an observer can enter, and which are the intensive foci to and from which people travel. Many nodes, by nature, are both junctions of paths and polarizing centers for districts. Nodes are well defined and recognized by a cohesive design theme using architectural treatment or street hardware.
GROUPING	Groupings are small-to-medium sections of the city that are similar in relation to districts. They are a collection of similar units that bridge gaps left between districts and nodes. A grouping may be buildings of similar character, use, or history, or be non-structural such as a park or open space.
GATEWAY	Gateways serve as the visual entries or exits between a district, grouping, or denote an access through an edge. A gateway may be characterized by natural or man-made features, usually in conjunction with traveling along a path. The use of gateways helps to define entries by portraying positive community characteristics or elements that are easily recognizable.
PANORAMIC VIEW	Panoramic views provide an overall image of a large portion of the city or outlying region. The location may be within or adjacent to the city and from an easily access point such as a hill top, pass, or atop a landmark.
VISTA	Vista is similar to panoramic views but with a much narrower angle. These views are characterized by long vertically defined spaces that open to allow sight of a few select elements. Common examples occur along streets, corridors, or groves that open on to views of the ocean, a major building, or a square.



GENERAL PLAN

COMMUNITY IMAGE

LEGEND

Landmarks / Nodes

- Major Landmark
- Minor Landmark
- Major Node
- Minor Node
- Panoramic View
- Vista

Paths and Edges

- Gateway
- Major Edge
- Minor Edge
- Major Path
- Minor Path

Districts & Groupings

- District
- Grouping

- Municipal Boundary

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-10

Community Design and Sustainability Guidelines

Place-making in urban areas with all too frequent generic developments is a continuous challenge. In revitalized and new special places, community and consumer interests are heightened. Sustainability practices can be incorporated into all phases of the Development Process, from project conceptualization and choice of site, to building design and construction.

Gateway Sign on Fletcher Parkway

Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable Development approaches are gaining recognition as not only feasible, but preferred options to conventional forms of development. Activities in support of Sustainable Development can be pursued through collaborative working relationships that address the following twelve principles:

- Select environmentally friendly materials, build more compactly to save land, mix uses and provide connections to adjoining development.
- Respect geography by conserving and retaining natural systems such as streams, wetlands, native vegetation and habitat, and provide open space for urban respite.
- Reuse and recycle land and buildings as successive uses locate within the City.
- Design buildings to use natural heating and cooling and to minimize the need for mechanical equipment. Use energy efficient mechanical systems for low energy use. Consider condensing furnaces for residential heating, centrifugal chillers for commercial cooling, energy recovery and economizer equipment, variable speed motors, gas-fired water and air heating systems.

Re-Used Buildings along Fletcher Parkway

- Reduce energy consumption through the use of additional wall and roof insulation, and building practices that optimize heating and cooling management.
- Select high performance windows to reflect or transmit heat and orient windows properly relative to the sun.
- Use sun-reflective roofs and skylights for energy savings.

- Replace inefficient lighting which can account for a substantial share of energy costs with low energy lighting systems such as compact fluorescent light emitting diodes or task-oriented lighting with occupancy sensors and on/off scheduling.
- Incorporate passive solar systems and active solar energy production into building designs to meet a substantial portion of heating and cooling needs.
- Design for walking, cycling and transit use to reduce dependence on the automobile and minimize land area dedicated for parking.
- Make distinctive places and incorporate amenities that foster community cohesion.
- Conserve water resources utilizing climate appropriate landscaping and on-site storm water management.

Sustainable or "Green" Building is the process of designing and building efficient structures that minimize the use of energy, water, and material resources. The application of sustainable site design principles can create commercial and residential projects that are efficient and affordable. Workplaces that are sited with access to transit, and have clearly defined pedestrian routes, encourage opportunities for walking to work and for minimizing traffic congestion and related economic and environmental costs. A building's location and context are important factors to reduce energy demand while increasing opportunities for improved personal health and social interaction.

New development fits within the context of the community.

The most sustainable developments are those that meet the needs for daily life and work. Progress towards a sustainable community can be made by encouraging "green" redevelopment and new projects that improve the built environment and quality of life for the City's citizens.

The Urban Design Program

The Urban Design Program utilizes principles of good urban design in a review process intended to insure that new development fits into the fabric of the community. The Program establishes a system to evaluate both public and private projects based on the Community Image Concept and hierarchy of land use ranging from Regional to site specific plans. The design review process is a key method of implementing the Land Use Element of the General Plan as development review occurs. Projects subject to design review include new or substantially renovated commercial properties, multi-unit residential developments, projects within the City's Mixed-Use corridors, and sites within the Downtown Village Specific Plan area.

The Urban Design Program is geared toward consideration of individual buildings and sites, with the idea that incremental redevelopment and renovation will enhance the overall quality of the built environment and improve the aesthetic quality of life in the community. This focus on private development also considers, however, the larger urban context and public realm. For both private and public realms, consideration of Development Guidelines and use of sustainable design techniques are key factors in the project review and approval process. As new technologies and new design methods become available, existing Design Guidelines should periodically be reviewed and updated for improvements.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

La Mesa's Urban Design Goals, Policies, and Objectives are in line with the following principles:

1. Development pattern, form, and structure are crucial to creating a sense of place.

2. Well designed development is sustainable, visually appealing, and designed to fit within the current or planned context of the surrounding area.

3. Natural features of a site are valuable amenities.

Goal UD-1: A built environment that contributes to the qualities distinguishing La Mesa's unique community identity.

Objective UD-1.1: To protect La Mesa's existing built environment and cultural heritage.

Policy UD-1.1.1: The visual quality and continuity of the community will be enhanced through consistent circulation patterns, definition of community edges and boundaries, distinct gateways and nodes, and removal of visually disruptive elements.

Policy UD-1.1.2: For mixed use projects, ground floor commercial uses are encouraged to be oriented to the streets and sidewalks to encourage an appealing pedestrian experience.

Policy UD-1.1.3: Retain the Village atmosphere and pedestrian scale of buildings in the Downtown Village.

Policy UD-1.1.4: Incorporate defensible design principles into future buildings and site design schemes to facilitate crime prevention, also known as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Policy UD-1.1.5: Improve the quality of public gathering spaces and buildings.

Objective UD-1.2: To facilitate property that is well maintained and creates visually appealing neighborhoods.

Policy UD-1.2.1: Promote reinvestment in private property, and encourage private property maintenance.

Policy UD-1.2.2: Commercial signage should improve rather than detract from the quality of the surrounding neighborhood. New billboard structures are prohibited.

Policy UD-1.2.3: On a case-by-case basis, consideration should be given to using public right-of-way areas for alternative uses, such as sidewalk cafes.

Policy UD-1.2.4: Collaborate with CALTRANS and MTS to improve the appearance and maintenance of landscaping within the transportation right-of-way.

Goal UD-2: Well-designed development based upon proven urban design principles.

Objective UD-2.1: Preserve and enhance the aesthetic, environmental, economic, and social character of La Mesa through careful design review decisions.

Policy UD-2.1.1: Give careful attention to Urban Design Standards related to building scale, architectural materials, landscaping, and other elements to emphasize attractive building and site design in new developments and redevelopments.

Policy UD-2.1.2: The review of projects should place a priority on the compatibility of adjacent land uses. Special attention should be given to buffering and transitional methods, when reviewing projects of differing residential densities or land uses.

Policy UD-2.1.3: Adopt revised Street Design Standards to maintain an efficient and aesthetically pleasing street network while meeting the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

Policy UD-2.1.4: Building setbacks and step-backs should be evaluated to maintain La Mesa's pedestrian emphasis and character.

Policy UD-2.1.5: Revitalize University Avenue through traffic circulation, pedestrian safety, and landscaping improvements.

Policy UD-2.1.6: Consider shared parking, parking reductions and/or parking management plans to reduce the amount of physical space devoted exclusively to parking vehicles. Parking lot landscaping should further water conservation goals.

Policy UD-2.1.7: Ensure that telecommunications facilities are designed to integrate into existing structures and/or landscapes with minimal visual intrusion.

Goal UD-3: A built environment that respects La Mesa's natural environment and climate.

Objective UD-3.1: Development that is architecturally and environmentally sensitive and is compatible with neighboring design and scale.

Policy UD-3.1.1: Encourage resource-efficient building techniques, materials, and principles of sustainable design in new construction and renovation.

Policy UD-3.1.2: For all City-owned facilities, the City shall attempt to incorporate "Green" building principles and practices into the planning, design, construction, and operation.

Policy UD-3.1.3: Create Development Standards to accommodate new technologies related to solar and wind energy.

Policy UD-3.1.4: Ensure that the built environment prepares for adaptation to adverse climate change impacts such as increasingly intense heat waves or water shortages.

Policy UD-3.1.5: Increase the amount of foliage, especially street trees, for aesthetic reasons and to provide shade, cooling, habitats, air quality benefits, and visual continuity.

Implementation

The General Plan is a policy document adopted by City Council Resolution. In order to implement its policies, other plans and programs must be adopted. A variety of these plans and programs have been used in La Mesa to implement Land Use Policy; including Specific Plans, redevelopment project areas, development regulations, the Urban Design Program, and a collection of related activities. This section briefly describes how each of these plans and programs work within La Mesa.

Specific Plans

Specific plans are used in many California cities to establish a link between implementing policies of the General Plan and the individual development proposals in a defined area. The content of a Specific Plan remains consistent with the General Plan, and usually includes an examination of current conditions, a forecast of future conditions, a list of goals and policies, needed public improvements, and a set of development regulations tailored to the unique characteristics and planning issues in an area. In La Mesa, Specific Plans have been adopted in four areas:

Grossmont Medical Center

Grossmont Specific Plan

Grossmont Center and Grossmont Hospital are part of a high density Commercial District serving the City and region with a variety of commercial uses and professional services including retail, restaurants, medical offices, and a hospital. The Grossmont Specific Plan

area is generally bounded by Interstate 8 to the south, Jackson Drive to the west, Parkway Drive to the north, and Amaya Drive to the east. This area comprises the largest Commercial District in La Mesa. The Plan envisions the area developing with fairly high densities, taking advantage of the variety of available transportation options (trolley, bus, freeway access) for continued economic growth. The Plan was first adopted in 1985 and the area has received numerous improvements, such as the construction of a Trolley Station and improvements to surrounding commercial property, including Regional Serving Uses, such as the Grossmont Medical Campus.

Within the Specific Plan area, it is anticipated that the Grossmont Shopping Center will redevelop during the time span of this General Plan. This Regional shopping center site contains 64 acres and represents the largest single development opportunity site in La Mesa.

Downtown Specific Plan

Although the Downtown La Mesa Village area is already developed, reuse, conversion, and modernization of existing development is anticipated as property owners lease their sites to new businesses locating to La Mesa. The Downtown Village Specific Plan, adopted in 1992, establishes Policies for development within its subarea. Distinctive site and building designs are encouraged to create pleasant public realms and memorable places for residents and visitors alike. The purpose of this General Plan update is to define the policies, programs, and public improvements needed to preserve the Downtown District as the symbolic center of La Mesa.

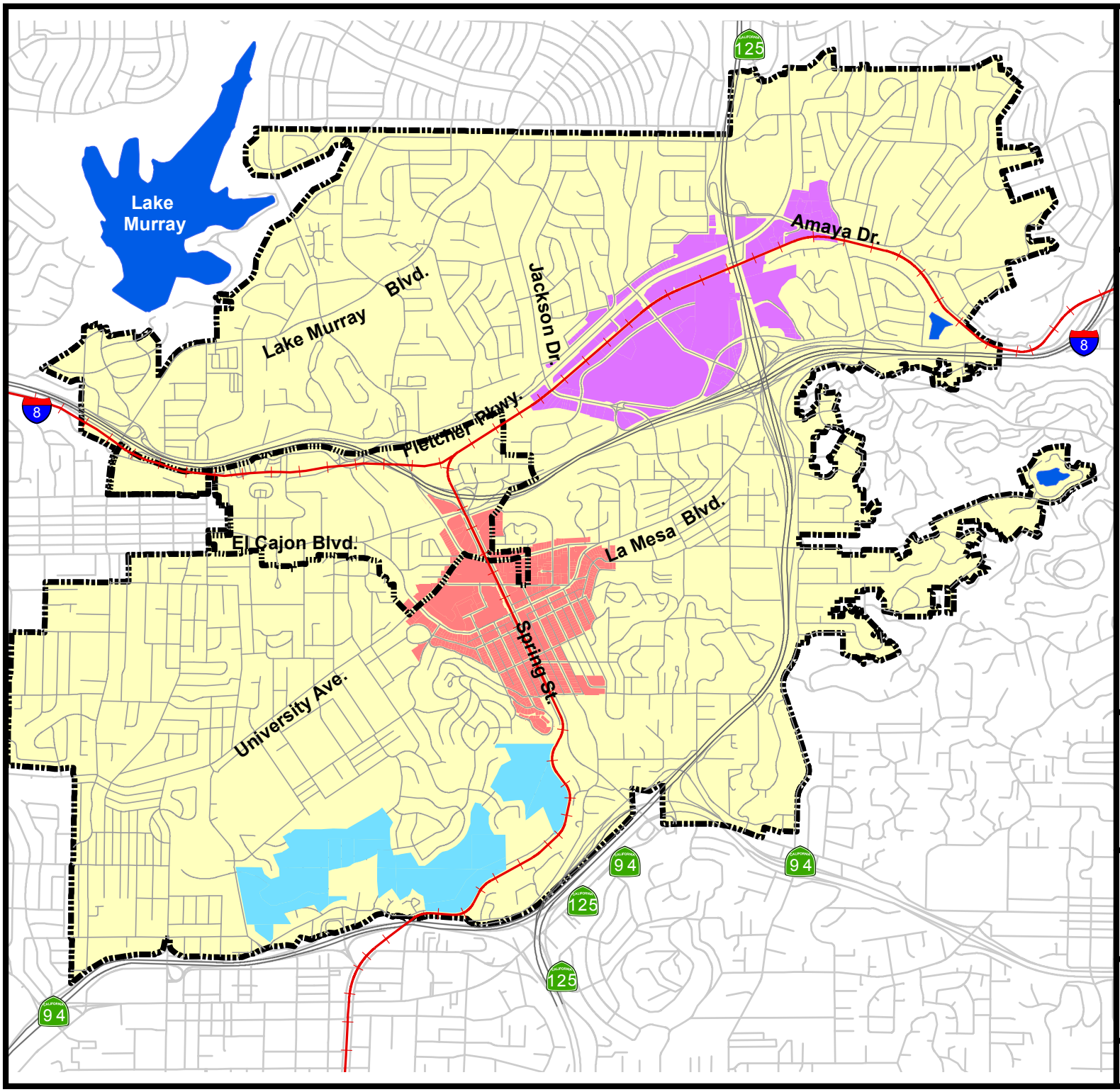
West Central Specific Plan

The West Central Specific Plan was adopted in 1987 and the Goals and Policies of this Plan have been replaced by the Mixed-Use Urban Overlay Zone and the Downtown Specific Plan. As a result, the West Central Specific Plan has been rescinded by the above referenced documents.

Eastridge Specific Plan

The Eastridge Specific Plan, located in the south central portion of the City, was adopted in 1989. The area consists of 192 acres generally bounded by Murray Hill Road to the west, SR-94 to the south, Spring Street to the east, and existing residential neighborhoods to the north. The site is generally steeply sloping and includes vegetated areas with coastal sage scrub and chaparral. It is the intent of the Eastridge Specific Plan to provide for new housing while retaining hillside areas as natural open space. The Specific Plan includes text and diagrams specifying the distribution and location of land, including open space, and facilities proposed to be located to support the land uses described within the Plan, as well as standards for the conservation of natural resources. At the time of its adoption, the Eastridge Specific Plan area was the largest undeveloped land in the City. Subsequently, this specific plan area has been largely built-out with new residential development and includes a 50 acre open space preserve.

These four specific plans are detailed in **Figure LD-11**.



GENERAL PLAN

SPECIFIC PLANS

Legend

- Downtown Village Specific Plan
- Grossmont Specific Plan
- West Central Specific Plan
- Eastridge Specific Plan
- Freeways
- Light Rail Transit
- Roads
- Lakes
- City Boundary

Feet
0 1,300 2,600 3,900

CITY OF LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

Data Sources:
SanGIS
City of La Mesa

Figure LD-11

Development Regulations

Development regulations for La Mesa include the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Ordinance, and the Uniform Building Code. Each of these sets of regulations are adopted by the La Mesa City Council as part of the Municipal Code, therefore violations of these Codes are subject to both civil and criminal prosecution. These Codes are important tools used to implement the Goals and Policies of the General Plan. As such, it is important for the City to review and amend these Ordinances as necessary with each succeeding General Plan update. It is intended that with the current update of the General Plan, the City will revise the development regulations as necessary to reflect adopted Policies and keep up to date on new practices and trends. This process will give the City an opportunity to review existing regulations for consistency and relevance. The following is a brief description of the function of each Ordinance:

1. Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance regulates the use of all land within the City. Every parcel of land is located within a Zoning District. Each Zoning District has specific regulations regarding the use of land, the minimum lot size for subdivision, as well as limitations on the location, height, amount of parking, and bulk of buildings on lots. According to State law, the Zoning Ordinance must be consistent with the General Plan. Since the City's Zoning Ordinance dates to the 1970's, the regulations regarding development of land should be reviewed and modified as appropriate to ensure consistency with this General Plan.

While the General Plan provides policy statements relating to the general uses of land and the desired results of any future development, it is the Zoning Ordinance which has the most direct influence on development by specifying the distances between buildings, the height of buildings, landscaping, parking, and other regulations which combine to create the desired urban environment.

The City of La Mesa Zoning Ordinance will be updated for consistency with the Gillespie Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. This Plan requires the recordation of an overflight notification applicable to new residential development and avigation easements applicable to any new use of property. These recordation requirements can apply on if the City of La Mesa adopts a Municipal Ordinance which mandates such recordation consistent with the ALUCP. Without such an Ordinance, the County Recorder's office does not have the authority to make such recordations.

In addition to Development Regulations established by the City's base zones, a number of Overlay Zones have been applied to particular areas of the City where supplemental Permitted Use and Development Standards are merited. The Urban Design Overlay Zone, adopted in 1987, is used to supplement the required land use regulations reviewed under the standard provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Projects developed within this Overlay Zone will be evaluated on their compliance with both the unique design criteria

that pertain to the visually sensitive areas within the City and Development Guidelines established by the Urban Design Program.

The Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone established regulations for the recognized scenic areas in the City, the character of which could be permanently damaged by actions involving the development and use of land without special regulations. The Brier Tract Overlay Zone establishes Development Standards for a unique residential area of the City, including lots fronting on Brier Road, Bramble Road, Briercrest Drive, and Nokomis Street in the Brier Tract which is a relatively rural area with a rustic atmosphere.

The Grossmont Specific Plan Overlay Zone, which was adopted in 1985, establishes Standards and Regulations for a unique area of the City consisting of the Grossmont Hospital, Grossmont Shopping Center, two transit station sites, and related surrounding uses. This area has been highly impacted by the route SR 8/125 interchange, an extension of route 125 to the north. This area will develop as a relatively high density urban sub-center with allowable densities at the upper end of ranges feasible under market demands. To accomplish this and retain compatibility with surrounding land uses the Overlay Zone and Grossmont Specific Plan establish additional Development Standards and Guidelines.

The Floodway Overlay Zone is intended for those areas of the City within floodways or water courses in which flood control structures and facilities are required or planned to be installed.

The Murray Hill Overlay Zone, which was adopted in 1982, establishes Standards and Regulations for the reasonable development of a unique area of the City, the Murray Hill area. This Overlay Zone includes modified Regulations and special Development Standards. The Hillside Overlay Zone, which was adopted in 1980, establishes Standards and Regulations for the reasonable development of hillside areas in order to reduce the impact of such development on adjacent residential areas.

The Neighborhood Plan Overlay Zone, which was adopted in 1979, establishes Development Standards for a unique residential area of the City. Unlike other single-family residential neighborhoods in La Mesa, this area has exceptionally large lots which cannot be subdivided in a conventional manner. This Overlay Zone is established to provide regulations of said lots. The Neighborhood Plan Overlay Zone Number Two, which was adopted in 1980, establishes Development Standards and Regulations for the American Avenue neighborhood and surrounding area. The Bowling Green Overlay Zone, which was adopted in 1985, establishes Development Standards and Regulations for the Bowling Green Drive area. These three Overlay Zones were relevant to the widening of SR-125. Now that the freeway widening project is complete, the relevance of these Ordinances will be addressed by the City.

The Mixed-Use Overlay Zone was adopted in 2008 and establishes Development Standards and Regulations for uses, structures and lots within the Overlay Zone boundary.

Mixed-Use Design Guidelines apply to all remodeling of, or additions to, existing structures exceeding 2,500 square feet in size, and any change in occupancy exceeding 2,500 square feet in size. Site Plan Review and Urban Design Review are required for all new development and major renovation of existing development in the Mixed=Use Overlay Zone. The Overlay Zone provides a mechanism to revitalize older commercial corridors, increase opportunities for infill housing, encourage new housing and innovative retail that is less automobile dependent, and help create pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods.

2. Subdivision Ordinance

The State Subdivision Map Act provides the uniform standards for determining when a subdivision map must be filed with the appropriate local agency and contains Regulations regarding minimum Design Requirements for subdivisions. Additionally, it specifies appropriate findings for approval and disapproval, and outlines time limits for review of subdivision applications.

La Mesa has adopted its own Subdivision Ordinance which specifies local review and approval procedures and provides Regulations which are optional in the State law. One example of an optional regulation is La Mesa's control of the number of apartments that may convert to condominiums. The Subdivision Ordinance provides an important function in controlling the density of development in residential categories of the General Plan.

3. Sign Ordinance

The intent of the La Mesa's Sign Ordinance is to regulate signs in a way that balances their means of conveying information against the needs to protect the visual environment. Sign regulation serves the interest of community aesthetics, commerce and tourism, and traffic and pedestrian safety, to name a few. Commercial centers which use comprehensive sign programs have more uniform signage serving their multiple tenants. As part of the implementation of the Scenic Overlay Zone and the City-wide Sign Ordinance, the City will continue to prohibit the placement of new billboards in La Mesa. The City's sign regulations are meant to further the Goals and Policies of the General Plan while expressing the community's pride, Design Standards, culture, and sense of order, giving it a distinctive appearance and reinforcing the character of La Mesa.

4. Parking Standards

While La Mesa encourages alternative transportation (transit, biking, walking), the majority of trips around the City are still made by automobile and these trips need to end with a place for the car to be stored. La Mesa's Municipal Code and Parking Standards ensure that properties have adequate off-street parking areas. Parking lots provide for adequate capacity and circulation patterns to reduce traffic congestion, facilitate movement, enhance public safety, and support high standards of environmental quality. The City's Parking Standards make provisions for the required number of parking spaces for a particular use, the parking of recreational vehicles, and the use of shared parking within a development.

The Downtown Specific Plan contains Design Guidelines for off-street parking facilities in the Village, mostly focusing on the use of landscaping to minimize the visual impact of large, paved parking areas.

5. Landscape Standards

New Water-Efficient Landscaping

Landscapes are essential to the quality of life by providing areas for active and passive recreation and enhance the environment by cleaning air and water, preventing erosion, offering fire protection, and replacing ecosystems. However, landscape design, installation, maintenance and management must be water efficient. In response to low annual precipitation and extensive periods of drought, and in an effort to reduce the City's water consumption, La Mesa adopted Water Efficient Landscape Regulations in 2010. The regulations limit water waste through the Maximum Applied Water Allowance (MAWA), which sets an upper limit for water use in irrigation systems. These regulations apply to most developments with landscaped areas equal to or greater than 2,500 square feet and to new single-family residences with over 5,000 square feet of landscaping.

6. Building Codes

Title 14 of the La Mesa Municipal Code contains all the regulations regarding the construction of buildings in the City. Within Title 14 are chapters containing the International Building Code, the International Residential Code, the Uniform Mechanical Code, the Uniform Plumbing Code and the National Electrical Code. Additionally, La Mesa also adopts the California Green Building Standards Code. These International, Uniform and National codes are model codes published by nationally recognized building code organizations, such as the International Code Council (ICC), and recommended to the State. Once adopted by the State, local jurisdictions will usually adopt their own versions with appropriate modifications. All of these codes are regularly updated by the code writing organizations with addenda published annually. La Mesa utilizes the most current versions of these codes once adopted by the State.

Housing Regulations

The City enforces the State Housing Law and the Uniform Housing Code. The method of enforcing the Housing Regulations is through inspection done on a complaint basis. The City follows the adopted Code Enforcement Policy, and the procedures in Uniform Housing Code, as the basis for correcting housing violations.

La Mesa Springs Senior Housing Complex

Enforcement of Mobile Home Parks Act

The City of La Mesa enforces the State Mobile Home Parks Act as related to the installation and placement of manufactured homes and mobile homes in the City. The Community Development Department also conducts maintenance inspections of mobile home parks, as outlined in State laws, to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of the park residents.

7. Storm Water Program

Storm flows from rain are conveyed into the City's storm drain system in order to prevent flooding. This system is a network of pipes which are designed to handle large, prolonged storm events; conveying water underground until eventually discharging into a local channel or stream. This storm water is comprised primarily of urban runoff which may contain levels of pollutants, such as bacteria, sediment, trash, dissolved metals, nutrients, and pesticides. This water is sent to our local channels and creeks untreated, unlike our sanitary sewer which conveys flows to a treatment plant.

The La Mesa's Storm Water Program was created in order ensure the City complies with State and Federal pollution prevention requirements, as well as to administer programs which attempt to minimize the amount of pollutants reaching our local water bodies. The Program's objectives are achieved through various activities such as water quality monitoring, educational outreach, code enforcement, facility inspections, and development review. Additionally, source abatement activities are conducted as well as other activities such as street sweeping and storm drain cleaning.

Development projects are required to employ pollutant source control as well as low impact development (LID) treatment designs. These requirements were created in order to minimize the impacts on receiving water quality downstream of proposed development projects. LID comprises a set of site design approaches and small-scale storm water management practices that promote the use of natural systems for infiltration and reuse of rainwater. In cooperation with Regional partners, La Mesa also regularly takes water quality samples and conducts toxicity tests in waterways.

The City's Storm Water Program is managed to remain in compliance with applicable laws related to water quality, including the City's own Municipal Storm Water Permit and Federal and State laws such as the Clean Water Act and Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. The City's ongoing compliance with these regulations as well as the implementation of site specific pollution reduction programs demonstrates the City's ongoing commitment to the preservation of storm water quality. This preservation ultimately leads to the sustenance of our quality of life related to the enjoyment of our beaches, creeks, and ocean.

8. Development Advisory Board

The City's Development Advisory Board is composed of the Director of Planning, Director of Building, Public Works/City Engineer, and Fire Marshall. City departments work together to review and approve development proposals, and make recommendations to the City's Planning Commission and City Council. These departments provide assistance to the public by reviewing development plans as to their compliance with the municipal code, and provide inspection services to ensure proper installation of new buildings and accessory structures that meet code requirements while protecting the public health, safety, and welfare.

9. Code Compliance

The City's Code Compliance Program is intended to protect the public health, safety, and welfare through the implementation of standards relating to building safety, fire code safety, and property maintenance requirements. In terms of residential property maintenance, areas which are commonly addressed include yards and setback areas, parking and inoperable vehicles, as well as accessory structures such as fences. Property owners and tenants are required to correct violations reported to the City to ensure that private property is maintained. In regards to commercial development, property maintenance standards address unauthorized outdoor storage, proper signage, parking circulation, and landscaping.

In addition to enforcing minimum maintenance standards for the upkeep of private property, Code Compliance efforts include programs related to, storm water quality, the proper disposal of restaurant and hazardous wastes, graffiti removal, recycling, and neighborhood cleanup projects coordinated with other City departments, such as the Police Department's Community-Oriented Policing Program (COPPS).

10. Maintenance of Public Property

While the Code Compliance Program focuses on private property maintenance issues, significant resources are devoted to maintain public property. The City's Public Works Department is in charge of maintenance within the public right-of-way, including streets, landscape areas within the City streets, and street lights, while the community services department is in charge of maintaining public parks. These departments coordinate with the Police Department in an on-going effort to abate graffiti within the public realm.

Urban Design Program

The Design Review Board and City Council review development to assure compliance with Design Guidelines, adopted as part of a comprehensive Urban Design Program in 1987. The Guidelines contain principles of design focused on several different scales of concern; including, the community as a whole, the neighborhood, the specific site and the building itself.

The Urban Design Program incorporates a comprehensive approach to urban design issues, including community-wide, neighborhood and site-specific guidelines for all new development. The Program identifies sites within La Mesa that are subject to a Design Overlay Zone. All development proposals within the Design Overlay Zone are reviewed by the Design Review Board. The Design Review Board is composed of three design professionals and two members of the Community Development Department. The Design Review Board reviews development proposals and makes recommendations to the City Council based on policies and principles established in the Urban Design Program.

Related Activities

In addition to the previous programs, which often focus on new development activity, the City has the following programs which help in the implementation of the General Plan:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The CDBG program involves Federal money granted to cities each year for a variety of community development activities. Federal regulations require that the majority of these funds provide verifiable benefits to lower income households. The City will continue to utilize CDBG funds within the parameters of Federal regulations to implement the Community Development and Housing Goals of the General Plan. Examples of CDBG programs include capital improvements and renovations in lower income neighborhoods, public services to special needs populations including seniors, homeless people, and people affected by domestic violence and fair housing services to ensure that La Mesa's housing environment is accessible to all types of households.

Capital Improvement Program

The City of La Mesa's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) identifies improvement projects, including public buildings, sewer and storm drain system upgrades, street and park improvements. Capital improvements are an important component of General Plan implementation. The CIP identifies both the infrastructure needs and the funding sources, and is a key program for ensuring the quality of life within our neighborhoods. It is important for the City to coordinate Capital Improvement efforts with those of private developers to ensure that infrastructure remains intact and meets expected demand.

Bio-Swale on Allison Avenue

Zoning and Land Use Consistency

The General Plan consists of several Elements, including the Land Use and Urban Design Element. Together, these Elements define the Goals and Policies, which provide the basis

for the programs, projects, procedures, and regulations, which will help ensure the health, welfare and safety of the community through achieving these Goals. The Elements of the General Plan serve as a long-term vision for the City's economic growth, and as a short-term practical tool to assist in the ongoing decisions needed to operate the City.

State law requires that zoning designations match the land use designations in the General Plan. Amendments to the General Plan land use designations or zoning classifications will be considered on appropriate sites in La Mesa through the public hearing process.

The procedures for amending the General Plan will apply to the Land Use and Urban Design Element, as well as the other Elements of the General Plan. As provided by State law, amendments to the General Plan may be made no more than four times in one year. The City Council, the Planning Commission or a member of the public may initiate amendments. As needed, the Planning Commission will review proposals for amendments to the General Plan three times a year, at the first regularly scheduled meeting in the months of February, June, and October. The recommendations of the Planning Commission will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at a public hearing scheduled for the earliest possible date.

The City prescribes procedures and requirements for amendments requested by the public. Such applications will be consolidated and scheduled for a public hearing by the Planning Commission at the earliest time as outlined above. The City Council may also initiate amendments to the General Plan during the same calendar year. Changes to the General Plan are typically considered during one amendment process adopted by a City Council resolution.

Glossary

The terms and definitions in this glossary are commonly found in land use planning literature.

Airport Influence Area: The area where airport-related noise, safety, airspace protection, and over-flight factors may significantly affect land use compatibility or require restrictions as determined by the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). Land use actions within this area are subject to the compatibility policies and criteria of the airport's compatibility plan.

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan: Required by California law to promote compatibility between airports and the land uses that surround them.

Airport Over-flight Notification Area: Properties within this area may experience some annoyances or inconveniences, such as noise, vibrations, odors, etc. A buyer awareness tool that ensures a prospective buyer is informed about the airport's potential impact on the property.

Avigation Easement: An easement that transfers certain property rights from a property owner to an airport owner.

Building intensity: Quantifiable standards for each land use designation, which are based upon a combination of variables such as maximum dwelling units per acre and height and size limitations.

Climate change: Any significant change in the measures of climate (such as temperature, precipitation, or wind) lasting for an extended period (decades or longer). These changes may result from natural processes or human activities that change the atmosphere's composition or the land surface (e.g. burning fossil fuels, deforestation, urbanization, etc).

Discretionary review: The process for a project that cannot be automatically approved, but requires judgment or deliberation by a decision-making body such as the Planning Commission or City Council. These decision makers would have the ability to impose Conditions of Approval as necessary in reviewing the appropriateness of a project.

Green building: To significantly reduce or eliminate the negative impact of buildings on the environment and on the building occupants. Green building design and construction practices address: sustainable site planning, safeguarding water and water efficiency, energy efficiency, conservation of materials and resources, and indoor environmental quality.

Greenhouse gases (GHG): Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, fluorinated gases).

Infill: Development of vacant or underutilized sites within a previously developed area.

Light Rail Transit (LRT): A metropolitan electric railway system characterized by its ability to operate single cars or short trains along exclusive rights-of-way at ground level, on aerial structures, in subways or, occasionally, in streets, and to board and discharge passengers at track or car-floor level.

Mixed-Use: Development that includes two or more physically integrated uses on one site or within one structure. The combination could include residential, retail, office, industrial, institutional or other land uses.

Public Works: The City department responsible for infrastructure maintenance (streets, sidewalks, pipelines, etc.).

Public realm: Places to which everybody has access, although this access may be controlled at times. It consists of both outdoor and indoor spaces. The outdoor spaces include streets, linkages, squares and parks, while the indoor may include public buildings such as libraries.

Redevelopment: Construction on a site with previously established uses, usually to revitalize deteriorated and blighted areas and properties.

Right-of-Way: An area where a legal right of passage exists; it is land used for public purposes in association with the construction or provision of public facilities generally related to transportation systems and infrastructure.

Smart Growth: The concentration of growth in compact, walkable, urban centers.

Specific Plan: Contains policy statements, development regulations, and guidelines on the development of specific sites or public improvements while carrying out the objectives of the General Plan.

Subdivision: The act of dividing land into pieces for individual sale or development.

Suburban: Urban growth within or at the edge of a city that tends to be less dense. Suburbs generally necessitate commuting to other services or land uses within the City or metropolitan region.

Sustainability: To meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. A sustainable community fosters the three E's; environment, economy, and equity by not letting the interest of one be considered above the others.

Tax Increment Financing: An economic development tool that borrows from projected future tax revenue to fund current improvement projects.

Transit: Transportation by bus, rail, or other conveyance, either publicly or privately owned, which provides service to the public on a regular and continuing basis.

Transportation Demand Management: A combination of marketing and incentive programs aimed at reducing single-occupancy vehicles. These programs also encourage the use of transportation options, including public transit, walking, and ridesharing.

Transit Oriented Development: A compact, mixed-use development, that is located adjacent to transit facilities in a high quality walking environment.

Underdeveloped: A site that is not built-out to the maximum density permitted under La Mesa's land use designations.

Urban design: The process of giving form, shape, and character to groups of buildings, to whole neighborhoods, and the City. This also concerns the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of towns and cities.

Vacant: Unoccupied property, which could be owned privately or publicly.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT): The distance in miles of vehicular travel over a day, year, or other given period of time.

Zoning: The designation of permitted uses of land based on mapped zones which separate one set of land from the other.