



# CITY HEIGHTS - SAN DIEGO

## URBAN GREENING MASTER PLAN



... BRINGING NATURE BACK INTO THE COMMUNITY

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY BACK TO NATURE. . .

**Prepared by:**



**Prepared for:**



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Contract H125568

**Funded by:**

Strategic Growth Council  
Natural Resources Agency  
California Environmental Protection Agency  
California Health and Human Services Agency



# 1 INTRODUCTION

A successful and sustainable community considers efficient use of land, and the appropriate use of public funds for transportation and land use integration when considering its future growth patterns. For many areas, this means smart growth that includes mixed use urban infill within a walkable community that has transportation alternatives. The City of San Diego has tasked the KTU+A project team to produce an Urban Greening Plan for City Heights that reflects the values of the community. The City Heights Urban Greening Plan develops a framework strategy that supports existing and future development based on a system of green streets and public spaces. Green streets are defined as the literal greening of public spaces through the use of plant materials as well as incorporating sustainable practices that affect the visual built environment.

## 1.1 BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

The City of San Diego was awarded a Proposition 84 Urban Greening Planning for Sustainable Communities Grant in January 2011 by the Strategic Growth Council (SGC). The purpose of this plan is to create a safer, healthier, more walkable, and greener community, that links community assets, creates healthier air, cleaner water and provides a pleasant environment to encourage walking, jogging, hiking or biking. The results of this study may be incorporated into a future update of the Mid-City Community Plan through the formal community plan amendment process.

### PLAN ORGANIZATION

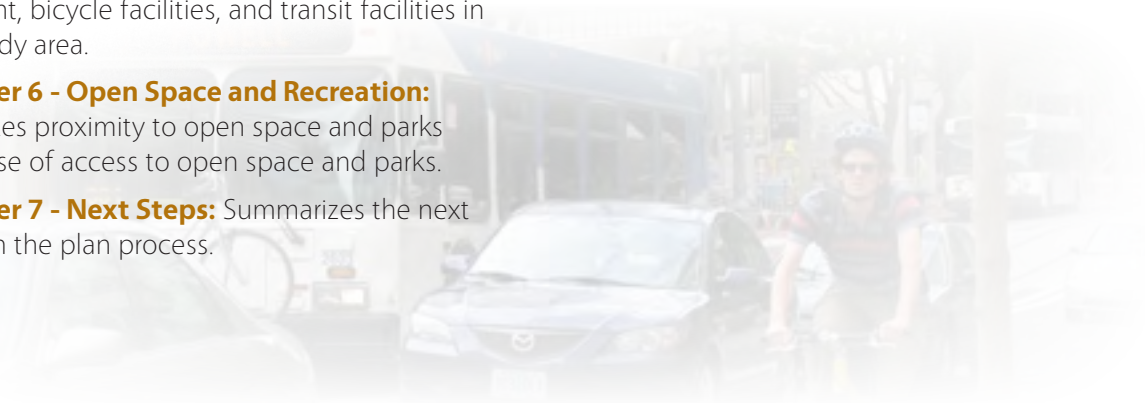
This report is the first step towards changing City Heights into a more sustainable, safe, connected and healthier community. This report is organized as follows:

- **Chapter 1 - Introduction:** Provides an overview of the plan process, City Heights context, and discussion of adopted, previous and ongoing planning efforts and policies.
- **Chapter 2 - Community Context:** Identifies key community destinations and establishes an overall character and identity of City Heights
- **Chapter 3 - Urban Forestry:** Analyzes the number of trees, tree species, and condition of trees. Describes the impact to air quality through trees and the oxygenation process.
- **Chapter 4 - Storm Water & Urban Runoff:** Describes urban run-off, drainage, and erosion conditions in the study area.
- **Chapter 5 - Mobility & Connectivity:** Evaluates existing conditions of pedestrian environment, bicycle facilities, and transit facilities in the study area.
- **Chapter 6 - Open Space and Recreation:** Evaluates proximity to open space and parks and ease of access to open space and parks.
- **Chapter 7 - Next Steps:** Summarizes the next steps in the plan process.

### OBJECTIVES

As stated in the City's grant application to the SGC, the objectives of this planning study are to:

- Consolidate planning efforts and create a comprehensive vision for City Heights by reaching out to the community and stakeholders
- Develop a green strategies framework for future development based on a system of green streets
- Develop a master street tree planting plan and plant palette
- Identify vital linkages within the community to commercial areas, parks, and open spaces
- Analyze the existing multi-modal mobility network to address deficiencies
- Recommend design strategies that combine storm water improvements, traffic calming, safety, and way-finding to increase multi-modal access
- Develop a master street tree planting plan and plant palette
- Identify vital linkages within the community to commercial areas, parks, and open spaces
- Analyze the existing multi-modal mobility network to address deficiencies
- Recommend design strategies that combine storm water improvements, traffic calming, safety, and way-finding to increase multi-modal access



## 1.2 LOCATION AND PLANNING AREA

City Heights is located in the Mid-City Community Planning Area. The Mid-City Community Planning Area includes Normal Heights, Kensington-Talmadge, City Heights, and Eastern. Each community has its own distinctive character and is advised by a different community planning group. City Heights is bounded on the north by El Cajon Boulevard, on the west by I-805 and I-15 freeways, on the south by the SR-94 freeway, and on the east by 47th Street (see Figure 1-1 and 1-2).

City Heights has a number of small canyons extending through it with Chollas Creek touching the southern end. City Heights features a “grid” street pattern with several strip commercial development corridors (see Figure 1-3). City Heights began as a predominantly working class community with immigrants from around the world and has evolved into a vibrant international community today. City Heights includes the following neighborhoods:

- Azalea Park
- Bayridge
- Castle
- Cherokee Point
- Chollas Creek
- Colina Park
- Corridor
- Fairmount Park
- Fairmount Village
- Fox Canyon
- Hollywood Park
- Islenair
- Ridgeview
- Swan Canyon
- Teralta West
- Teralta East

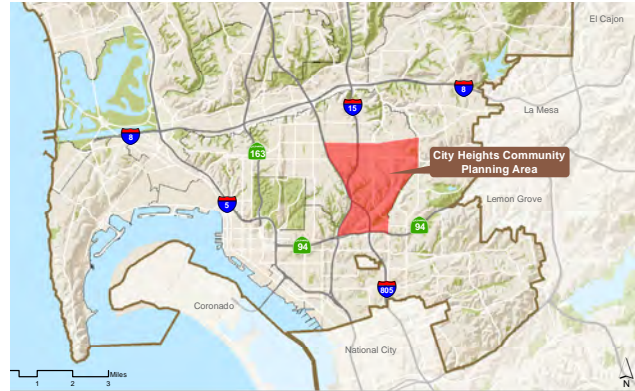


Figure 1-1: City Heights Vicinity Map



Figure 1-2: City Heights Sub-Community Areas

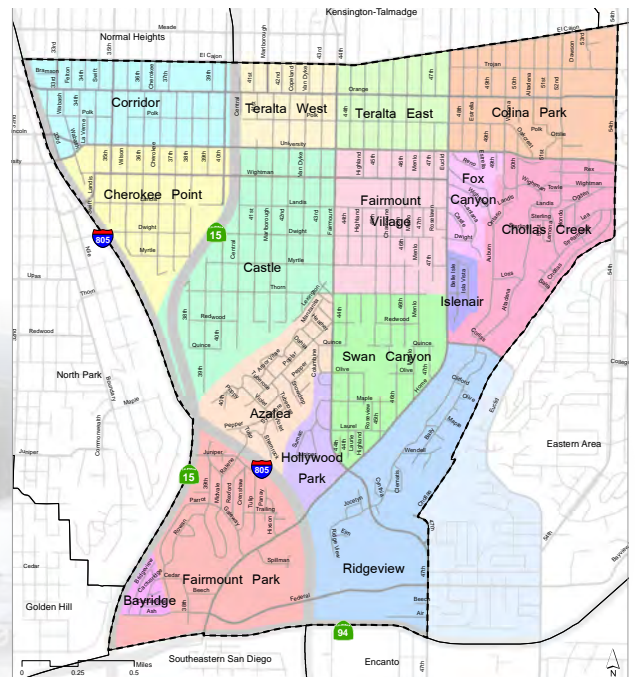


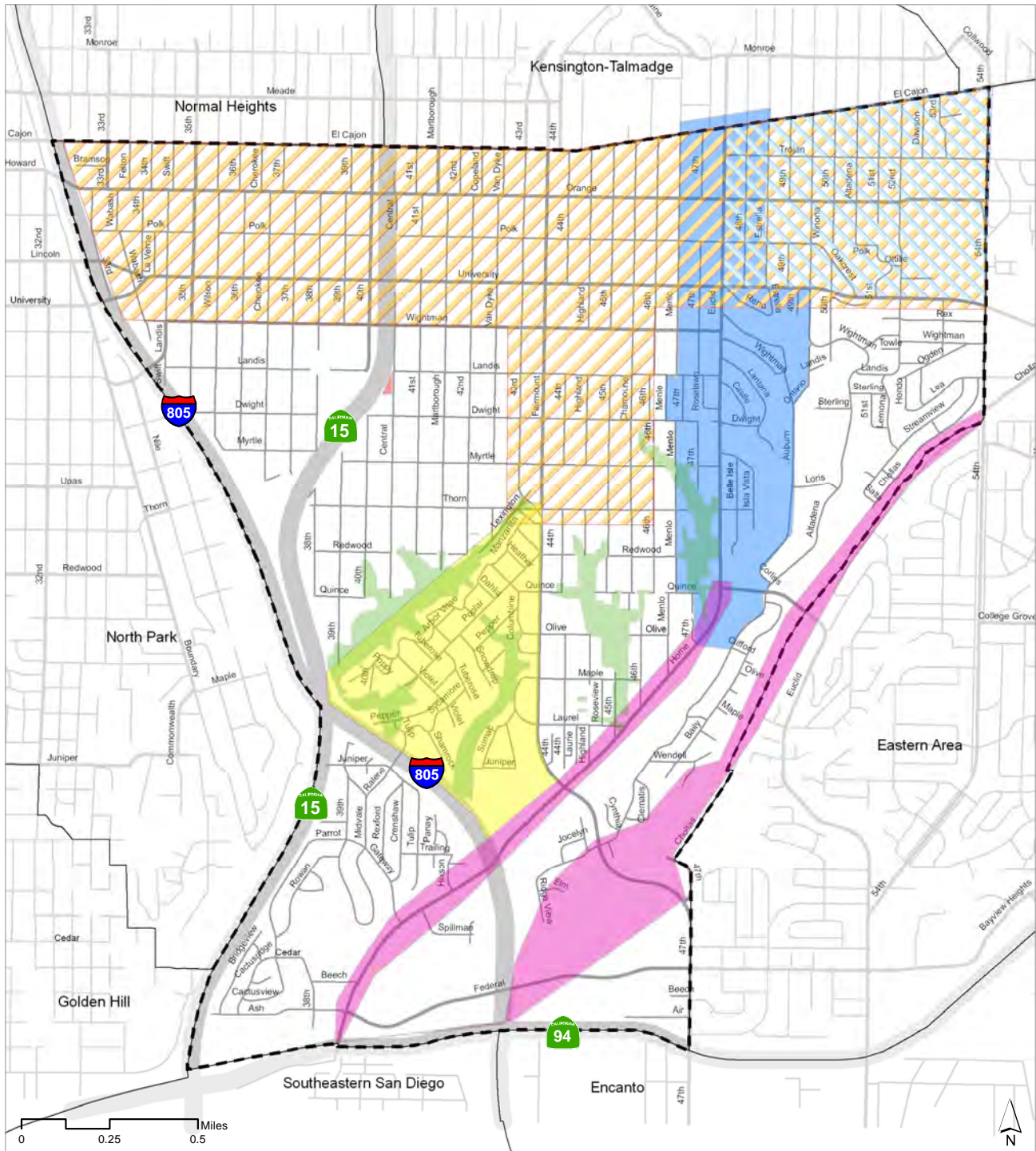
Figure 1-3: City Heights Neighborhood Areas

### 1.3 EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

The City Heights Urban Greening Plan considers current policies and planning efforts that reflect the community's values. This section summarizes previous plans and recommendations as they relate to this City Heights Urban Greening Plan. The table below highlights the previous planning efforts in City Heights and Figure 1-4 identifies the locations within the study area for these previous planning efforts.

FaceLift (City Heights Community Development Corporation - CHCDC)	1995	Revitalize 10-15 homes within City Heights (Ended in 2011 due to lack of funding)
Mid-City Heights Community Plan (City of San Diego-CSD)	1998	An integrated open space system of natural canyons, park grounds, urban plazas, & landscaped streets
Euclid Avenue Revitalization Action Plan (City of San Diego)	2000	Construct landscaped "curb extensions" to protect parking areas & "bulb-outs" at intersections to shorten the crossing distances for pedestrians.
		Provide continuous sidewalks throughout area.
		Construct dual auto-oriented & pedestrian oriented street lights to provide adequate lighting for all users of the right-of-way.
		Develop a street tree program for Euclid Avenue within the study area.
Azalea Park-Hollywood Park Revitalization Action Program (City of San Diego)	2002	Restore Euclid Avenue's canyons & hillsides.
		Enhance safety along the Poplar Street commercial corridor by reducing the speed limit through traffic calming measures.
		Construct "curb extensions" to shorten the crossing distances for pedestrians at intersections.
		Prevent cut-through traffic on Manzanita Place from Fairmount Avenue.
		Reconstruct sidewalks & pedestrian ramps to meet Americans with Disabilities Act.
Chollas Creek Enhancement Program (City of San Diego)	2002	Alleviate intermittent flooding to surround residences by repairing storm drains on Glenfield & Fairmount & reconstructing storm inlets
		Development of a street tree planting program for Poplar Street concentrating on the area from Fairmount Avenue to Violet Street as well as other streets in Azalea Park & Hollywood Park.
		Need for a multi-use trail system which connect neighborhoods
Mid-City Heights Community Plan Revision (CSD)	2003	Hiking trails along natural portions of creek & bike pedestrian paths in more developed areas
		Focus on youth & education through use of creek
		Theme of trees to connect creek system visually
San Diego Pedestrian Master Plan - City Heights Pedestrian Audit (CSD)	2008	A functioning transportation system that connects to the larger regional system & features landscaped streets, fixed rail, electric buses & trolleys, & intra-community shuttles
City Heights Walks to School (CHCDC)	2010	Audit of existing pedestrian conditions
Mid-City Sr-15 Bus Rapid Transit Station Area Planning Study	2011	Detailed SRTS Plan with public outreach, existing conditions & recommendations
Health Equity By Design (CHCDC)	2011	Focused on development scenarios around the BRT stations at El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue and will provide:
Full Access Community Transport System (FACTS) Project (CHCDC)	2012	Document to educate & empower community - does not make recommendations
Central Avenue Park Plan (Mid City Skate Park Advocates)	2012	Documents community support for pedestrian & bicycle infrastructure improvements
City Heights Canyons Urban Greening (CSD)	2012	Design for possible 28,000 SF skate park, turf areas & play areas at Central Ave & Landis Street (840K Budget)
	2012	Ongoing

Figure 1-4: Previous Planning Efforts



City Heights Community Planning Area

**Planning Efforts**

- Azalea Park-Hollywood Park Revitalization Action Program
- Central Avenue Park Plan
- Chollas Creek Enhancement Program
- City Heights Canyons Urban Greening Project
- Euclid Avenue Revitalization Action Plan
- FACTS Project
- San Diego Pedestrian Master Plan - City Heights Pedestrian Audit

## 1.4 PURPOSE

The objectives of the CHUG are:

- **Objective 1:** Connect important major destinations found within the community to support non-vehicular travel. These connections must be physical, visual & perceptual.
- **Objective 2:** Improve the functional, aesthetic and environmental sustainability of public streets.
- **Objective 3:** Improve water quality & lower the water discharge quantity in the stormwater system and opens space areas.
- **Objective 4:** Identify connectivity of publicly owned areas that include canyons, parks, road right of ways, and other publicly owned or dedicated lands.
- **Objective 5:** Improve pedestrian and bike mobility, which will result in improved public health, lowered transportation costs, smart investment of transportation funding, lowered vehicle miles traveled and green house gas emission reductions.

The CHUG plan considers four topics that relate to physical improvements (urban forestry, stormwater, non-vehicular mobility (bike and pedestrian connectivity), and open space / recreation connectivity). In addition, a key focus for this plan includes funding mechanisms and community support needed for maintenance of any proposed recommendations. The Green Team has established a preliminary vision

statement, as well as goals and actions as a part of the initial public outreach process.

### Vision Statement

**This Urban Greening Plan will result in physical changes to City Heights that will improve air and water quality, safety, energy savings, walkability, bikeability, and enhance the social, economic and physical opportunities of the community and its residents.**

### Urban Forestry

Urban forestry focuses on planting and maintaining trees in specific corridors.

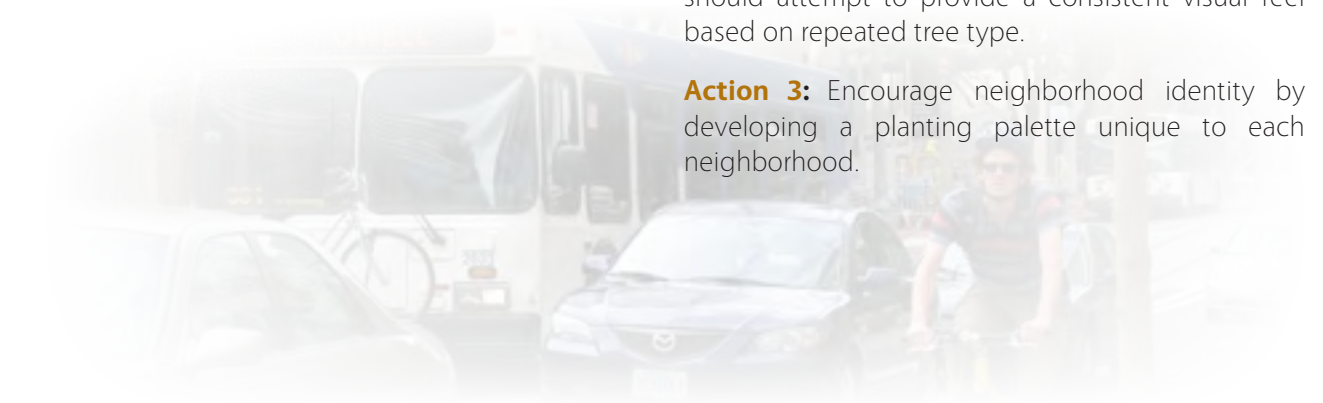
**Primary Goal:** Use native and non-native adapted/non-invasive plants and trees to provide relief from urban heat gain through shade and the plant water cycle (evapotranspiration).

**Secondary Goal:** Support economic development by improving the character of retail districts, creating job training opportunities related to horticulture, tree arboriculture, nursery production and tree planting. This economic focus would include job placement and training programs primarily focused on local youth.

**Action 1:** Substantially increase the number of trees in City Heights.

**Action 2:** Identify one tree type or a small number of trees that can be used to unify key corridors. A broad diversity of trees is encouraged but individual streets should attempt to provide a consistent visual feel based on repeated tree type.

**Action 3:** Encourage neighborhood identity by developing a planting palette unique to each neighborhood.





## Stormwater

Stormwater addresses urban water flow, capture, reuse, and treatment through specific physical improvements.

**Primary Goal:** Maximize capture for rain and urban runoff and reuse those water resources for supplemental watering of trees and plants. By capturing runoff, erosion and sedimentation impacts to the canyons would be reduced.

**Secondary Goal:** Improve water quality by capturing sediment, heavy metals, petroleum products, fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides through the use of bio-swales and other natural water cleansing processes.

**Action 1:** Identify current erosion control measures and develop strategic ways that additional erosion control measures can be incorporated near the canyon / urban interface.

**Action 2:** Identify capture areas on streets that experience runoff problems to help reduce flooding conditions in City Heights.

**Action 3:** Incorporate stormwater capture strategies into street design.

## Bike & Pedestrian Connectivity

The bike and pedestrian connectivity defines specific physical recommendations that increase multi-modal access in specific corridors.

**Primary Goal:** Increase cycling, walking, and transit use through increased bike facilities, improved walking environments, and ease of access to transit.

**Secondary Goal:** Create safe physical and social connections in the community by incorporating lighting and signage

**Action 1:** Establish a Safe Routes Plan that builds on Walk San Diego's safe routes to schools but add safe routes to commerce / employment centers, parks, and transit.

**Action 2:** Establish a Safe Bike Routes Plan that builds on the City of San Diego Bicycle Master Plan and incorporates innovative bike facilities and parking.

## Open Space & Park Access

Open space and park access identifies opportunities for increasing quantity of parks through reclaiming excess widths in existing right-of-ways and publicly owned land. Open space and park access focuses on increasing connectivity through the planning area.

**Primary Goal:** Connect the community with its open spaces and parks by well lit, safe and connected walkways, green corridors and bike facilities.

**Secondary Goal:** Allow, where appropriate, access and connections through open space and provide for nature appreciation and environmental education.

**Action 1:** Identify opportunities for new linear public spaces and small parkettes.

**Action 2:** Transition urban streets into the natural canyons through distinctive signage and appropriate planting.

**Action 3:** Identify linkages between open space, parks and the broader community.

**Action 4:** Identify opportunities for urban agriculture, nurseries, and other passive uses for the non-natural areas of the community.

## Maintenance & Funding Plan

The maintenance and funding plan will link community partners and funding sources in order to identify initial construction or implementation funding sources and on-going maintenance strategies.





## 2 COMMUNITY CONTEXT

City Heights is home to different types of culture and cuisines from all corners of the world, including Vietnamese, Cambodian, Indian, Somali, Ethiopian and Mexican culinary traditions. City Heights has a high concentration of retail outlets, restaurants, and other examples of self-employment and small business development resulting from newly arrived immigrant communities. Businesses tend to be smaller and wider spread. City Heights is a walkable neighborhood with many of the restaurants, businesses and shops adjacent to major residential pockets. It is common to see pedestrians, cyclists and scooters throughout the various neighborhoods. University Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard and Fairmount Avenue are the major thoroughfares and commercial streets found in the study area.

## 2.1 COMMUNITY CONTEXT

City Heights consists of sixteen neighborhoods. Each neighborhood has a unique character. Today, City Heights has attracted many businesses, cultures, and created distinct destinations. City Heights has two charter schools, two private schools, 12 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 2 high schools, 5 churches, 16 parks, and 3 community gardens. Each of these places help create the distinct character and feel of City Heights.

### LAND USE

In 2003, the City completed a land use plan for an Existing Conditions Report update related to the Mid-City Community Plan Update. At that time, City Heights had 12 primary land use categories that were applicable to City Heights. The land uses are as follows:

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Group Quarters
- Mobile Home Park
- Commercial
- Industrial / Warehouse / Storage
- Communications / Utilities / Transportation Related
- Institutions
- Schools
- Park / Open Space
- Private Recreation
- Undeveloped



El Cajon Boulevard

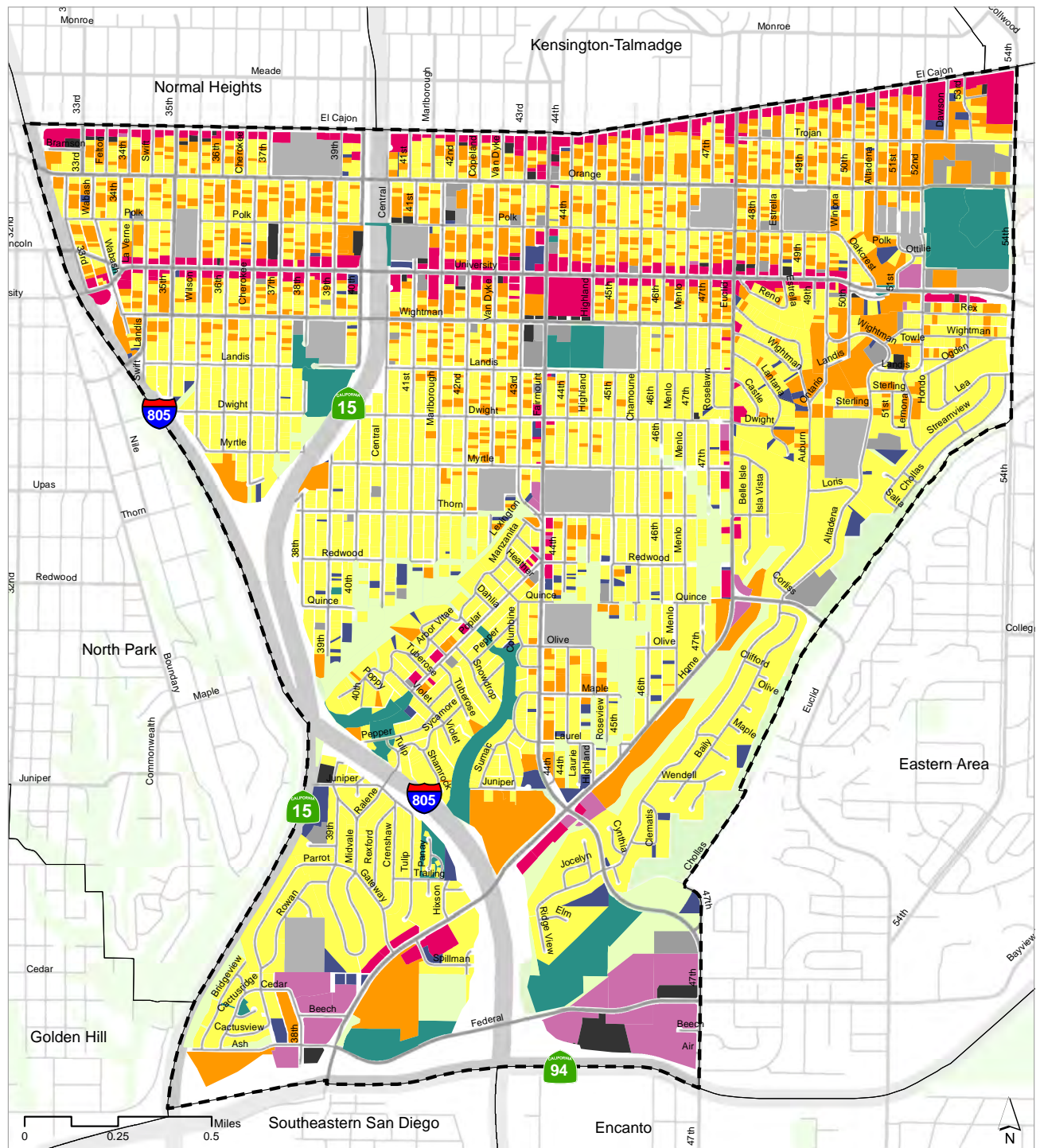
Figure 2-1 shows the existing land use in City Heights based on SANDAG's land use data from 2009. The existing land uses in 2009 include:

- Single Family
- Multi-Family
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Communications / Utilities
- Education
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Open Space / Canyons
- Vacant

The most significant change from 2003 to 2009 is the addition of mixed use as a land use and removal of group quarters and mobile home park as a land use designation. In addition, public services such as police and fire were identified as separate land uses.



Figure 2-1: Existing Land Use



## DESTINATIONS

There are two major east-west corridors in City Heights, El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue. Both streets include a significant amount of commercial use. In addition, Fairmount Avenue acts as a spine for City Heights and is a north-south connector.

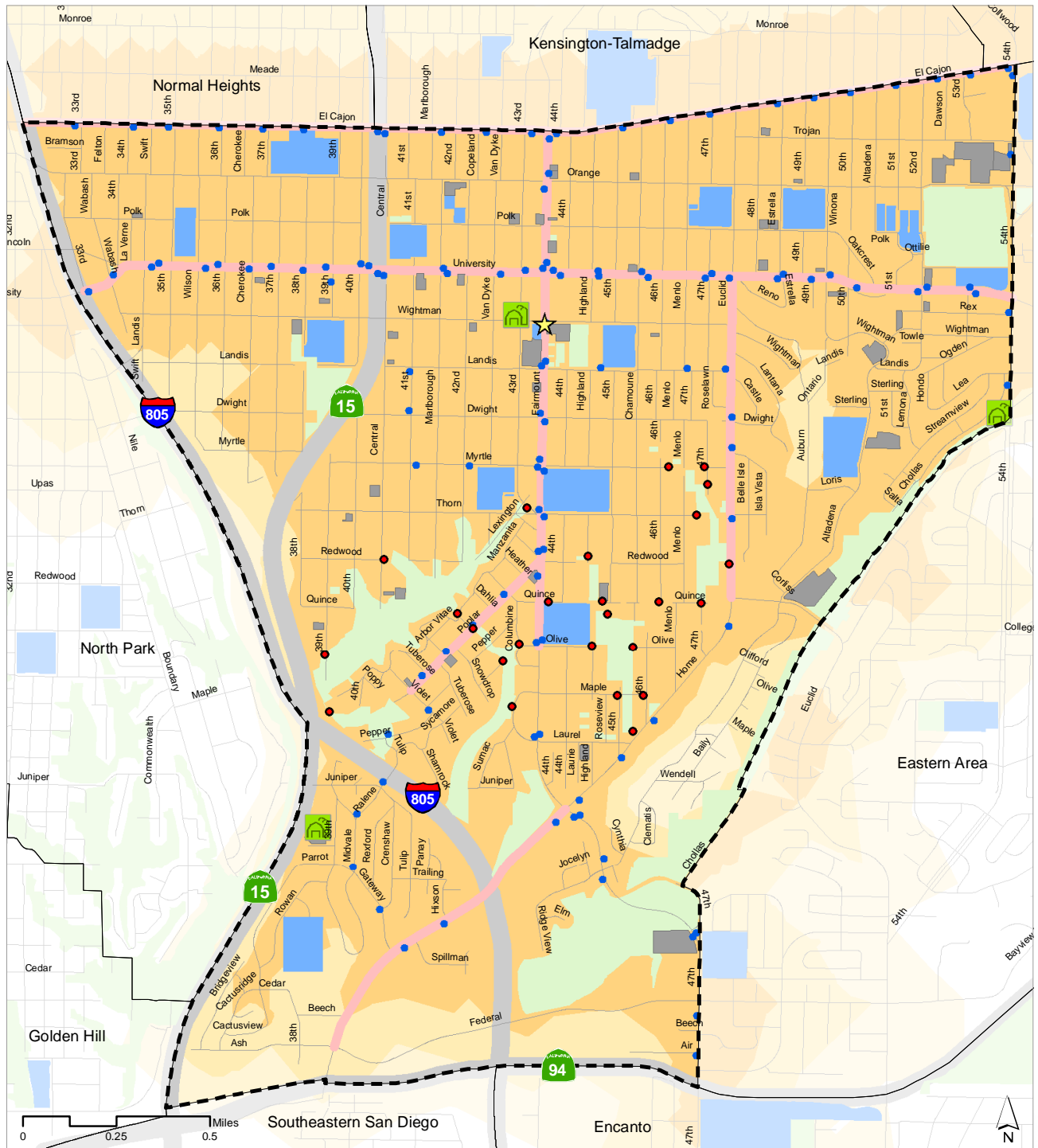
Name
Charter school
Health Science High & Middle College
City Heights Prep Academy
Private grade schools
Waldorf School of San Diego[7]
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School
Public elementary schools
Cherokee Point
Hamilton
Euclid
Marshall
Edison
Central
Florence Griffith Joyner
Herbert Ibarra
Mary Lanyon Fay
Wilson
Rowan
Rosa Parks
Public middle schools
Clark (Monroe)
Wilson
Mann
Public high schools
Hoover High School
Crawford Educational Complex
Community Health and Medical Practices School (CHAMPS)
Invention and Design Educational Academy (IDEA)
School of Law and Business (LAB)
Multimedia and Visual Arts School (MVAS)

In addition to the variety of businesses spread along Fairmount, University, and El Cajon Boulevard, City Heights has a number of schools, churches, and parks. They are listed on Tables 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3 and shown on Figure 2-2 as community destinations. Figure 2-2 also highlights trail heads, transit stops, and community gardens as destinations.

Name
New Creation Church
Redemption Church
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Harbor Mid-City Church
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Name	Type	Acres
Central Elementary School	Mini	0.56
City Heights (39th St)	Mini	0.32
Edison Elementary	Mini	0.68
Euclid	Mini	0.0
Wabash	Mini	0.17
Azalea	Neighborhood	9.0
Hollywood	Neighborhood	13.19
Monroe Clark Middle	Neighborhood	0.0
Park DeLa Cruz	Neighborhood	6.93
Rosa Parks Elementary	Neighborhood	2.3
Teralta	Neighborhood	4.0
Wilson Middle	Neighborhood	4.0
City Heights Village	Community	6.93
Colina Del Sol	Community	33.84
Fairmount Village	Community	0.00
MidCity Athletic Area	Community	40.88

Figure 2-2: Destinations



**Legend**

- City Heights Community Planning Area
  - Parks & Open Space
  - Civic Buildings
  - Schools
  - ★ Community Service Centers
  - Trailheads
  - Transit Stops
  - 🌿 Community Gardens
  - Streets of Commerce
- Major Destination Walk Time (Minutes)**
- 0 - 5
  - 5 - 10
  - 10 - 15



# 3 URBAN FORESTRY

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**Primary Purpose of Urban Forestry:** Implement measures to help offset greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide) by providing an urban forestry program that increases the production of oxygen and removes carbon dioxide, dust, particulate matter, and various air pollutants and contaminants. Large canopy trees are an effective way to increase oxygen production, remove air pollutants, and lower the overall urban heat island effect that increases the negative impacts to air quality and excessive energy use for cooling.

**Needs Summary:** Streets need to accommodate a large increase in urban trees and plantings in order to offset negative effects of heat absorption, impermeable surfaces, and vehicle emissions on the community and the local environment. Streets need to accommodate urban forests to help mitigate heat gain and potentially reduce stormwater runoff.

### 3.1 URBAN FORESTRY

Urban Forestry is the practice of planning, planting and maintaining trees and plantings in an urban environment in order to produce the maximum benefits for the quality of life, shade, walkability, energy conservation, and environmental benefits resulting from major tree resources planted in an urbanized environment.

#### WHAT TREES CAN OFFER

Plants and trees offer many health and social benefits in urban environments. Some positive benefits are as follows:

- Trees save energy by providing shade. Shade from trees reduces heat gain and sunlight absorption. It can reduce building cooling costs.
- Trees improve the comfort street by providing shade. The shade lowers temperatures and can encourage walking or cycling as a means to reach transit or other community destinations. If more people walk, cycle, and use transit, this will reduce green house gas emissions by decreasing car trips and vehicle miles.
- Trees enclose streets and can act as a traffic calming tool to lower vehicle speeds and ultimately increase safety when placed in strategic locations.
- Trees contribute to neighborhood identity and way-finding by creating distinct and memorable spaces.
- Trees absorb some water from rainfall, runoff, and slow water from before it reaches the stormwater system. Trees and plants can improve ground water quality by removing sediments and pollutants prior to reaching sensitive habitats, canyons, and the San Diego Bay.
- Trees can encourage social interaction and stimulate relaxation in public spaces. By having people and activities in well designed streets and public spaces, incidents of crime can decrease significantly.
- An urban forestry program can support the economic viability of a retail area by creating an attractive shopping environment. Urban forestry programs can also contribute to job creation programs.

### 3.2 TREE INVENTORY

Figures 3-1 through 3-3 show the City of San Diego’s tree inventory for City Heights. Though a significant number of trees exist in City Heights, most of these trees are small. Note that the dots showing the trees do not represent the size of the tree canopy, they are actually much smaller. The actual tree canopy cover is significantly less than the graphic may portray. In reality, a majority of these trees are young or small due to limited root growth areas, poor soil conditions, or a lack of watering, soil nutrients and proper pruning.

#### SPECIES TYPE

There are 5,425 street trees in City Heights. City Heights has evergreen, palm, deciduous, and conifer species all in the public right of way. Figure 3-1 highlights the location of the four different types of species.

- Evergreens make up 43%
- Palms make up 30%
- Deciduous trees make up 22%
- Conifers make up 5%

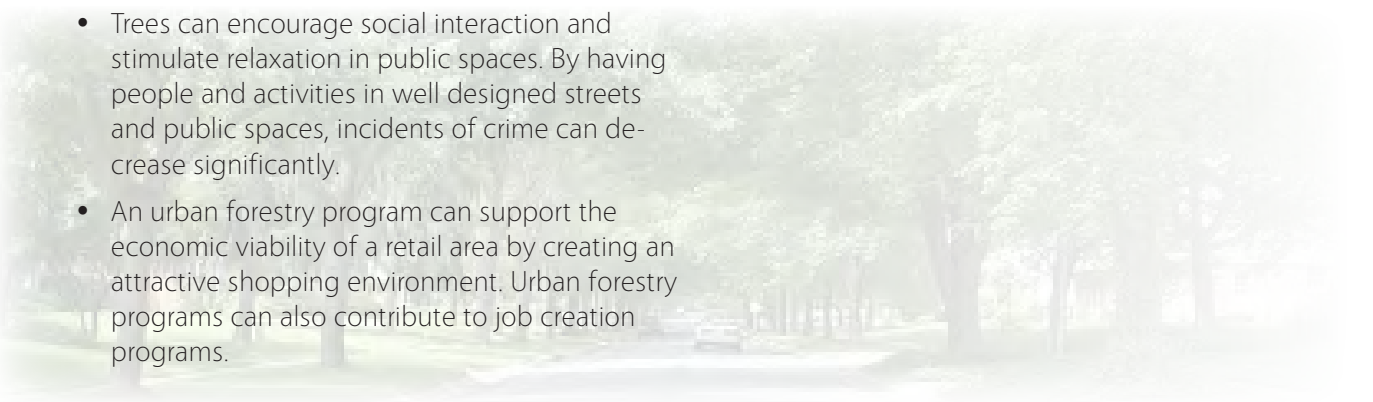
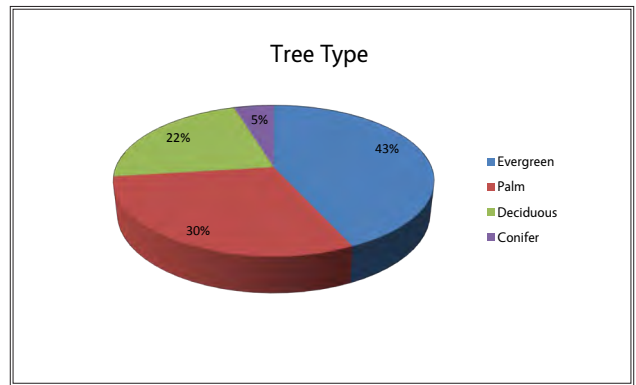
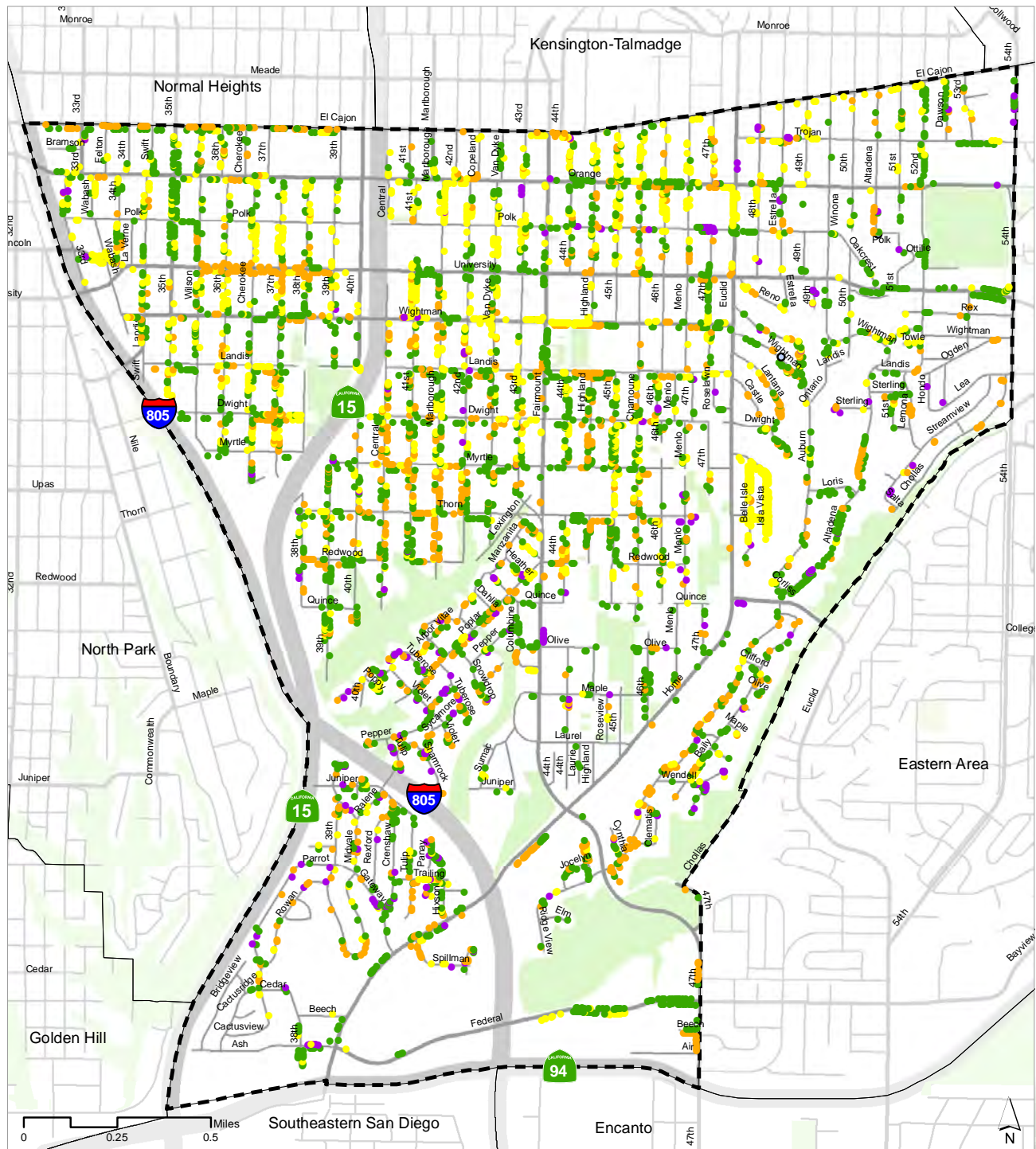




Figure 3-1: Existing Street Tree Inventory



City Heights Community Planning Area

**Tree Type (Count)**

- Coniferous (258)
- Deciduous (1,203)
- Evergreen (2,342)
- Palm (1,620)

**NATIVE VS. NON-NATIVE**

Only 78 trees or 1.5 % of the 5,425 trees are species native to San Diego. This is a very small number of trees when compared to the whole. The prominence of non-native tree species is common in San Diego. Because of this, the species in the planning area were reviewed against the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) database of invasive plant species.

An invasive plant species is a concern because the species can spread into canyons and creeks. The Cal-IPC is based on the following criteria:

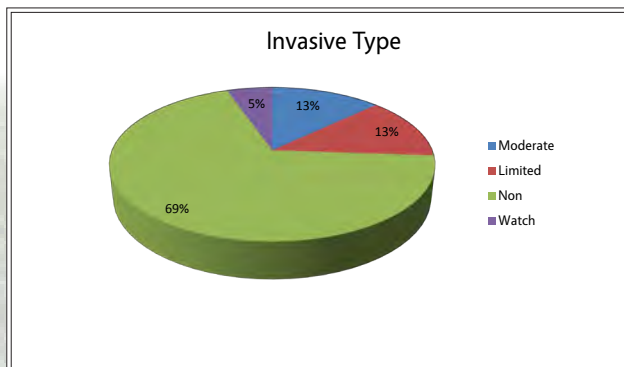
- **High:** These species have severe ecological impacts on plant / animal communities and vegetation structure. There are no highly invasive species in City Heights.
- **Moderate:** These species have substantial ecological impacts on plant / animal communities and vegetation structure. They can spread at moderate to high rates, but only grow in ecologically disturbed areas. They can disperse from a limited range to widespread. The Mexican Fan Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) and Brazilian Pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) are commonly found in City Heights and are considered moderately invasive.
- **Limited:** These species are invasive but their ecological impacts are minor on a statewide level or not enough information is available to justify a higher score. Their reproductive biology and other attributes result in low to moderate rates of invasiveness. These species may be locally persistent and problematic.



Brazilian Pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*)

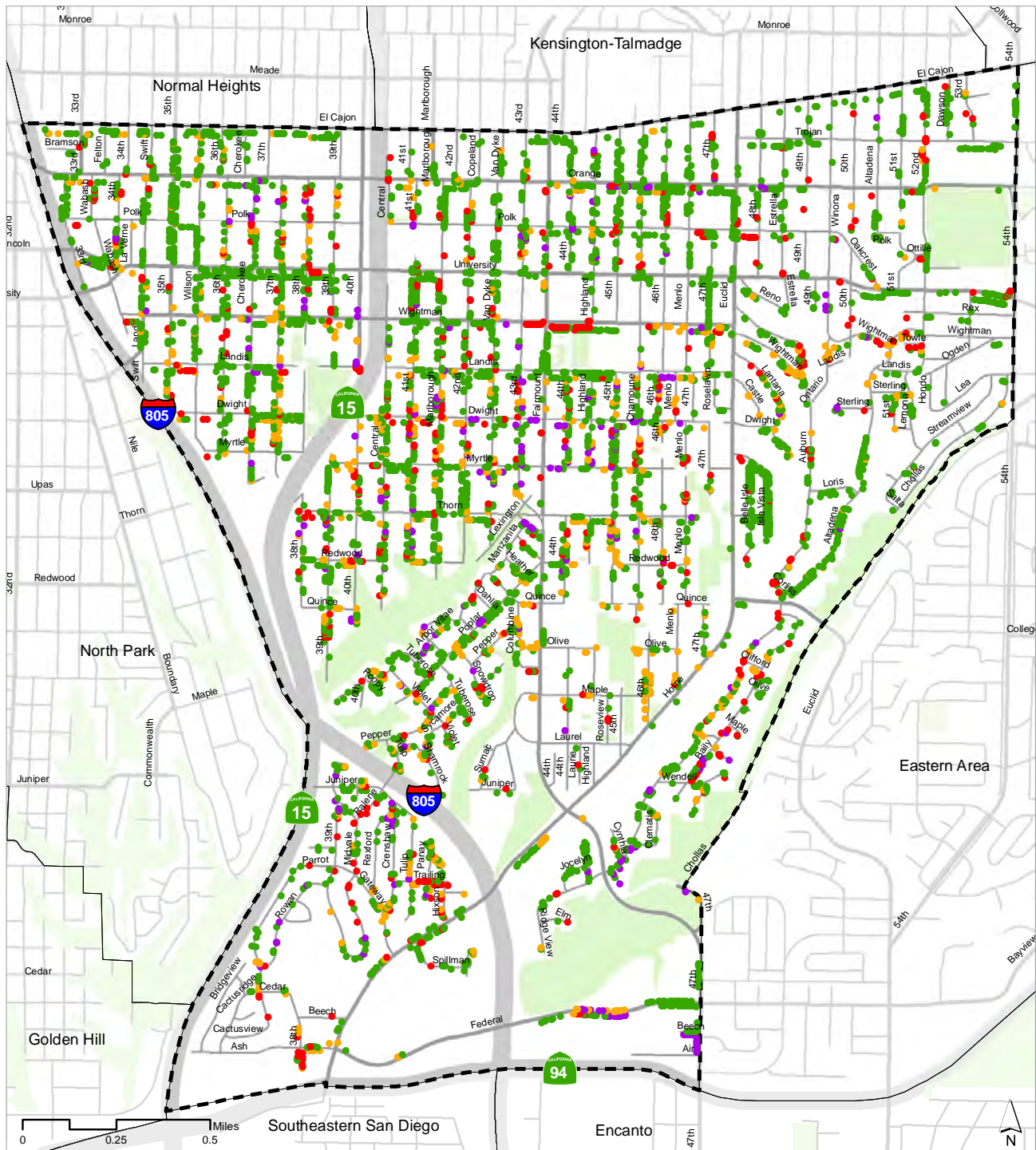


Seeds of Brazilian Pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*)



Mexican Fan Palm (*Schinus terebinthifolius*)

Figure 3-2: Existing Invasive Tree Inventory



City Heights Community Planning Area

**California Invasive Plant Inventory Ranking (Count)**

- Moderate (704)
- Limited (711)
- Non (3,719)
- Watch (291)

### 3.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

#### CHALLENGE #1: MISSING TREES

While there are 5,425 trees in public right-of-way in City Heights, there are many more opportunities for urban trees. If a tree were placed in the planting area of a sidewalk zone at 50 feet intervals, there would be 15,849 trees in City Heights. This is an additional 10,424 trees or an increase of 292%. Figure 3-3 highlights the sparseness of trees in City Heights. The map assumes a 50 foot radius per tree based on the average interval and shows where there are missing trees along walkways.

#### CHALLENGE #2: CONTINUOUS STREET IDENTITY

El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue are key east-west connectors. Fairmount Avenue and Home Avenue are north-south connectors. However, none of these streets has a consistent tree species in the public right-of-way. The Green Team identified street continuity as a key desire. Each of these four streets should have a primary and secondary trees species that unifies the street, gives a unique identity, and provides a consistent feel for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

#### CHALLENGE #3: NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

Based on preliminary assessments of the planning area, the sixteen neighborhoods in City Heights are not clearly identifiable by any specific tree palette. This has been expressed as a concern and desire by the Green Team. It is recommended that each neighborhood have a primary and secondary tree species and limited plant palette that can be utilized in the public right-of-way.

#### CHALLENGE #4: INVASIVE SPECIES

There are some concerns for invasive species. The invasive tree and plant species are mostly a concern for areas adjacent to the canyon edges. Further study will be completed around the canyon edges at distances of 100 feet, 250 feet, and 500 feet to identify invasive species and evaluate their spread potential for the canyons.



Lack of Neighborhood lighting, tree species, and plants

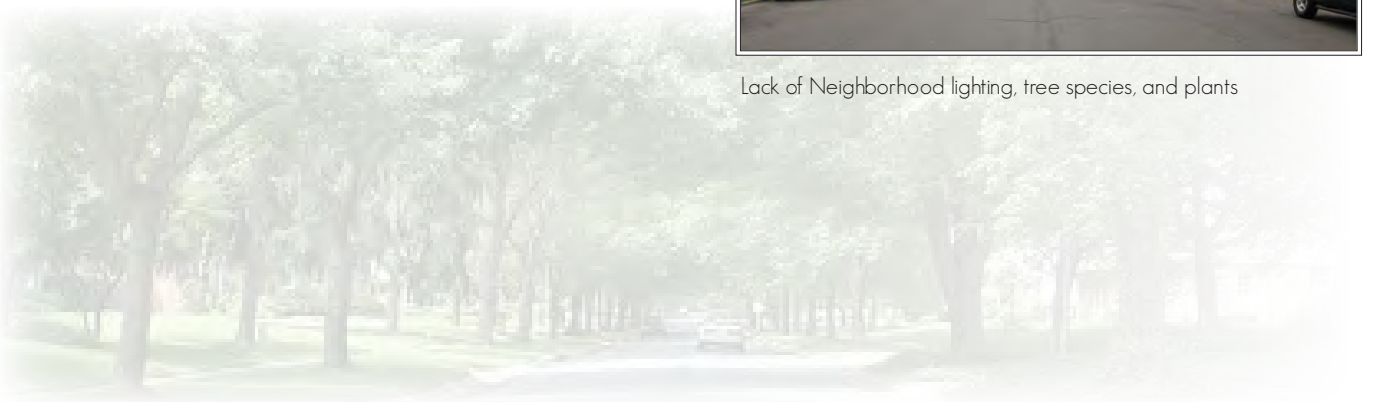
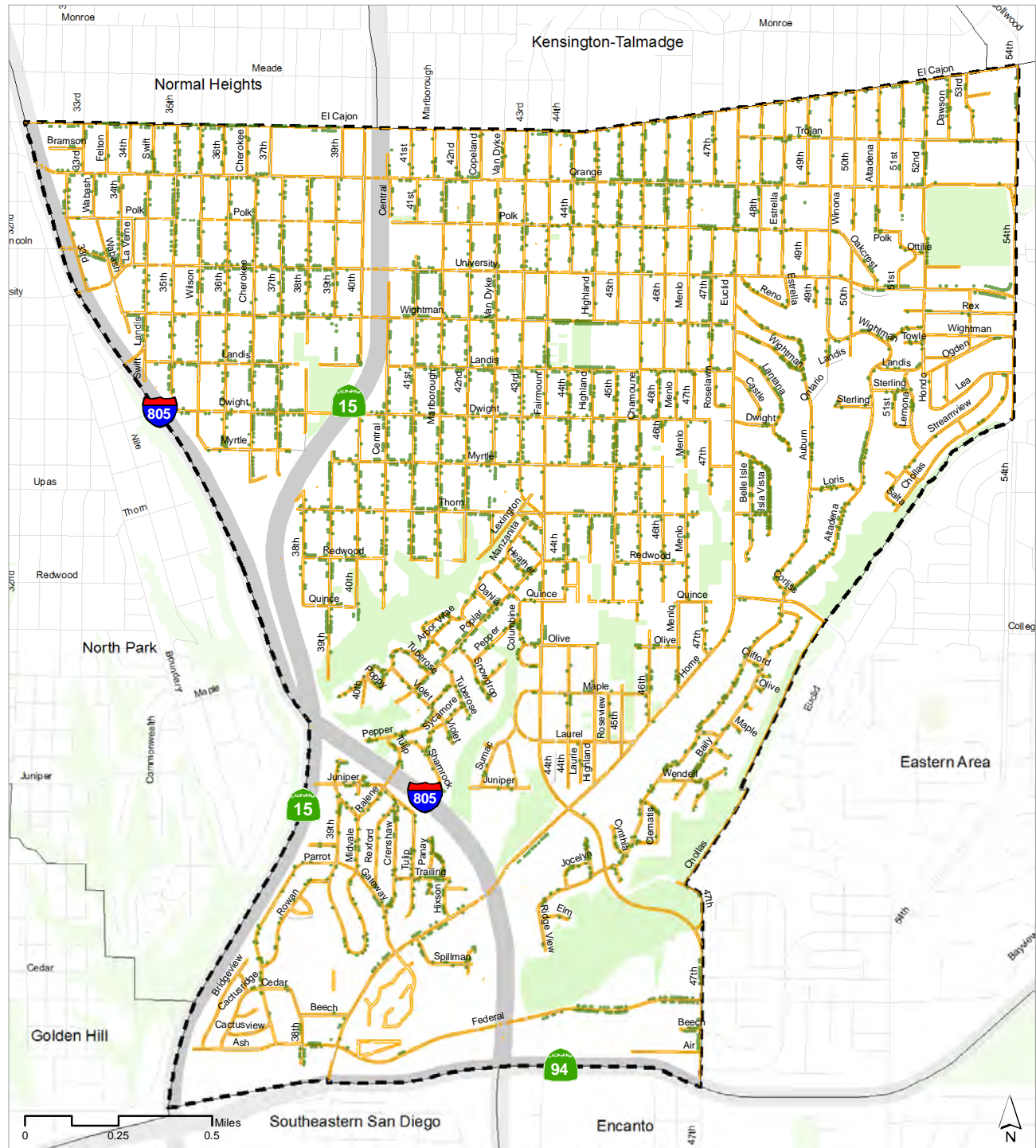






Figure 3-3: Missing Tree Locations



-  City Heights Community Planning Area
-  Walkways
-  City Heights Street Trees (5,425 Current Trees)
-  Parks & Open Space



# 4 STORMWATER & URBAN RUNOFF

**Primary Purpose of Streets Stormwater Runoff:** The capture, treatment, and reuse of water is a key focus of this plan. Stormwater and urban runoff consists of water from rain, excess water from irrigation systems, or other water that finds its way into curbs and gutters along streets. It is termed runoff because this water is not absorbed naturally but instead it enters the drainage systems and stormwater inlets and discharges into natural open spaces, creeks, canyons and ultimately the bay and ocean. Water that does not drain into the stormwater system is absorbed into the natural water cycle by evaporation or absorption. Water can remain as standing water after a storm and eventually evaporate or can be absorbed into permeable surfaces such as tree wells, parkway planters, and landscaped/mulched areas.

**Needs Summary:** Streets are the primary conveyance of urban runoff and stormwater. However, the older methods of simply collecting all water and distributing it downstream is not sustainable and damages natural resources. Streets have the ability, if planned and designed properly, to reduce runoff and obtain a beneficial use of the excess water in supporting the urban forest. Design techniques can use plant material to reduce runoff quantities and improve water quality.

## 4.1 STORMWATER

Stormwater is of concern for two main reasons: one related to the volume and timing of runoff water and the other related to potential contaminants that the water is carrying.

Stormwater is a valuable resource as drought conditions in San Diego continue. Techniques of stormwater harvesting for reuse and purification can potentially make urban environments more self-sustaining in terms of water for landscaping.

### STORMWATER RUNOFF REUSE

Urban runoff and stormwater currently contribute to the concentration and spread of pollutants in creeks, the canyons, and eventually into San Diego Bay and the Pacific Ocean. The intent of this Plan is to lessen the amount of runoff by the following techniques:

- Adding street trees and parkway strips/planting areas to capture runoff.
- Incorporating bio-swales, infiltration trenches, and detention basins to slow down, capture, and filter stormwater and runoff.
- Slowing and discharging water appropriately through vegetation, mulch, sand and other soil material in order to minimize erosion and sedimentation.
- Capturing stormwater and runoff for reuse in watering landscape areas, and recharging groundwater, and supporting wetland areas in natural open space.

Benefits include:

- Less standing water when there are storms.
- Reduced water utility costs for City Heights and these funds could be used to plant more trees.
- Healthier canyons and Chollas Creek and San Diego water ways.

## 4.2 DRAINAGE INVENTORY

Stormwater runoff within City Heights primarily flows south into one of the tributaries for Chollas Creek. Figure 4-1 highlights the area north of Polk Avenue and Orange Avenue. The area north of the blue line on Figure 4-1 indicates flows north to the San Diego River.

### STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM

Aside from curb and gutters, storm drain infrastructure is fairly limited in City Heights. Figure 4-1 shows the location of each drainage inlet and outlet. Most of the east-west streets are crowned in profile to drain to the nearest north-south street, where it merges with runoff from the north/south street and continues flowing to the south. The majority of the stormwater flows into one of several open space canyons (Manzanita, Hollywood, Swan, 47th Street, and Chollas Parkway Canyons) before reaching Chollas Creek and eventually San Diego Bay. There is an existing sewer system in City Heights but the stormwater system does not tie into the sewer system.

When streets terminate at the canyon edges, the runoff goes from the gutter down the slopes of the canyon to the canyon bottom. This has resulted in areas of severe erosion over the years. In other areas, a drain inlet may occur at the end of the street and the runoff is carried down a pipe to the canyon bottom. Where there is an inlet and a carrying pipe, there is less erosion on the canyon slopes but gullies or trenches are created as the speed of runoff (velocity) is high enough to erode the native soils.

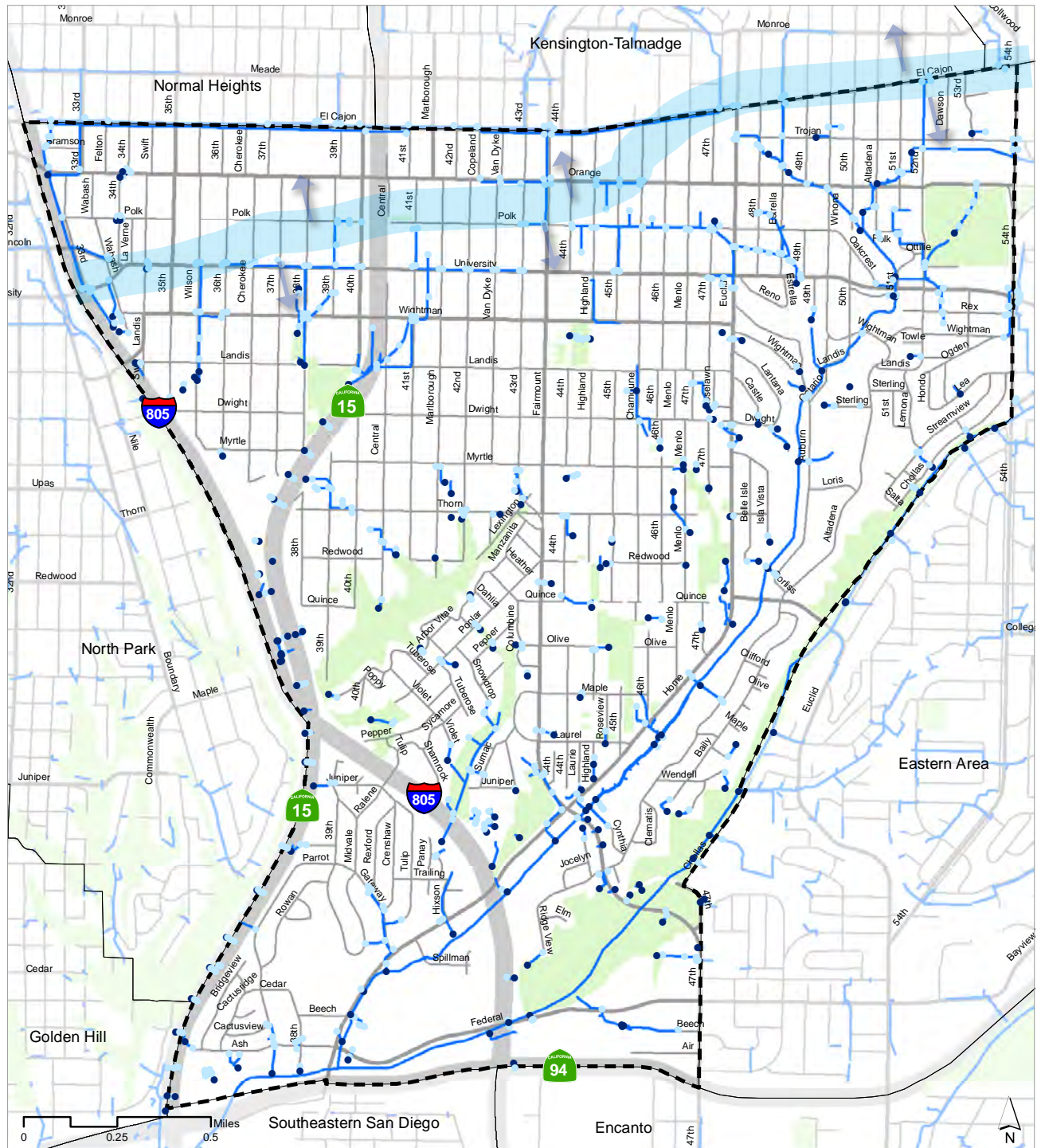
The configuration of the storm drainage system within City Heights contributes substantial trash and debris into the open space canyons which has been the target of many volunteer clean-up efforts and hundreds of hours of volunteer labor.

### INFILTRATION

Figure 4-2 highlights the infiltration potential of the streets and canyon areas. Areas highlighted in dark blue and light blue have low slopes and can absorb and/or evaporate water. Areas highlighted in yellow are areas of concern where the slope is steep enough where water cannot be fully absorbed or detained. Areas highlight in orange and red are areas where the water creates problems such as erosion, sedimentation, significant pollutant transfer. The orange and red areas are areas where the speed or velocity of the water becomes an issue.

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Figure 4-1: Existing Drainage Structures



City Heights Community Planning Area

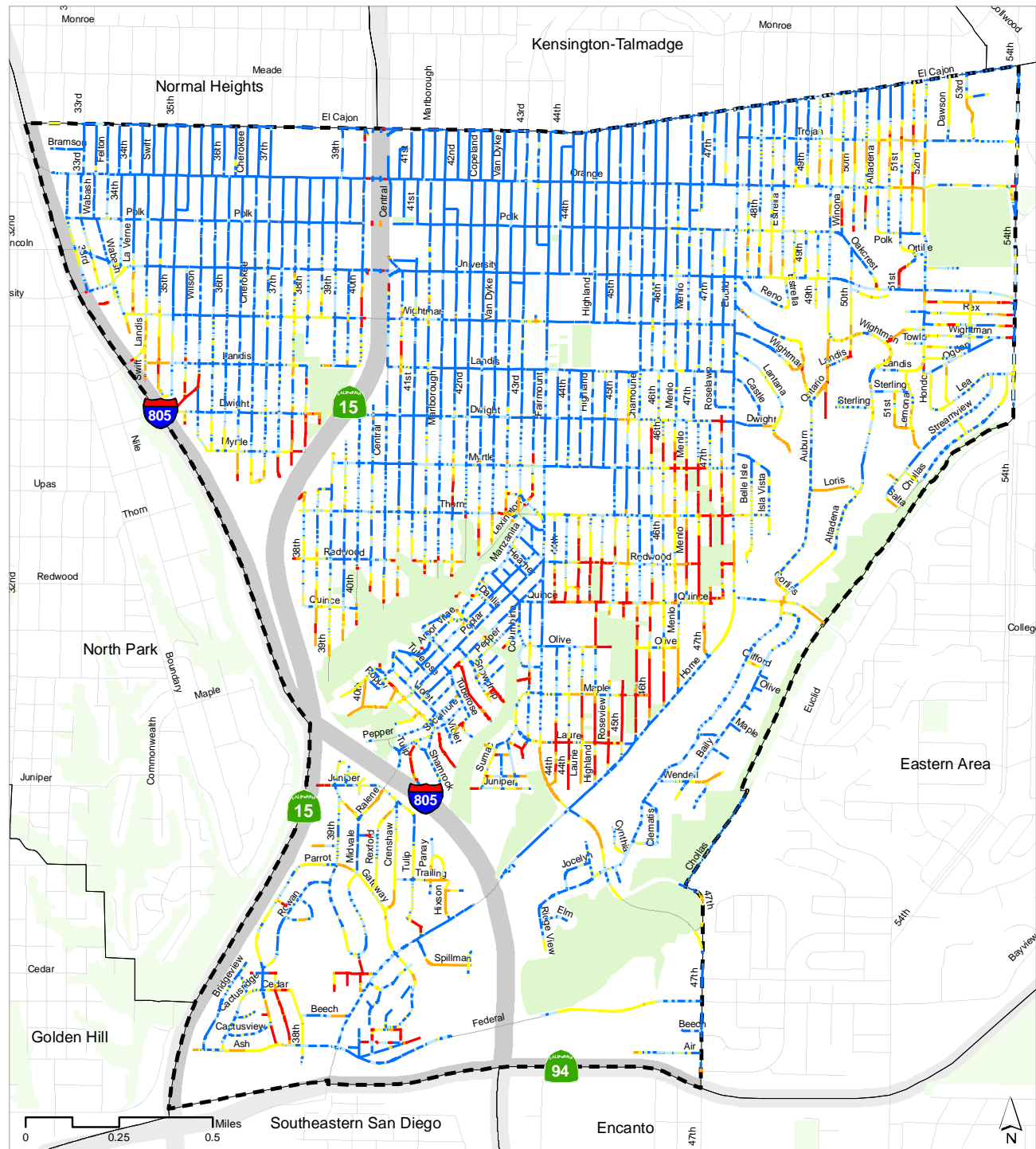
Drainage Conveyance

**Drainage Structure**

- Inlet
- Outlet



Figure 4-2: Infiltration Potential



City Heights Community Planning Area

Parks & Open Space

**BMP Opportunities**

- 0-3% - Infiltration (52%)
- 3-5% - Infiltration/Detention (21%)
- 5-10% - Detention/Energy Dissipation (16%)
- 10-20% - Energy Dissipation (6%)
- > 20% - Too Steep (5%)

### 4.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Any major overhaul of the stormwater system is very costly and unrealistic. The focus of this plan is to address the orange and red problem areas highlighted in figure 4-2 and provide integrated bio-swales, infiltration BMPs to slow water, decrease volume, and absorb it into other devices such as bio-swales.

#### CHALLENGE #1: CATCHING CANYON WATER

One distinct challenge is addressing runoff before it gets to the mouth of a canyon. Storm drain systems adjacent to canyons tend to be steep and thus have a fair amount of hydraulic head available. For these locations, while not effective for decreasing flows, hydrodynamic separators, or other gross solids removal type bmps, can be an effective way to remove trash and debris from the stormwater before it enters the canyon. The orange and red areas highlight on Figure 4-2 coincide with the increased slope near the canyon edges.

#### CHALLENGE #2: CATCHING STREET RUNOFF

One strategy that is often utilized to drain streets is to crown the street or raise the middle of the street so it is higher than the curb. This is effective but can also create standing water at pedestrian crossing areas or even any slow sidewalk area. This has been noted in City Heights. There is a need to identify ways to incorporate more permeable surfaces into the street environment in order to capture and slow more runoff.

#### CHALLENGE #3: INTEGRAL DESIGN

The first two challenges address today's conditions. However, runoff is best addressed in the design phase of a street. The City of San Diego has standards related to stormwater and runoff. City Heights can also identify specific design standards as a part of this plan for runoff. This includes percentage of permeable surfaces in a given street, number of bio-swales or landscaped areas, and tree wells.



Erosion at a canyon edge



Runoff and trash carried through a drainage channel



Runoff in the street



# 5 MOBILITY & CONNECTIVITY

**Primary Purpose of Increased Mobility Options:** Mobility is defined as the public's access to a variety of transportation choices for work trips or any form of trips taken on a daily basis. The Strategic Growth Council is most interested in the types of trips that will result in lower than average vehicle miles traveled. This could be accomplished by transit systems, by walking, by cycling, carpooling or simply by lowering total miles traveled by living in mixed-use compact developments that are near trip destinations or by chaining together trips that reduce overall miles. Today, this is called active transportation, complete streets, and multi-modal access but they are synonymous for providing well designed, integral pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access on streets as an alternative to vehicle use

**Needs Summary:** Historically, vehicular travel has been overly accommodated at the expense of walking, biking and transit use. Streets have several purposes beyond mobility and is discussed in other sections of this report. Mobility integrates the design and modification of streets to support walking, cycling, and transit access. Connectivity highlights the use of streets to provide the public right-of-way connects users to the community destinations.

## 5.1 MOBILITY & CONNECTIVITY

This plan provides for active transportation, which is defined as walking, biking, or walking coupled with transit use. Those that have a wide range of transportation available to themselves, have the highest level of mobility. Mobility for the City Heights Urban Greening Plan starts with nodes of activity in City Heights. This includes schools, businesses, parks, open spaces, canyons and other community destinations. Connecting these destinations for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users with attractive sidewalks, trails, bicycle facilities, and enhanced bus stops is the discussion of the mobility section.

### ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

City Heights is a community that relies heavily on walking, cycling, and transit for travel. However, many physical conditions of sidewalks and streets do not encourage walking, cycling, or transit use. There are many benefits resulting from the integration of active transportation into street design. Benefits include:

- Reduces vehicle congestion on streets.
- Improves air quality and reduces greenhouse gas emissions when more people walk, ride, and/or use transit.
- Increases opportunities for socialization.
- Increases activities in the street such as sidewalk sales, cafes, and more stable retail environments.
- Reduces crime rates on streets when there are more people walking around.
- Improves personnel health for those that switch to active transportation modes .
- Encourages compact development with multiple uses.

## 5.2 STREET PATTERN AND INVENTORY

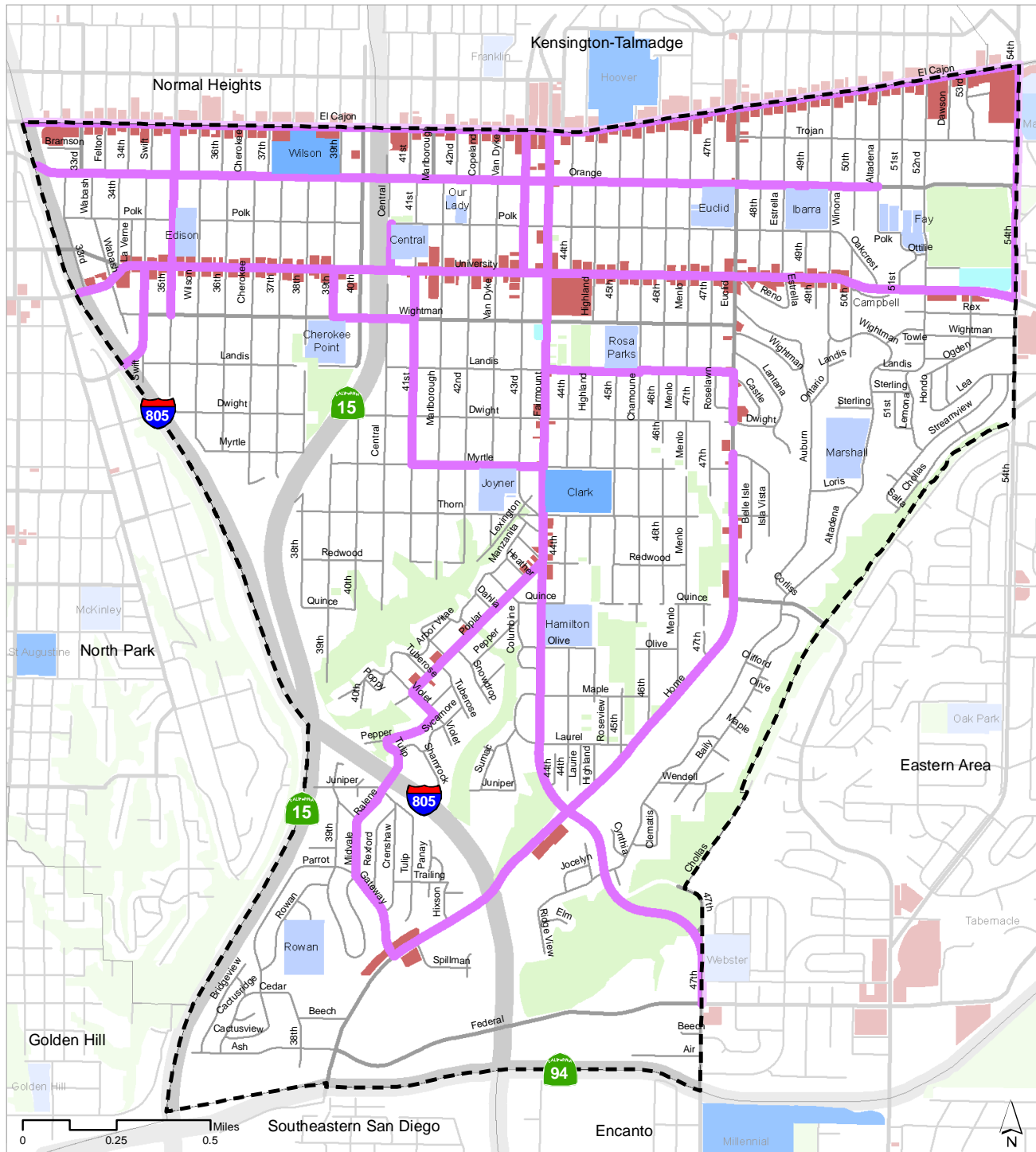
The overall grid street pattern of City Heights is ideal for increased walking and cycling activity. However, the block length is not ideal for walking options. The average block is approximately 200 feet by 500 feet. The extensive system of canyons in the southern part of City Heights interrupts the grid pattern, isolates a number of neighborhoods, and limits the routes that a person can walk or ride through. The simple addition of trails through these canyons could result in significant reduction in out-of-direction travel for the pedestrian or cyclist. This section looks at the various types of streets in City Heights and identifies where they occur and what percentage the street type represents. There are 82 miles of street in City Heights.

### STREETS SUPPORTING MULTI-MODEL USES

Multi-Modal Streets are streets with any combination of existing bicycle facilities, existing sidewalks and public transit routes. Multi-Modal streets make up 20% or 16 miles of City Heights' existing road network (see Figure 5-1). The streets are primarily El Cajon Blvd., University Ave, Euclid/Home Ave, and Fairmount Ave. There is a gap on Euclid Ave between Dwight St., and Isla Vista Dr. because of the lack of sidewalk on this section of Route 965.



Figure 5-1: Multi-modal Streets



City Heights Community Planning Area

- Multi-Modal Streets
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- Senior High School
- Other School
- Commercial Land Use



**STREETS SUPPORTING COMMERCE**

Streets of Commerce are streets that directly access retail and commercial land use. 11% or 9 miles of the street network fall within this street type. Most of the commercial activity is concentrated on a few streets. These streets include University Ave, El Cajon Blvd, Fairmount Ave, Poplar St, Euclid Ave and Home Ave (see Figure 5-2).

**STREETS CONNECTING SCHOOLS**

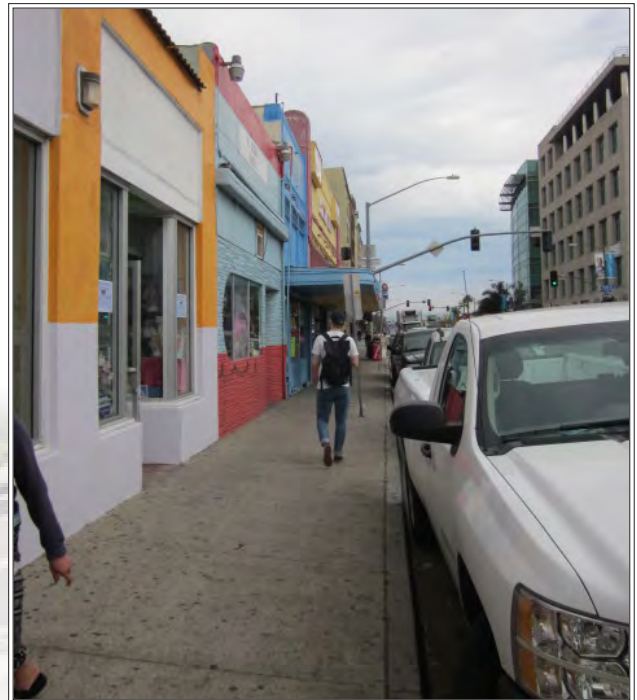
Between 2008 and 2010, WalkSanDiego conducted a Safe Routes to School study within City Heights. The purpose of this project was to engage and educate residents and seek input on how to improve pedestrian safety and walkability in the City Heights. A secondary goal was to create a movement to support walking and biking to school through a safe routes program. Based on the study, 40% 33 miles of City Heights streets have been identified for improvements for creating safe suggested routes to schools (see Figure 5-3).



Waiting to cross at University & Fairmount Ave



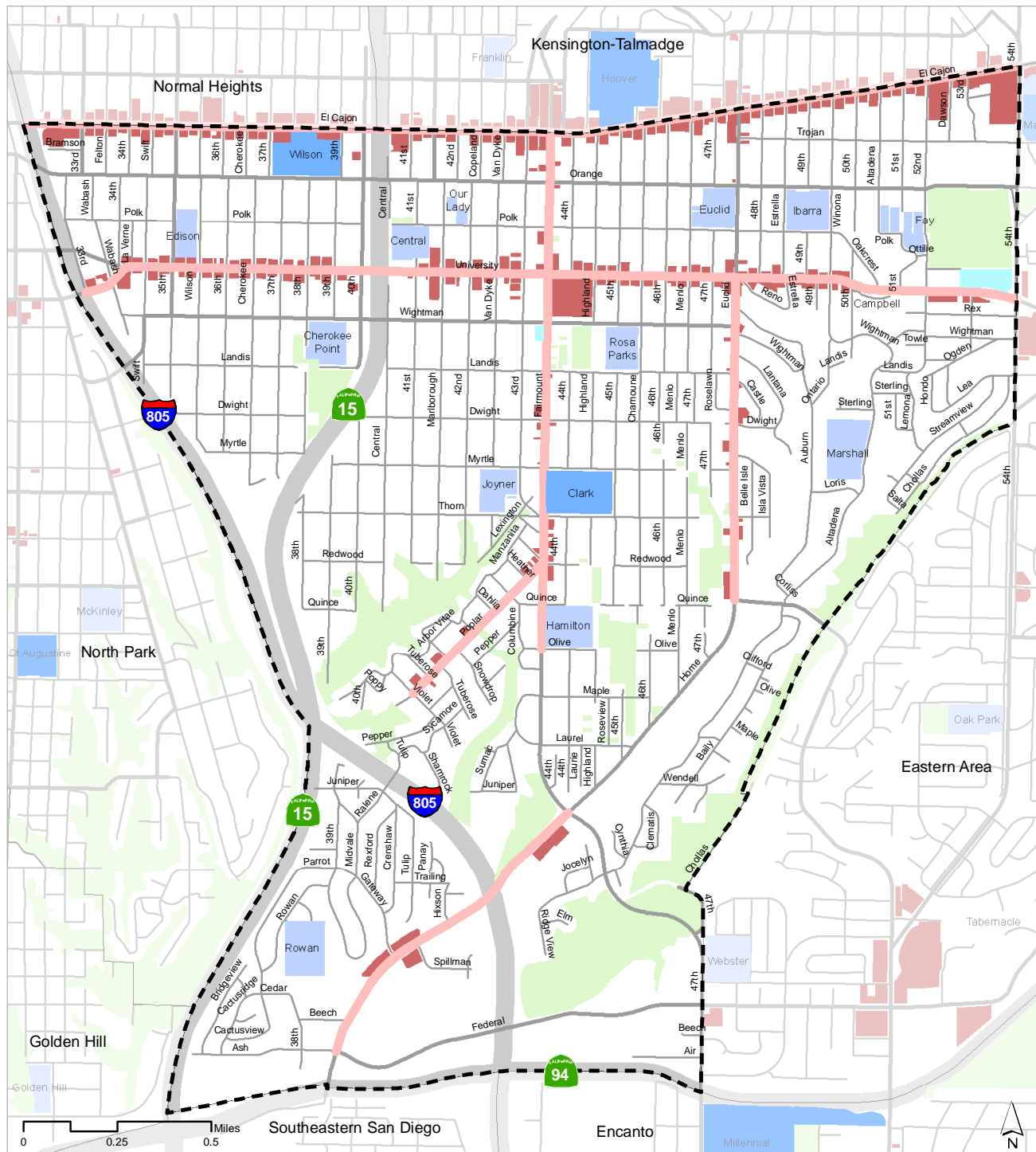
Landis Street view



Walking in City Heights



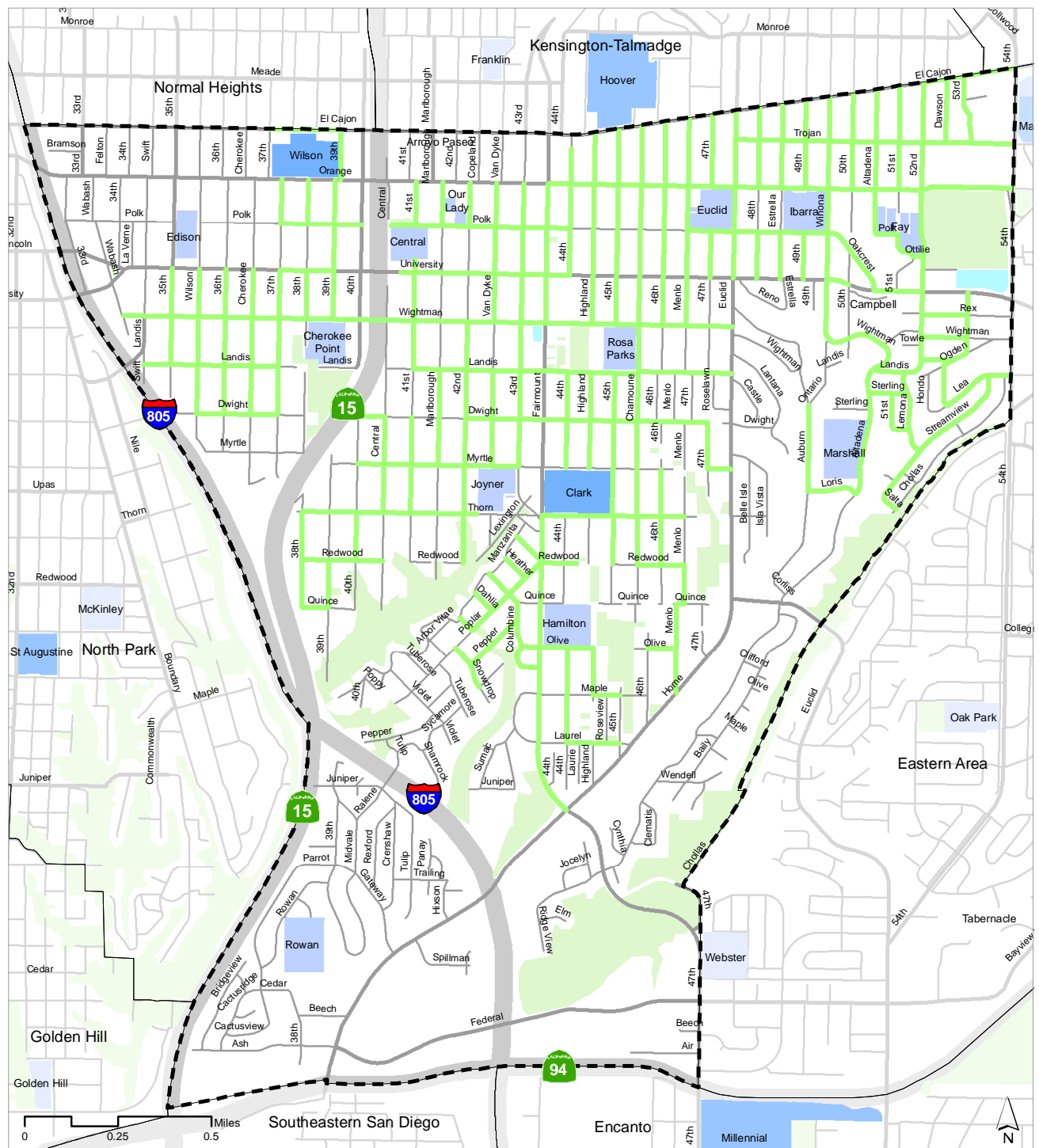
Figure 5-2: Streets of Commerce



- City Heights Community Planning Area
- Streets of Commerce
- Commercial Land Use
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- Senior High School
- Other School



Figure 5-3: Safe Routes to School Streets



- City Heights Community Planning Area
- Identified Safe Routes to School
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- Senior High School
- Other School



**STREETS SUPPORTING PUBLIC TRANSIT**

There are eight Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) bus routes that travel through and around City Heights. Five of these routes can be accessed at the City Heights Transit Plaza on University Ave and SR-15. Figure 5-4 highlights the routes and identifies ridership numbers at each stop.

- Express Service Routes: 210 and 960
- Local/Urban Route: 1, 7, 13, 10 and 15
- Community Circulator: 965. This route is within City Heights only.

The most heavily used bus stops can be found along El Cajon Blvd and Fairmount Ave. According to the 2011 ridership data from MTS, the University Ave/ Fairmount Ave. bus stop has the highest boarding and alightings within City Heights. The table below ranks the bus stops in City Heights based on use.

Rank	Bus Stop	Total
1	University Ave / Fairmount Ave	718
2	El Cajon Blvd / Fairmount Ave	650
3	University Ave / Fairmount Ave	648
4	Fairmount Ave / University Ave	624
5	Fairmount Ave / University Ave	591
6	El Cajon Blvd / 54th St	571
7	University Ave / I-15 Transit Plaza	541
8	El Cajon Blvd / 50th St	466
9	El Cajon Blvd / 33rd St	422
10	Fairmount Ave / El Cajon Blvd	417



Bus Stop



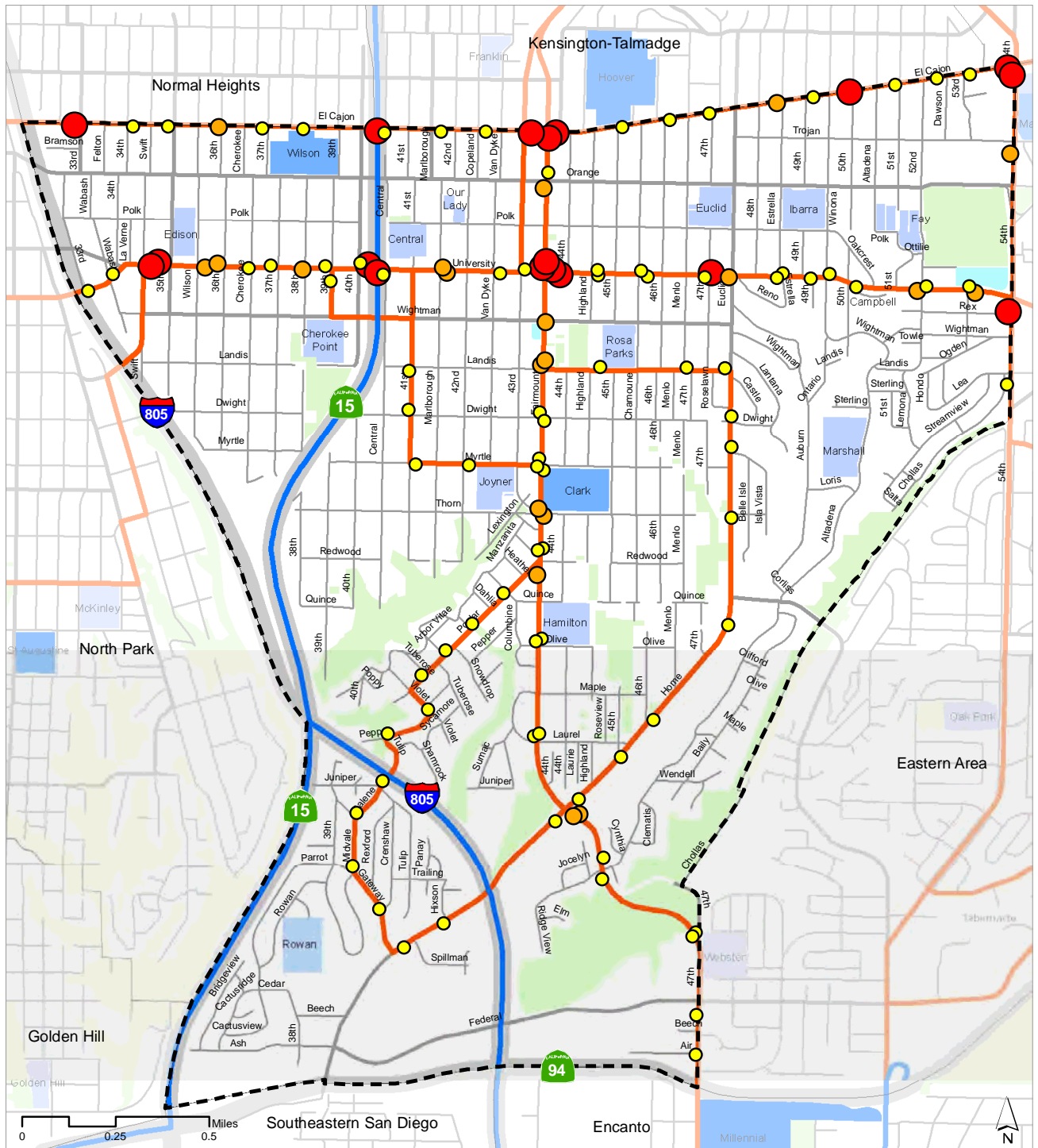
Bus Shelter



City Heights Transit Plaza

City of San Diego | City Heights Urban Greening Plan

Figure 5-4: MTS Bus Routes and Ridership



City Heights Community Planning Area	<b>Public Transit Routes</b>	<b>Transit Ridership (2011)</b>
Elementary School	MTS Express Bus	< 100
Middle School	MTS Local Bus	100 - 300
Senior High School		> 300
Other School		

## STREETS SUPPORTING CYCLING

There are very few facilities in City Heights. University Avenue and 38 Street have bicycle facilities. University Avenue has a Class 3 facility and 38th Street has Class 2 and Class 3 facilities between University Avenue and Wightman Avenue. However, bicycle use is more common in City Heights than is indicated by bicycle facilities. Below is information about each Class facility:

- Class 1 Bikeways:** (frequently referred to as bike paths) are facilities physically separated from motor vehicle routes, with exclusive right of way for bicycles and pedestrians and with motor vehicle cross flows kept to a minimum. The opportunity often exists for the installation of Class 1 facilities that would not only provide the relaxed recreational atmosphere associated with an off street facility, but could also improve commuter connections. Any proposed Class 1 routes would need to be designed for multipurpose use. The paths must be wide enough (Caltrans requirements call for eight feet minimum with two feet of clear space on each side) to accommodate multiple user types and should include an unpaved side path (two to four feet) for users who prefer a softer surface. Also, adding two feet of additional pavement width to these facilities to make them 10 feet wide helps prevent edge damage from maintenance or patrol vehicles.
- Class 2 Facilities:** are marked bicycle lanes within roadways adjacent to the curb lane, delineated by appropriate striping and signage. Bicycle lanes help to delineate available road space for preferential use by cyclists and motorists, and to promote more predictable movements by each. Bicycle lane markings can increase a cyclist's confidence in motorists not straying into his/her path of travel. Likewise, passing motorists are less likely to swerve to the left out of their lane to avoid cyclists on their right. Under ideal conditions, the minimum bicycle lane width is five feet, but certain edge conditions can dictate additional desirable bicycle lane width. However, even where roadway width is available, Class 2 bike lanes should be no wider than eight feet to prevent the appearance of a travel lane that could encourage motorists to drive or park in them.

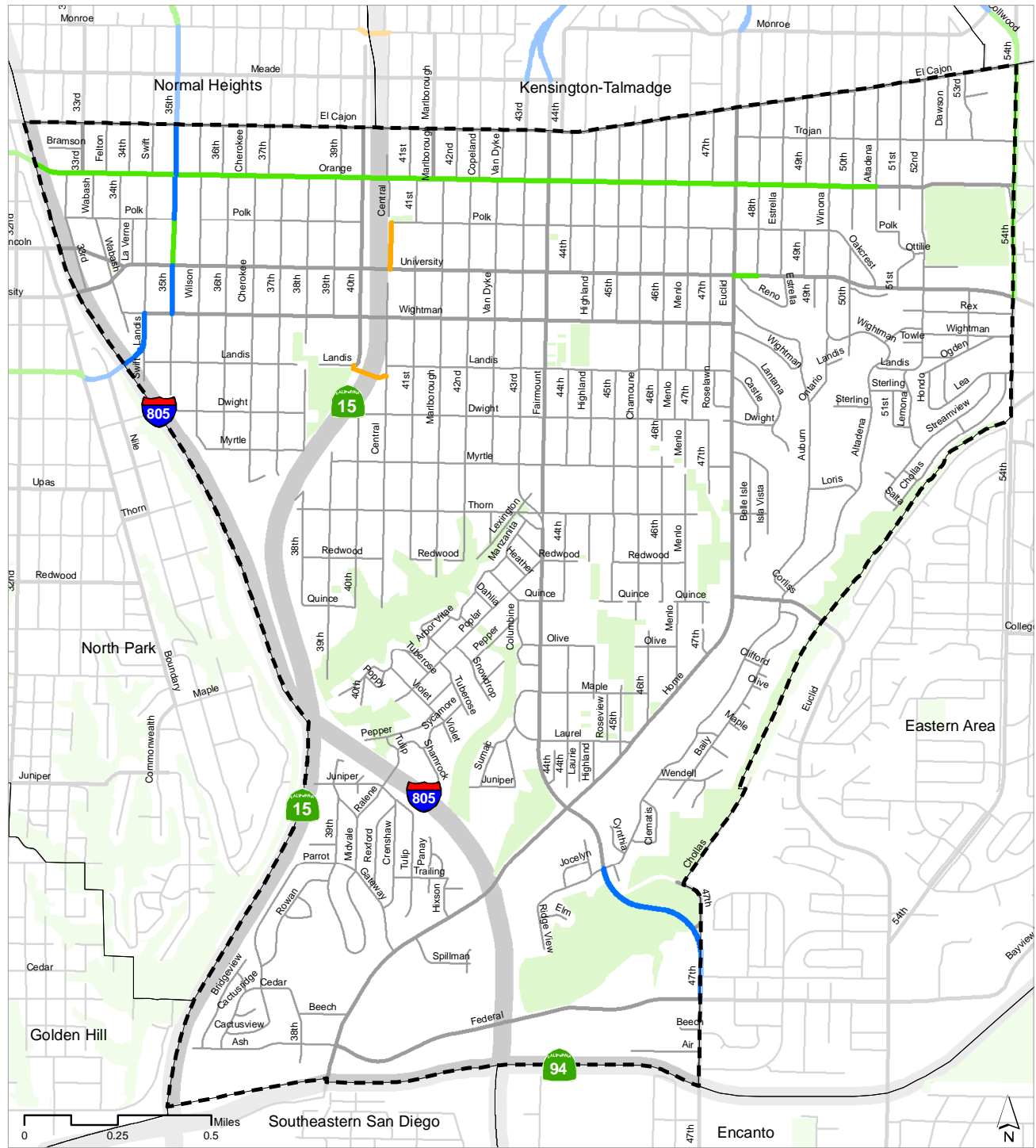
- Class 3 Facilities:** is a suggested bicycle route marked by a series of signs designating a preferred route between destinations such as residential and shopping areas. A network of such routes can provide access to a number of destinations throughout the community. In some cases, looped systems of scenic routes have been created to provide users with a series of recreational experiences. In addition, such routes can provide relatively safe connections for commuting to workplaces or schools. They are recommended where traffic volumes and roadway speeds are fairly low (35 MPH or less). The designation of a roadway as a Class 3 facility should be based primarily on the advisability of encouraging bicycle use on that particular roadway. While the roadways chosen for bicycle routes may not be free of problems, they should offer the best balance of safety and convenience of the available alternatives.

The following table summarizes the existing and proposed bicycle facilities within City Heights. The data source is from the 2011 San Diego Bicycle Master Plan (see Figure 5-5 and 5-6).

Bicycle Facilities Summary		
Existing Bicycle Facilities	Existing	Proposed
Class 1: Bike Path	0.23 mi	4.1 mi
Class 2: Bike Lane	0.92 mi	9.3 mi
Class 3: Bike Route	2.79	2.9 mi
Bike Lane or Bike Route	0 mi	3.3 mi
Bicycle Boulevard	0 mi	2.6 mi



Figure 5-5: Existing Bike Facilities

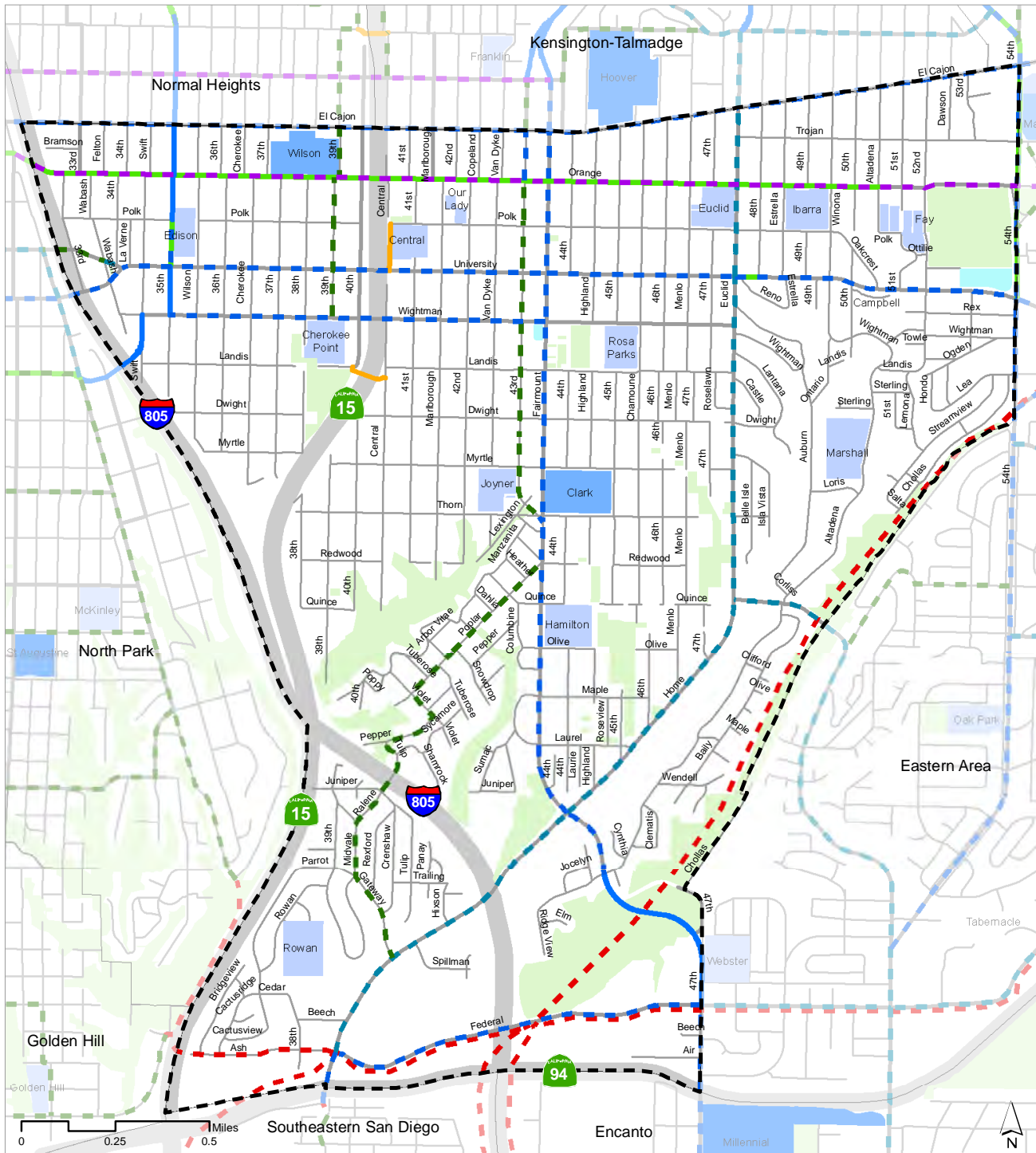


City Heights Community Planning Area

**Existing Bicycle Facilities**

- Class 1: Bike Path
- Class 2: Bike Lane
- Class 3: Bike Route
- Bike & Pedestrian Bridge

Figure 5-6: Proposed Bike Facilities



	City Heights Community Planning Area	<b>Existing Bicycle Facilities</b>	<b>Proposed Bicycle Facilities</b>
	Elementary School		Class 1: Bike Path
	Middle School		Class 2: Bike Lane
	Senior High School		Class 3: Bike Route
	Other School		Bike & Pedestrian Bridge
			Bike Path
			Cycle Track
			Bike Lane
			Bike Lane or Route
			Bike Route
			Bicycle Blvd

**STREET SUPPORTING PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY**

Preliminary sidewalk data was provided by SANDAG to identify sidewalk deficiencies within City Heights. The sidewalk data has yet to be field verified. In addition, the data will be verified once data from the Safe Routes to School efforts has been collected. With the provided data, 87% of City Heights streets have sidewalks. Most of the missing sidewalks are near and around the canyons (see Figure 5-7). There are 150 miles of sidewalks in City Heights. Of this, there are 20 miles of missing sidewalks.

**COLLISION ANALYSIS**

Data from the California Highway Patrol’s Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRs) was collected to analyze pedestrian and bicycle collisions trends for the community. A five-year data set was collected between 2006 and 2010 for both bicycle and pedestrian analysis. The severity and locations of the collisions is summarized in the following tables. University Ave and El Cajon Blvd have the highest volumes of non-motorized collisions. Fatal pedestrian collisions were primarily found on the I-805 and SR-15 corridors (see Figure 4-8 and 4-9).

Bicycle Injuries	
Severity	Count
Injured	271
Fatal	3
Total	274

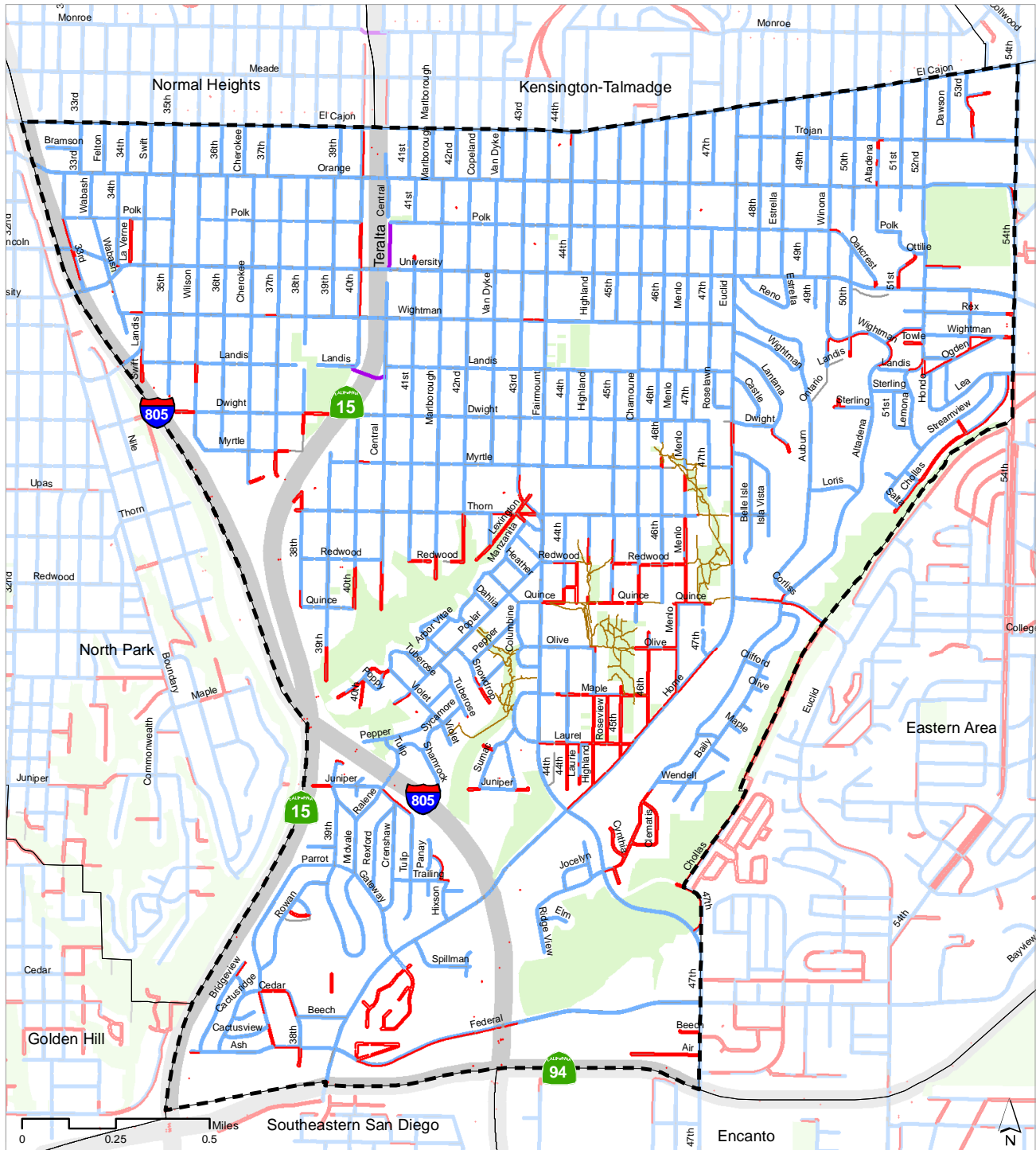
Bicycle Collision Locations	Count	% of Collisions
El Cajon Blvd	48	18%
University Ave	48	18%
Orange Ave	15	5%
Fairmount Ave	11	4%
54th Street	8	3%
Euclid Ave	7	3%
Polk Ave & Wrightman St	6	2%
41st, 46th, Chamoune and Winona	5	2%
33rd, 38th, Estrella Ave, Marlborough Ave and Wilson Ave	4	1%
36th, 37th, 43rd, Auburn Dr and Trojan Ave	3	1%

Pedestrian Injuries	
Severity	Count
Injured	491
Fatal	17
Total	508

Pedestrian Collision Locations	Count	% of Collisions
University Ave	116	23%
El Cajon Blvd	71	14%
Euclid Ave	27	5%
Fairmount Ave	24	5%
Orange Ave	23	5%
I-805	14	3%
Marlborough Ave	13	3%
41st, 54th, Home Ave, SR-15 and Wightman St	11	2%
Landis St and Winona Ave	9	2%
Chamoune Ave and Trojan Ave	8	2%



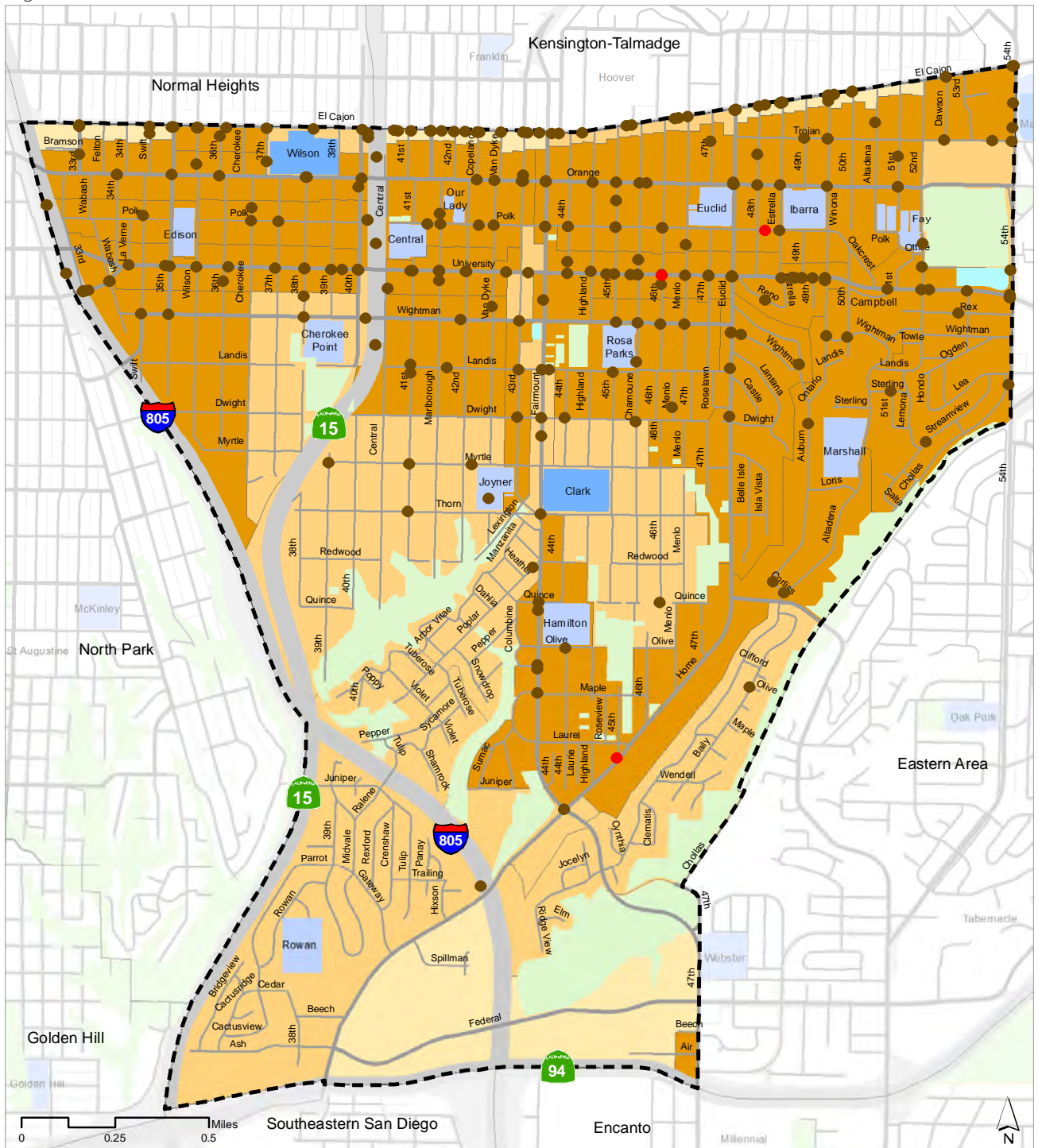
Figure 5-7: Existing Walkway Facilities



- City Heights Community Planning Area
- Soft Surface Trails
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Bridge
- Sidewalk Infrastructure**
- Existing Sidewalk
- Missing Sidewalk



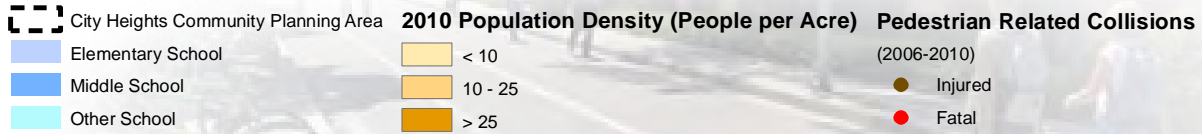
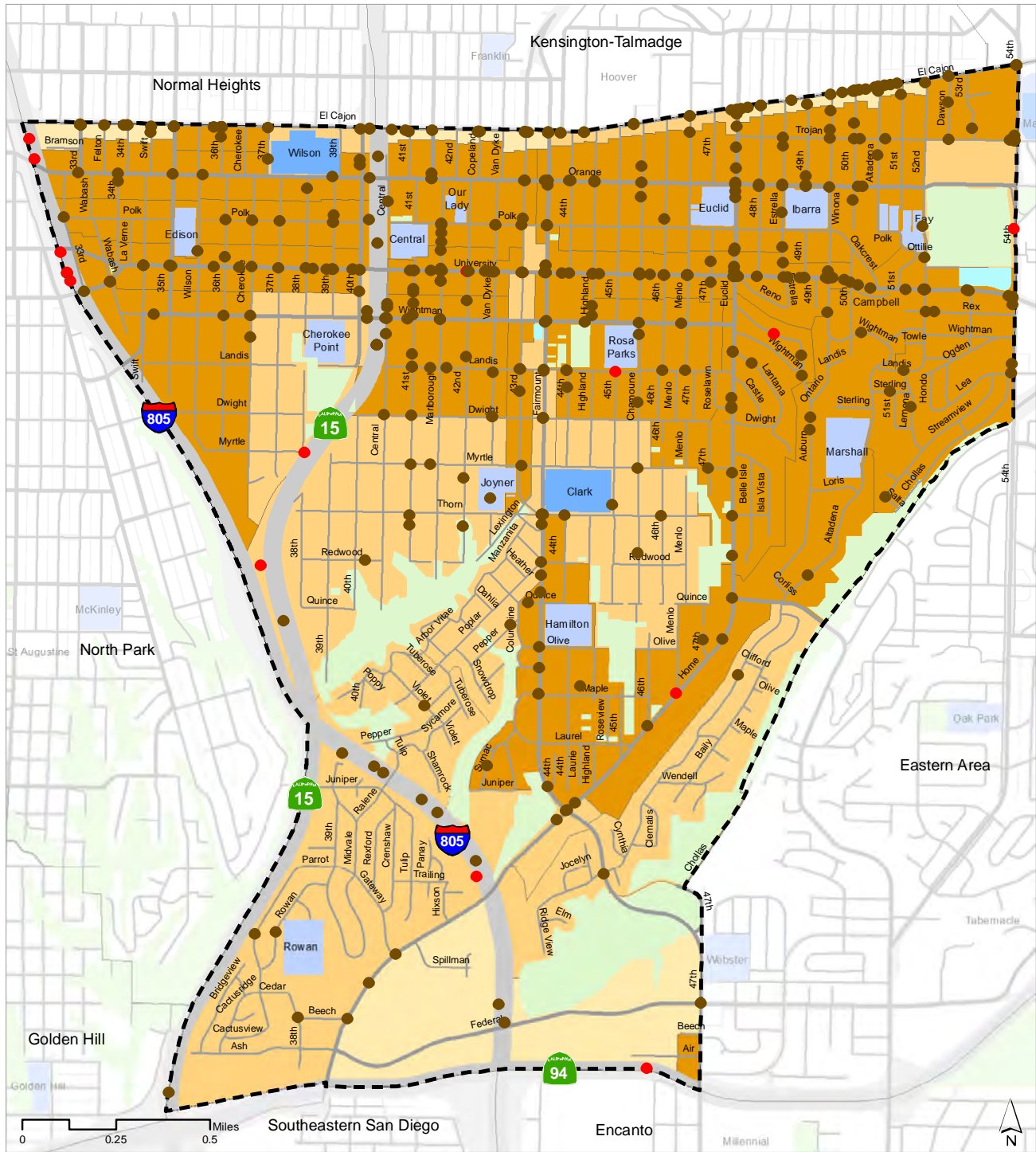
Figure 5-8: Vehicle / Bike Collisions



City Heights Community Planning Area	<b>2010 Population Density (People per Acre)</b>	<b>Bicycle Related Collisions (2006-2010)</b>
Elementary School	< 10	Injured
Middle School	10 - 25	Fatal
Other School	> 25	



Figure 5-9: Vehicle / Pedestrian Collisions



### 5.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

#### CHALLENGE #1: IDENTIFYING ROUTES

Figures 5-10 through 5-16 identify the population that has walkable access to a variety of destinations. Wayfinding and walking amenities are often missing. Integrated ground signage as well as posted signage can be used to provide direction. Other site amenities that help walkers include: distance markers, safe crossings, lighting and points of interest. These are key to activating a specific route program. In order to provide clear direction to residents, a signage system for safe routes to school and safe routes to parks needs to be established.

#### CHALLENGE #2: FEW BICYCLE FACILITIES

There are very few bicycle facilities in City Heights. Although City Heights has a proposed bicycle master plan, these facilities need to be implemented. Funding for these capital improvements is necessary.

#### CHALLENGE #3: NON-ADA PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Most streets in City Heights have adjacent sidewalks. The issue with the sidewalks is not whether they exist but rather if they are universally accessible. Are they an adequate width to encourage commercial activity? The physical condition of current walkways is poor and the width often do not support ADA access.

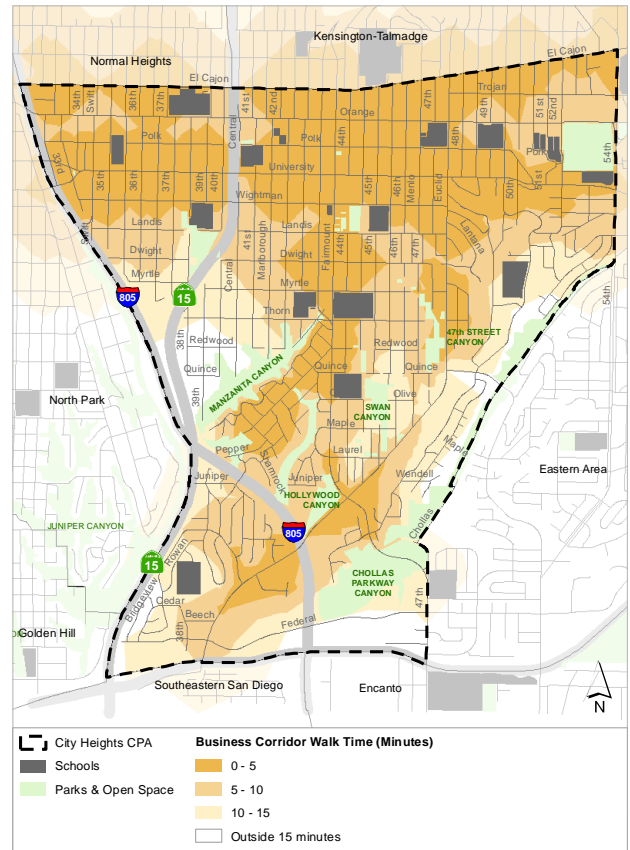
#### CHALLENGE #4: LIGHTING AND SAFETY

Lighting impacts the street environment in two ways. The first positive effect is visibility for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers. The second positive effect is safety resulting from increased lighting. Figure 5-16 shows the number of crime incidents in City Heights that are non-vehicle related. In contrast, Figure 5-15 shows the lighting conditions in City Heights and the significant dark spots. These areas can attract crime.

#### CHALLENGE #5: ENHANCED TRANSIT FACILITIES

MTS provides the minimum standards for bus stops. If any additional facilities are desired, the financial responsibility and maintenance burden falls to the City or organization that is interested in enhancing or changing the bus shelter or bench. There is an opportunity for more community involvement to design and maintain a bus bench or shelter.

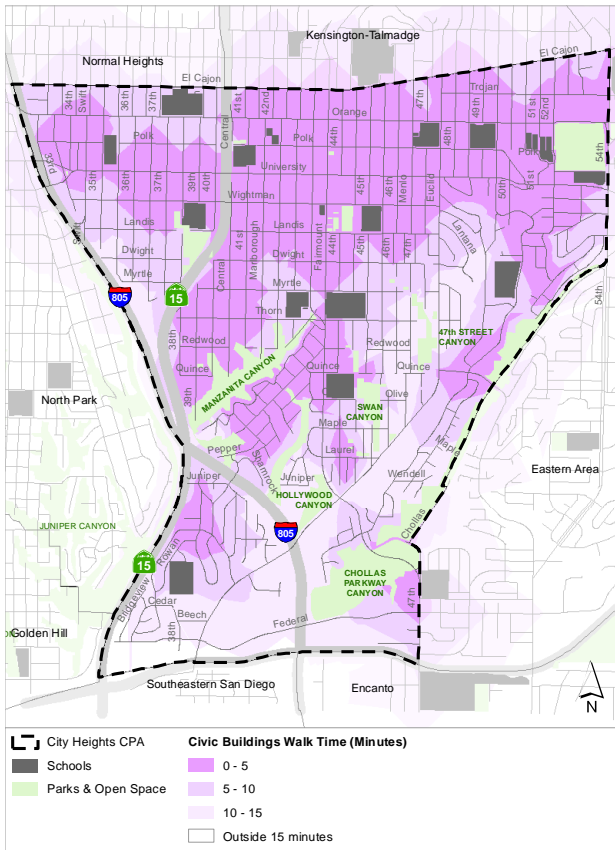
Figure 5-10: Walkable Areas from Street of Commerce



Walkable Population from Streets of Commerce		
Min	Population 2010	Population 2030
0 - 5	40,917	59,380
5 - 10	25,926	29,985
10 - 15	9,191	10,108
Grand Total	76,034	99,474

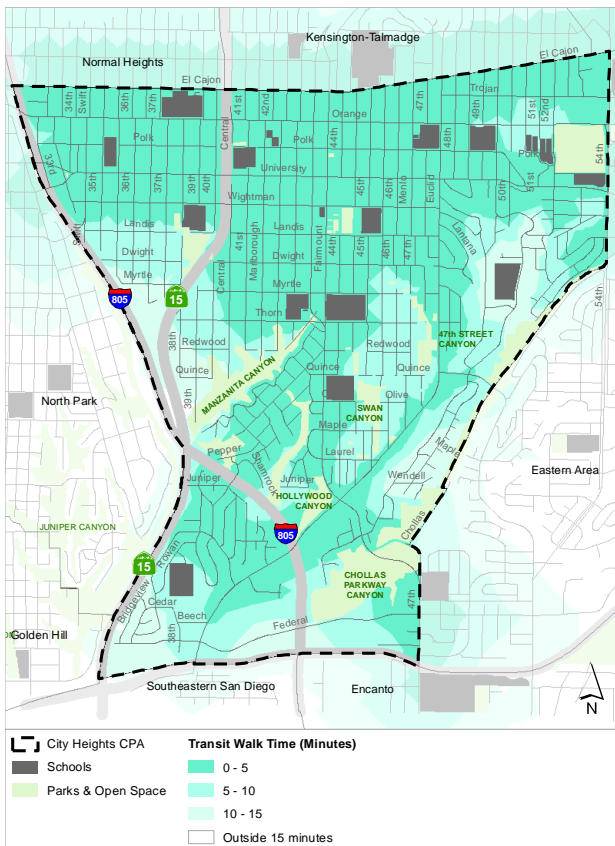


Figure 5-11: Walkable Areas from Schools



Walkable Population from Schools		
Min	Population 2010	Population 2030
0 - 5	32,834	41,367
5 - 10	30,856	42,193
10 - 15	13,003	16,514
Grand Total	76,693	100,075

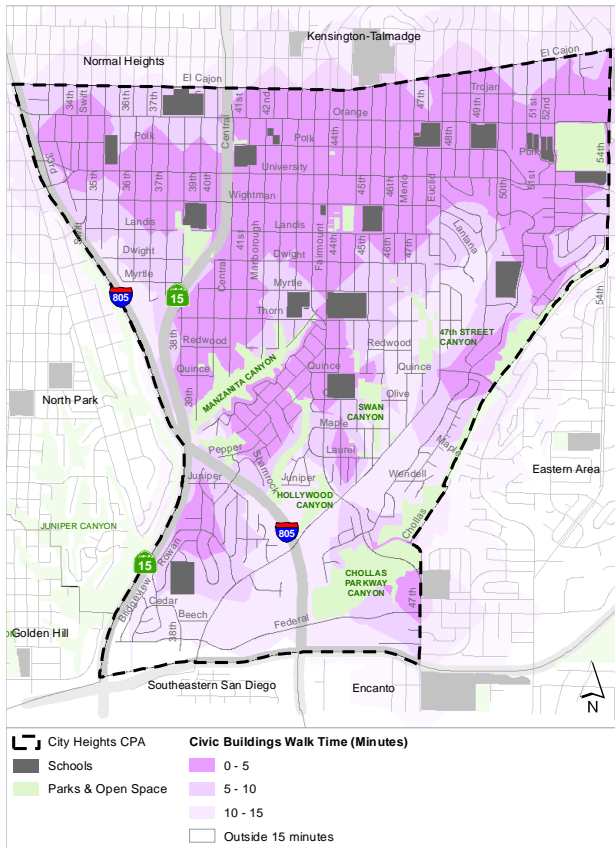
Figure 5-12: Walkable Areas from Transit



Walkable Population from Transit		
Min	Population 2010	Population 2030
0 - 5	59,471	81,032
5 - 10	14,879	16,646
10 - 15	5,919	6,402
Grand Total	80,269	104,079

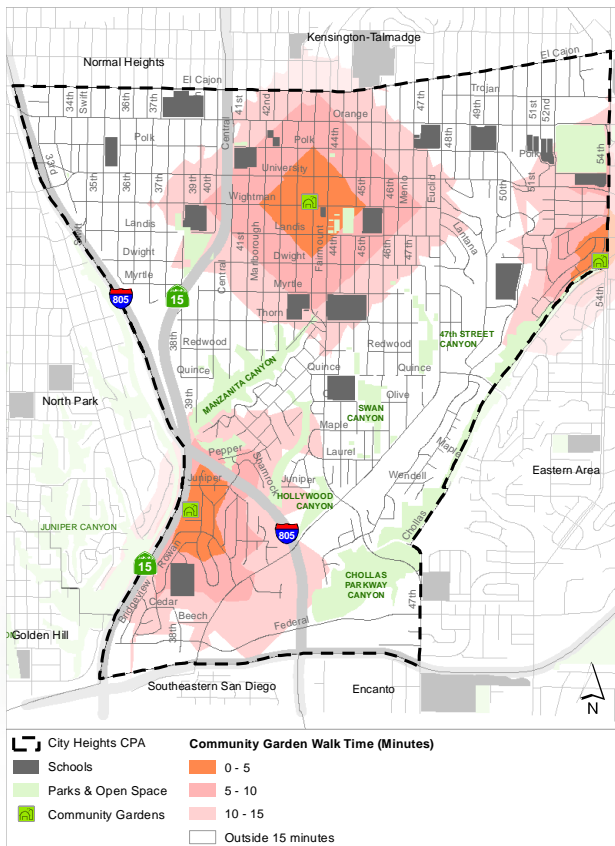


Figure 5-13: Walkable Areas from Civic Buildings



Walkable Population from Civic Buildings		
Min	Population 2010	Population 2030
0 - 5	47,947	62,243
5 - 10	23,122	30,943
10 - 15	8,734	10,380
Grand Total	79,803	103,566

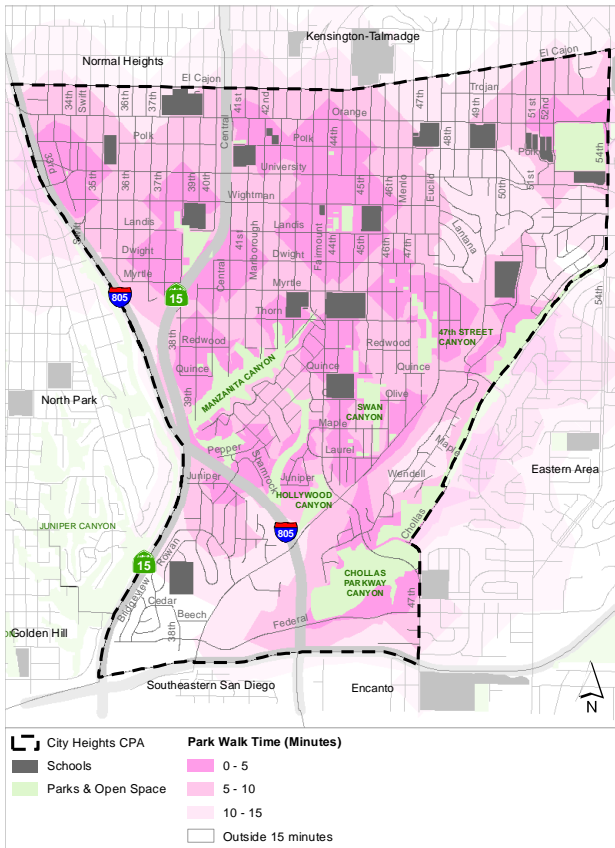
Figure 5-14: Walkable Areas from Community Gardens



Walkable Population from Community Gardens		
Min	Population 2010	Population 2030
0 - 5	3,789	5,471
5 - 10	12,370	15,287
10 - 15	17,297	22,092
Grand Total	33,457	42,850

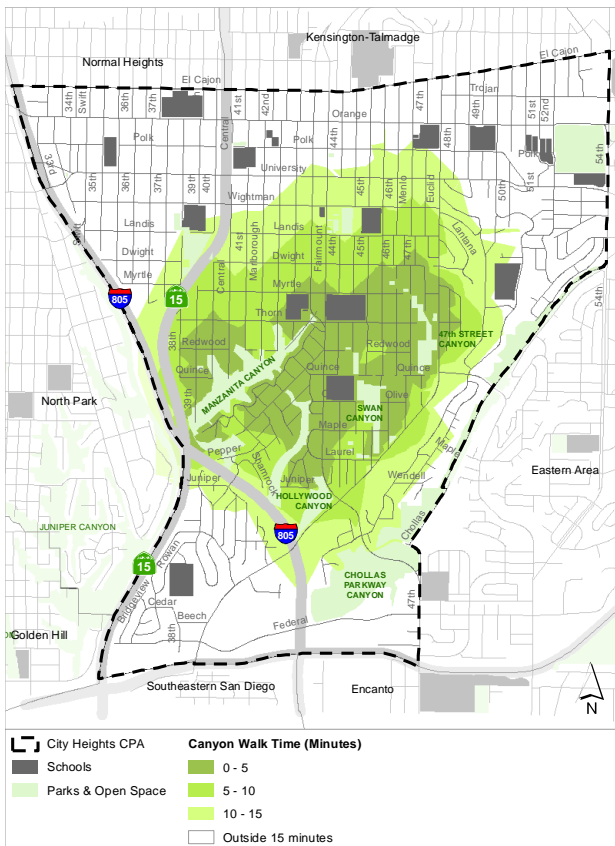


Figure 5-15: Walkable Areas from Parks



Walkable Population from Parks		
Min	Population 2010	Population 2030
0 - 5	25,653	31,191
5 - 10	37,052	48,397
10 - 15	16,269	22,855
Grand Total	78,974	102,443

Figure 5-16: Walkable Areas from Canyons



Walkable Population from Canyons		
Min	Population 2010	Population 2030
0 - 5	9,799	11,686
5 - 10	9,641	11,249
10 - 15	12,810	16,122
Grand Total	32,249	39,057





# 6

## OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

**Primary Purpose of Streets in connecting to Open Space and Parks:** This section discusses the places where the community goes to enjoy the outdoors, nature, fresh air, and activity. Open Space includes natural settings such as canyons. Recreation encompasses parks, plazas, and any space that is a designed active or passive recreation area. There are many activities that can occur in both of these types of places such as sports, walking, hiking, mountain biking, chess games, and yoga classes. These activities encourage social interaction and have significant health benefits to individuals. In addition, these activities taking place in open space and recreation areas, enhance the safety of the physical environment by activating space and providing more eyes on the trails and canyons.

**Needs Summary:** Open Space and recreation areas fulfill an important need for the community through access to nature, recreation facilities, clean air, physical activity and mental relief. The park and recreation resources are not distributed throughout the community in an equitable fashion and natural open space areas are concentrated at the south end of the community. Therefore streets, will play an increasing important role, to not only connect natural areas with urban areas, but also to provide a safe walking and riding environment to these spaces, but also for the opportunity of providing small parks and urban plazas within or next to the public right of way.

## 6.1 OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

Open space and recreation have two different meanings. Open space refers to natural areas that are publicly accessible, generally devoid of built structures or roads such as canyons. For this section, recreation is defined as parks and activity centers that are often more formalized public spaces with improvements that support active and passive recreational activities such as neighborhood or community parks.

### OPEN SPACE & RECREATION BENEFITS

Open space provides the community with a visual and physical link to nature and natural processes while recreation creates opportunities for all levels of activity to occur within a community. Open space and recreation benefits include:

- Provides psychological relief from heavily urbanized areas that often do not provide for recreational activities, passive enjoyment, or quiet contemplation.
- Increases air flow and often provides cleaner air through tree oxygenation and natural processes.
- Cleanses runoff water through natural processes.
- Connects City Heights visually through the canyon system.
- Provide enjoyable bike and pedestrian short cuts and areas for exercise and healthy activities.

## 6.2 OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Open space and recreation in City Heights is comprised of neighborhood and community parks, open spaces and canyons. Canyons and open space areas are opportunities for environmental-based education and ecologically sensitive recreation. Some canyons and open space areas are in need of restoration and preservation. Others need both visual and physical access improvements. San Diego Canyonlands has been working in City Heights on a Canyons Loop Trail system to implement a loop trail that connects four City Heights Canyons.

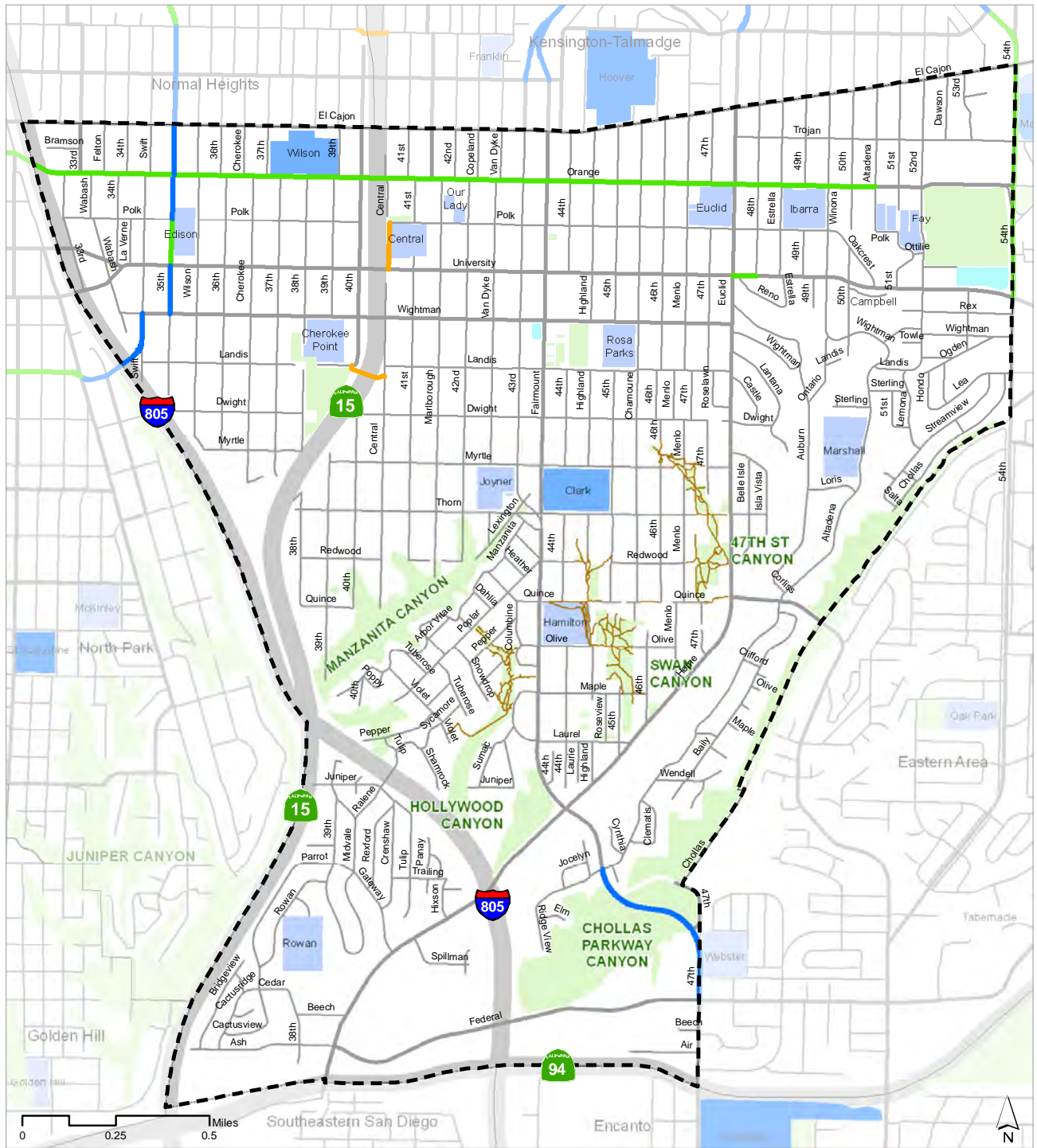
### OPEN SPACE TRAILS

Established soft surface trails can be found in three of the community's five canyons (see Figure 5-1). There are just over five miles of these trails that traverse Hollywood Canyon, 4th Street Canyon and Swan Canyon. The most recent data have been collected by San Diego Canyonlands and have been identified by surface type and recommendations on whether to keep specific trails open. These trails are used by the local community as connectors between neighborhoods where the canyons bisect them. Trails can also be found in Manzanita Canyon and Chollas Parkway Canyon. At the moment, these trails have not been cataloged or surveyed.



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Figure 6-1: Existing Trail Systems



- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  City Heights Community Planning Area | <b>Existing Bicycle Facilities</b>   |
|  Soft Surface Trails                  |  Class 1: Bike Path       |
|  Elementary School                    |  Class 2: Bike Lane       |
|  Middle School                        |  Class 3: Bike Route      |
|  Senior High School                   |  Bike & Pedestrian Bridge |
|  Other School                         |  |



## PARKS

City Heights has a number of park facilities. They are listed below:

Name	Type	Acres
Central Elementary School	Mini	0.56
City Heights (39th St)	Mini	0.32
Edison Elementary	Mini	0.68
Euclid	Mini	0.0
Wabash	Mini	0.17
Azalea	Neighborhood	9.0
Hollywood	Neighborhood	13.19
Monroe Clark Middle	Neighborhood	0.0
Park DeLa Cruz	Neighborhood	6.93
Rosa Parks Elementary	Neighborhood	2.3
Teralta	Neighborhood	4.0
Wilson Middle	Neighborhood	4.0
City Heights Village	Community	6.93
Colina Del Sol	Community	33.84
Fairmount Village	Community	0.00
MidCity Athletic Area	Community	40.88

These parks are spread throughout City Heights but based on City of San Diego population requirements, the area is deficient in park space.

## 6.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### CHALLENGE #1: RECLAIMING RIGHT-OF-WAY

Because City Heights is an older neighborhood, there are few opportunities for new park land. There is a need for new parks and green space. One strategy for resolving this deficiency is to identify paper streets or extra wide right-of-ways where a portion can be reclaimed for public use. Figure 6-2 highlights in red where there is an excess right-of-way that could be reclaimed while still providing on street parking and efficient vehicular access.

### CHALLENGE # 2: OPEN SPACE CONNECTIONS

The canyons are an untapped resource in City Heights. They could contribute more to physical activity and could provide key connections for cyclists and pedestrians to get to community destinations. Currently, there is not a clear trail system or marked entries to these canyons. San Diego Canyonlands is working on improving this situation. This plan will work with San Diego Canyonlands to ensure open space trails and connections are realized, in an environmentally sensitive manner.

### CHALLENGE #3: SAFE ROUTES TO RECREATION

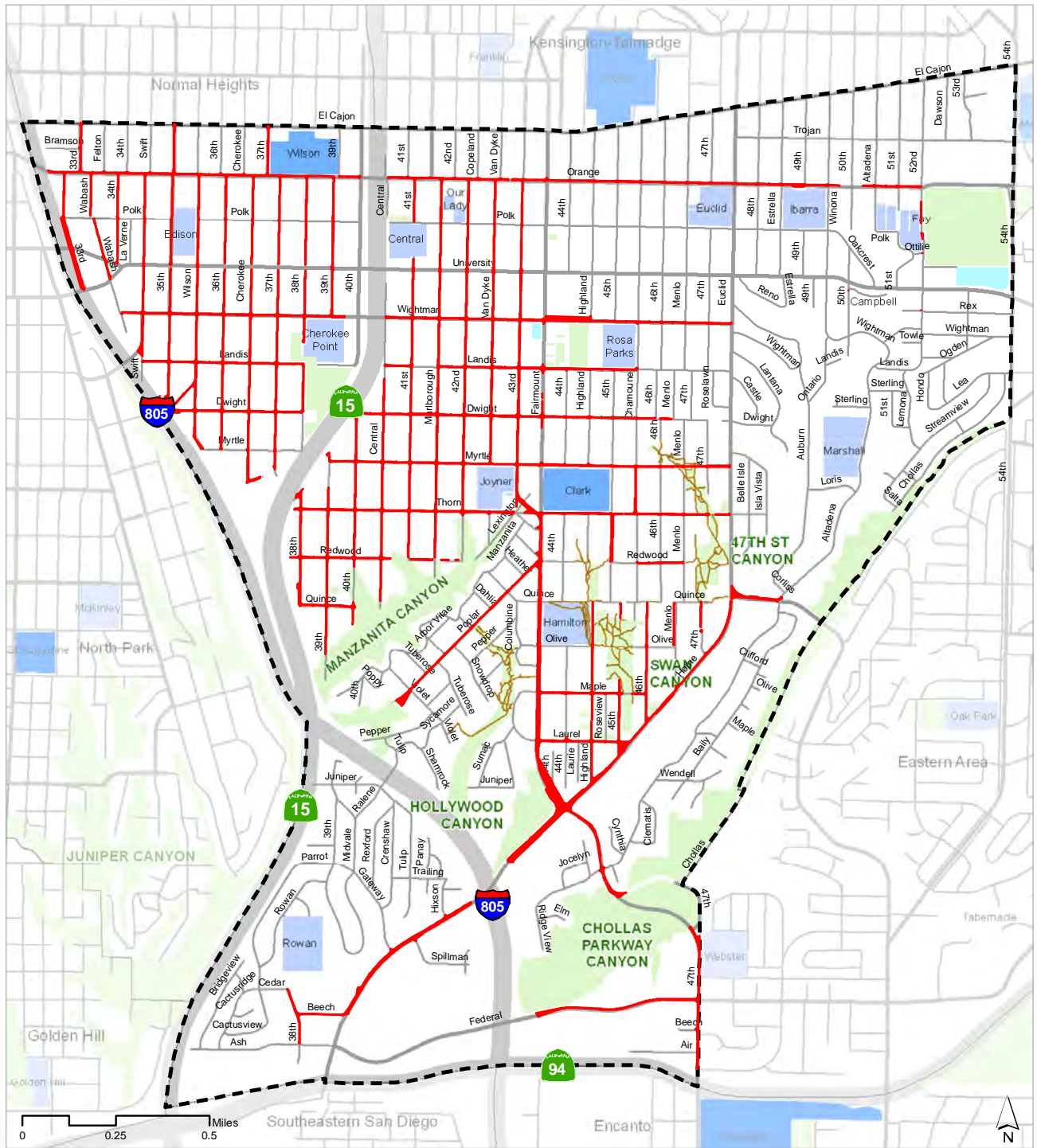
As previously mentioned in the mobility chapter, there are no signage systems to direct the community to parks or open space. Often the parks and canyon entries are hidden or not clearly marked. A safe routes to recreation signage system could highlight the direction and distance a person would need to travel.

### CHALLENGE #4: PLAZA DESIGN STANDARDS

There are few public plazas in City Heights. Public plazas can activate the street environment and provide an opportunity for the community to gather. As these activities increase, incidents of crime can decrease as more of the community uses these spaces. New development could integrate plaza designs into their projects to enhance the public street environment.

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Figure 6-2: Existing Trail Systems



- City Heights Community Planning Area
- Available Pavement
- Soft Surface Trails
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- Other School

## 7.1 NEXT STEPS

The project team will work with the Green Team and the City to create a strategy for Public Workshop #1. The project team will then prepare for this Public Workshop and consolidate input received from the community outreach activities. This input will help to form three community linkage scenarios. Based on feedback on the alternatives in Public Workshop # 2 and # 3, a Preferred Scenario will be prepared. The Preferred Scenario maybe one of the alternatives or some combination of the alternatives. Based on the Preferred Scenario, the project team will identify conceptual recommendations for key physical projects that would increase access for the community and provide urban forestry, storm water, mobility, and open space strategies for City Heights.

