
DESIGN ELEMENT

PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose of this element is to ENSURE THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN SCRIPPS MIRAMAR RANCH WILL PROMOTE A POSITIVE COMMUNITY IDENTITY, ALLOW FOR REASONABLE FREEDOM OF DESIGN EXPRESSION, AND MAINTAIN THE CHARACTER OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT.

Observance of the guidelines outlined herein during the design of individual projects will meet the objectives of this Plan as well as the Hillside Review process. The intent of these guidelines is presented below.

- Protect environmental resources that are typically associated with hillsides, preserve significant public views of and from hillsides, and maintain a clear sense of natural hillside topography throughout the development of Scripps Miramar Ranch.
- Encourage a sensitive form of development on the community's hillsides by allowing for their reasonable use in a manner which complements their natural character and relates to the visual environmental character of the community and the Open Space Element of the General Plan.
- Encourage design diversity and variety of interpretation but avoid visual chaos and incongruity.
- Foster a sense of neighborhood identity by encouraging design diversity between development subunits while promoting design integration and compatibility within neighborhood concept areas.

APPLICATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Implementation of these design criteria will be accomplished by the methods outlined in the **Implementation Element** of this Plan. The variety of discretionary approval processes now applicable to development requests precludes a single review status for this element. Where Hillside Review, rezoning, Conditional Use Permits, Planned Residential Developments, Planned Commercial Developments, and other discretionary actions are involved, this Plan's proposals should be examined during the project's normal review. Where ministerial actions alone are involved, this Plan expresses the intent of the community.

Although the Scripps Miramar Ranch community is planned primarily for residential uses, this element is intended to apply to industrial and commercial developments as well.

PROPOSALS

Open Space

The relationship between development and natural and man-made open space is the dominant feature of Scripps Miramar Ranch. The present open space systems should be expanded through the application of the following criteria and implementation of the proposals of this Plan's **Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element**.

1. Types of Open Space

a. Usable Open Space

Approximately 25 percent of the required open space areas within the community should be usable. "Usable" in this context implies that these areas are easily traversed and broad enough in dimension to preserve a feeling of freedom and lack of confinement. Generally, areas with slopes less than 30 percent, valley and canyon bottoms, public paths in areas with relatively level crosssections of at least 30 feet, and public parks fall into this category.

b. Hillside Open Space

Hillside open space is that area remaining undeveloped which is over 30 percent natural slope. Cuts and fills, except where other important design features take precedence, should not intrude into these areas. Rather, development grading should terminate against these areas by a daylight cut or fill line. Within these open spaces, eucalyptus trees should be planted at a rate of 100 trees per acre. The exceptions to this requirement are in the area adjoining Miramar Reservoir or where preservation of high-interest biological species is indicated, such as the major canyon at the east end of the Ranch which has been designated as natural open space. Development adjacent to major natural open space areas should use the subdivision open space to accentuate and amplify the community open space systems. Transitional plantings should be provided at the development edge. Landscaping in transitional areas should include native and naturalized plant species which facilitate the blending of developed areas with the natural environment, while still providing fire protection to developed areas.

c. Reservoir Viewshed

The following guidelines should be observed to protect Miramar Reservoir and minimize impacts within the reservoir's viewshed:

- All urban runoff should be diverted from the reservoir. To achieve this, a fill slope not exceeding 100 feet high will be required in the canyon on the northeast perimeter of the reservoir.

- Any residence adjoining the reservoir should be one-story only and should have special landscaping on the lake side of the building site. Exceptions to this one-story rule may be approved by the architectural review board. Landscaping along the fringe should be in clusters with a density of at least three trees per lot. Man-made slopes may be created to allow the construction of a loop road providing access to the community park and/or homes along this road. Homes along this loop road may be two stories to minimize the creation of man-made slopes and may not be located on the lake side of the loop road.
- Fencing along the perimeter should emphasize natural materials, such as stone and wood, and present a uniform design. Installation of a common fencing by a developer is suggested as the most effective means of implementation.
- Public viewpoints overlooking the reservoir should be provided at strategic points.
- Uniform roofing materials should be used adjoining this perimeter.

d. Carroll Canyon

Disturbance of this important natural open space area should be limited to the absolute minimum required for public welfare and access. While an allowance for improvement of Pomerado Road is anticipated, design and these improvements should result in a “scenic roadway.” Bridges rather than fills should be used for road crossings in the canyon bottom. Easements for equestrian trails should go along the canyon bottom. Passive recreation areas such as the proposed Resource-Based Park, may be located here, but even these uses should respect the presence of rare and/or endangered plant species. The proposed Olympic golf course at the United States International University should be allowed.

e. Planned Residential Developments

These private open space areas shall be treated in accordance with Section 101.0900 of the City Code. Preference should be given to the preservation and planting of eucalyptus trees, of which about 30 varieties are known to grow in San Diego County. Design of open space in PRDs should consider the adjoining open spaces and neighborhood themes and should attempt to enhance these characteristics wherever possible.

f. Public Parks

Public parks should be treated as this Plan suggests or as subsequent City Council actions require.

g. Ponds

Preservation of man-made ponds within the community should be sought. Alignment of Scripps Lake Drive south of the reservoir should minimize impacts to the pond in this area. Renzulli's pond, adjacent to Cypress Canyon Road, should also receive special consideration for preservation. A neighborhood park is proposed on land above the pond, and the pond represents the easterly end of the Cypress Canyon greenway of the Miramar Ranch North community.

h. San Diego Gas & Electric Company Easement

The 200-foot SDG&E easement which traverses the northeastern portion of the Ranch should serve as an open space connector and passive park. Although there are strict limits on the types of construction and vegetation allowed in the easement, this plan advocates the following treatments:

- Where the easement traverses natural areas slated for preservation, those areas should remain unchanged.
- Where grading or roads occur in the easement, the graded area should be revegetated with low-lying groundcover which will not impede access to transmission lines. At the edge of the easement, transitional plantings such as native chaparral species, shrubs and eucalyptus species shall be provided in order to buffer the open space connector from adjacent development while still providing view into the open space.
- The proposed improved open space shown in the northeastern portion of the Plan (Area E) under the easement should be treated in such a manner as to meet SDG&E requirements, and yet still provide a grassy-type area for passive recreation uses. When future Planned Residential Development permits are applied for in this area, those permits should provide for sensitive development and maximum utilization of the site.

Decisions on whether any land would be accepted as open space in fee by the City, or as an open space easement and providing for public access should be made at the time of map review.

i. Other Usable Open Space

Implementation of this Plan should extend the existing Hoyt Park open space system through the lands east of the reservoir. Portions of this system may include hillside open spaces, as noted above. Other portions may include the area on the perimeter of the reservoir, which would be left in its natural state with the exception noted. Finally, portions of this system may include public parks and walkways adjoining PRDs.

2. Access and Utility

Pedestrian access paths should be stressed within open spaces. At least 25 percent of required open space should have a slope of no more than 30 percent, except for PRD areas, which shall meet City ordinance requirements. The following general relationships should be observed in the design of open spaces:

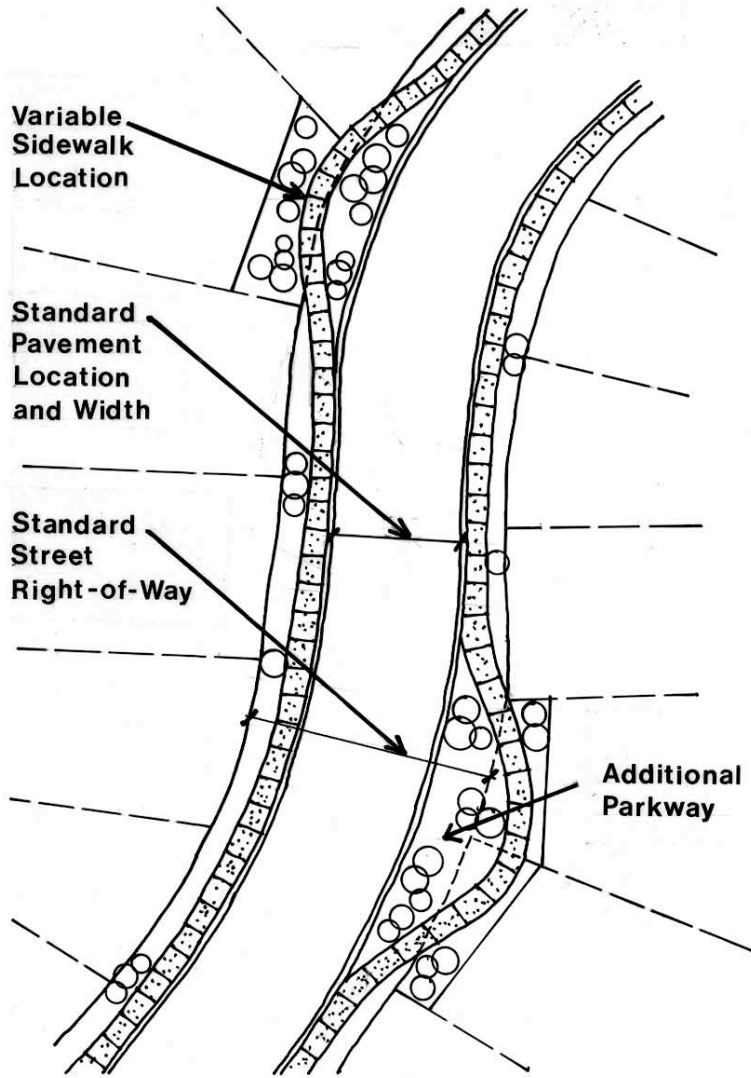
- A minimum of 25 percent of future development areas should be left as open space. This open space should occur in such a way as to become a scenic backdrop from public viewpoints and streets. Open space should continue across streets and ridges to provide vista points and access to residents.
- Design of open space should maximize public access and provide a network for pedestrian travel throughout the community.
- Open space should be interspersed throughout the development to maximize its impact on residents and to help define individual neighborhoods.
- The use of clustered housing interrelated with open space is encouraged to avoid unneeded streets on steep hillsides and protect hillside topography, stands of trees and high-interest plant species.
- Dedicated open space should be incorporated wherever possible into the designated open space system shown on **Figure 10**, Parks, Recreation and Open Space.
- Where preservation of hillsides and trees complicate the normal open space standards, those standards may be met by creating easements over private lots to allow for equivalent uses of open space.

Landform and Grading

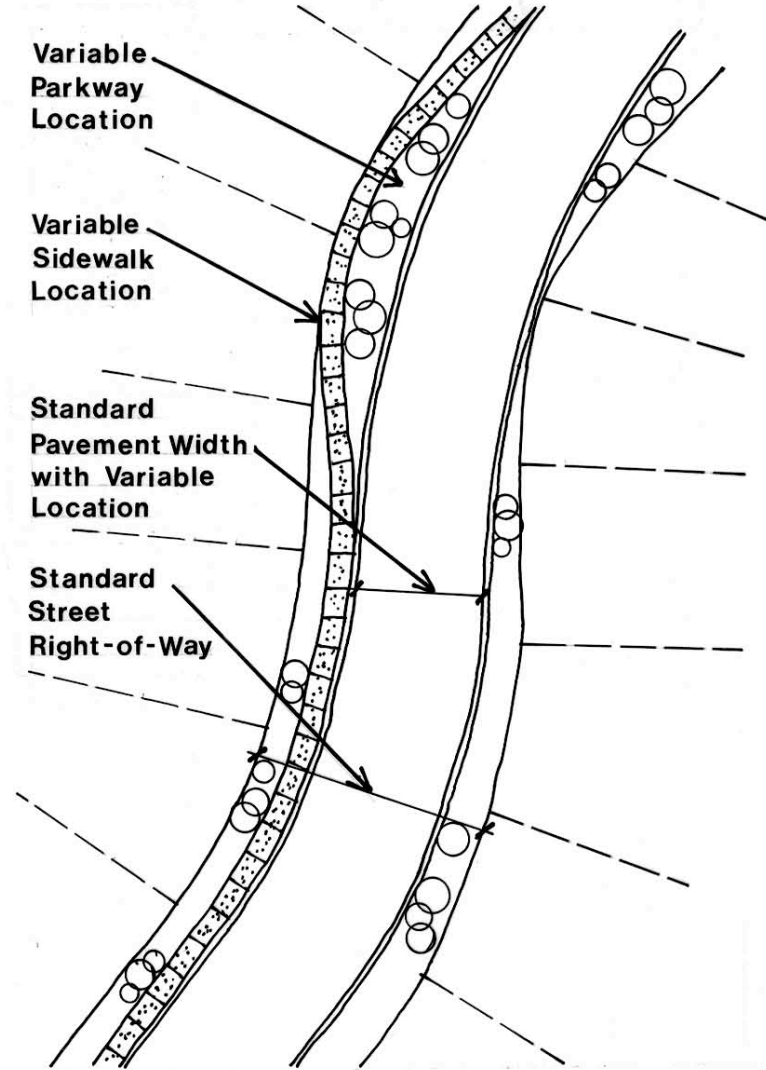
The general criteria which apply to the design of landform and grading are as follows:

- Development should relate to existing topographic and landscape features. The hill-valley relationship should be maintained and not obliterated. While hilltops and valleys may be graded to permit human settlement, the sense of distinctive landform should remain.
- House foundations, driveways, patios and other similar structures that occur on steep hillsides should minimize the covered surface and should support or be compatible with natural drainage.
- Buildings should not be located in areas subject to flooding.
- Roadways in steep hillside areas should accommodate the natural contour as much as possible in order to minimize cuts and fills.
- Access for public viewpoints should be provided along hillside crests.

VARIABLE PARKWAY WIDTH



VARIABLE PAVEMENT LOCATION



Landscaping Pockets

Scripps Miramar Ranch Community Plan

18

FIGURE



- Homes that must be built on steep hillsides should be adapted to the hillside condition instead of using large prepared pads.
- Where the Plan would create building areas for family-oriented residences, these sites should follow the existing topography by having individual sites step up or down hillsides, rather than creating large, level hilltop areas for groups of homes.
- Hillsides should not be used as locations for solar energy equipment.
- The technique of topping narrow-ridge hills and filling sharp canyons by daylight cut and fill methods should prevent the destruction of entire hillsides and provide usable outdoor living area on individual homesites. Special hillside foundation techniques may be required in some situations, but in general, designated open spaces are not to be developed.
- Cut and fill slopes should emphasize the natural form of hillsides.
- All artificial slopes over 30 feet in height should be sculptured to create rounded, variable slopes. Such slopes must be based on sound engineering investigations and recommendations. Landscaping materials on slopes should be deep-rooted species. Construction control should pay attention to soils compaction and avoid an over-concentration of rocks and cobbles in the outer area of fills.
- Where development on a hilltop is parallel to or adjoins a canyon development, an adequate horizontal separation should be maintained. If conditions limit this distance, adequate landscaping should define the separation. This landscape separation should be maintained until grade differentials create a vertical separation.

Street Scene and Trail Treatment

The normal approach to standard subdivision streets requires a contiguous sidewalk along streets meeting rigid design requirements. This necessitates locating trees on the outer edges of the street and sidewalk right-of-way. However, the implementation device of Open Space Maintenance Districts should be implemented in conventional subdivisions throughout the community, thereby permitting landscaping treatments not normally approved by the City of San Diego.

In order to break up straight and/or lengthy streets, landscaped pockets or parkway strips should be inserted in strategic and logical locations. **Figure 18** illustrates two examples of these landscaped pockets.

Streetlights and other street furniture such as benches and trash cans should complement the design theme of the neighborhood.

Setbacks and lot width should be varied along streets. Fencing, RV parking and other outdoor development should be controlled by CC&Rs, which should be submitted to the planning committee with tentative maps and recorded as part of the subdivision.

Streets should reflect the undulations of the underlying topography with an emphasis on curvilinear design, as shown in the **Circulation Element**.

1. Non-Standard Streets

Where hillsides are developed with narrow streets that do not provide adequate on-street parking, added parking should be obtained by using small off-street parking areas which are screened with planting, berms and/or terraces.

2. Private Streets

Even if all other factors permit, private roads should be permitted only within PRDs and only if necessary public access will not be impaired.

3. Collector and Major Streets

Local access streets should have no restrictions concerning driveway access. Collector streets, on the other hand, should be strictly regulated concerning driveway access. Opposing driveways should be discouraged. Driveways should not front on four-lane streets or on Pomerado Road. The preferable treatment is to use local intersecting streets for access with publicly maintained landscaped parkway areas along the collector streets.

4. Design Details

Bicycle and pedestrian trail crossings at all streets should be clearly defined and include curb cuts for bikes and wheelchairs. Cul-de-sacs opening onto open space vistas, even if longer than those typically approved by the City, are preferred to a multiplicity of intersecting streets.

Preservation of Eucalyptus Trees

Important to the historical continuity and overall community design is the preservation of as many existing eucalyptus trees as possible. Hence, all forested areas should be defined on tentative maps and other development plans. Methods available to preserve these trees could include the following:

- Open space dedication by fee, easement or negative easement.
- Construction of roads at or near grade.
- Use of bridges as opposed to fills and culverts.
- Use of stepped footings on unpadding lots greater than 20,000 square feet.
- Justification of removal of each tree having a diameter exceeding eight inches.

Architectural Form and Character

The following proposals are intended to establish a visual effect which is aesthetically appealing without dictating a style or personal taste. Variety is essential to the development of spatial relationships and sequence and should be used when a series of buildings can be perceived at one time; this does not mean that any one building design or combination of buildings can be used only once.

Scripps Miramar Ranch is essentially a residential community with a variety of housing and support facilities with peripheral industrial and commercial facilities. Design considerations which will enhance the residential character of the community are as follows:

1. Site Relationships

- Each building should relate in terms of mass and bulk to its neighbor but should not be identical.
- Stereotyped, repetitive patterns should be avoided.
- The use of clustered housing should be encouraged to protect the existing hillside topography and significant resources.
- The position of houses on lots should vary, as should the lot size and front and rear setbacks to create more variety on the street scene.
- Houses should be located to preserve trees and special environmental resources.
- Any large-scale buildings should be set back from the brow of the hillside. These should be of the highest quality design. Where buildings of different mass and scale occur near one another, it is recommended that varying setbacks and buffers be provided in order to protect the smaller scale buildings.
- Masses of one structure should relate in a sympathetic manner to all neighboring structures. Architectural forms and treatments that are strongly identified as being the same when repeated should be avoided.
- Where different residential densities or land uses occur adjacent to one another, a transitional area shared and provided by both uses should be provided through landscaping. For example, the low-medium density site proposed at the intersection of Spring Canyon and Pomerado Roads is near existing single-family homes. Additional restrictions should be obeyed so that the existing single-family homes will not experience a level of visual impact any greater than that which would occur if similar single-family homes were constructed under standard zoning regulations.

- A wooded greenbelt should extend from the water tank area at the northwest of the site, to the Fronsac Street cul-de-sac. Vertical and horizontal separation can be provided in this location because of the topographic character of the land. The intervening slope should continue the eucalyptus plantings which exist around the water tank and in the hollows. Where the site adjoins the backyards of existing homes (at the westerly property line) the separation should be a 100-foot landscaped and bermed buffer.
- For the commercial site at the intersection of Spring Canyon and Pomerado Roads, a buffer should be provided between it and any residential uses nearby.
- For the area at the north of the Ranch, adjacent to Miramar Ranch North and Sabre Springs, landscaped greenbelts of 100 feet (horizontal) shall be maintained between ridge and canyon development areas in order to preserve the topographic character of the site.

2. Building Materials and Colors

- Wall materials and colors should be compatible within the same building as well as to neighboring buildings.
- The following materials are encouraged for building exteriors: natural materials with earth-tone colors; woods with transparent stains or heavy body stains; rough sawn or resawn woods finishes or painted smooth wood; and roof materials of wood shingles or tiles.

3. Building Elevations

The way light strikes a building has a great deal to do with how it is perceived. Shadow areas give buildings depth and substance. The visual effect of light and shadow on buildings is perhaps the most valuable design tool available to the housing designer.

Every building should have shadow relief. Popouts, overhangs, and recesses may be used to produce effective shadow interest areas. Larger buildings require more shadow relief than do smaller buildings. Large, unbroken expanses of wall should usually be avoided.

The rear side of buildings visible from streets, Carroll Canyon and Miramar Reservoir should have detail similar to that normally provided for front elevations.

Planned Residential Developments (PRDs)

While the guidelines of this element apply to conventional and planned residential developments, certain criteria should apply specifically to PRDs.

- All PRDs must conform to section 101.0900 of the City Code.
- When located in canyon areas, fill should daylight against adjoining hills, minimizing cut slopes.

- When located on ridges or other high ground, PRDs should daylight with the ridge to minimize slope banks.
- Each PRD should be distinctive in character from any adjoining PRD.
- While internal paths and streets may be private, public walkways shown on this Plan should be provided on the perimeter of the PRDs. These walkways should have slopes suitable for pedestrian traffic. The paths should be located in areas not exceeding 30 percent cross slope; trees should be planted as required by the Plan. Public walkways within PRDs should have a right-of-way of at least 30 feet and may adjoin a larger open space. Public pathways should be dedicated and maintained by the Open Space Maintenance District.
- Planned Residential Development, CC&Rs and management agreements should be submitted to the City Attorney for review. Among other clauses, each should allow and require participation by the PRD management group in any Scripps Miramar Ranch Town Council or similar organization.

Planned Commercial Developments (PCDs)

In addition to the criteria set forth in this element, the following criteria applies to all PCDs processed within the Plan area.

- All PCDs must conform to section 101.0910 of the City Code.
- Each PCD should be distinctive in character from other PCDs in the Ranch area so as to establish neighborhood identities.
- The PCD should incorporate the landscaping themes of any adjoining streets and nearby residential developments in order to have a harmony of design. While safe ingress and egress to commercial developments is important, especially on major streets, it need not be accomplished at the expense of attractive project buffers and landscape areas. Especially for projects at the intersections of major roads, consideration must be given to streetside landscaping in order to avoid the appearance of a paved island among otherwise wooded areas.

Signs

Signs in Scripps Miramar Ranch should advertise a place of business or provide directions and information and should be architecturally attractive and contribute to the retention and enhancement of the community's character. Each sign should be in scale with surrounding buildings. The use of natural materials, especially wood, is encouraged.

Animated and roof signs should not be permitted. Building or roof outline tube lighting should be prohibited. Building or wall lighting should be indirect. A limited number of spotlights may be used to create shadow, relief or outline effects when such lighting is concealed or indirect.