V. URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

A. OBJECTIVES

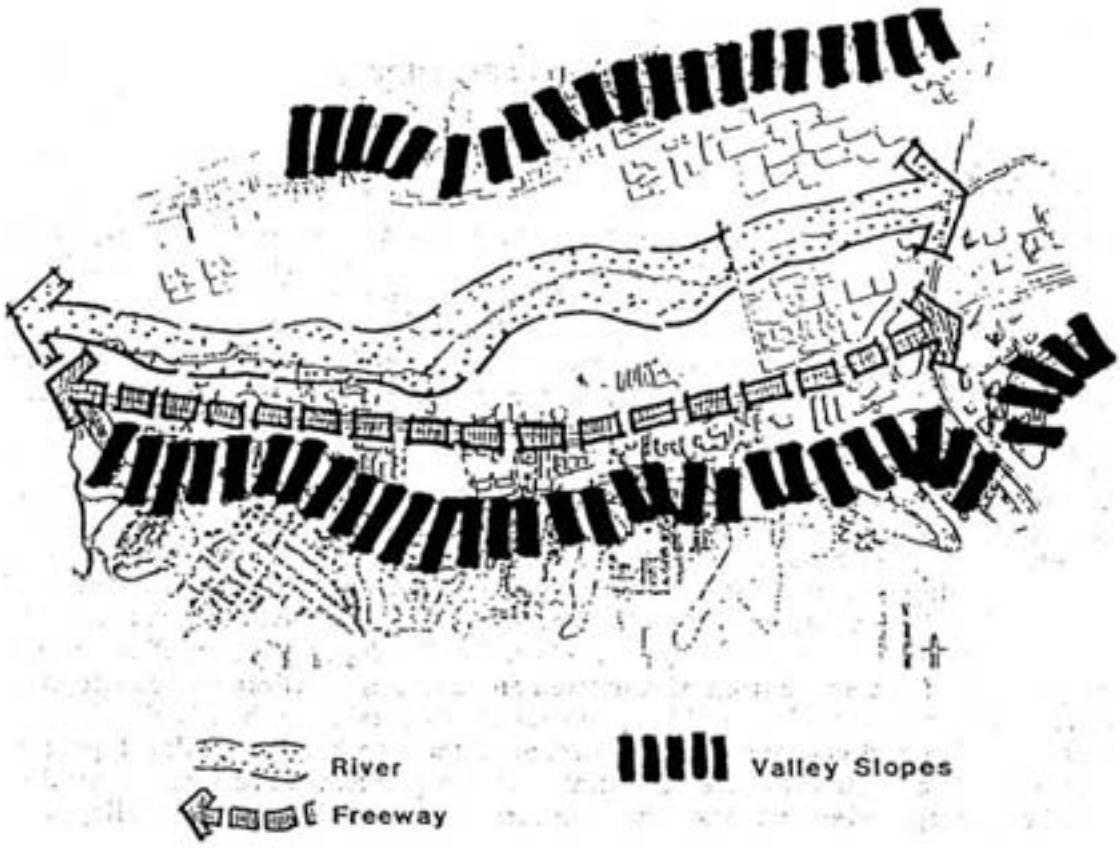
The purpose of this urban design element is to encourage and ensure, to the extent possible, the creation of a quality urban landscape. The various elements of the urban landscape include not only the planted landscape, but structures, roads, buildings, the land itself and perhaps most importantly, the people. A city is interaction; creating this interaction, as well as providing for other human needs such as aesthetics, privacy and quiet, is a primary purpose of this urban design element.

The river, the distant mountains, the freeway, the Presidio, the hotels, the crowds of busy people, the valley slopes; these are the obvious perceptions and elements one feels within and around the Atlas Specific Plan area. What was once a rich agricultural valley has now become one of the urban centers of San Diego. The Atlas Specific Plan area, or basically that area between Taylor Street and State Route 163, has become known as "Hotel Circle". The Atlas Specific Plan area has great potential for the creation of a unified and exciting multiple use development. The elements needed to fulfill this potential already exist. What is required is a logical, creative and organized set of design criteria to help guide development in the planning area to its ultimate potential. Design guidelines are incorporated into this urban design element that will ensure the creation of a quality urban landscape.

There are three major factors which affect the spatial character of the Atlas Specific Plan area. These three factors are the principal reasons the "space" is perceived as it is. The design of the Atlas Specific Plan area emphasizes the relationships to and between these elements. The three major factors are:

- The River: The central focus of the Atlas Specific Plan area is its relationship with the river. A symbolic statement indicating the union between a very natural element, the river, and a highly urbanized and built environment would be ideal for those sites adjacent to the river. The river, by specific design treatment, will provide a transition between man and "nature", and provide a very necessary unifying element for the project. The river, along with the freeway, becomes the thread, so to speak, that holds the Atlas Specific Plan area fabric together.

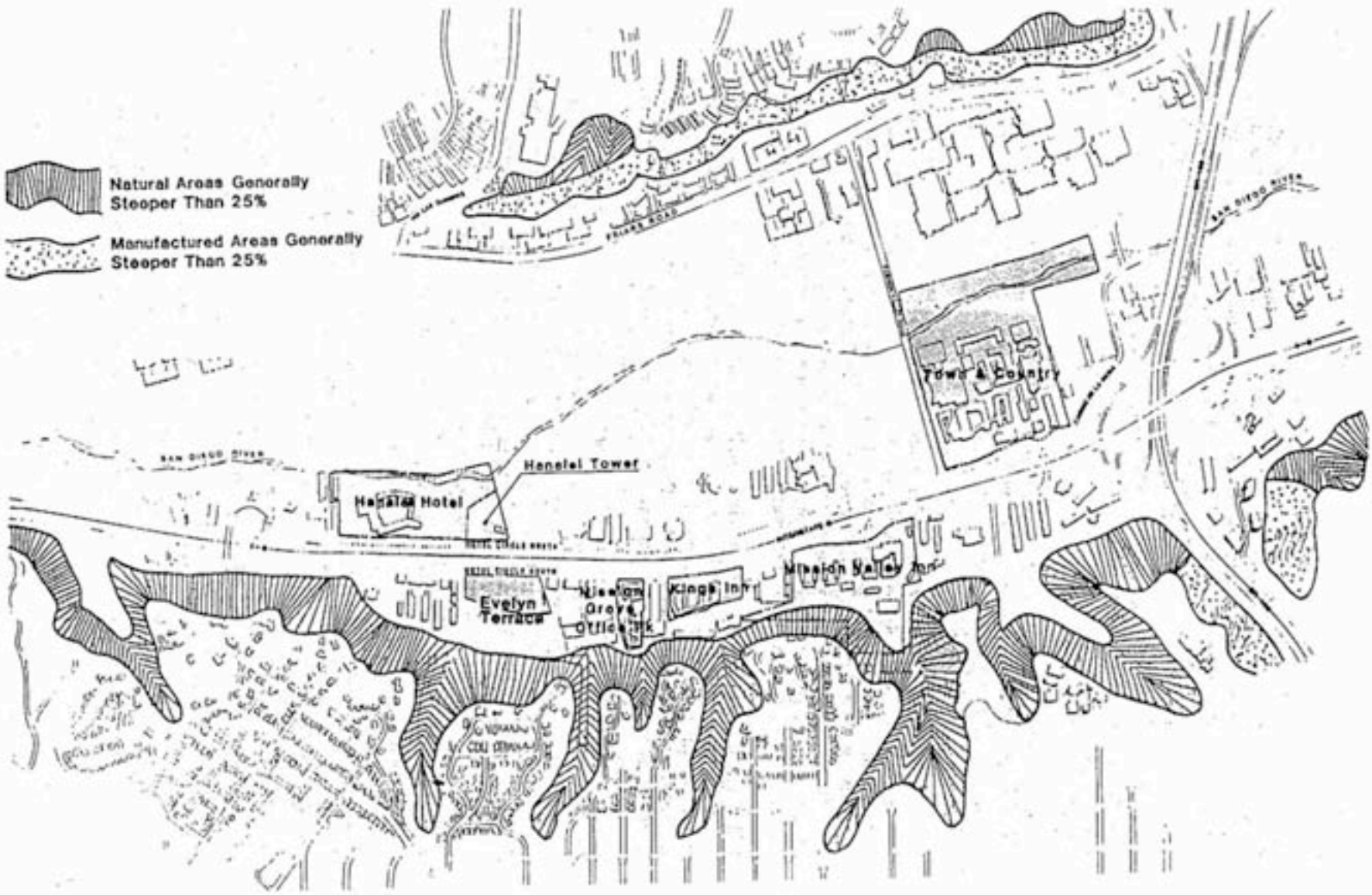
- The Valley Slopes: The integrity of the natural Mission Valley topography will not be affected by the Atlas Specific Plan proposed design. On those projects which are adjacent to natural hillside areas along the southerly slopes of Mission Valley, in particular the Mission Valley Inn site, careful and sensitive architectural design will maintain the integrity of the valley walls by respecting the topography and integrating the forms of the building into the hillside. Site design, architectural design and site grading on the Mission Valley Inn site will be consistent with the requirements of the Mission Valley Community Plan to ensure sensitive site design and the retention of significant views of the Mission Valley hillside.



As shown on Figure 22, Hillsides, none of the Atlas sites except the Mission Grove Office Park and Mission Valley Inn sites are affected by slopes steeper than 25%. The Mission Valley Inn site contains relatively little steep land, and no development is proposed on the hillside. The Mission Grove Office Park also contains relatively little steep land and no additional development is proposed. Both the Mission Grove Office Park and Mission Valley Inn sites are subject to hillside review (HR) as per the requirements of City Ordinance 16523.

- The Freeway: Most people perceive the Atlas Specific Plan area while on the Interstate 8 freeway. It is one of the most travelled sections of freeway in San Diego. The freeway, however, need not be considered a constraint. In fact, as previously mentioned, along with the river the freeway acts as one of the unifying elements, a "thread" that holds the urban design fabric of the area together. A key to the successful design of the Atlas Specific Plan area is recognizing the importance and design possibilities the freeway possesses. The specific plan responds to the design opportunities offered by the freeway corridor by suggesting a skyline theme planting of palm trees (Washingtonia robusta). These palm tree plantings would visually accentuate the freeway corridor and emphasize its importance in uniting the spatial relationships of Mission Valley. A more detailed discussion of the freeway's planting treatment can be found in the Streetscape guidelines.

The river, the valley slopes, the freeway: these are the predominant environmental factors whose relationships affect the Atlas Specific Plan area. In addition to these, however, the "urban character" created within each individual site will emphasize and reinforce several key design elements.



Hillsides

Atlas Specific Plan

22 FIGURE

- Views: The planning area presents two principal "positive" view types; background views and middle-ground views. The background views occur in an east-west direction toward the distant hills and mountains (i.e., Cowles Mountain) and present a pleasant visual backdrop. The valley walls, in particular the north facing slopes on the south side of the valley, provide middle-ground views and a much needed "green belt" that softens the intensity of the existing urban landscape. The main objectives of the streetscape and urban design guidelines are to preserve and reinforce the positive background and middle-ground views while mitigating and enhancing foreground views.

- Grading: When grading is required, several smaller pads rather than a few large pads will be created. This will maximize view opportunities from within the sites and minimize large slopes, thus enhancing the views from outside the planning area.

- Open Space: The creation of quality open space is of prime importance. There exists in the plan three basic types of open space. The first type is "natural open space" which consists of the river corridor and the undisturbed hillsides south of Hotel Circle. The second type is "useable open space". This includes the river buffer and any designated park-like or plaza areas adjacent to the river. The third type is "project open space". This includes areas such as setbacks, project entries and internal project plazas, walks, etc.

- Building Form and Mass: To provide quality open space, the buildings which delineate open space areas should have an orientation, form, massing, and exterior finish which enhance the visual, aesthetic and psychological character of the open space areas. Projects which are adjacent to the river corridor should locate their tallest buildings, or buildings with the largest mass, away from the river corridor. Where buildings front on the river corridor they should be terraced back on each successive building story to provide a transition toward river corridor open space. A consistent design theme for building design, landscaping and signage should be developed for the entire specific plan area giving it a unique and easily recognizable identity. Although specific architectural themes will vary at each site, the general design criteria outlined in the Mission Valley Community Plan will be utilized. Reference is made to the design principles for hillside areas and to criteria identified for development in river areas as included in the Mission Valley Community Plan. Signage criteria is identified in the signage and street graphics sections of this specific plan.

Analysis of the specific plan area based on the environmental factors and key design elements previously mentioned resulted in the establishment of several major development goals. In summary, they are:

- Maintain the visibility of the hotels, restaurants and offices along the freeway corridor from the freeway corridor.
- Establish a pedestrian linkage network between the proposed LRT stations and the proposed Atlas developments by providing pedestrian sidewalks and/or bicycle paths or lanes along project vehicular corridors and on both sides of the river. Since the specific plan area has some unique site design constraints, pedesterian sidewalks, bikeways, buffer

areas and landscaping are graphically documented with each specific site recommendation. Where exceptions from established design standards are proposed, alternate design criteria is specified.

- o Develop major gateways at the eastern and western ends of Hotel Circle. Gateways can be formed by natural geologic features, building massing and placement, and/or distinctive landscape development. Refer to the specific site development criteria for the Town and Country, Hanalei Hotel and Hanalei Tower sites.
- o Maintain the integrity of the hillsides through natural contour grading and revegetating larger manufactured slopes with native compatible plant material.
- o Provide a relationship to the river by orienting development and pedestrian activity areas to the river.
- o Maintain and enhance the river corridor as an open space corridor.
- o Provide theme entries to the individual project sites.
- o Maximize distant views.
- o Create a visually continous streetscape along Hotel Circle North and South which upgrades and enhances foreground views through street improvements which improve pedestrian access and landscaping.

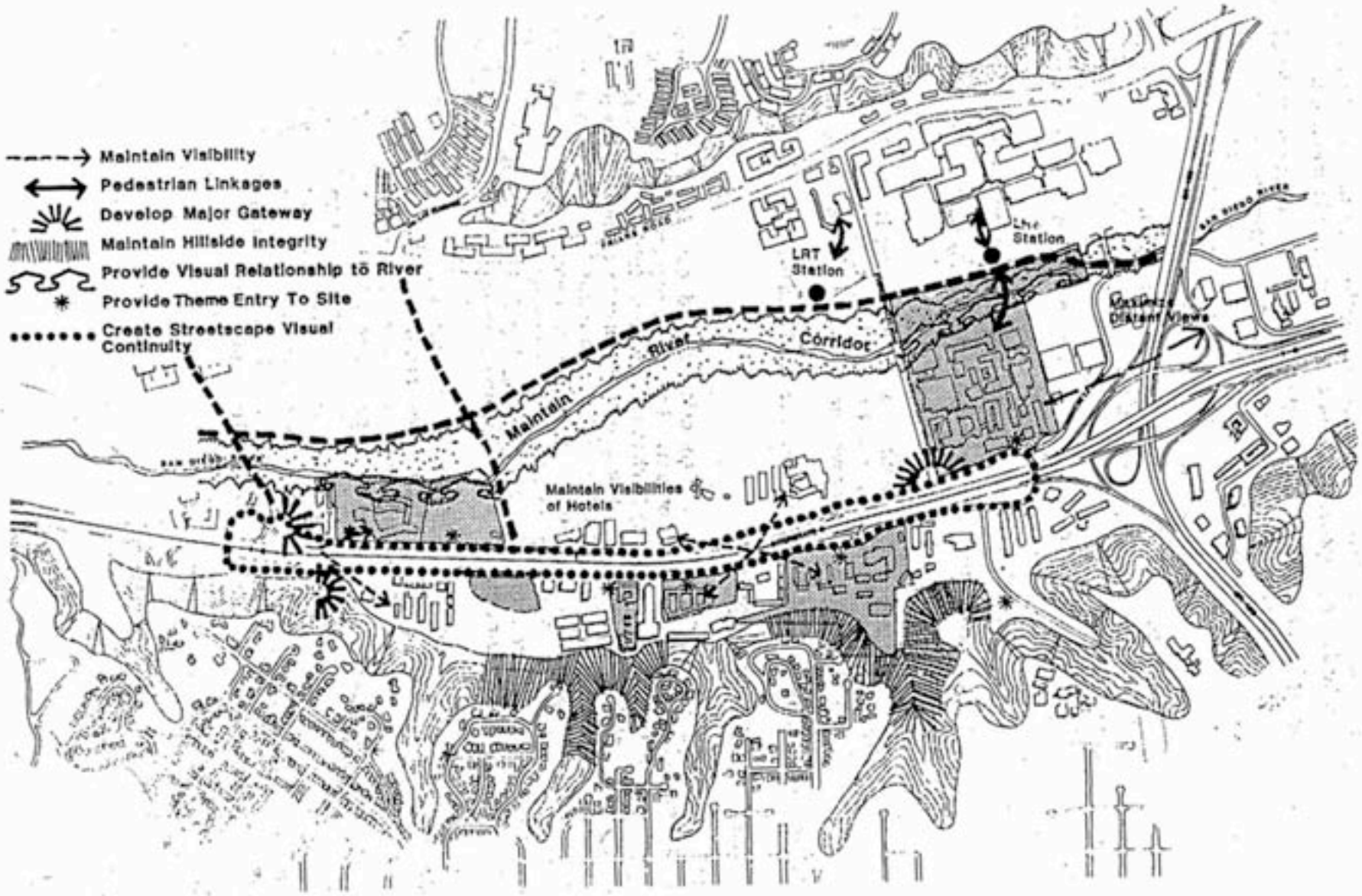
These major goals are graphically summarized on Figure 23.

Design Concepts and Criteria

The following design concepts, design criteria and development standards will regulate and guide future development. The basic objective will be to create a visually and functionally integrated urban environment fulfilling the major development goals previously discussed. The guidelines presented herein are not intended to be inflexible. Each individual site within the Atlas Specific Plan area will be developed during different periods. Economics, technology, and markets are constantly changing. A design element should provide room for alternatives in order to properly address changing economic and social conditions. These criteria will provide a basic framework for directing the creation of the ultimate plan.

The Atlas Specific Plan area contains a combination of properties. The General Design Criteria in Section V.B. which follow are prepared to address the problems of overall continuity and quality of urban design solutions. The general criteria address the design performance levels expected for the entire specific plan area. The general criteria will provide for an overall urban design framework within which individual sites may be developed. The implementation of the concepts and criteria contained in the eleven categories covered in the General Design Criteria will provide a common urban design fabric which will unify and link individual development sites. The General Design Criteria include:

1. Land Use Criteria
2. Circulation System Criteria
3. Streetscape Criteria



Area Synthesis

Atlas Specific Plan

23 FIGURE

4. Site Planning Criteria

5. River Corridor Criteria

6. Landform Alteration Criteria

7. Open Space and Recreation Criteria

8. Planting Criteria

9. Architectural Criteria

10. Visual Criteria

11. Energy and Conservation Criteria

Site Specific Design Criteria are contained in Section V.C. These criteria provide detailed design performance for each of the proposed development sites and existing developed sites owned and controlled by Atlas Hotels. The site specific criteria respond to the unique physical features on each of the Atlas sites. The site specific criteria, while responding to the physical features of the seven sites, also provide for their integration with a linkage to the overall site development categories in Section V. B. Site specific design criteria have been prepared for the following sites:

1. Town and Country

2. Hanalei Tower

3. Hanalei Hotel

4. Mission Grove Office Park

5. King's Inn

6. Mission Valley Inn

The seventh site, the 3.70 acre Evelyn Terrace site, is being reserved for irrevocable dedication to the City, at no cost to the City, for the right-of-way for the proposed future interchange at Interstate 8 prior to the issuance of building permits for the Hanalei Tower site. No site specific design criteria have been prepared for this site. If the interchange has not been constructed within 10 years after adoption of the Atlas Specific Plan, the City shall allow Atlas to proceed with the redevelopment of the Mission Valley Inn site as provided in this Specific Plan as if the interchange was in place.

B. GENERAL DESIGN CONCEPTS AND CRITERIA

1. Land Use

The basic themes for the land uses within the Atlas Specific Plan area have been established as predominantly tourist-related with some office uses as shown in Figure 25. The Atlas Specific Plan land uses would remain within this basic established framework and would be consistent with the existing land use pattern which is "multiple use" oriented. Hotels, office buildings, residential condominiums, and golf courses presently occur adjacent to each other, providing a sense of excitement to the area as well as helping to mitigate traffic congestion during peak hours. Proper land use planning and urban design applied conscientiously and effectively can result in a proposed project area design that unifies, is aesthetically pleasing, mitigates environmental and planning concerns, and retains a multiple use concept which provides exciting spaces for human enjoyment.

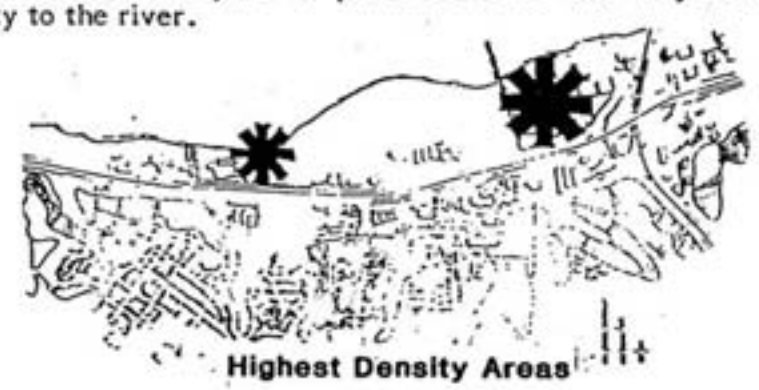
Concepts and Criteria

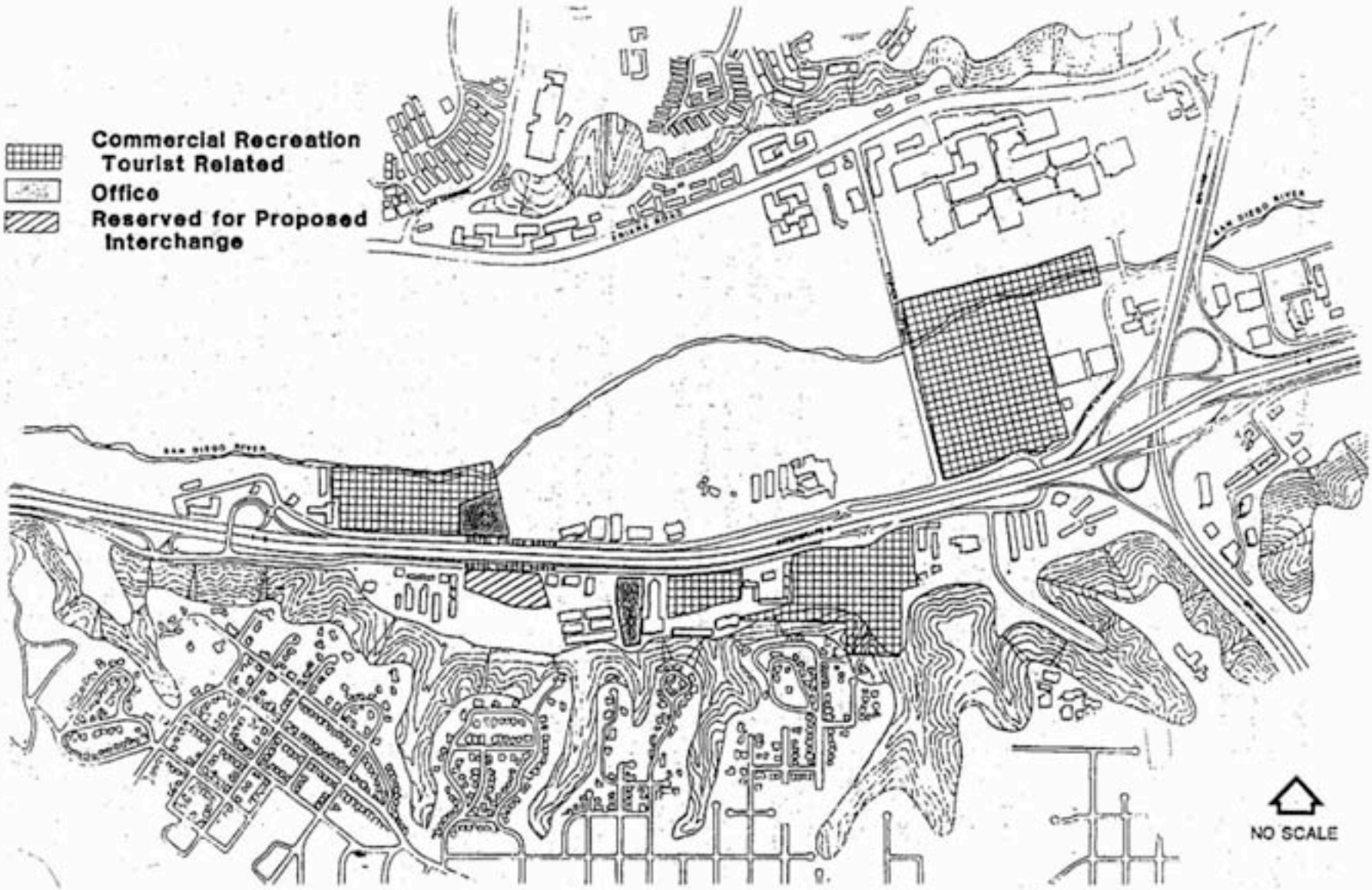
- Integrated multiple-use development shall be encouraged on those sites where it is possible from an economic point of view.

- Developments along the river corridor have at least two orientations; one to the river, and the other to the freeway and hotel circle. Improvements within those parcels shall be site-planned to respect both these important orientations. Service access and utility areas are not appropriate uses for either frontage.

- A sense of community shall be maintained within the entire area. Adjacent compatible developments should not separate themselves from each other, but rather an attempt should be made to integrate, to the best extent possible, these adjacent uses. Integration of adjacent compatible developments can be partially achieved through the implementation of the pedestrian circulation and streetscape improvements contained in the general concepts and criteria.

- In general, the area should be considered an urban area and not a suburban area. This creates, however, some difficulty in integrating a highly urban situation with a highly natural one, the river. Improvements within those parcels adjacent to the river shall, at least symbolically, reflect as much of the river environment as possible within the interior of the site. In this way, a sensitive and subtle transition will occur between river, structure, and the freeway corridor. For example, utilizing riparian trees and water elements around a central courtyard or plaza could be one way to reflect a site's proximity to the river.





Proposed Land Uses

Atlas Specific Plan

24 FIGURE

- City-wide regulations, CalTrans Design Criteria, and the Mission Valley Community Plan Design Criteria for landscaping, pedestrian walks, bikeways, signage and planned development regulations shall be the minimum standard unless modified by this specific plan.

2. Circulation System Concepts and Criteria

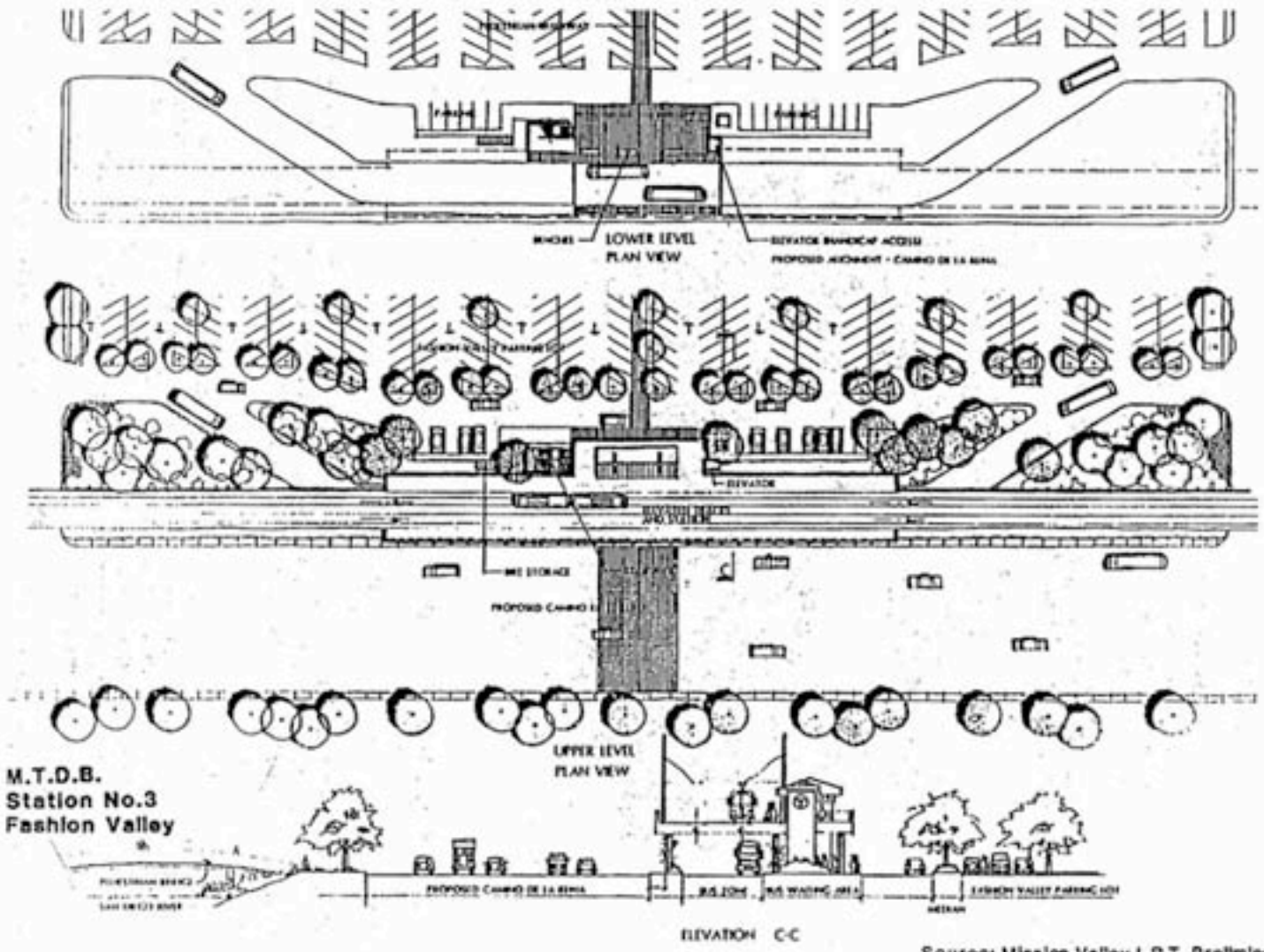
People movement within the planning area will occur in a variety of ways; either by light rail public transit, by bus, by automobile, by intra-valley shuttle, by bicycle or by foot. Frequently these various transportation methods are conceived separately, with little thought given to their interrelationships. Because of the highly urbanized nature and character of the Atlas Specific Plan area, the individual transportation systems must carefully interrelate. Concepts and criteria for the light rail, bus, automobile (including service, emergency, and parking), bicycle and pedestrian systems are included in this section. A more detailed discussion is included in Section VI, Transportation Element.

(a) Light Rail Public Transit

A preferred LRT alignment for the Mission Valley area, including station locations, has been adopted by the Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB). Two transit stations are shown in the adopted alignment in the vicinity of the Atlas Specific Plan area - one adjacent to the Town and Country site north of the river and another north of the river within the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan area. The anticipated alignment for the LRT in the Mission Valley area is located on property not owned by Atlas Hotels, Inc.

The light rail transit (LRT) system will most likely be incorporated along an east/west alignment along the northern boundary of the river. The precise alignment will be determined by the Metropolitan Transit Development Board and has yet to be finalized. However, in order to provide for the LRT line, the following shall be considered:

- An LRT station should be located immediately north of the Town and Country site and the river. In this way, the station would better serve the high density Town and Country site as well as the busy Fashion Valley Shopping Center. Atlas Hotels, Inc. will fund construction of an at-grade LRT station and at-grade LRT facility the length of the Town and Country property, with funding provided as required to meet the MTDB construction schedule. Atlas will bond for these improvements, or will provide other assurance of funding acceptable to MTDB, prior to the issuance by the City of building permits for Phase One of the development of the Town and Country site. Access to the station shall be provided by a pedestrian/bicycle bridge extending from the Town and Country site across the river. The bridge will be elevated above the 100-year flood elevation and shall be of sufficient height to pass debris during the 100-year flood with a minimum of 2 feet of free board. The bridge will connect with the sidewalk along the south side of Camino de la Reina. An at-grade pedestrian crossing shall be provided across Camino de la Reina to the LRT station at a new signalized intersection of Camino de la Reina and a new Fashion Valley Shopping Center parking access road. In the event that a signalized intersection is infeasible, a grade separated pedestrian crossing shall be provided over Camino de la Reina and to the LRT station as approved by the City Planning Director and City Engineer.



Source: Mission Valley L.R.T. Preliminary Engineering Study

Mission Valley LRT
Conceptual Station Design (for reference only)

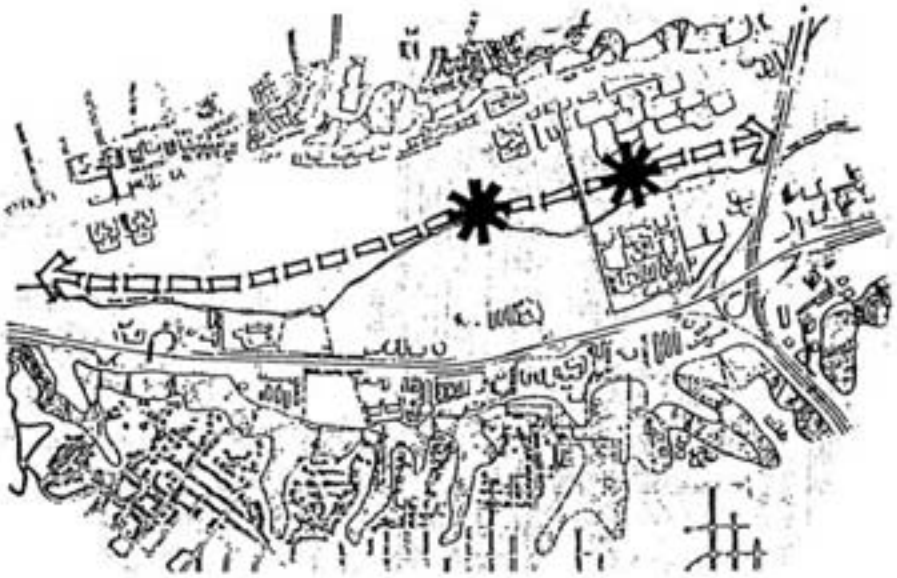
Atlas Specific Plan

25 FIGURE

- Another LRT station should be located north of the river along Via Las Cumbres within the Levi-Cushman Specific Plan area. This location would allow for easy access and a central location for the users in the western end of the valley.

- The LRT line shall be located above the 100-year flood level. This will require that the LRT line be constructed on an elevated bridge type structure. Atlas Hotels, Inc. will provide funds to MTDB for construction of an at-grade facility adjacent to the Town and Country site.

- Vehicular and pedestrian at-grade crossings with the LRT line shall be prohibited except at signalized intersections.



LRT Station Locations

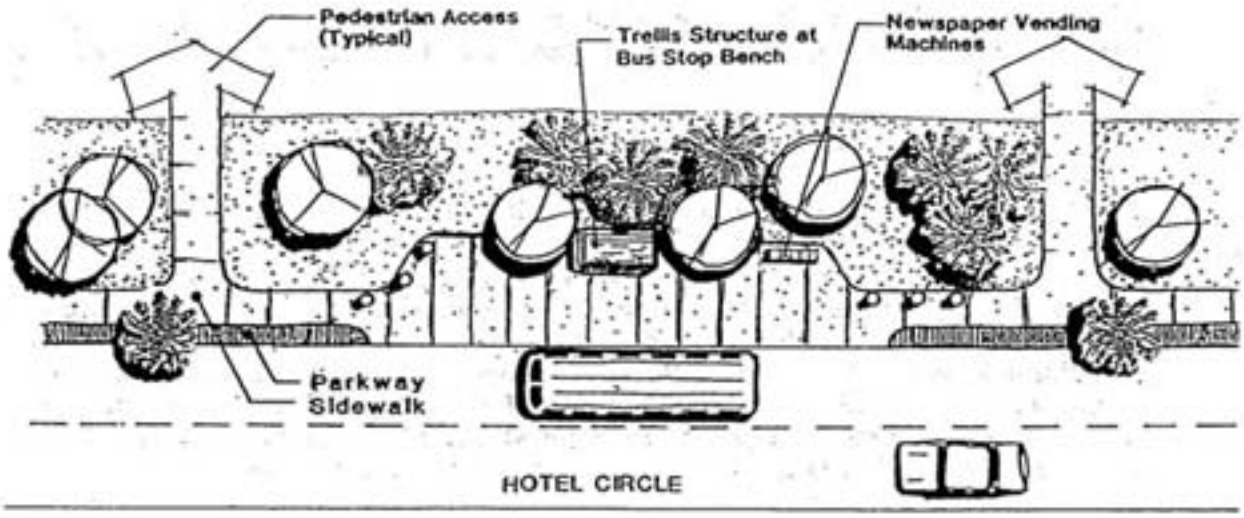
(b) Bus and Intra-Valley Shuttle

Bus and Shuttle Route Considerations:

Hotel Circle and Fashion Valley Road are identified as major bus or shuttle transportation routes serving the Atlas Specific Plan area. Bus stop areas shall be located at points which give the greatest walk-in access possibilities and interface with the LRT stations.

- Bus stops shall be designed to be integrated into building or pedestrian areas, streetscapes and urban plazas in order to provide easy pedestrian access from bus stop to destination. These facilities shall be designed to maximize security features and shall be located in proximity to both traffic signals and pedestrian crosswalks, in order to provide for ease of ingress for buses and ease of access for pedestrians.

- If not integrated into a building, bus stops shall incorporate a shelter into their design. Bus stops shall be colorful, properly signed, and readily identifiable to both pedestrian and rider.



- o Provide bus drop-offs at bus and shuttle stops.

- o Intra-valley shuttle stops shall be provided for each of the Atlas Hotel sites already developed or proposed for development. The shuttle stops will be provided adjacent to building lobbies or within expanded sidewalk paving areas in the Hotel Circle North and South Streetscapes. Atlas Hotels, Inc. will fund and operate an intra-valley shuttle to transport hotel guests, office employees and the general public between the Atlas Specific Plan sites and San Diego Lindbergh Field.

(c) Automobile Considerations

There are three distinctive types of automobile circulation systems; public systems, service systems, and emergency/police systems. The routes traveled by these are not necessarily the same. Most of the concepts specified herein integrate and consider the need for this distinction. The following concepts and criteria also include parking areas.

- o Emergency (police, fire, and ambulance) services shall have complete access to structures as required by San Diego safety codes. Superblock areas (i.e. Town and Country), plazas and mall areas shall allow for emergency access. Consideration shall therefore be given to limiting the use of steps, steep ramps, and walls within these predominately pedestrian areas. Removable bollards, requiring minimum paving widths of 12 feet, and minimum turning radii shall be considered in the final design of these areas.

- o Driveway entrances into parking areas shall be minimized in order to avoid breaking the pedestrian continuity of the sidewalk areas, especially along

Hotel Circle. If possible, these access points could be minimized by providing shared driveways at property lines. Care should be taken, however, that other urban design features, such as linear plazas and visual corridors are not compromised by these driveways. Also, too few driveways can cause congestion if a blockage occurs.

- Automobile driveways shall be carefully designed with the pedestrian crossing in mind. The driveway width shall be minimized and a patterned surface should be included to visually accent the pedestrian right-of-way.

- At sites where additional development is proposed, and at sites which may be proposed to be redeveloped in the future, a minimum of 75% of all required parking shall be provided in architecturally integrated structures. The remaining 25 percent may be in surface parking areas. These surface parking areas shall have a minimum of 10 percent of the interior area (excluding the landscape setback buffer adjacent to major streets) landscaped, and should be designed to screen parked vehicles from view of the adjacent street.

- Parking on roofs of structures shall be restricted. For each site, 30% of the parking structure roofs shall be reserved for recreational facilities or screened from view by the use of trellis or other screening structures. In all cases, a minimum of 10% of each parking structure roof shall be reserved for recreational facilities or screened from view by the use of trellis or other screening structures or landscaping.

- Large parking areas shall feed off of an internal project street rather than a public arterial street area. In that manner, ingress and egress is simplified and the project provides drive up and drop off access as well as parking.

- Multiple-use areas within the same parcel of land may be considered for lower parking ratios than single use parcels. In order to obtain the lower overall parking ratios, an evaluation of peak use has to be made, as well as a specific review of the parking areas, their access and design in relation to buildings during each specific project permit process. Any requests for shared parking shall be based on ULI guidelines and approved by the Engineering and Development Department and Planning Department of the City.

- Surface parking areas shall, wherever possible, be screened from view of the public right-of-way by walls, berms or combination. Surface parking areas shall meet City-wide parking and landscaping regulations and shall be landscaped with broad canopy, long lived, evergreen trees.

- Large surface parking areas shall be constructed slightly below the grade of adjacent streets whenever feasible, particularly when visibility of the structures beyond is desired and berms are not appropriate.

- Parking facilities shall be designed to ensure proper access and shall generally be specified for use by residents, employees, customers, visitors, goods deliveries and/or the handicapped.

- Parking facilities shall be designed to be adequate for both initial development and future expansion of land uses in terms of size and intensity. For example, initial parking facilities could be surface lots capable of eventually

accommodating parking structures. Surface lots could also reserve land for future development.

- o Parking along major public streets shall be prohibited.
- o The use of public rights-of-way for the loading and unloading of goods by providing adequate delivery areas shall be prohibited.
- o Off-street loading and unloading bays shall be provided for new commercial developments.

(d) Bicycle Considerations

Bicycle paths provide an energy efficient alternative to the automobile and help to link commercial, residential, office, hotel, and open space uses.

- o A combined pedestrian/bikeway shall be included along the south side of the river.
- o Bikeway design standards shall reflect those presently adopted by the City, CalTrans, and the Mission Valley Community Plan.
- o The minimum paved width for a shared pedestrian/bicycle path shall be 10 feet.
- o A minimum 2-foot horizontal clearance to obstructions shall be provided adjacent to the pavement.
- o The vertical clearance to obstructions across the clear width of the path shall be a minimum of 8 feet.
- o Drainage inlet grates, manhole covers, etc. on bikeways shall be designed and installed in a manner that provides an adequate surface for bicyclists.
- o Uniform signs, markings, and traffic control devices are mandatory and shall conform to the requirements of State law.
- o All bicycle pathways shall have adequate lighting and signing to provide for the safety of the users.
- o Office and hotel projects shall provide secure bike racks, bicycle parking facilities and other facilities to encourage bicycle use. Such facilities should be provided in accordance with City of San Diego regulations or guidelines pertaining to bicycle parking and related facilities.
- o Hotels shall be encouraged to provide bicycle rental facilities within their respective complexes.

(e) Pedestrian Considerations

The San Diego River environment provides an excellent opportunity for utilizing an extensive local and regional system of trails and walkways. As the area grows, the

dependence on the authomobile could be minimized by encouraging pedestrian circulation. The following concepts and criteria shall be followed as closely as possible to ensure a successful pedestrian circulation system.

- o Major linkages and plazas shall reflect the urban character of the sites while providing a transition with the riparian elements of the nearby river.

- o Pedestrian sidewalk and parkway criteria, except where noted in this specific plan, shall conform to the Implementation Guidelines of the Mission Valley Community Plan which establishes sidewalk and parkway widths based on the adjacent street classifications as follows:

-	Major streets or arterials:	10-foot clear corridor sidewalk 8-foot parkway
-	3-4 lane collector streets:	8-foot clear corridor sidewalk 6-foot parkway
-	2 lane collector streest:	6-foot clear corridor sidewalk 5-foot parkway

  Sidewalks should have adjacent pedestrian amenities such as benches and mini-plazas. Parkways shall incorporate a consistent street tree concept within their design to provide an inviting and "walkable" space. Project interior walkway widths of 10 feet to 20 feet and urban plazas should be considered within the interior of high intensity projects.

- o Where insufficient rights-of-way or physical site constraints (ie. severe grade changes or physical conditions such as existing buildings) preclude the installation of the prescribed sidewalk and parkway widths, alternative streetscape sections may be considered. Alternative streetscape sections and exceptions to the community-wide criteria shall be subject to the approval of the City Planning Director.

- o Pedestrian access shall be provided along the entire length of the river corridor at the Town and Country and Hanalei Hotel sites. Refer to the river corridor section of the Urban Design Element and elsewhere in this specific plan.

- o Separate internal pedestrian circulation and automobile circulation shall be provided throughout the specific plan sites wherever possible.

- o Projects that front on the public street shall provide identifiable pedestrian access from the street into the project, even in areas where parking lots are located between the street and the buildings. Pedestrian access shall be provided through parking lots so as to minimize conflicts between automobiles and pedestrians.

- o Urban plazas and other project open areas shall have direct pedestrian links to either the river corridor or to Hotel Circle pedestrian systems. Where these pedestrian links must cross parking areas, they shall be constructed of a paving material consistent with the pedestrian links or urban plazas and which provide a contrast to parking area paving.

- o On-grade street crossings shall be permitted only in conjunction with major signalized street intersections. Pedestrian crossings shall be identified through special paving design. Special paving shall occur only at signalized intersections and at pedestrian crossings of local streets as determined by the City Engineer.

- o All pedestrian pathways shall have adequate lighting and signing to provide for the safety of the users.

- o Individual site development shall provide linkages between internal project circulation systems and the overall streetscape sidewalk system.

- o Safe and convenient pedestrian movement shall be provided both within and to and from parking areas.

- o Direct pedestrian links from transit stops (bus or LRT) shall be provided to high activity areas. These pedestrian links shall also relate to the river corridor.

3. Streetscape Criteria

The concepts and criteria in this section will be of a more general nature since most of the elements comprising the streetscape are covered throughout other sections of this urban design element. However, certain characteristics of the streetscape are particularly important.

Streetscape philosophy

The streetscape is much more than the sum of the buildings, plantings, paving, and street furniture that give the street its appearance. The true streetscape incorporates emotional and cultural factors as well as physical factors. All of these factors contribute to perhaps the most important characteristic, function.

The streetscape must also include people as an element. Human figures as well as the vehicles they operate, act as kinetic design elements. Frequently, they alone can create the diversity and variety necessary to energize a space.

A streetscape can be perceived at three levels:

Level 1. From the street as a pedestrian.
Level 2. From the street as a passenger in a vehicle.
Level 3. From the surrounding or adjacent structures or buildings.

Each level utilizes different criteria for design and quite often all three must be taken into consideration, especially in a highly urbanized area. Level three perceptions and criteria, those derived from the buildings themselves, are usually quite compatible with the pedestrian experience and the automobile experience. Levels one and two, however, frequently compete with each other. Because of the location, scale, perception, and speed differences, the same streetscape scene utilized for a 40 mile per hour parkway, for example, cannot be repeated and expected to also function as a pedestrian experience. Visual perception is only one area where the automobile and pedestrian often do not mix.

Streetscape Design Factors

Numerous design techniques and considerations shall be considered when preparing the final detailed streetscape design for the Atlas Specific Plan area. These include:

- Available right-of-way
- Element of surprise
- Communication
- Noise
- Interest versus clutter
- Lighting
- Spontaneity
- Geometrics
- Height
- Scale
- Natural light
- Grade changes
- Public versus private space
- Second-level access
- Signage (public and private)
- Physical site constraints
- Micro-climate
- Landmarks
- Energy conservation
- Indoor/outdoor relationships
- Soft versus hard landscape
- Plant material
- Pedestrian/vehicular separation
- Music
- Food
- Art

The utilization of the various design techniques, coupled with fulfilling the needs of the community, will result in a streetscape scene that is appropriate, functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Streetscape Design Elements

The elements of the streetscape can be divided into 6 basic categories. These are:

(1) Street Furniture: Those elements used to comfort, service and direct.

- Fire hydrants
- Phone kiosks and booths
- Bicycle racks
- Newspaper racks
- Mail boxes
- Planters
- Tables
- Trash receptacles
- Bollards
- Seats/benches
- Railings, ballustrades
- Tree guards
- Drinking fountains

(2) Spatial, Visual and Coverage Elements: The major elements utilized to create outdoor spaces.

- Vegetation
  - Trees
  - Shrubs
  - Vines
  - Groundcovers
- Topography
  - Walls
  - Berms
  - Ramps
  - Steps
  - Terraces
- Overhead Structures
  - Canopies
  - Trellises
- Visual/Functional Component:
  - Screens
  - Framing

- Shelters
- Terminus points
- Focal points
- Facades
- Utility wires, antennas, etc.
- Signage

(3) Surfaces: Deals with paving and other surfaces used in streetscape design.

- o Paving (Used as focus, accent, interface, edges)
  - Shape
  - Texture
  - Color
  - Size
  - Expansion joints
  - Quantity and location
- o Tree grates
- o Utility covers

(4) Control Elements:

- o Light standards
- o Stop lights
- o Parking signs
- o Traffic bollards
- o Other traffic related graphics

(5) Street Graphics:

- o Directional signs (public and private)
- o Billboards
- o Storefront signs
- o Art
- o Sculpture
- o Characteristics include
  - Legibility
  - Reading rate
  - Location/surroundings
  - Letter style/background
  - Color
  - Lighting
  - Sight lines
  - Correct copy
  - Integrated signage
  - Flexibility/ changeability
  - Letter
  - Heights
  - Square footage
  - Symbols
  - Confusion on traffic standards

(6) Architectural Elements:

- o Space articulation
- o Forms and shapes
- o Windows
- o Views
- o Energy considerations
- o Adjacent styles
- o Transitions in form and scale
- o Indoor/outdoor relationships
- o Visual connections

Concepts and Criteria

The streetscape design for the Atlas Specific Plan area shall consider the following concepts and criteria. The concepts presented in this section are general in nature with more specific criteria presented following, in the "Hotel Circle Streetscape" section or in other individual sections, such as landscape concepts and architectural considerations.

Environmental Goals and Objectives:

- Mitigate climate extremes (seasonal and localized microclimate).
- Improve the quality of the environment by utilizing visual, audio, air and water features.
- Minimize adverse wind tunnel effects. Wind studies should be undertaken on significant projects proposing several high rise buildings located near each other.

Aesthetic/Sensory Quality Goals and Objectives:

- Recognize and enhance major views.
- Relate the scale and character of the street to adjacent uses.
- Provide focal points.
- Promote and encourage artistic expression.
- Street graphics within the project shall be of consistent type and style. A comprehensive sign plan shall be prepared for all Atlas Specific Plan sites and approved by the City prior to planned development permits being issued.
- Public signing for the open areas, river corridor, traffic management and parking access shall be graphically coordinated. Sign sizes shall be subdued relative to the other design elements of the project.
- Street signing within the project area shall be coordinated in the graphic design of the signs themselves and in their location. Sign locations shall be prominent in order to establish a clear directional identification.
- Private development signing shall be coordinated for directional signing, identifying entrances, etc.
- Building identification signs shall emphasize the use of logo designs and shall be integrated on the building exterior.
- Other signs identifying building activities and tenants shall be designed to fit the structure and design of the building.

- o Establish a uniquely urban and Southern California quality to the Atlas environment while maintaining the "flavor" that is Mission Valley.
  - Utilize plant material that is appreciated visually, environmentally and emotionally.
  - Architectural materials and forms shall be compatible with those in the area as well as being appropriate for the region.
- o Create an indoor/outdoor linkage and relationship between major project interior plazas and the streetscape.

Functional Goals and Objectives

- o Provide for lighting that respects the functions and hierarchies of various street and activity centers.
- o Provide barrier-free design amenities for the disabled.
- o Arrange centers or groupings of activities to facilitate access, minimize conflicts.
- o Minimize conflicts between circulation systems (pedestrian, automobiles, transit and service) by proper integration between transportation and circulation systems.
- o Provide transportation nodes conveniently located so as to efficiently move people, goods, and vehicles throughout the area.
- o Provide a pedestrian network that includes spatial and design qualities that allows the pedestrian to feel that the space was created for him, not as an afterthought.

Social Goals and Objectives

- o Provide an attractive and secure environment for private investment.
- o Provide for social interaction (group and individual).
- o Improve communications and reduce visual clutter by proper utilization of street graphics.
- o Provide for activities that will bring life into the Mission Valley streetscapes where feasible; for example, food vendors, sidewalk cafes, and street entertainment.

Hotel Circle Streetscape

The existing streetscape, particularly Hotel Circle, is a haphazard collection of random elements which results in an incongruous street scene that adds to the visual confusion of the area. The following section focuses on the Hotel Circle streetscape. Atlas will not improve the entire Hotel Circle, but only those areas immediately adjacent to its properties.

Several major problems have been identified with the existing Hotel Circle street scene. Although the following identified problems have a negative impact on the Hotel Circle streetscape, the solutions will take some time to evolve. It is not proposed that the problems be immediately corrected. Rather, a long term improvement program should be established. The major problems are:

- Certain physical site constraints such as topography or the location of existing improvements such as buildings, walls, utilities, or driveways, make expansion or improvement of streetscape areas to the optimum standards established by the Mission Valley Community Plan difficult if not impossible.
- Discontinous pedestrian sidewalks occur typically throughout the area.
- There is an emphasis on vehicular circulation.
- There is a de-emphasis on pedestrian circulation.
- Overhead utility lines are visually objectionable.
- Too much variety in plant material with no consistent frame.
- Utility structures such as electrical transformers and telephone equipment create visual clutter within the perceived streetscape.
- The freeway side of the Hotel Circle right-of-way is relatively barren.
- There is informational overload due to the number and design of the street graphics.
- The cumulative effect of street lights, parking lot lights, commercial signs, flag poles, traffic signs, utility poles, and single palm trees, creates a busy and cluttered urban forest of "poles".

Conversely, some positive aspects of the existing streetscape have been identified. They are:

- Light standards have good visual quality, detail, and are generally regularly spaced. The night scene, therefore, appears more cohesive.
- The planting within the freeway right-of-way is well planned and maintained.
- The proximity and views of the southern valley slopes help soften the harshness of the existing streetscape.

Design Criteria for the Hotel Circle Streetscape

In addition to the general streetscape criteria previously mentioned, the following specific streetscape criteria shall be followed for Hotel Circle.

Theme

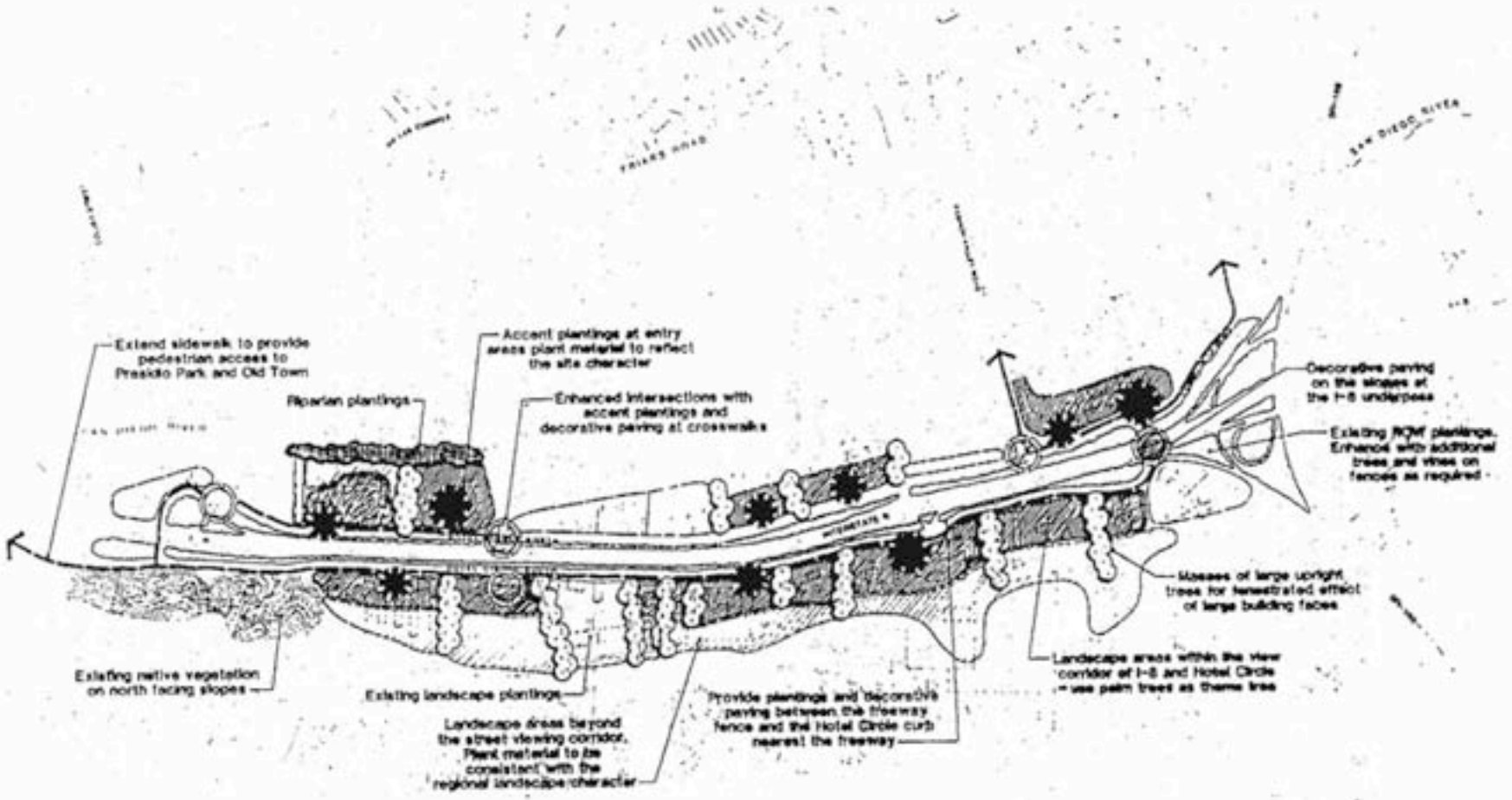
Due to the proposed cul-de-sacs on Hotel Circle North it will no longer be a continuous thoroughfare. For this reason a major emphasis should be placed upon introducing a main, skyline palm theme planting in the unpaved right-of-way areas on the north and south sides of Interstate 8. This proposed theme planting for I-8 would be implemented by appropriate agencies, not Atlas Hotels, Inc.. The proposed palm tree planting would emphasize the importance of Interstate 8 as a main element in the urban design fabric of Mission Valley. It would also give the highway visual prominence and a "tropical feel" which would enhance the experience of visitors to the Mission Valley area. The palm tree planting would retain a high visibility factor for destination-oriented hotels and businesses along the I-8 corridor due to their skyline quality and compact foliage. To retain this high visibility along Hotel Circle, the streetscapes for Hotel Circle North and South shall be planted with small to medium sized broad headed evergreen trees. This will allow people in vehicles on the highway to see hotels and business along and beyond Hotel Circle North and South without streetscape plantings obscuring their view. The lower scale of the Hotel Circle streetscape plantings would also place further emphasis and importance on the palm tree plantings along Interstate 8. The graphics on the following pages illustrate both the proposed design suggestions for the I-8 right-of-way and other non-Atlas improvements, and design concepts and criteria for the Hotel Circle streetscape improvements by Atlas Hotels, Inc.. Figure 26 presents the proposed Hotel Circle concept streetscape design recommendations. The following criteria shall be adhered to at all Atlas Specific Plan sites:

General Criteria

- Provide planting between the freeway fence and the Hotel Circle curb nearest the freeway immediately opposite the Atlas Specific Plan sites. Where planting areas occur, skyline palm tree plantings should be provided to emphasize the highway corridor's function as a major design element and to provide a tropical theme for Mission Valley.

- Provide a continuous paved 8' wide pedestrian sidewalk with a 6' wide landscaped parkway between the sidewalk and the street incorporating small to medium height, broad-headed, evergreen street trees at each of the Atlas Specific Plan sites along the outer perimeter of Hotel Circle; that is, the north side on Hotel Circle North and the south side on Hotel Circle South, except where otherwise noted within this specific plan.

- Where site constraints due to topography or existing improvements such as buildings, walls, utilities, or driveways preclude installation of the 8' wide sidewalk with 6' wide landscaped parkway, alternative streetscape designs may be allowed. Refer to the site specific design criteria section of the Urban Design Element for locations of alternative streetscape design. Minor exceptions to the streetscape and alternative streetscape design criteria shall be approved by the City Planning Director.



Hotel Circle Streetscape Plan

Atlas Specific Plan

26 FIGURE

- The installation of Hotel Circle streetscape improvements shall be provided in conjunction with street widenings or improvements triggered by traffic thresholds which are described in the traffic analysis of this specific plan.

- Accent colors shall be used to prevent monotony. Color can originate from plant material, building material, street graphic materials, or landscape materials.

- Theme entries shall be incorporated at the major access points to each site. Theme entries shall consist of decorative landscape paving, special signage and special entry monument or destination-oriented signage and special plant material treatment. This treatment results in being able to identify major entries quickly and safely as well as providing a pleasing aesthetic scene.

- Utilize decorative textured paving at pedestrian crosswalks.

- When trees occur in paved areas, removable tree grates shall be used.

Signage and Street Graphics

The present visual quality of the Hotel Circle streetscape and the adjacent Interstate 8 transportation corridor is significantly affected by a variety of existing informational signage and graphics. In general, the visual results produced by the variety of signs existing in the specific plan area are somewhat chaotic. In an effort to reduce the negative visual impacts created by a perceived lack of coordination of signage types or a limitation on their number, this specific plan proposes the basis for a comprehensive signage and graphics program for the Hotel Circle streetscape. This program shall be developed and submitted to the City for approval in conjunction with the first Planned Commercial Development submittal for the Atlas Specific Plan sites.

The Mission Valley Community Plan is relatively flexible in its discussion of street graphics and signage. Rather than providing specific guidelines or concepts it suggests the development of a special signage district for Mission Valley and the incorporation of comprehensive signage programs within specific plans.

The most important issue these signage criteria will address is the performance standards for ground mounted, free-standing, freeway-oriented signage. Division 11, Citywide Sign Regulation, of the Municipal Code limits freeway-oriented signage heights to 50' with a maximum sign face area of 300 square feet. There are, however, existing freeway-oriented signs at the Town and Country Hotel site which are subject to a City of San Diego Planning Commission Resolution No. 1747 previously approving Comprehensive Sign Plan No. 2 pertaining to the Town and Country Hotel site.

Atlas Hotels recognizes that the visual continuity of freeway-oriented signage, as well as other signage, is important to the success of the urban

design and streetscape design for the Atlas Specific Plan areas and Mission Valley. Atlas will comply with the regulations in Division 11, the criteria in this section and Comprehensive Sign Plan No. 2. The timing and phasing of the freeway-oriented sign at the Town and Country site will be identified in the comprehensive sign program to be prepared by Atlas.

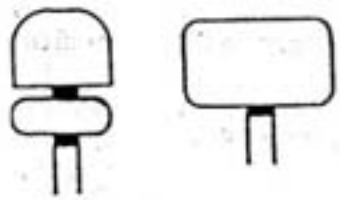
The signage criteria for the Atlas Specific Plan area will consider a variety of basic signage types which would accommodate the basic signage and graphic needs of individual development sites and the area wide needs of the entire Specific Plan area. The sign types discussed will include:

- Freeway-oriented signage
- Building wall signage
- Individual project entry signage
- Secondary signage (vehicular safety and directional signage, etc.)
- Building directory signage
- Temporary signage

Sign type will be discussed in terms of general concepts and criteria which would address the performance standards for all sign types and specific concepts and criteria which would address detailed performance standards for each individual sign type.

General Signage Concepts and Guidelines

- Commercial signage shall limit the amount of informational bits occuring on any one sign.



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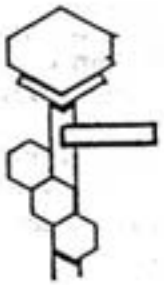

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- Major freeway-oriented identification signs should have simple forms and shapes to minimize visual clutter.

- Each individual site shall establish a signage vocabulary that will create a distinctive yet consistent sign program. The design vocabulary should address lettering style, size, form, color, and materials.

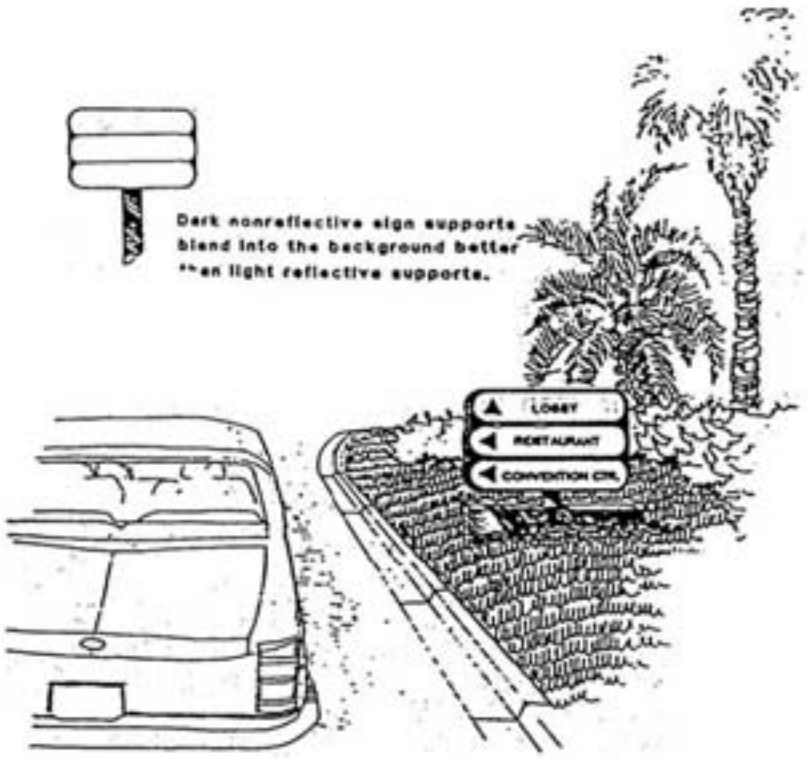
- Individual rather than multiple sign supports should be utilized; especially for major freeway-oriented identification signs. Where multiple sign supports are employed they will be limited to two support poles. These poles should be designed to appear as a visually continuous design element such as an arch or a "u"-shaped structural element. Combinations of individual unattached or discontinuous support poles should be avoided.

- Signs shall not contain any moving parts.

- Sign supports, materials and colors shall be compatable with the architecture on the project they occupy.

- Lighting for signs should be as minimal as possible and still provide readability. Glare and ambient light should not affect adjacent properties. Flashing lights shall be prohibited. Where lighted, computerized, digital read-out signage is allowed and employed, it shall be a steady, constant read-out type, and not of intermittent or flashing operation.

- The number of colors utilized in any one sign shall be minimized. Use light or dark letters on a solid contrasting background.

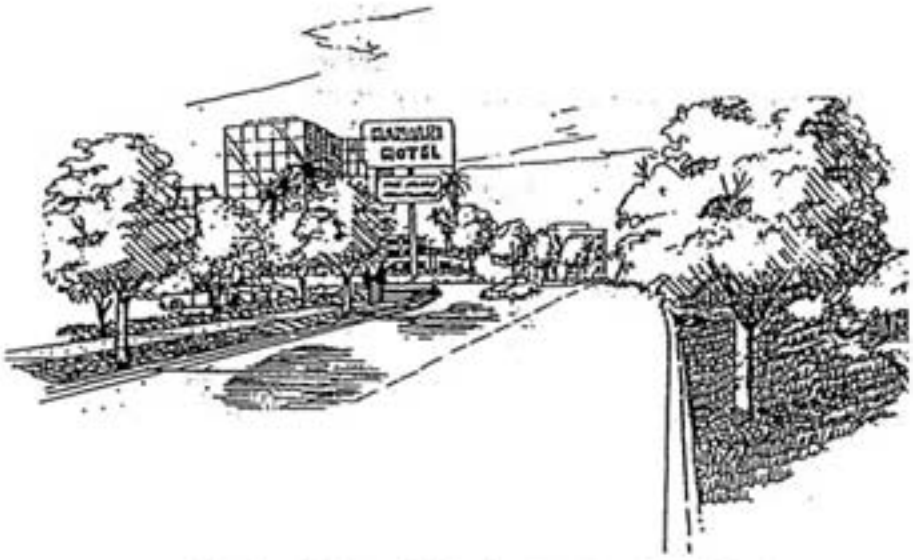


Typical Directional Sign

- Information should be located on a single sign rather than utilizing multiple signs.

- Freestanding signs, other than freeway-oriented signs, shall have a maximum height of 30 feet, a maximum size of 200 square feet, and shall be located at least 10 feet from the public right-of-way, unless otherwise allowed by Resolution No. 1747.

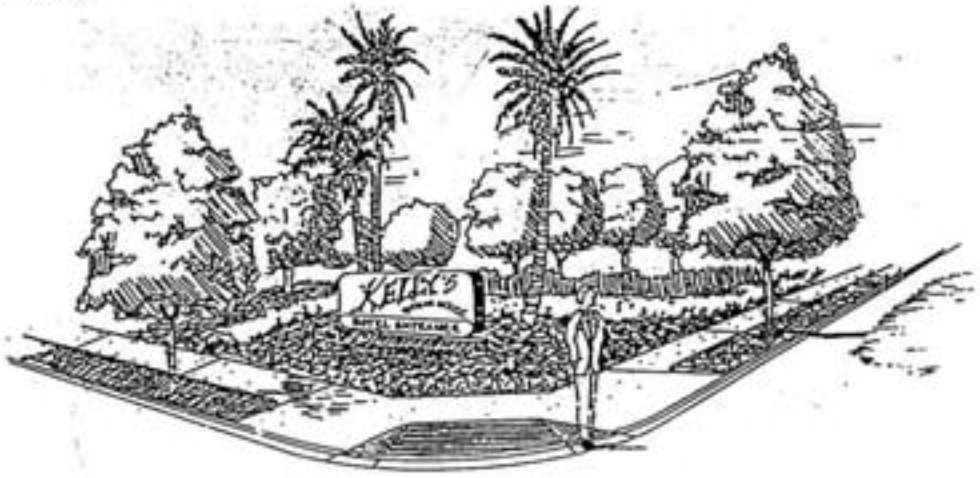
- No signs shall be located immediately on the "roof" (on top) of any structures.



Typical Hotel Circle Street Graphics

- Wall signs shall be allowed when applied directly to the building face only if they are integrated into the architectural design of the buildings and meet criteria established by Division 11, Citywide Sign Regulations, of the Municipal Code.

- Signage, other than secondary signage, shall be discouraged along the river.



Typical Monument Corner Sign

Specific Signage Criteria

The following criteria provide specific performance standards for each of the individual signage types anticipated for the Atlas Specific Plan area. These

criteria provide the basis for future development of a comprehensive signage program for the Atlas Specific Plan sites. These guidelines do not, however, relinquish the requirement to prepare signage design written and graphic information concurrently with individual planned development permits for site development. These criteria and the future comprehensive signage program will be used as a reference for determining the performance and adequacy of signage proposals contained in planned development permit submittals. All signs described below will conform with the Mission Valley Community Plan, the Citywide Sign Regulations contained in Division 11 of the Municipal Code and with the following criteria whichever is more stringent, with the exception of those signs and related criteria established by Resolution No. 1747.

1. Freeway-oriented signage: These signs are generally classified as major, pole support or ground-mounted signs which are readily visible from the freeway. Freeway-oriented signage will conform to the following criteria with the exception of those signs and related criteria established by Resolution No. 1747:

   - The maximum height of freeway-oriented signs is 50' north of I-8 and 40' south of I-8.

   - The maximum sign face area for freeway-oriented signs is 300 square feet. Freeway-oriented signs may be doubled sided. Where double sided signs are used, the total area of both sign faces shall not exceed 600 square feet.

   - Freeway-oriented signage shall be in accordance with Division 11 setback requirements from a property line or public street right-of-way.

   - Freeway-oriented signs will only be allowed on properties which front on a public right-of-way which is designated as a major street or prime arterial in the General Plan or which is wider than 60'.

   - Each project site which qualifies for a freeway-oriented sign, based on road designation or width, will only be allowed one such sign per project site.

   - Sign type face and logos shall not exceed 75% of the sign face. Where double face signs are used, both sides shall conform to the 75% maximum. Signage type face size and logos shall comply with Division 11 requirements.

   - The number of poles used to support freeway-oriented signs shall be limited to a maximum of two.

   - Where computerized digital read-out display is allowed and incorporated into a sign, it should not occupy more than 50% of the sign area.

- o The computerized read-out characters will not be allowed to change color, intensity or to flash intermittently.

- o The height of logos or letters displayed on a computerized read-out shall comply with Division 11 requirements.

- o Letters and logos on freeway-oriented signage may be internally illuminated or externally illuminated. Internal illumination might be more appropriate for signs constructed with matte finish plastic panels. External illumination may be more appropriate for sign faces with applied metal or plastic letters.

- o Where external illumination sources are employed they should be provided with appropriate shielding to eliminate glare to adjoining properties or sensitive land uses such as the river.

- o Because of their relatively large size, freeway-oriented signs should be placed with themed landscape planting elements. Combining freeway-oriented signage with landscaping will help to create a transition between sign supports and the ground and allow signs to appear more in concert with the pedestrian scale when viewed from the streetscape

2. Building Wall Signage - Signs and logos which are attached to a building wall or an extension of a building wall such as an arcade or a porte cochere. Building signage will conform to the following criteria:

   - o The total area devoted to wall signage and logos on a building will comply with Division 11 requirements. Only one wall-mounted sign will be allowed on any building elevation.

   - o All building wall signage shall employ a low, horizontally-oriented layout.

   - o Metal or matte finish plastic letters and logos which are individually attached to a building wall surface or letters and logos which are directly cast and recessed into a wall surface are preferred. However, some building architectural styles may lend themselves to individual wood letters and logos or wood panels with carved or recessed letters and logos.

   - o Where a fabricated metal, wood, or plastic panel type sign is used for building signage it shall comply with Division 11 requirements. Letters and logos on panel type signs shall not exceed 75% of the total area of the panel.

   - o Letters and logos shall not be directly painted onto building wall surfaces or extension of building wall surfaces.

   - o All figures, logos or lettering for building wall signs should exhibit a finished typeset quality. Approximations of typestyles will not be permitted.

- Wall-mounted signage shall not extend beyond the sides or tops of building walls, building extensions (porte cocheres, etc.), or fascias and shall be placed a minimum of two feet away from the corner or top of a building wall or fascia.

3. Individual Project Entry Signage - Signage or logos which are placed on ground-mounted, free-standing walls or retaining walls at major project entry driveways. Individual project entry signs should conform to the following criteria:

   - Project entry sign walls may be placed on each side of a major project entry drive. Major project entry drives are those driveways which provide access to a project from Hotel Circle North or South, or other major roadways.

   - Project entry sign walls shall have a maximum height of 5' measured from finish grade and a maximum wall face area of 80 square feet.

   - Project entry sign walls should retain a horizontally-oriented or rectangular shape to remain consistent with building wall signage.

   - No more than 60% of the total face area of an project entry sign wall shall be occuppied by logos and typeface.

   - Project entry wall sign materials shall be consistent with the architectural theme of the building on a site.

   - Individually attached metal or matte finish plastic letters and logos or letters, and logos which are recessed into wall surfaces are preferred. However, wood letters and logos or wood sign panels with recessed or carved letters may be appropriate with certain styles of architecture.

   - Decorative fountains or water features or design elements such as flags or banners may be used in conjunction with project entry wall signage.

   - Project entry wall signage shall be in accordance with Division 11 setback requirements from a property line or public street right-of-way.

   - The placement of project entry walls should not conflict with any requirements by the City of San Diego Traffic Engineering Department for vehicular line-of-sight distance.

4. Secondary Signage - These signs would generally be ground-mounted signs which are located within or near vehicular roadways, accessways, driveways, or project entries. These signs would serve to provide information for motorists, pedestrians or bicyclists. Secondary signs shall conform to the following criteria:

- Secondary signs shall be appropriately sized to be easily read without becoming over dominant when perceived at the pedestrian scale.

- Secondary signs shall have a maximum 6' height including sign face when measured from finish grade. However, where certain vehicular, pedestrian or bicycle safety signs (stop signs, etc.) require maximum heights or sign face areas which differ from the foregoing, they shall comply with those standards which are required by the governing agencies (i.e. City of San Diego, CalTrans, etc.). Such standards shall take precedence over the maximum 6' height criteria.

- Secondary signs may be single or double faced. The area of a sign face shall not exceed 12 square feet.

- In general, simple sign face treatments are preferred. The internationally accepted symbols or graphics for certain activities or services (i.e. bicycle path, food or lodging, etc.) should be used whenever possible in lieu of type face descriptions.

- Whenever possible, secondary information signs should be stacked within an appropriate sign frame or on an individual pole.

- In general, metal signs with dark matte finish backgrounds and light colored or white symbols and letters are preferred. However, wood signs may be appropriate for secondary signage when placed in proximity to certain architectural styles within a project site.

- Secondary signs shall not be located in a public street right-of-way.

5. Directory Signage - These signs would usually be located within landscaped areas adjacent to building entries or vehicular drop-off points but would generally not be visible from the public street. They would serve to provide directions to visitors of buildings such as hotels which have a variety of functional areas within one structure.

Directory signs shall conform to the following criteria:

- Directory signs shall employ simple sign faces. The exterior framework of the directory sign shall be consistent with the materials used in the building which it serves.

- Building directory signs shall have a maximum sign face area of 10 square feet and may be double sided.

- Individual letters or logos placed in directory signs shall have a maximum height of 8 inches.

- Letters and logos may be individually attached or may be applied by using adhesive backed or painted stencil letters on an individual panel.

6. Temporary Signage - These signs will include temporary signs used for the sale, lease, or rental of a building space and temporary signs which announce the construction and development of a project site. Temporary signs shall conform to the following criteria:

   - One freestanding temporary construction sign will be allowed for each project or site.
   - Temporary construction signs may not be installed closer than 5' from a property line or right-of-way along a public street.
   - Temporary construction signs shall employ a square or rectangular format and should have a maximum total sign face area of 100 square feet.
   - Temporary construction signs shall be single-sided and no more than 75% of the total sign face area shall be occupied by typeface and logos.
   - Temporary construction signs shall be removed immediately following completion of construction.
   - One temporary sign may be permitted for each building or portion of a building which announces the sale, lease or rental of that building or portion of a building.
   - Temporary signs used to advertise sale, rental or lease shall comply with Division 11 requirements.

Street Furniture

Street furniture shall conform to the following criteria:

- Street furniture shall not intrude into the required width of pedestrian sidewalks.
- Public telephones shall not be considered as "afterthoughts", they should be integrated into the street scene. If possible, they should be located on or adjacent to a structure; either a bus shelter, or building facade or transit stop.
- Trash receptacles shall be installed periodically, especially at waiting areas like bus shelters or transit stops. They shall be constructed of a material compatible with the existing light standards.
- Benches shall be contoured for human comfort and constructed of a warm, inviting, and vandal resistant material (i.e., hardwood). Benches should be provided at bus/shuttle stop locations in expanded sidewalk paving sections within streetscapes. No advertising shall be allowed on any benches.

- Bollards can be utilized as a safety separation between vehicles and pedestrians. Their materials shall match or be compatible with the street light standards and trash enclosure container materials which are installed within streetscape areas.
- Newspaper vending machines shall be allowed only in groups of uniformly designed units in logical areas (i.e. bus stops, shuttle stops and near hotel lobbies).
- Miscellaneous items such as mailboxes, fire call boxes, traffic speed and directional signs, traffic signal boxes, and electrical transformers will require careful location studies along with color and material coordination.

Lighting

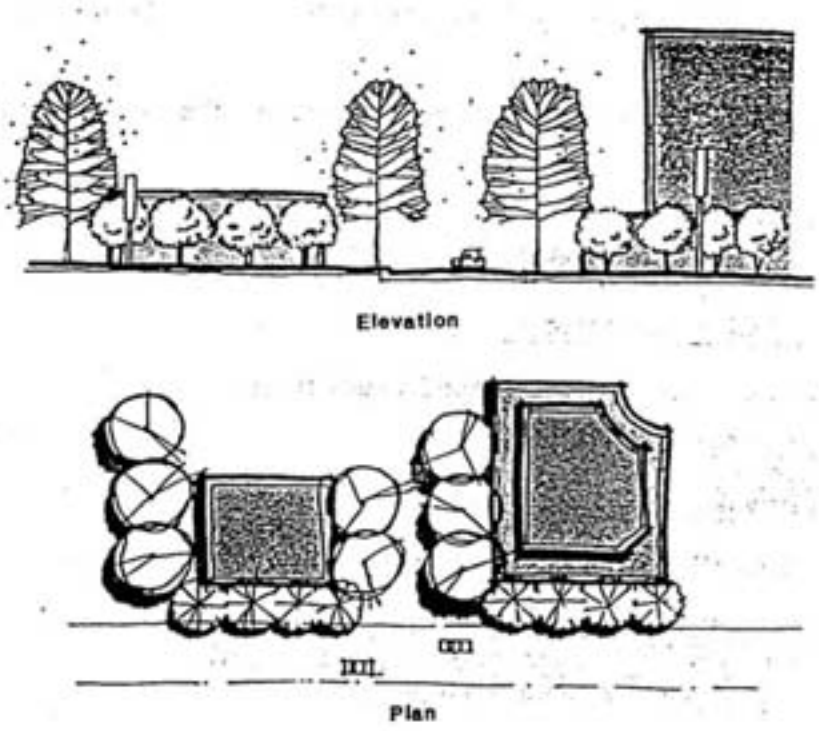
Since the entire Hotel Circle street scene is very well lit at night, only minimal pedestrian scale lighting should be required. This lighting should be located at theme entries, uplighting accent trees, and at bus and shuttle stops. Streetscape lighting shall conform to the following critieria:

- Low pressure sodium lights shall be used as the predominant roadway lighting and parking area lighting. High pressure sodium or mercury vapor shall be used for such uses as plaza and mall lighting, building accent lighting, pedestrian lighting, and special landscape lighting.
- Accent lighting, where used, shall originate from concealed or inconspicuous source locations.
- Flashing lights on signs shall not be allowed.

Plant Materials

Since most of the architecture for the area has been established (built) and uniformity does not exist, it is not practical to modify the architectural facades of the existing structures. Therefore, the streetscape, and in particular, the proper use of plant materials is critical as the element that will unify the area.

Palms, predominately Washingtonia robusta, dominate most of the sites throughout the Hotel Circle area. Philosophically and economically, the use of palms should be encouraged in a San Diego tourist area. Most tourists, whether correct or not, expect to see palm trees in San Diego, especially in the "resort" area of Mission Valley. In fact, palm trees, if used correctly, are drought tolerant, low maintenance, solve many problems, and can provide a pleasing skyline. There are skyline palm trees that traditionally have been planted as single trees in a row that should be viewed from a distance as well as smaller scale cluster palms that can be effectively used at the pedestrian scale. Tall, single trunk palm trees should not be used as a pedestrian scale tree, but rather when viewed from a distance. The palm tree, therefore, will be the theme tree for the Atlas Specific Plan area.



The Use of Open Trees, Palms and Small Broad-Headed Trees in Front of Buildings Will Provide Visual Continuity Without Blocking Views of Signs or Building Facades

However, since the palms are generally (in the case of Mission Valley) tall skyline trees, smaller broad headed evergreen trees are needed in the area of Hotel Circle itself and would be planted within the parkways which separate the pedestrian sidewalks from the street. These trees will provide shade and visual relief resulting in a pleasing effect. Since much of the architecture along Hotel Circle is varied with no continuity, another effect of significant masses of these trees will be to unify the street scene. This is a critical aspect of the proposed Hotel Circle streetscape. Care must be taken not to screen the entire hotel frontage from the freeway. Therefore, these trees should not be dense but open and should not form a wall along the freeway. Rather, they should be grouped together strategically providing necessary views of the adjacent commercial/hotel areas. The theme

entry accent trees should be of similar scale but can vary in color or texture. Care shall be taken to provide adequate vehicular sight lines at driveways and project entries. The use of a smaller scale evergreen tree will symbolically provide a transition from the tall upright trees (eucalyptus) presently used within the freeway right-of-way. The freeway requires a taller open tree like the existing eucalyptus (cladocalyx and maculata) due to the high speeds and visibility while Hotel Circle should utilize the palm tree and smaller trees. Figures 27 and 28 illustrate this concept. The following illustrations depict the concepts and criteria for planting along Hotel Circle. The concepts and criteria presented in "Plant Material Criteria" later in the Urban Design Element will also apply to Hotel Circle.

The following suggested list of plant materials has been prepared for inclusion into the Hotel Circle streetscape.

Suggested plants for the I-8 Corridor (not a part of the Atlas Specific Plan improvements)

Theme Tree (Palms)

- Washingtonia robusta (skyline)

Plants for the Hotel Circle Streetscape

Small-medium evergreen broad-headed street trees

- Ceratonia siliqua (male)
- Rhus lancea
- Pyrus kawakami

Mid-height to small clumping accent trees

- Phoenix reclinata (clumping mid-height)
- Arecastrum romanzoffianum (single mid-height)
- Chamaerops humilis (small clumping)

The above list of evergreen, broad-headed street trees is purposefully kept short to avoid too much variety. A single specie shall be chosen for all sites along Hotel Circle North. The same or an alternate single specie shall be chosen for all sites along Hotel Circle South. The mid-height and small clumping accent palm trees should be limited to individual project entries or entry plazas. Other trees for the Hotel Circle streetscape may be selected subject to the approval of the City Planning Department.

Accent trees (theme entries, bus stops, etc.)

- Jacaranda acutifolia
- Koelreuteria bipinnata
- Liquidambar styraciflua
- Platanus racemosa
- Populus fremontii