

## 3.8 LAND USE

### 3.8.1 Existing Conditions

#### Existing Land Use Patterns

The City of San Diego encompasses approximately 219,241 acres. **Table 3.8-1** and **Table 3.8-2** summarize the City's acreage distribution in terms of existing uses and planned land use designations. Existing uses represent those uses as they are presently found. Planned land uses are the recommended land use designations that are identified in the adopted community plan. Existing land uses may not always match the adopted planned land use designations. For example, a site may have agricultural uses on it while the planned land use designation calls for residential use. Existing uses may be located on sites with planned land use designations that allow other types of uses that have not yet been implemented in accordance with the adopted community. Together, both tables represent the overall distribution of land use within the City. **Figure 3.8-1** displays generalized land use categories distributed across the City.

**Table**  
**3.8-1 Existing Uses**

General Plan Land Use Category	Existing Uses	
	Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	6,055	2.8
Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services	7,887	3.6
Industrial Employment	8,928	4.1
Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities <sup>a</sup>	37,103	16.9
Multiple Use	--	--
Park, Open Space and Recreation <sup>b</sup>	60,654	27.6
Residential	52,389	23.9
Roads / Freeways / Transportation Facilities <sup>c</sup>	31,291	14.3
Water Bodies <sup>c</sup>	6,932	3.2
Vacant <sup>c</sup>	8,002	3.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>219,241</b>	<b>100.0</b>

a. This land use category includes 26,547 of existing acres of military use.

b. This land use category includes 2,578 acres of water bodies that are recreational areas and located within park and open space areas.

c. Not a General Plan land use category, however, it is included to provide an accurate account for total acreage in the City. Water bodies identified here are not for recreational purposes.

According to the existing land uses identified on **Table 3.8-1**, the largest existing use of land in the City of San Diego, at nearly 28 percent, consists of parks, open space and recreation areas.

The next largest existing use of land is for residential uses at nearly a quarter of the City's total acreage, or 23.9 percent. Industrial uses make up over four percent and commercial uses consist of less than four percent of the total acreage in the City. Institutional facilities, which include approximately 70 percent military uses, account for almost 17 percent of San Diego's existing land. Agriculture accounts for 2.8 percent of existing use. A slight difference in land use allocation is apparent when comparing **Table 3.8-1** with **Table 3.8-2**.

**Table  
3.8-2 Planned Land Uses**

General Plan Land Use Category	Adopted Community Plan Planned Land Uses	
	Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	3,670	1.7
Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services	6,114	2.8
Industrial Employment	12,278	5.6
Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities <sup>a</sup>	36,545	16.7
Multiple Use	4,534	2.1
Park, Open Space and Recreation <sup>b</sup>	62,686	28.5
Residential	55,987	25.5
Roads / Freeways / Transportation Facilities <sup>c</sup>	30,495	13.9
Water Bodies <sup>c</sup>	6,932	3.2
Vacant <sup>c</sup>	--	--
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>219,241</b>	<b>100.0</b>

a. This land use category includes 26,547 of planned acres of military use.

b. This land use category includes 2,578 acres of water bodies that are recreational areas and located within park and open space areas.

c. Not a General Plan land use category, however, it is included to provide an accurate account for total acreage in the City. Water bodies identified here are not for recreational purposes.

The City's acreage distribution in terms of existing uses and planned land use designations are grouped into seven Draft General Plan land use categories. Roads/Freeways/Transportation Facilities, Water Bodies and Vacant land use categories are not Draft General Plan land use categories but are used in the tables to depict an accurate account for total acreage in the City.

The seven Draft General Plan land use designations used on **Tables 3.8.1 – 3.8.3** are described below:

### ***Agriculture***

The Agriculture land use designation defines areas that are rural in character and very low-density or areas where agricultural uses are predominant. This designation is intended to accommodate a wide range of agriculture and agriculture-related uses such as: dairies; horticulture nurseries and greenhouses; raising and harvesting of crops; raising, maintaining and

keeping of animals; separately regulated agricultural uses; and single dwelling units when applicable.

### ***Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services***

The Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services land use designation includes areas identified as Neighborhood Commercial, Community Commercial, Regional Commercial, Office Commercial, Visitor Commercial, and Heavy Commercial. Generally, these areas provide a range of retail, service, civic, hotel, office and occasionally residential uses.

### ***Industrial Employment***

The Industrial Employment land use designation includes areas identified as Business Park, Business Park-Residential, Scientific Research, Technology Park, Light Industrial, and Heavy Industrial. Generally, these areas provide a variety of industrial uses which include office, research and development, corporate headquarters and a range of manufacturing, warehousing, storage, wholesale distribution and transportation terminals.

### ***Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities***

The Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities land use designation defines areas that are identified as public or semi-public facilities and which offer public and semi-public services to the community. Uses may include but are not limited to: airports, military facilities, community colleges, university campuses, landfills, communication and utilities, transit centers, water sanitation plants, schools, libraries, police and fire facilities, cemeteries, post offices, hospitals, park-and-ride lots, government offices and civic centers.

### ***Multiple Use***

The Multiple Use land use designation includes areas identified as Neighborhood Village, Community Village, and Urban Village which are characterized by mixed-use. The Village designations apply to areas that provide varying degrees of housing in a mixed-use setting that is integrated with shopping, civic uses and services.

### ***Park, Open Space and Recreation***

The Park, Open Space and Recreation land use designation includes areas identified as Open Space, Population-based Parks, Resource-based Parks, and Private/Commercial Recreation. These areas are generally non-urban in character and may have utility for: park and recreation purposes, passive or active recreation; conservation of land, water, or other natural resources; or historic or scenic purposes.

### ***Residential***

The Residential land use designation includes all single-family and multifamily housing within varying density ranges.

Additional land use category information is located in Section B of the Land Use Element of the Draft General Plan.

Vacant land is not a Draft General Plan land use designation; however, as an existing condition it provides a total acreage of land that is considered to be developable or designated for a future use such as a future right of way. **Table 3.8-3** identifies the associated land uses with existing

developable vacant acreage in the City. Developable vacant land accounts for 3.6 percent or 6,756 acres of the City’s total acreage.

**Table 3.8-3**  
**Breakdown of Vacant Developable Land**  
**in Terms of Planned Land Use Designations**

General Plan Land Use Category Planned Land Uses	Vacant Developable Acres	% of Total
Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services	617	9.1
Industrial Employment	2,107	31.2
Institutional, Public and Semi-Public Facilities	702	10.4
Multiple Use	423	6.3
Residential	2,907	43.0
<b>TOTAL ACRES (Vacant Developable)</b>	<b>6,756</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The majority of existing vacant land is designated for residential and industrial land uses. Of the 3.6 percent of land identified as vacant, 43 percent is designated for residential uses while another 31 percent is designated for industrial related uses. With less than four percent of land in the City vacant, future growth will most likely occur in existing urban areas.

### *Seven Basic Typologies*

San Diego’s communities can be characterized in seven basic typologies (2006 Draft General Plan Housing Element) as shown on **Figure 3.8-2**. These typologies provide a general description of the pattern of development within the City.

**Downtown San Diego** – Downtown is a unique high-density community with a mix of high-rise residential, commercial, and institutional development. Downtown San Diego is the City’s central core with an evolving urban district and has seen significant redevelopment in recent years. It is located between the San Diego Bay and Balboa Park. This business, cultural, and civic center has been bolstered by the expanded convention center and a new ballpark. Downtown is arranged on a grid-based system and consists of a collection of smaller neighborhoods. The circulation system allows for a walkable system of streets and includes a pedestrian promenade along the San Diego Bay.

**Pre World War II Communities** – These communities consist of Uptown, Old Town, North Park, Golden Hill, Southeastern, Barrio Logan, and the Mid-City neighborhoods. These older communities were developed gradually during the streetcar era with a grid-based street system from 1880-1930. Many of these communities have a mix of low- to medium-density development and experienced incompatible multifamily infill between 1960 and 1990 that disrupted the original character of these neighborhoods. Commercial development has primarily occurred along major community corridors such as University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard, and has clustered around major intersections. For this discussion, commercial development in

these communities is characterized as a mixture of pedestrian-oriented storefronts and strip commercial with curb cuts for off-street parking. New development is primarily occurring along major community corridors with multifamily residential and mixed use development.

**Coastal Communities** – The coastal areas originally developed as seasonal resorts and gradually became desirable year round communities. The coastal communities consist of Midway, Peninsula, Ocean Beach, Mission Beach, Pacific Beach and La Jolla. Many original structures intended to be temporary residences were retained and improved over time. The circulation systems within these communities are essentially based around a grid system with more curvilinear street patterns occurring along the hillsides. Throughout, there is a mix of single- and multifamily development on varying-sized lots with supporting commercial along major corridors. There is demand on under-developed multifamily lots to develop at their maximum density because of the desire to live in these communities. Significant numbers of single-family properties are undergoing expansion and remodels. Commercial development has occurred similarly to that of the Pre World War II communities along major corridors and within small commercial districts or cores. The Coastal Height Limit Overlay Zone was approved by a voter initiative in 1972 (Proposition D) and restricts the height of structures to 30 feet. The 30-foot height limit is a characteristic of all coastal communities and helps preserve public views of natural resource areas. The height limit has contributed to the relatively small scale development along the coast.

**Post World War II Suburban Communities** – These communities are dispersed across the City and consist of Torrey Pines, Mira Mesa, Clairemont Mesa, Linda Vista, Serra Mesa, Navajo, College Area, Encanto, Skyline-Paradise Hills and Otay Mesa-Nestor. These areas feature expansive single-family housing tracts bounded by garden style apartments on major thoroughfares. They were often developed much more quickly than the earlier communities, with less opportunity for organic growth and infill and they retain essentially the same residential structures that were part of the original development. Redevelopment and infill development is occurring intermittently. Commercial and residential areas tend to have greater separation between uses than in older communities. The residential street system is characterized by curvilinear and meandering streets that primarily serve local residential traffic. Commercial uses are clustered in larger scale strip commercial areas along major intersections and arterials. A few of the post World War II suburbs include significant industrial and employment lands. These uses tend to be located on the edges of the community, separated from residential uses and near freeway access.

**Master Planned Suburban Communities** – These communities were developed mostly from the 1970s through the present with a high degree of comprehensive planning. The Master Planned Suburban communities consist of Otay Mesa, Tierrasanta and the majority of the neighborhoods in the northern part of the City of San Diego, from Carmel Valley to Rancho Bernardo and Rancho Encantada. Most contain a mix of single-family and low-scale multifamily suburban style development as well as some commercial and employment uses intended to support the residential uses. Neighborhoods are often separated by open space canyons and habitat areas that were preserved concurrently with the original development pattern. Except for occasional individual site redevelopment or a few left over vacant sites these areas of the City are relatively new with little redevelopment occurring. The master planned

communities of the 1970's attempted to create internally balanced communities by including jobs, shopping and residential areas. The most recent master planned communities created after 1990 have incorporated urban village concepts including transit and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood and community centers.

**Newer Urban Communities** – These areas include University City, Kearny Mesa and Mission Valley. These communities were developed mostly after 1960 with a mix of residential and commercial uses. They differ from other multifamily areas in that the original development intensity in these communities is medium and medium-high density multifamily residential with structured or underground parking. These areas use master plans and specific plans for development and contain a mix of residential, commercial and employment uses. Unlike the master planned communities, these communities provide higher residential density and a greater intensity of commercial and employment uses.

**Military, Environmental and Other Limited Development** – These areas are typically park land, open space and Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) lands as well as military lands. These lands are not typically developable land and include military lands such as Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar, environmental lands such as East Elliot with prime MSCP lands, the Tijuana River Valley and San Pasqual Valley and regional and City parks like Mission Bay Park, Balboa Park. Little, if any, development can be expected in these areas.

### *Adjoining Jurisdictions*

The City of San Diego is the largest incorporated city in San Diego County and borders unincorporated areas of the county, a number of other cities and the US-Mexico border.

**County of San Diego** – The county of San Diego identifies 23 community and subregional areas throughout the unincorporated county. The unincorporated communities adjacent to San Diego tend to have urbanized land use patterns. (Regional Comprehensive Plan [RCP] Program Environmental Impact Report [PEIR])

Otay sub-region is an unincorporated part of the county that is located east of the City of San Diego's Otay Mesa community planning area and Chula Vista. East Otay Mesa is one of two specific plan areas within the Otay sub-region. It is a relatively flat mesa with mountains at the eastern edge and the Otay River Valley and tributary canyon to the north. East Otay Mesa consists primarily of industrial lands including distribution and warehouse uses due to the proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border (1994 East Otay Mesa Business Park Specific Plan). North of San Diego is the county's San Dieguito community plan area. It is, generally, a low-density estate residential area and is located north of San Diego's Black Mountain Ranch community planning area. A portion of the county's unincorporated community of Lakeside is located along the eastern border of San Diego in the western foothills of the Cuyamaca Mountains on the San Diego River about 21 miles east of downtown San Diego. Lakeside is primarily residential with a rural/suburban character. In addition, two non-contiguous county islands exist within the City of San Diego. The Mira Mesa Island (Davis Ranch) is approximately 77 acres located within the Scripps Miramar Ranch community planning area; and Greenwood Island (Mount Hope Cemetery) is approximately 100 acres located in the Southeastern community planning area.

**City of Chula Vista** – The city of Chula Vista is the second largest city in the county and is located in southern San Diego County, between National City and the southernmost portion of the City of San Diego. Chula Vista encompasses approximately 52 square miles of land from the San Diego Bay to the Otay Lakes, generally between Sweetwater River and Otay River. (2005 Chula Vista General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report [FEIR]).

**Coastal cities** – The City of San Diego is bordered in the northwest by the city of Del Mar and the city of Solana Beach. Del Mar and Solana Beach are coastal cities which include older community cores close to the beach with lower density residential development. In addition, the city of Coronado lies west of San Diego Bay. The San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge, a two-mile long area landmark, connects the island of Coronado to San Diego.

**Inland cities to the north** - The City of San Diego borders the city of Escondido and the city of Poway to the northeast. These North County inland cities contain predominately large-lot, single-family residences and provide employment in regional commercial, industrial, and office complexes.

**Inland cities to the east** – Santee, El Cajon, La Mesa and Lemon Grove border San Diego to the east. Each of these cities has an older urban core and well-established residential areas. These cities are experiencing some degree of growth in residential uses and intensification of commercial and employment uses. In addition, El Cajon has significant industrial and commercial activity.

**Southern cities** – Aside from Chula Vista and portions of the county, southern portions of San Diego also border National City and Imperial Beach. Imperial Beach, similar to other coastal cities, has a community core near the beach area with older residential development. Imperial Beach is bordered by the Pacific Ocean, the San Diego Bay, the City of San Diego and the city of Coronado and does not contain any large tracts of vacant land. (2004 RCP PEIR). National City is the second oldest city in San Diego County and is one of the original suburbs to the City of San Diego. It is located on San Diego Bay, and is bordered by the City of San Diego to the north and east. National City is nearly entirely developed, with a mix of residential neighborhoods and industrial and commercial uses.

**Mexico** – San Diego’s southern most communities lie along the US-Mexico border. Just south of the international border is the city of Tijuana which is considered the largest city in the Mexican state of Baja California and according to SANDAG, the San Diego-Baja California point of entry is one of the busiest in the Americas. The Tijuana River travels through Tijuana and crosses the international border near the San Ysidro border crossing, creating a natural border between the US and Mexico before it drains into the Pacific Ocean.

## **Regulatory Framework**

The following section describes the planning framework and additional regulatory documents, plans, and policies relevant to land use for the proposed Draft General Plan. The section describes applicable plans, policies, and regulations of regional, state or federal agencies with jurisdiction over the City. These include regional planning documents prepared by San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), which address regional growth, transportation and land use in the county of San Diego, the California Coastal Act/Local Coastal Program, Land Development Code (LDC), Community Plans, and the MSCP, among others.

### ***Long Range Plans***

**Progress Guide and General Plan** – The *Progress Guide and General Plan* (1979) together with the adopted Strategic Framework Element (2002) serve as the City’s most current adopted General Plan. The City’s community plans comprise the Land Use Element of the *Progress Guide and General Plan*. The land use plans are implemented, and development is regulated by the sections of the Municipal Code relating to the zoning, subdivision of land, and building regulations. The General Plan is the master document to shape growth in a city or region as described in EIR **Section 2.0**.

Factors influencing this Draft General Plan update include:

- Population forecasts indicate that the City’s population will continue to increase.
- Less than four percent of the City’s land is vacant and available for new development, meaning the City must shift from developing vacant land to reinvesting in existing communities.
- The City faces a significant shortfall in public facilities and services.
- The need to address traffic congestion and other quality of life concerns.
- Housing is increasingly unaffordable and unavailable.

**Community Plans** – The City has 50 distinct community planning areas, and 42 recognized community planning groups that provide input on planning and development. Each community planning area has its own land use plan that specifically addresses land use distribution and land use designations in more detail than is possible at the Draft General Plan level. Community plans also provide community and site-specific guidance on community facilities, urban design and other aspects of community planning as needed.

The community plan structure is necessary because of the City’s diverse geography, development patterns, and cultural and ethnic communities, and other variations. Community plans provide the level of information that is needed in order to review and assess proposed public and private development projects. However, it is important to emphasize that community plans are policy documents that do not contain regulatory requirements. While the community plan addresses specific community needs, its policies and recommendations must be in harmony with other community plans, the overall Draft General Plan, and citywide policies. In order to maintain consistency between the Draft General Plan and community plans, updates to community plans will be necessary over the next several years.

**Precise Plans and Specific Plans** – The term “precise plan” is a creation of the City of San Diego. Some community plans contain only broad communitywide policies, and precise plans are used to lay out specifics associated with land uses, public facilities, and design issues. Precise plans have also been used to provide very detailed policies for a small part of a community planning area.

A specific plan can be a policy document alone, or a combined policy/regulatory document, according to State Planning and Zoning Law. In the past, combined policy/regulatory specific plans have been used in the City, notably in Mission Valley. The LDC reflects a policy decision by the City to use the specific plan solely as a policy document, with implementation through



LDC zones. Specific plans are also used at a project level for long-term projects with multiple phases, and in master plan situations.

**Public Facilities Financing Plans** – In order to address the need for public facilities associated with community plan-recommended land uses, the City prepares Public Facilities Financing Plans (PFFP) as companion documents to community plans. The PFFPs identify major public facilities in the areas of transportation (streets, storm drains, traffic signals, etc.), libraries, park and recreation facilities, police stations and fire stations that are needed to serve the needs of the community over the upcoming years. These documents also identify fees that are necessary to help mitigate costs of public facilities required as a result of development in the communities. The PFFPs are updated as needed due to community plan updates and amendments.

**Park and Open Space Plans** – In addition to the Draft General Plan and community plans which contain guidelines for growth, development and land use, there are park master plans, canyon plans and resource management plans for special areas of the City which contain environmental goals, policies, and recommendations for park and open space areas.

The *Mission Bay Park Natural Resource Management Plan* (May 1990) contains guidelines managing the natural resources within Mission Bay Park. The plan consists of guidelines for in-water construction, dredging, and buffer zones for nesting sites. The plan recommends that land uses within buffer areas be limited to bikeways, walkways, and passive recreation and buffer zones around terrestrial habitats in Mission Bay Park which exclude any development are as follows: salt marsh-100 feet; salt pan-50 feet; and coastal strand-50 feet.

The *Balboa Park Master Plan* (July 1989) provides direction to protect and recover free and open park land from encroaching uses whenever possible and the Arizona Landfill, Central Operations Station and Inspiration Point must be developed as free and open park land emphasizing multi-use play, picnic and passive uses. Also the plan recommends consolidating special use recreation and sports activities in the Morley Field-East Mesa area, the zoo and the Golden Hill Recreation Center areas.

The *Mission Trails Regional Park Master Plan* – Mission Trails Park was started in 1974 and has become one of the largest urban parks in the United States. Mission Trails encompasses nearly 5,800 acres of both natural and developed recreational acres. Along with Balboa Park and Mission Bay, it provides San Diego residents and visitors a way to explore the cultural, historical, and recreational aspects of San Diego.

The *Carroll Canyon Master Plan* (August 1994) includes design features for the creek channel, a buffer of adjoining upland habitat adjacent to Rattlesnake Canyon and direction on reestablishing native vegetation. As part of the Master Plan, the canyon will serve as a passive open space area that includes a ten usable acre neighborhood park site near Rattlesnake Canyon.

The *Sunset Cliffs Natural Park Master Plan* (July 2005) provides guidelines to direct park planning decisions regarding development and preservation of a 68-acre resource-based park stretching along the Pacific Ocean bordering the western edge of Point Loma. The 18-acre linear section of the park lies to the west of Sunset Cliffs Boulevard between Adair and Ladera Streets. The 50-

acre hillside section, a designated multiple species conservation area, links to the 640-acre Point Loma Ecological Reserve beginning at the Navy property to the south.

The goal of the *Los Peñasquitos Enhancement Plan and Program* (October 1985) is to protect, maintain, and enhance Los Peñasquitos Lagoon system and adjacent uplands in order to perpetuate native flora and fauna characteristic of southern California lagoons, and to restore and maintain the estuarine hydrology. Many of the community plans adjacent to Los Peñasquitos contain related information regarding the Canyon and the preservation of the canyon environment.

The City of San Diego adopted the *Chollas Creek Enhancement Plan* in 2002. It is a comprehensive planning document adopted to preserve and enhance the Chollas Creek system while providing design guidelines for new projects. The document is used in conjunction with other plans to review projects located near Chollas Creek.

*Canyon Plans* – Many urban canyons have been included in the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA). As with many urban open space areas, the need exists to balance habitat preservation with passive recreational uses and green space enjoyment. In a coordinated effort, City staff along with Friends of Canyons groups, have been working to prepare a planning guide for canyon enhancement. A number of individual open space areas currently have management plans in place or in process, Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa, Black Mountain Open Space and Tecolote Canyon to name a few. There are also a number of open spaces canyons located in urban areas which provide various opportunities for preservation and trail programs.

The City currently has four river parks at various stages in the planning process: San Diego River Park, San Dieguito River Park, Otay Valley Regional Park, and Tijuana River Valley Regional Park.

The *First San Diego River Improvement Project Specific Plan* (February 1984) contains guidelines for the river corridor and the transportation system. The river corridor is a part of the San Diego River citywide open space system; therefore, it should be accessible to the public. Areas outside the river channel should be landscaped and linked to the river corridor. The First San Diego River Improvement Project states that buffer areas are to be located along the entire length of both sides of the river. At no particular location shall the private development intrude into the floodway proper. The average width of the buffer for the entire area shall not be less than 20 feet. The maximum width of the buffer should be approximately 50 feet. Buffer areas should be widest adjacent to the most sensitive habitat areas. Land uses within the buffer areas should include only the light rail transit corridor, bikeway and pedestrian areas and other passive recreation uses.

The *San Diego River Park Master Plan* (Draft June 2005) – This plan is in draft form. The plan provides definition and guidance for the future development and maintenance of the San Diego River Park. The Plan focuses on seven principles: clean up and restore hydrological function of the river; reclaim the valley as a common space; unify fragmented lands; emphasize a continuum of experience; reveal the valley history; reorient development toward the river; and create a synergy of people, water and wildlife.

The *San Dieguito River Regional Plan* (October 1984) includes land use and Recreation/Open Space recommendations, such as minimizing the alteration of land forms and drainage patterns with special attention to floodplains, canyons, and steep slopes and protect and preserve significant resources and the visual integrity of the San Dieguito River basin as an essentially passive rural area.

The *San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan* (February 1994) contains the following park objective to protect the significant biological resources of the planning area, provide adequate buffers between development and sensitive resources. Functional linkages should be identified and preserved between the San Dieguito River Park and open space preserves to the north and south. The plan promotes the preservation of all significant cultural resources, and recommends the protection and restoration of all historic sites within the planning area. This plan also endorses the proposal to restore the San Dieguito Lagoon and its associated wetlands ecosystem.

The *Tijuana River National Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan* (February 1986) contains policies and regulations to restrict disturbance of the natural vegetation and wildlife. The Plan requires that the diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries and lakes shall be permitted in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects. The Plan contains policies for a buffer area to be established for each development adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and the buffer should be a minimum of 100 feet for small projects on existing lots, unless the applicant can demonstrate that 100 feet is unnecessary to protect the resources of the habitat area.

The *Otay Valley Regional Park* has an approved Concept Plan. The *Otay River Regional Park Concept Plan* (July 1997) provides policy direction for the three jurisdictions (cities of San Diego and Chula Vista and the county of San Diego) for coordinated land acquisition and future development of the Regional Park. The Plan proposes a boundary; protection of environmentally sensitive areas and important cultural resources in an open space core; identifies areas adjacent to the open space for active and passive recreational development opportunities; includes a regional trail system of approximately 8.3 miles with staging areas and envisions two interpretive centers for environmental and educational programs.

The *County Trails Master Plan and Program* was adopted by the county in 2005. The Plan and Program is a comprehensive planning document adopted to preserve existing trails and to establish new paths to enhance the recreational continuity of trails within the county; both in the incorporated and unincorporated areas. The City's Pedestrian and Trails Master Plans will be developed in coordination with the County's Trails Master Plan.

**Proposition A: The Managed Growth Initiative** – In 1985, the electorate adopted Proposition 'A,' an initiative amending the *Progress Guide and General Plan* (1979) to require approval of a majority vote of the people for shifting of land from the Future Urbanizing to the Planned Urbanizing Area phase of growth or development. The ballot measure further provided that the “provision restricting development in the Future Urbanizing Area shall not be amended except by majority vote of the people, and except for amendments which are neutral or make the

designation more restrictive in terms of permitting development.”

By 2005, phase shifts, per Proposition ‘A’ and the Guidelines for Future Development, occurred for the land determined to be appropriate for more urban levels of development within the planning horizon of this Draft General Plan. The City also completed planning efforts to address land use in the remainder of the Future Urbanizing Area subject to its jurisdiction.

The City Council adopted a comprehensive update to the San Pasqual Valley Plan that requires the preservation of the San Pasqual Valley for agricultural use, open space, and MHPA. Additionally, the City adopted a specific plan for Del Mar Mesa that severely limits residential development to rural densities and sets aside over half of the plan area as MHPA. Furthermore, federal, state, county and other jurisdictions have participated with the City in planning for open space and habitat preservation in the San Dieguito and Tijuana River Valleys.

Proposition ‘A’ lands also include military and other lands not subject to the City’s jurisdiction. In the past, the City Council has chosen to follow the development intensity restrictions and the requirement for a vote of the people to approve an amendment to shift the area from Future to Planned Urbanizing Area as specified in Proposition ‘A’, upon receipt of jurisdiction over former military installations.

**Annexations** – The City of San Diego plays a leading role in regional planning. This role includes working with other jurisdictions and agencies in refining the city’s boundaries. Both the state and county support the expansion of cities to provide urban services, rather than the expansion of special districts. Under the authority of the state, the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) regulates, through approval or denial, any boundary changes proposed by a city. Although LAFCO does not have the power to initiate boundary changes on its own, LAFCO coordinates the orderly development of a community through reconciling differences between city and county plans, so the most efficient urban service arrangements are created for the benefit of area residents and property owners.

A “Sphere of Influence” which is used to determine the most logical and efficient future boundaries for cities, is the physical boundary and service area that a city is expected to serve. In 1985, LAFCO determined the City of San Diego’s Sphere of Influence to be co-terminus with its jurisdictional boundaries.

Prospective annexation areas are shown in **Figure 2.2-1** and include two county islands of unincorporated land within the City, and two large unincorporated areas of the county: 4S Ranch/West Rancho Bernardo located north of Highway 56 and Otay Mesa East located adjacent to the Otay Mesa community and the US/Mexico border. The prospective annexation areas are unincorporated areas within the county of San Diego that share common geographic features, land use patterns, and are bordered by the same natural boundaries as the contiguous City area. The county islands consist of the following areas: the Davis Ranch, an approximately 77-acre property, designated for industrial use, located adjacent to Interstate 15 within the Scripps Miramar Ranch Community Planning Area; and the Mount Hope Cemetery, an approximately 100-acre property, designated as a public cemetery, located within the Southeastern San Diego Community Planning Area.

Land located within these prospective areas can be reviewed for the possibility of annexation upon the initiative of either the landowner or the City. LAFCO will determine if the proposed annexation requires an amendment to the Sphere of Influence, or if a Sphere of Influence study is needed prior to an amendment. In either case, LAFCO will also use the above-mentioned factors as part of its decision making process. In addition, future environmental analysis would be necessary as part of any annexation.

### ***Regulations***

**Land Development Code** - Chapters 11-15 of the Municipal Code are referred to as the LDC. These chapters contain the City's planning, zoning, subdivision, and building regulations, with the exception of the planned district ordinance regulations which are contained in Chapter 15. The LDC is one of the tools used to implement the *Progress Guide and General Plan* (1979) and the community plans, which establish the pattern and intensity of land use through the City.

The City of San Diego's zoning and land development regulations were comprehensively updated over a multi-year program. The new LDC became effective in January of 2000. The code offers a toolbox of regulations to implement Draft General Plan and community plan policies including:

*Base Zones* – Chapter 13 of the LDC contains the citywide base zones as well as specific overlay zones. The five base zones help to ensure that land uses within the City are properly located and that adequate space is provided for each type of use identified. Base zones are intended to regulate uses; to minimize the adverse impacts of these uses; to regulate the zone density and intensity; to regulate the size of buildings; and to classify, regulate, and address the relationships of uses of land and buildings. The five base zones are Open Space, Agricultural, Residential, Commercial and Industrial.

- The **open space zones** are applied to land where the primary use is park or open space or to private land where development must be limited to implement open space policies of adopted land use plans or applicable federal and state regulations and to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.
- The **agricultural zones** are intended to accommodate a wide range of agriculture and agriculture-related uses as well as single dwelling units.
- The **residential zones** are intended to accommodate a variety of housing types and to encourage the provision of housing for all citizens of San Diego. It is also intended that the residential zones reflect desired development patterns in existing neighborhoods while accommodating the need for future growth.
- The **commercial zones** provide distinct regulations for size, intensity, and design of commercial development to provide for the employment, shopping, services, recreation, and lodging needs of the residents of and visitors to the City.
- The **industrial zones** are intended to provide flexibility in the design of new and redeveloped industrial projects while assuring high quality development and to protect land for industrial uses and limit non-industrial uses. The zones accommodate a range of

industrial and manufacturing activities in designated areas to promote a balanced land use and economy and to encourage employment growth.

*Overlay Zones* – In addition to base zones, Chapter 13 of the LDC contains thirteen specific overlay zones. The overlay zones provide supplemental regulations that have been tailored to specific geographic areas of the City. Overlay zones are applied in conjunction with a base zone and modify or add to the regulations of the base zone to address specific issues such as development adjacent to airports, special height or parking requirements, or supplemental processing requirements. The following are three important overlay zones for the Draft General Plan implementation:

- *Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone* – The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) provides supplemental development regulations that are tailored to specific sites within community plan areas of the City. The intent of the regulations is to ensure that development proposals are reviewed for consistency with the use and development criteria that have been adopted for specific sites as part of the community plan update and amendment process.

CPIOZ is characterized as either “Type A” or “Type B” depending upon whether or not the applicable community plans contain specific development standards and criteria or policies and guidelines, respectively, to address development proposals within an identified area. The CPIOZ “Type A” is ministerial (Process One) and no discretionary permit is required if the proposed development complies with the development standards or criteria. Applicants for development proposals within a CPIOZ “Type A” who are unable or unwilling to comply with those standards may process a Site Development Permit (SDP) to request deviations. Often, the community plan provides thresholds within Type A to address different design options. The CPIOZ “Type B” always requires a SDP as the community plan language focuses upon design recommendations and guidelines. Both CPIOZ Type “A” and “B” are useful tools to implement both General Plan and community plan policies.

CPIOZ is applied to the following areas:

- Clairemont Mesa Community: areas on Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, Genesee Avenue, and Clairemont Drive;
- College area: a few areas near San Diego State University;
- Linda Vista Community: along Linda Vista Road, and an area bounded by Interstate 5, Friars Road, and Tecolote Road;
- Centre City: on California Street and Kettner Boulevard;
- Navajo Community: along Mission Gorge Road and Friars Road;
- Pacific Beach: along Mission Boulevard and the coast;
- Peninsula Community: along Rosecrans Street and Nimitz Boulevard;
- Rancho Bernardo Community: next to Interstate 5, along Rancho Bernardo and Bernardo Center Drive;
- Rancho Peñasquitos: one site on Peñasquitos Drive;
- University area: most of the area north of Rose Canyon; and
- Uptown Community: east of Highway 163.

- The *Airport Approach Overlay Zone* provides supplemental regulations for the property surrounding the approach path for San Diego International Airport (SDIA), Lindbergh Field. The intent of these regulations is to help ensure the following:
  - The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) airspace protection regulations are satisfied;
  - The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (Airport Authority) is provided the opportunity to participate in the evaluation process; and
  - Minimum vertical buffers are provided between the FAA-established airspace protection surfaces and structures constructed within the approach path.
- The *Airport Environs Overlay Zone* provides supplemental regulations for property surrounding Brown Field, Montgomery Field, SDIA at Lindbergh Field, and MCAS Miramar. Although the intent of these regulations is to ensure that land uses are compatible with the operation of airports by implementing the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs). The boundaries for the Airport Environs Overlay Zone boundaries cover less area than the boundaries of the airport influence areas used by the ALUCPs.

The following are additional overlay zones that are used to implement various regulations in specific areas of the City:

- *Coastal Overlay Zone*
- *Coastal Height Limit Overlay Zone*
- *Sensitive Coastal Overlay Zone*
- *Mobilehome Park Overlay Zone*
- *Parking Impact Overlay Zone*
- *Residential Tandem Parking Overlay Zone*
- *Transit Area Overlay Zone*
- *Urban Village Overlay Zone*
- *Mission Trails Design District*
- *Clairemont Mesa Height Limit Overlay Zone*

*Planned District Ordinances* – Planned District Ordinances are an earlier regulatory system made up of 20 individual zoning codes, separate from the citywide zoning code. The PDOs were created prior to 2000, during a time when the Municipal Code was incapable of protecting unique community features. The Land Development Code, which became effective in January 2000, includes a variety of tools to implement adopted policy, particularly to address land use and design. The City is in the process of a comprehensive PDO update to apply existing Land Development Code tools where possible modify or develop new measures when necessary, and complete implementation of the City’s Zone Code Update. The PDO update is expected to improve predictability and consistency in application of the City’s regulations by providing a single source for zoning and development regulations (Land Development Code), that implements the policies of the General Plan and Community Plans, and protects the unique features of each community.

*Land Development Manual* – The Land Development Manual is a companion manual to the Land Development Code. The Land Development Manual provides information to assist in the processing and review of development applications. Volume I establishes requirements for the submittal of applications, including the identification of required fees and deposits. Volume II establishes development standards and guidelines used in the review of applications. Volume II consists of the following information: Biology Guidelines, Coastal Bluffs and Beaches Guidelines, Deviations From Environmentally Sensitive Lands Regulations Within the Coastal Overlay Zone, Historical Resources Guidelines, Landscape Standards, and Steep Hillside Guidelines. The appendices include a number of manuals that were originally adopted in advance of the Land Development Manual.

*General Development Regulations* – Additional development regulations are found in the LDC. These regulations are intended to regulate specific uses that may be desirable and appropriate in a particular zone if limitations or conditions are placed on the development of those uses to minimize detrimental effects to neighboring properties or incompatibility with the permitted uses of the base zones.

*Planned Development Permits* – Planned Development Permits provide a process for projects that request to deviate from the strict application of development regulations. The process encourages imaginative and innovative planning and design to assure the development achieves the purpose and intent of land use plans.

*Site Development Permits* – The Site Development Permit is required for proposed development that, because of its site, location, size, or some other characteristic, may have significant impacts on resources or on the surrounding area, even if developed in conformance with all regulations. The intent of this discretionary permit is to apply site-specific conditions as necessary to assure that the development does not adversely affect the applicable land use plan and to help ensure that all regulations are met. Site Development Permits often used for sites which contain Environmentally Sensitive Lands, historic structures, and sites within Planned District Ordinances and various overlay zones. .

*Environmentally Sensitive Lands Regulations (ESL)* – ESL regulations help protect, preserve, and restore lands containing steep hillsides, sensitive biological resources, coastal beaches, sensitive coastal bluffs, or Special Flood Hazard Areas. The intent of the ESL regulations is to assure that development occurs in a manner that protects the overall quality of the resources, encourages a sensitive form of development, retains biodiversity and interconnected habitats, maximizes physical and visual public access to and along the shoreline, and reduces hazards due to flooding in specific areas while minimizing the need for construction of flood control facilities.

### ***State/Federal Programs***

**California Coastal Act/Local Coastal Program** – The City’s community plans located within the State Coastal Zone Boundaries must be certified by the California Coastal Commission (Coastal Commission) as being appropriate to implement the Coastal Act. Community planning areas wholly or partially located within the Coastal Zone include: Barrio Logan/Harbor 101, Ocean Beach, Carmel Valley, Otay Mesa/Nestor, Del Mar Mesa, Pacific Beach, La Jolla, Pacific Highlands Ranch, Midway/Pacific Highway Corridor, Peninsula, Mira Mesa, Torrey Hills,



Mission Bay Park, Tijuana River Valley, Mission Beach, Torrey Pines, North City Future Urbanizing Area, San Dieguito River Valley, North City Local Coastal Program, and University. **Figure 3.8-3** shows the Coastal Zone boundaries within the City of San Diego. Within the Coastal Zone, there are several categories of land associated with different types of permit authority. The City of San Diego has the authority to issue Coastal Development Permits for areas of the Coastal Zone where the Coastal Commission has certified the Local Coastal Program (LCP) land use plan and related implementation program in the form of code regulations. This constitutes a majority of the area within the Coastal Zone and these areas are known as “Coastal Commission certified areas.” These certified areas can lie within appealable as well as nonappealable areas. For instance, if a Coastal Development Permit falls within the appealable area, then the decision involving this development is appealable to the Coastal Commission. On the other hand, if a coastal development permit falls within the nonappealable area, then the decision rests with the City and is not appealable to the Coastal Commission.

“Areas of deferred certification” constitute another category of land in the Coastal Zone. In these areas, the Coastal Commission has not yet certified the City’s land use plan, and therefore retains coastal development permit authority. There are also “areas of original jurisdiction” or “Coastal Commission permit jurisdiction” that are not a part of the City’s LCP and where the Coastal Act jurisdiction and permit authority to remain with the Coastal Commission.

**California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act)** – The Williamson Act, codified at Government Code section 51200 et seq., was enacted for the purpose of allowing cities and counties to preserve agricultural land via voluntary contracts with the landowners. The process requires public notice of the intent to establish the preserve, including a legal description or an assessor’s parcel number. The preserve must be at least 100 acres, unless the city or county finds that smaller preserves are necessary due to unique characteristics of the agricultural enterprises in the area and that the establishment of the smaller preserves is consistent with the general plan.

The landowner receives the benefit of having the land taxed at a rate consistent with its actual use, instead of the potential market value. The City of San Diego is already exempt from paying taxes on property it owns and therefore, the Williamson Act does not apply to land owned by the City of San Diego. There are no Williamson Act lands within the City of San Diego.

**Surface Mining and Recovery Act of 1975** – In accordance with classification guidelines established by the State Mining and Geology Board and in compliance with the Surface Mining and Recovery Act of 1975 (SMARA), the State Geologist is required to classify, on the basis solely of geological factors and without regard to existing land use and ownership, the following:

- Areas containing significant mineral deposits; or
- Areas containing little or no mineral deposits;
- Areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which requires further evaluation.

The State Mining and Geology Board subsequently defined the above categories into Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs). These zones are established based on the presence or absence of substantial sand and gravel deposits and crushed rock source areas. Please see **Section 3.9** Mineral Resources for more detailed information.

**Military Installations** – There are a number of military installations adjacent to and within the City of San Diego borders. The installations vary in purpose and size. **Figure 3.8-4** depicts the military installations in San Diego and within close proximity. These include: Marine Corp Air Station Miramar, Marine Corp Recruit Depot, Naval Medical Center San Diego, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center, Fleet Supply Center San Diego, Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare Training Center, Naval Station San Diego, Naval Submarine Base San Diego, Naval Air Station North Island, Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, Silver Strand Training Complex, Imperial Beach Naval Outlying Landing Field.

### ***Adjoining Jurisdictions – General Plans and Policy Documents***

Three large jurisdictions contain most of the population and control much of the land use in southwestern San Diego County. They are the City of San Diego, the county of San Diego, and the city of Chula Vista. The jurisdictions are tied together through the City’s Metro Wastewater System. The three jurisdictions make up the bulk of the subregional habitat preserve planning effort, the MSCP. The three jurisdictions jointly plan regional parks. While the county and Chula Vista are not yet constrained with dwindling vacant land, all three have embarked on an effort to update their respective General Plans. Chula Vista recently adopted their General Plan update in 2005.

**County of San Diego General Plan 2020** – The General Plan 2020 is a multi-year project that began in August of 1998, to update the San Diego County general plan. The current general plan for the unincorporated county has not been fully updated since 1979 and has been substantially modified over the years. Since 1979, significant growth and change has occurred which has led to the incorporation of coastal cities and to the annexation of lands on the fringes of the unincorporated areas such as Otay Ranch and Montgomery area into the city of Chula Vista and various county “islands” (e.g., Miramar Ranch North) into the City of San Diego.

General Plan 2020 will establish a framework by enabling the unincorporated communities to grow, thereby shaping the future of the county. The outcome will be an updated county general plan which protects the environment, focuses population growth to specified areas, and provides adequate public facilities and services for the additional citizens. This comprehensive planning document encourages development in the western portion of the county near existing infrastructure. The update also includes adjustments to community planning area boundaries, and replaces residential lot size requirements with a density-based approach.

The county’s general plan update assumes that most elements and the unincorporated community plans will be updated concurrently. This effort could take several years. The county’s effort differs from the City’s effort in that the City General Plan Update is phased with incremental approvals.

**City of Chula Vista General Plan** - The city of Chula Vista recently completed their comprehensive general plan update. Most current planned growth would occur in large master planned communities in eastern Chula Vista, including the 23,000-acre Otay Ranch. This expansion area has an expected population of approximately 68,000. The buildout of this area may extend beyond 2020. Otay Ranch has been planned as a series of villages with core densities averaging from 14.5 to 18 dwelling units per acre (gross) depending on whether

planned transit ways traverse the villages. In these villages, rights-of-way for future rapid transit extensions have been reserved.

The General Plan update examines existing neighborhoods to determine what areas are likely to remain stable and where transitional areas exist where revitalization and intensification may be appropriate to accommodate future anticipated growth. This would focus upon some of Chula Vista's older portions, generally west of Interstate-805 and along Interstate-5. These areas include the city of Chula Vista's urbanized core and redevelopment areas, and some of the prime candidates for infill projects with mixed-use and higher densities.

A joint program, the South Bay Transit First Program, with Chula Vista and other jurisdictions, is refining proposed transit routes and station locations to provide a framework for identifying areas where transit supportive land uses are appropriate in this area.

**General Plan profiles of adjacent jurisdictions** – Adjacent jurisdictions to San Diego are generally urbanized with limited vacant land. Most of the cities are experiencing varying degrees of growth in residential uses and intensification of commercial and employment uses. Each municipality adjacent to the City of San Diego has a General Plan which is regularly consulted and used for project review and guidance.

There are 12 jurisdictions bordering the City of San Diego. The jurisdictions are: Imperial Beach, San Diego County, Chula Vista, National City, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, El Cajon, Santee, Poway, Del Mar, Escondido and Mexico. A majority of the jurisdictional boundaries are characterized by contiguous or complementary land uses within 1000 feet. However, there are a few discrepancies between jurisdictions. The most notable discrepancy is along the Chula Vista-San Diego border between the I-5 and I-805. On the north side of the boundary, Chula Vista maintains mostly industrial land, which borders the open space area of the Otay River Valley located within San Diego's southern boundary. To the west, Imperial Beach multifamily residential land uses and the Imperial Beach Naval Outlying Landing Field which includes an airport border single and multifamily residential land in San Diego. To the east, landfills located in the county and Santee border City of San Diego open space. To the northeast, industrial land within the city of Poway is located within 1000 feet of City of San Diego open space. Along the northwest border, Del Mar single-family residential land uses border City of San Diego open space. To address multi-jurisdictional adjacency land use issues, jurisdictions are notified of and asked to comment on proposed land use plan amendments and updates. The plan amendment and update review process allows interested individuals, groups, organizations and other government agencies to raise concerns about proposed land use designations and changes to adopted land use plans. The review process is intended to identify and address possible land use incompatibilities and potential impacts, including impacts to adjacent jurisdictions.

The land uses located in San Diego along the US-Mexico border consist of open space, commercial and industrial land uses. The Tijuana River Valley sits along the western portion of the border and is primarily open space in the form of abandoned agricultural lands, estuary and beach. South of the Tijuana River Valley is the US-Mexico border which is adjacent to residential and mixed use development in Tijuana. Near the international border entrance at I-5, San Diego commercial land uses are adjacent to commercial uses in Tijuana. To the east, San Diego open space along the border is adjacent to residential and mixed-use development in

Tijuana and further east industrial land uses in Otay Mesa are adjacent to Tijuana's Rodríguez International Airport, multifamily housing and scientific research uses.

A regional effort to address planning related issues along a portion of the border has been established. SANDAG and the city of Tijuana's Municipal Planning Institute (Instituto Municipal de Planeación or IMPlan) are working on the development of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan. The study area encompasses the City of San Diego's Otay Mesa community planning area, the county of San Diego's East Otay Mesa community planning area, including Otay Lakes, the eastern portion of the city of Chula Vista east of Interstate 805 (I-805) and south of Olympic Parkway, and the planning areas of Mesa de Otay and Centenario, including the Alamar River in the city of Tijuana. This border region has been identified as an opportunity to create an effective binational planning partnership.

Transportation, housing, economic development, and environmental conservation are four key issue areas that have been identified for evaluation as part of the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan. A Draft Early Action Plan was released for comment in June 2006 (2006 SANDAG).

**Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans** – The Airport Authority, which serves as the state designated Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for San Diego County, adopts the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans serve as a tool for use by the ALUC in conducting reviews of proposed land use in the areas surrounding airports and assists the City of San Diego, as an affected local land use jurisdiction, in the preparation or amendment of land use plans and ordinances, including the General Plan. Currently, there are five adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans in place within the City land use jurisdiction that include the San Diego International Airport, MCAS Miramar, Brown Field Municipal Airport, and Montgomery Field Municipal Airport. Compatibility Plans have not been prepared for Naval Air Station North Island or Naval Outlying Field Imperial Beach.

In 2004, the Airport Authority amended the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans to incorporate new ALUC policies into the existing Comprehensive Land Use Plans that SANDAG adopted in the 1980s and 1990s when it served as the ALUC for San Diego County. The Airport Authority is currently in the process of preparing new Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans for all of the public and military airports within the county. It is expected that the ALUC will adopt these updated Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans separately at different points during the next two years.

The purpose of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans is two-fold: 1) to provide for the orderly growth of airports and the area surrounding the airports within the jurisdiction of the ALUC; and, 2) to safeguard the general welfare of inhabitants within the vicinity of the airports, and the public in general. The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans address compatibility between airport operations and future land uses that surround them by providing policies and criteria for aircraft overflight, safety, and airspace protection concerns to minimize the public's exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards within the airport influence areas for each airport over a 20 year horizon. Since the ALUC does not have land use authority, the City implements the compatibility plan through land use plans, development regulations, and zone ordinances.

State law requires the City as an affected local jurisdiction in the environs of airports to submit its General Plan and subsequent amendments to the ALUC for a consistency determination prior to adoption. Once submitted, the ALUC will determine if the General Plan is consistent. If the ALUC determines that the General Plan is inconsistent, the City can modify its general plan and applicable land use plans (community plan, precise plans and specific plan) and zoning ordinances to make them consistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans or to take the steps necessary to overrule the ALUC. At the same time, when an action is proposed to amend or update a land use plan, airport plan, development regulation, and zoning ordinance within an airport influence area, the City is required to submit these actions to the ALUC for a consistency determination prior to adoption of the action. When the ALUC amends or updates a compatibility plan, the state law requires the City to submit the General Plan and applicable land use plans that are within an airport influence area to the ALUC within 180 days for a consistency determination.

**Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Study** – The federal government requires that the military develop AICUZ studies for military air installations. An AICUZ study establishes land use strategies and noise and safety recommendations to prevent the encroachment of incompatible land use from degrading the operational capability of military air installations. In 2005, the Marine Corps published an updated AICUZ study for MCAS Miramar. The Navy is in the process of updating the AICUZ studies for Naval Air Station North Island and Naval Outlying Field Imperial Beach and anticipates publishing the AICUZ studies by mid to late 2007. State law requires that the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans be consistent with the AICUZ studies. Once published, the Airport Authority, acting as ALUC, will address the AICUZ study strategies and recommendations as part the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans update for military installations within the county.

**San Diego Unified Port District Port Master Plan** – The Port of San Diego is a special government entity, created in 1963 by an act of the California legislature in order to manage San Diego Harbor, and administer the public lands along San Diego Bay. The port master plan was adopted and certified by the Coastal Commission 1981 and was last amended in 2004. The master plan provides the official planning policies, consistent with a general statewide purpose, for the physical development of the tide and submerged lands conveyed and granted in trust to the San Diego Unified Port District. The City of San Diego controls a small amount of the San Diego Bay tideland area, which is occupied by the City Sewer Pump Station No.2 on Harbor Drive near Lindbergh Field.

**San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)** – SANDAG serves as a forum for public decision making on regional issues such as growth, transportation, and land use in San Diego County and is comprised of representatives from each of the county’s local jurisdictions, including the City of San Diego. SANDAG programs such as the RCP and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) are pertinent to the City of San Diego’s General Plan efforts. These programs are summarized below.

**Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP)** – The RCP is the long-range planning document developed to address the region’s housing, economic, transportation, environmental, and overall quality-of-life needs. The City of San Diego’s General Plan is intended to complement this plan and encourage smart growth principles. Goals of the RCP are to establish a planning framework

and implementation actions that increase the region's sustainability and encourage smart growth. The plan seeks to achieve sustainability through planning and development that meets economic, environmental, and community needs, without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet these needs. Smart growth principles are provided to create a compact, efficient and environmentally-sensitive pattern of development that provides people with additional travel, housing and employment choices by focusing future growth away from rural areas and closer to existing and planned job centers and public facilities. The RCP contains an incentive-based approach to encourage and channel growth into existing and future urban areas and smart growth communities. Basic "smart growth" principles (SANDAG Smart Growth Definition, Principles and Designations) designed to strengthen land use and transportation integration are summarized as follows:

- Emphasize pedestrian-friendly design and mixed-use development.
- Provide a variety of travel choices (walking, biking, rail, bus, and automobile).
- Provide employment opportunities near major housing areas.
- Provide a variety of housing types.
- Create walkable neighborhoods.
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Preserve open space, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
- Provide adequate infrastructure and strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

**Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** – The current RTP, called MOBILITY 2030, serves as a blueprint to address the mobility challenges created by the San Diego region's growing population and employment. It represents a long range plan for highways, major bus routes, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), the Trolley, rail lines, streets, bicycle travel, pedestrian traffic, and goods movement. The RTP contains public policies, strategies, and investments to maintain, manage, and improve the transportation system in the San Diego region. SANDAG Directors approved the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan on March 28, 2003. The 2030 RTP provides the planning foundation for transportation improvements over nearly 30 years in the future, with periodic updates. A technical update was adopted in February 2006, and a Comprehensive 2007 RTP update is currently underway. It is anticipated that the SANDAG Board will adopt the comprehensive update in November 2007.

### *Natural Habitat Planning and Open Space Conservation Programs*

**Regional Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP)** – Jurisdictions within San Diego County have developed several multiple jurisdiction natural habitat planning and open space conservation programs in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program. The NCCP program, enacted in 1991, was established to provide long-term, regional protection of native vegetation and wildlife diversity while allowing compatible land uses and appropriate development and growth. The NCCP process was initiated to provide an alternative to "single-species" conservation efforts that were relied on prior to the NCCP Act. The shift in focus from single-species, project-by-project conservation efforts to conservation planning at the natural community level was intended to

facilitate regional protection of a range of species that inhabit a designated natural community. In terms of regional land use implications, these natural habitat planning and open space conservation programs delineate areas of biological value to the region and implement preservation strategies through public acquisition and/or development regulations. The Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP), approved in March 2003, was coordinated by the SANDAG and includes the cities of Carlsbad, Oceanside, Vista, Encinitas, Solana Beach, San Marcos and Escondido. The county of San Diego is also conducting planning efforts for the North County and East County MSCP Plans. The cities of Poway, La Mesa and El Cajon have also participated in the NCCP program. The NCCP efforts within San Diego County are illustrated on **Figure 3.8-5**. These habitat preserve planning efforts are discussed further below.

**Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP)** – The MSCP is a comprehensive habitat conservation planning program for 582,243 acres in southwestern San Diego County. The MSCP will preserve a network of habitat and open space to protect biodiversity and enhance the region’s quality of life. The MSCP will also provide an economic benefit by reducing constraints on future development and decreasing the costs of compliance with federal and state natural resource laws. The City of San Diego is one of 11 jurisdictions within the MSCP study area. The City has adopted a subarea plan and implementing agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CDFG.

The adoption of the MSCP by the City of San Diego in March 1996 satisfied the mitigation requirement of the City’s Clean Water Program (adopted in 1991). The preparation of the MSCP was a joint effort of the City of San Diego, member agencies, state and federal wildlife agencies, and citizen groups. The program addressed the wastewater facilities needs and improvements for the service area of the Metropolitan Sewerage System that included the City of San Diego as well as adjoining jurisdictions. The biological resource mitigation resulted from the provision of wastewater treatment capacity to accommodate current and projected growth in the southwestern portion of San Diego County. The City of San Diego implemented the MSCP, prepared a MSCP Subarea Plan and established the MHPA as a planned habitat preserve for sensitive biological resources. The MHPA is currently being assembled through the preservation of public lands, public acquisition of private lands from willing sellers, and mitigation for development projects. Other participating jurisdictions and special districts prepared separate subarea plans for their portion of the planned habitat preserve based on biological, economic, ownership and land use criteria (City of San Diego 1996). The status of the subarea plans and assembly of the preserve for each of the jurisdictions are described below.

*City of San Diego MSCP/MHPA* – The City of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan (City of San Diego 1997) has been prepared pursuant to the overall MSCP guidelines to address habitat conservation goals within the City boundaries. The City MHPA delineates 52,727 acres of core biological resource areas and corridors targeted for conservation. The City MSCP Subarea Plan also includes a Framework Management Plan and Specific Management Policies and Directives for management of resources within the MHPA.

In accordance with the approved MSCP implementing agreement between the participating jurisdictions and the wildlife agencies, UWFWS and CDFG, each jurisdiction must provide annual reporting on the status of the planned habitat preserve assembly. As of June, 2006, the

City of San Diego had conserved a total of 33,113 acres (or 62.8 percent) of the planned 52,727-acre goal. Approximately 15,341 acres of the remaining 19,614 acres are obligated as open space in association with public open space referred to as “cornerstone lands” and open space approved as a part of approved private projects that has not yet been placed in a conservation easement or dedicated to the City. The remaining 4,273 acres (8 percent) of open space required to assemble the preserve will be acquired through future private conservation and public acquisition of open space. Within the City of San Diego, preservation efforts are focused on assembling the regional preserve, or MHPA, which includes large, contiguous, biologically significant areas and associated corridors. These areas are found throughout the City, with large, core areas near the northern, eastern and southern jurisdictional boundaries; however, the MHPA also includes north-south and east-west corridors in the heart of the City (e.g., San Diego River) as well as urban canyons and parks. Plans for acquisition of the approximately 4,273 acres of privately-owned open space were prioritized by the City Council in April 2000, and have resulted in the purchase of over 1,625 acres in areas such as Montana Mirador, Del Mar Mesa, East Elliott and Otay Mesa. The preserve for the City of San Diego's MSCP Subarea Plan was developed simultaneously with preserves for other MSCP Subareas to create a regional system of core biological resource areas and corridor linkages.

### ***County of San Diego MSCP***

The county of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan covers approximately 242,379 acres. The Subarea is divided into three segments: 1) the Lake Hodges Segment in the northern portion of the county; 2) the Metro-Lakeside Jamul segment that covers 56,949 acres in the eastern portion of the county and; 3) the South County Segment. As of January 2006, a total of 76,747.8 acres have been preserved and 8,323 impacted through development within the county of San Diego portion of the MSCP. The preservation of 76,747.8 acres represents approximately 78 percent of the 98,379-acre goal within the county Subarea.

### ***City of Chula Vista MSCP***

The city of Chula Vista Subarea Plan consists of 33,365 acres. The city of Chula Vista Subarea Plan was approved by the Chula Vista City Council in May 2003, and was approved by the UFWFS and CDFG in January 2005. Chula Vista's annual report of habitat gains and losses state that 90.7 acres were impacted and a cumulative total of 2,658.3 acres, approximately 8 percent, have been preserved as permanent open space.



### ***Other MSCP Jurisdictions***

For the remaining jurisdictions participating in the MSCP, subarea plans are in draft form and have not yet been approved by the USFWS and CDFG. The cities of Del Mar and Coronado have prepared draft Subarea Plans. The city of Coronado MSCP subarea plan addresses coastal biological communities along the Silver Strand. The primary concern addressed by the Del Mar MSCP Subarea Plan is the southern portion of the San Dieguito Lagoon.

The city of Santee has revised its draft MSCP Subarea Plan to address comments by the USFWS and the CDFG, and is currently proposing to encompass approximately 10,000 acres, of which 57 percent is developed and 43 percent is undeveloped. A previous draft of the plan sought to conserve approximately 2,300 acres.

### **3.8.2 Thresholds of Significance**

A significant impact could occur if implementation of the General Plan:

- Conflicts with any adopted environmental plans, including applicable habitat conservation plans;
- Conflicts with the environmental goals of adopted community plans, land use designations or any other applicable land use plans, policies or regulations of state or federal agencies with jurisdiction over the City;
- Results in land uses that are not compatible with any applicable Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans;
- Physically divides an established community; or
- Creates substantial incompatibilities between adjacent land uses.

### **3.8.3 Impact Analysis**

***Could implementation of the proposed General Plan conflict with any adopted environmental plans, including applicable habitat conservation plans?***

The Draft General Plan calls for future growth to be focused into mixed-use activity centers that are linked to the regional transit system. Implementation of the Plan would result in infill and redevelopment occurring in selected built areas, which would be identified through the community plan update/amendment process. The Draft General Plan would also guide the development of remaining developable vacant land.

The goal of the MSCP is to achieve a sustainable balance between species preservation and smart growth by identifying areas for habitat/species protection (lands within the MHPA) and areas for development (lands outside the MHPA). The City's MSCP designates areas suitable for development and areas proposed for conservation (MHPA). A key aspect of the Draft General Plan village location criteria is avoiding adjacency concerns with the MHPA. However, in the event that future growth is proposed within the MHPA, the MSCP Plan contains a provision that requires additional lands be added to the MHPA that have an equal or better biological value than those lands removed for development. Any modification to the adopted

subarea plan would be subject to oversight by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and would require environmental review and public comment pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Draft General Plan is also consistent with the MHPA Land Use Adjacency Guidelines relating to drainage, toxics, lighting, noise, barriers, invasives and brush management, as identified in the MSCP Subarea Plan.

Additionally, the Draft General Plan contains the following policies to guide the conservation of habitat, wildlife, natural open space, and natural drainage resources in a manner consistent with existing environmental plans.

1. Utilize Environmental Growth Funds to pursue funding for the acquisition and management of the MHPA and other important community open space lands.
2. Support the preservation of rural lands and open spaces throughout the region.
3. Protect urban canyons and other important community open spaces that have been designated in community plans for the many conservation benefits they offer locally and regionally as part of a collective citywide open space system.
4. Minimize or avoid impact to canyons and other environmentally sensitive lands by relocating sewer infrastructure out of these areas where possible, minimizing construction of new sewer access roads into these areas, and redirection of sewers away from canyons and other environmentally sensitive lands.
5. Encourage the removal of invasive plant species and the planting of native plants near open space preserves.
6. Pursue formal dedication of existing and future open space areas throughout the City especially in core biological resource areas of the City's adopted MSCP Subarea Plan.
7. Require sensitive design, construction, relocation, and maintenance of trails to optimize public access and resource conservation.
8. Apply the appropriate zoning and Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) regulations to limit development of floodplains, sensitive biological areas including wetlands, steep hillsides, canyons and coastal lands.
9. Manage watersheds and regulate floodplains to reduce disruption of natural systems, including the flow of sand to the beaches.
10. Limit grading and alterations of steep hillsides, cliffs and shoreline to prevent increased erosion and landform impacts.
11. Limit and control runoff, sedimentation, and erosion both during and after construction activity

The proposed policies outlined above would be consistent with the overarching MSCP goal to maintain and enhance biological diversity in the region and conserve viable populations of endangered, threatened, and key sensitive species and their habitats, while enabling economic growth in the region.

Because the Draft General Plan contains extensive policies protecting natural resources and existing provisions in the MSCP require that any modifications to the plan result in equal or

better biological values, the Draft General Plan is not anticipated to result in any significant direct or indirect impacts on environmental or habitat conservation plans. Therefore, no significant impacts associated with this issue are expected to occur.

***Could implementation of the proposed General Plan conflict with the environmental goals of adopted community plans, land use designations or any other applicable land use plans, policies or regulations of state or federal agencies with jurisdiction over the City?***

The Draft General Plan provides a citywide growth strategy and guidance for future development in the City of San Diego. With limited developable vacant land, the draft General Plan focuses future growth into mixed-use activity centers that are linked to the regional transit system. Implementation of the draft General Plan would result in infill and redevelopment occurring in selected built areas (areas would be identified through the community plan update/amendment process). The draft General Plan would also guide the development of remaining developable vacant land.

In addition to the policies of the Draft General Plan, the City of San Diego also has many programs, permit processes, and regulations in place to guide development, as described in **Section 3.8.1**, Regulatory Framework.

An inconsistency with an adopted plan is not by itself a significant impact. The inconsistency must relate to a physical environmental impact to be considered significant under CEQA. Although no specific projects or actions have been identified with the Draft General Plan that would result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment, future actions and developments are anticipated that could result in conflicts with other adopted plans in the following areas:

- **Environmental Policies** - Community plans have a broad range of environmental policies that address or emphasize environmental goals to varying degrees, depending on the community's natural setting and resources, the legislative framework that was in place at the time of plan preparation, and the need to address community-specific issues. The General Plan addresses topics that are covered in many community plans including: open space and landform preservation, coastal resources, water resources, urban runoff, air quality, biological diversity, wetlands, energy independence, urban forestry, mineral production, agricultural resources, and environmental education. The General Plan contains the most comprehensive and up-to-date environmental policies of the City of San Diego and in most cases would be consistent with, and enhance community environmental goals. In addition, some community plans contain detailed site-specific guidelines to protect community environmental resources. However, in other communities, community plan amendments/updates will be needed to address current environmental issues and refine and apply broad citywide environmental goals.
- **Land Use Designations** - The Draft General Plan incorporates the adopted Strategic Framework Element and the City of Villages growth strategy into the Land Use and Community Planning Element. Implementation of the General Plan would require that some of the community plans within the City be amended to identify future areas suitable for village development. In addition, community plans would provide site specific

recommendations on how or where to implement citywide policies. Examples of Draft General Plan policies to be refined at the community level include: provision of housing at various densities, location of open space areas, local street system connectivity, location of public facilities and parks, location of public spaces, and street tree master plans, among others.

Some community plans already identify areas suitable for compact, walkable, transit-oriented, or pedestrian-oriented development. For example, the Mid-City Communities, Uptown, and Greater North Park community plans encourage intensification along transit corridors and nodes, the Mission Valley Community Plan calls for a series of mixed-use activity centers linked by the trolley line, and the Pacific Beach Community Plan calls out Transit-Oriented Development Opportunity Areas. Because other community plans do not address or encourage mixed use development, the community plans would need to be amended to effectively implement the proposed General Plan.

- Coastal Zone - Community plans and implementing zones are also the vehicles used by the City to meet state Coastal Act requirements. Since implementation of the General Plan may require community plan amendments as stated above, and some of the City's community planning areas are wholly or partially within the Coastal Zone, there is also a potential need for future amendments to the City's Local Coastal Program (LCP) land use plan. While the draft General Plan policies are consistent with the Coastal Act policies and do not require amendments to the City's LCP land use plan at this time, there is a potential that future actions could result in the need for LCP amendments.
- Other Agencies - With respect to other agencies/jurisdictions that have land use authority on lands adjacent to City of San Diego boundaries, implementation of the Draft General Plan will not result in substantial conflict with the general/master plans of those agencies, since the General Plan is intended to guide development only within the City of San Diego. Jurisdictions located adjacent to areas where land use plan updates and amendments occur are included in the plan update review process and allowed to comment on the proposed land use plans including land use designations and circulation patterns.

The Draft General Plan and the implementation of existing regulations and programs would help to avoid and mitigate these potential impacts. For example, the City's Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) regulations are designed to help assure that development occurs in a manner that protects the overall quality of the resources, encourages a sensitive form of development, retains biodiversity and interconnected habitats, maximizes physical and visual public access to and along the shoreline, and reduces hazards due to flooding. Coastal Development Permits and Site Development Permits address additional policy and regulatory objectives pertaining to plan consistency and resource protection. In general, the development process helps minimize potential conflicts between environmental and land use goals that could occur at the site-specific project level by providing a means for addressing and correcting conflicts. In addition, the City of San Diego has a process for community plan amendments. In order to amend a community plan, a finding must be made that it is consistent with the goals and policies of the City's adopted General Plan.

To implement the General Plan, amendments and updates to community plans are needed. To help ensure that the City's community plans are consistent with the General Plan, and that they serve as an effective means to implement citywide environmental policies a Community Plans update program is being established. Likewise, as community plans are updated it is anticipated that the process will apply Land Development Code regulations to achieve the desired community plan land use, design, and public benefits.

Until those updates occur, there may be conflicts with respect to the extent to which General Plan policies are implemented. However, discretionary review of public and private projects will evaluate whether proposed projects implement specified land use, density/intensity, design guidelines, Airport/Land Use Compatibility Plans, and other General Plan and community plan policies including open space preservation, community identity, mobility, and the timing, phasing, and provision of public facilities and ensure that they do not adversely affect the General Plan and community plans. The General Plan provides the framework to guide community plan amendments, updates and projects under discretionary review. The adopted community plans have been and will remain the authority for land use, density and site specific recommendations. Where community plans are silent on policy issues, the General Plan policies will apply. There may be a situation where a community plan does not implement the General Plan to the maximum extent possible, however, it is anticipated that competing goals and policies can be resolved through discretionary review. According to the State of California 2003 General Plan Guidelines a general rule for determining whether "an action, program, or project is consistent with the general plan [is] if, considering all its aspects, it will further the objectives and policies of the general plan and not obstruct their attainment." The discretionary review process allows staff and decision makers to balance competing goals and policies within adopted plans to achieve the overall policy objectives and make the permit findings for consistency with the general plan. Review of development will also be subject to Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations which are applied through the permit review process to reduce construction impacts on sensitive lands.

Implementation of the above mentioned Draft General Plan policies, future community plan updates and future compliance with established development standards would serve to reduce impacts to a degree, but cannot guarantee that all future project level impacts will be avoided or mitigated to a level less than significant. Because the extent of these plan amendments, development regulations, and future development projects are unknown at this time, the degree of impact and applicability, feasibility, and success of these measures can not be accurately predicted for each specific project at this time. Therefore, the program level environmental impacts related to General Plan conflicts with other adopted plans are considered significant and unavoidable.

***Could implementation of the proposed General Plan result in land uses that are not compatible with any applicable Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans?***

For the General Plan to be considered consistent with an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, it must do both of the following: 1) it must not have any direct conflicts with the Compatibility Plan; and, 2) it must contain criteria and/or provisions for evaluation of proposed land use development situated within the boundaries of the Compatibility Plan. Direct conflicts occur

with respect to General Plan land use designations, intensities or densities, which the ALUC has determined incompatible in proximity to an airport. If conflicts exist, the elimination of these conflicts may require reducing or shifting allowable residential densities or non-residential intensities to different locations around the airport or other areas of the City to ensure consistency with the Compatibility Plan policies and criteria. Only future proposed land uses are affected; the ALUC has no authority over existing land uses even if those uses do not conform to the adopted compatibility policies and criteria. The second requirement addresses criteria for evaluating other compatibility factors such as noise insulation, notification, and aviation easement requirements.

The policies and criteria in the General Plan are consistent with the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans that affect land use within the City. In addressing the first criteria, the Draft General Plan does not involve modifications to land use designations, intensities or densities. The community plans, precise plans, and specific plans contain the adopted land use designations and residential densities for the City and do not contain any direct land use conflict for future uses with the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. The Draft General Plan contains policy language supporting the compatibility between land use plans and the ALUCPs. However, future developments projects could be submitted to the City that may require amendments to the community plans. Amendments to the community plans could result in potential incompatibilities with an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The City will submit the Draft General Plan, prior to adoption, to the ALUC for a consistency determination as required by state law. If upon the ALUC review, it determines that inconsistency does exist, the City will take the appropriate steps to address the inconsistencies or overrule the ALUC determination. The above process is intended to address inconsistencies in plans prior to adoption. However, there is a mechanism for the City to adopt plans that are inconsistent with Compatibility Plans. Under state law, the City Council may overrule the ALUC determination by a two-thirds vote if it makes specific findings that the proposed action is consistent with the purposes of protecting public health, safety, and welfare, minimizing the public's exposure to excessive noise, and minimizing safety hazards within areas surrounding the airport.

An inconsistency with a plan is not by itself a significant impact. The inconsistency must relate to a physical impact on the environment considered significant under CEQA. If it becomes necessary to adopt a plan that is inconsistent and overrule the ALUC determination and the inconsistency results in physical impacts, there may be significant and unavoidable impacts associated with this inconsistency.

Since no specific development project is proposed at this time, no project-level mitigation can be developed at this time to address potential environmental impacts. Future environmental analysis would be required for any such future action or project; identification of project-specific level mitigation measures would be determined at that time. Because the degree of impact and applicability, feasibility, and success of these measures can not be accurately predicted for each specific project at this time, the program level impact related to General Plan conflicts with Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans are considered significant and unavoidable.

In addressing the second criteria, the Draft General Plan does contain policies for evaluating airport land use compatibility. For example, the Noise Element contains land use-noise compatibility guidelines and related policies for noise insulation and the Land Use Element contains policies addressing structure heights for uses in areas where proposed development could be an airspace obstruction or hazard and aviation easements. Discretionary review of public and private projects will evaluate whether proposed projects implement specified land use, density/intensity, design guidelines, Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans, and other General Plan and community plan policies to ensure that they do not adversely affect the General Plan and community plans.

The City implements the adopted ALUCPs with the Airport Environs Overlay Zone (AEOZ). The AEOZ boundaries cover less area than the boundaries of the airport influence area, which could allow the development of future projects that could pose a potentially significant impact outside of the AEOZ boundaries, but within the airport influence area. As a mitigation measure, the City will continue to submit discretionary projects within the airport influence area for each airport in the City with an adopted ALUCP to the ALUC for consistency determinations up until the time when the ALUC adopts the updated ALUCPs and subsequently determines that the City's affected land use plans, development regulations, and zoning ordinances are consistent with the ALUCPs.

Implementation of the above mentioned Draft General Plan policies and compliance with established development standards would serve to reduce impacts to a degree, but cannot guarantee that all future project level impacts will be avoided or mitigated to a level less than significant. Since no specific development project is proposed at this time, no project-level mitigation can be developed at this time to address potential environmental impacts. Environmental analysis would be required for any such future action or project; identification of project-specific level mitigation measures would be determined at that time. Because the degree of impact and applicability, feasibility, and success of these measures can not be accurately predicted for each specific project at this time, the program level impact related to General Plan conflicts with Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans are considered significant and unavoidable.

***Could implementation of the proposed General Plan physically divide an established community?***

As stated above, the Draft General Plan focuses future growth into mixed-use activity centers that are linked to the regional transit system. As this growth occurs, future infrastructure and development projects will be evaluated based on their conformance with the updated General Plan and the appropriate community plan. The draft General Plan contains policies that emphasize increasing connectivity between and within communities that may reduce impacts that could physically divide established communities. There have been instances in the City's past where major road or freeway construction has physically divided established communities. The Draft General Plan has policies calling for the sensitive design of roads and the development of a multimodal transportation system that may minimize the need for new or wider roads that could potential divide established communities. Examples of relevant policies include:

- Design an interconnected street network within and between communities, which includes pedestrian and bicycle access, while minimizing landform and community character impacts.
- Where possible, design or redesign the street network, so that wide arterial streets do not form barriers to pedestrian traffic and community cohesiveness.
- Locate and design new streets and freeways and, to the extent practicable, improve existing facilities to respect the natural environment, scenic character, and community character of the area traversed; and meet safety standards.
- Use open space and landscape to define and link communities.
- Link villages, public attractions, canyons, open space, and other destinations together by connecting them with trail systems, bikeways, landscaped boulevards, formalized parks, and/or natural open space, as appropriate.
- Preserve and encourage preservation of physical connectivity and access to open space.
- Design or retrofit street systems to achieve high levels of connectivity within the neighborhood street network that link individual subdivisions/projects to each other and the community.
- Design or retrofit streets to improve walkability, strengthen connectivity, and enhance community identity.

In addition to Draft General Plan policies, the City of San Diego's Street Design Manual (2002) contains guidelines for the physical design of streets that consider community character and the needs of all users of the public right-of-way. The manual includes provisions for street trees, traffic calming and pedestrian design guidelines, and addresses how to create streets that are important public places. The Street Design Manual guidelines apply to newly developing areas and as appropriate to older areas undergoing redevelopment construction and whenever improvements are made to existing facilities.

While the policies and guidelines described above are designed to minimize future impacts to community cohesiveness, private development projects, as well as public facilities (i.e., roads, transit lines, utilities), that may occur subsequent to General Plan adoption may have impacts that are unknown at this time. As part of the community plan update process the transportation network will be studied to plan and create a balanced network. Implementation of the above mentioned Draft General Plan policies, the community plan update process and compliance with established development standards would serve to reduce impacts to a degree, but cannot guarantee that all future project level impacts will be avoided or mitigated to a level less than significant. Because the degree of impact and applicability, feasibility, and success of these measures can not be accurately predicted for each specific project at this time, the program level impacts related to physically dividing communities are considered significant and unavoidable.

***Could implementation of the proposed General Plan create substantial incompatibilities between adjacent land uses?***

As the majority of the City is developed, infill development and redevelopment will play an increasingly significant role in providing needed housing, jobs, and services. Guidance for how this development should occur is provided by the City of Villages strategy to focus growth into mixed use activity centers, and through additional policies that address land use compatibility



and urban design. The Draft General Plan supports a greater mixing of land uses as a way to reduce commute distances and to make it possible for people to access a wide variety of goods and services on foot. However, while a greater mixing of land uses may have environmental benefits related to air quality, traffic, and the provision of public facilities (see **EIR Sections 3.2 Air Quality, 3.15 Transportation and 3.13 Public Services and Facilities**), mixed-use projects may also result in environmental impacts related to noise, lighting, and odors due to mixed-use projects such as residential/night club/restaurant; noise and air quality impacts due to residential proximity to transit corridors and streets; and possible noise, facilities, and public health impacts due to the mixing of employment/industrial/residential uses.

Draft General Plan policies designed to minimize the potential for land use incompatibilities generally relate to mixed use village development, residential/industrial land use issues, and agriculture/mining adjacency issues. The following policies address potential land use incompatibility impacts to a degree. However, since no specific development project is proposed at this time, no project-level mitigation can be developed at this time to address potential environmental impacts.

### **Mixed-Use Village Development**

Draft General Plan policies related to commercial and commercial/mixed-use village development include:

- Identify sites suitable for mixed-use village development that will complement the existing community fabric or help achieve desired community character, with input from recognized community planning groups and the public-at-large;
- Recognize that various villages may serve specific functions in the community and City; some villages may have an employment orientation, while others may be major shopping destinations, or primarily residential in nature;
- Determine at the community plan level where commercial uses should be intensified within villages and other areas served by transit, and where commercial uses should be limited or converted to other uses;
- Plan for and develop mixed-use projects where a site or sites are developed in an integrated, compatible, and comprehensively planned manner involving two or more land uses, and,
- Provide standards that address the particular design issues related to mixed-use projects, such as parking, noise attenuation and security measures.

### **Industrial/Residential Land Use**

The Draft General Plan Economic Prosperity Element calls for the preservation of prime industrial lands for base sector employment uses, while encouraging a greater mix of employment/residential uses in village centers and certain types of employment center areas not characterized by base sector uses. Base-sector industries are defined as industrial uses which drive economic prosperity by importing wealth to the local or regional economy through the production of goods and the development of intellectual products and processes which are exported to national or international markets. Collocation occurs when there is the geographic

integration of residential development into industrial uses, or when residential is proposed adjacent to industrial uses. The Draft General Plan proposes a collocation policy that would limit collocation in an effort to maintain and protect lands for base-sector industrial uses.

According to SANDAG, the San Diego region has adequate long term supply of employment land, but the City of San Diego does not. The Draft General Plan has goals and policies designed to protect and preserve the City's supply of land available to base-sector industrial uses. The Draft General Plan identifies prime industrial lands as areas that support base sector activities, such as warehouse distribution, heavy or light manufacturing, and research and development uses. Identification of prime industrial lands is based on a combination of six characteristics: it is designated industrial in the community plan, it has restrictive industrial zoning, it is feasible for industrial use from a market perspective, it is predominately developed with industrial structures, it is free from non-industrial encroachment, and it is in proximity to resources of extraordinary value. The Draft General Plan identifies these areas as a part of even larger areas that provide a significant benefit to the regional economy, and meet General Plan goals and objectives to encourage a strong economic base. The identification of prime industrial land does not affect existing land use designations or zoning.

The policies in the Draft General Plan direct that a number of factors be considered in a community plan amendment request that proposes land use changes from industrial to residential or commercial uses. Currently, a project involving a residential use in an industrial designation, must consider whether the project would have "no adverse impacts" to the General Plan. The policies in the Draft General Plan would additionally require that the community/general plan amendment analyze the regional significance of the parcel in question, and that the ability to process certain discretionary permits (such as Conditional Use Permits, for public assembly and sensitive receptor uses in industrial designations) be limited.

The Conversion/Collocation Suitability Factors (Appendix C of the Draft General Plan) address where residential and employment uses may be appropriately mixed. These factors include area character, transit availability, impacts on prime industrial, significant residential components, residential support facilities, airport land use compatibility, public health, public facilities and adequate separation of uses which includes a maximum 1,000-foot distance separation between industrial and residential properties or other sensitive receptor land uses with regard to hazardous or toxic air contaminants or hazardous or toxic substances. Sensitive receptors are described in the Draft General Plan as "land uses including residential, schools, child care centers, acute care hospitals, and long term care facilities." These factors are to be used during discretionary project review, plan amendments and plan updates. Conversion/Collocation Suitability Factors would not be reviewed at the ministerial level since sensitive receptor uses locating in industrial areas require a higher level of review. Uses which are not sensitive receptor land uses, such as most commercial and business offices, retail uses, parking, open space, and public rights-of-way can locate between the properties within the separation area.

For non-industrial properties to be redesignated for industrial uses, the Draft General Plan calls for the City to evaluate the extent to which the proposed designation and subsequent industrial development would: accommodate the expansion of existing industrial uses to facilitate their retention in the area in which they are located; not intrude into existing residential neighborhoods

or disrupt existing commercial activities and other uses; mitigate any environmental impacts (traffic, noise, lighting, air pollution, and odor) to adjacent land; and be adequately served by existing and planned infrastructure. The menu of community plan land use designations also specifies a new designation, Business Park/Residential. While many non-conforming residential uses are located in industrially-designated areas, this designation would allow collocating these uses subject to use regulations and development standards in the implementing zone. As part of community plan updates, implementation of new base zone use packages or modification to existing zones, designed to provide new mixed-use zone categories will also address issues to avoid incompatible permitted uses within Industrial and Commercial zones. Existing and future regulations will also provide development standards aimed at reducing land use incompatibilities. As part of the community plan updated process, opportunities for employment uses, as well as areas appropriate for locating workforce-housing opportunities near job centers will be identified. Collocation/Conversion Suitability Factors will be used to analyze compatibility of site specific proposals.

### **Agricultural and Mining Lands**

The Draft General Plan includes policies designed to minimize conflicts between uses, and to avoid impacts to agricultural and mining lands. The draft General Plan provides policy direction for agricultural or mining lands. Because the draft General Plan directs growth into urbanized areas that are already identified as suitable for urban development, conflicts with agricultural or mining lands are not anticipated. Relevant policies in the Conservation Element include: limit retail activity in agriculturally-designated areas to uses that are reasonably related to agriculture (e.g., sale of locally grown farm products); permit new or expanding mining operations within the MHPA in accordance with MSCP policies and guidelines; and produce sand and gravel with minimal harm and disturbance to adjacent property and communities.

While the Draft General Plan provides policies that emphasize compatibility between uses, it relies on community plan updates and future public and private development projects to implement its policies. Private development projects as well as public facilities that occur subsequent to General Plan adoption may have impacts that are unknown at this time. Environmental analysis would be required for any such future action or project; identification of project-specific level mitigation measures would be determined at that time. Because the degree of impact and applicability, feasibility, and success of these measures can not be accurately predicted for each specific project at this time, the program level impact related to potential incompatibilities between adjacent land uses is considered significant and unavoidable.

#### **3.8.4 Mitigation Framework**

Goals, policies, and recommendations enacted by the City combined with existing regulations described above provide a framework for developing project level protection measures for future discretionary projects which may conflict with adopted plans and environmental policies; or result in incompatibilities between land uses and with applicable Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans; or physically divide established communities. The City's process for evaluation of discretionary projects includes environmental review and documentation pursuant to CEQA as well as an analysis of those projects for consistency with the goals, policies and

recommendations of the General Plan and the applicable Community Plan. In general, implementation of the above policies and compliance with established regulations would avoid or minimize significant impacts. Compliance with regulations is required of all projects and is not considered to be mitigation. However, it is possible that for certain projects, adherence to the regulations may not adequately address incompatibilities with adopted plans and polices and physically divide communities, and such projects would require additional measures to avoid or reduce significant impacts. These additional measures would be considered mitigation.

For each future discretionary project requiring mitigation (i.e., measures that go beyond what is required by existing regulations), site-specific measures will be identified that reduce significant project-level impacts to less than significant or the project level impact may remain significant and unavoidable where no feasible mitigation exists. Where mitigation is determined to be necessary and feasible, these measures will be included in a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the project. Mitigation Framework Measures (summarized below) are general measures that may be implemented to preclude impacts and may be updated, expanded and refined when applied to specific future projects based on project-specific design and changes in existing conditions, and local, state and federal laws. The Mitigation Framework includes:

- A Community Plan update program is being established to help ensure that the City's community plans are consistent with the General Plan, and that they serve as an effective means to implement citywide environmental policies and address policies related to Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. As community plans are updated it is anticipated that the process will apply Land Development Code regulations to achieve the desired community plan land use, design, and public benefits. As part of the community plan update process the transportation network will be studied to plan and create a balanced network. In addition, as part of the community plan update process, opportunities for employment uses, as well as areas appropriate for locating workforce-housing opportunities near job centers will be identified. Collocation/Conversion Suitability Factors will be used to analyze compatibility of site specific proposals.
- Implementation of new base zone use packages, designed to provide new mixed-use zone categories will also address issues to avoid incompatible permitted uses within Industrial and Commercial zones. Existing and future regulations will also provide development standards aimed at reducing land use incompatibilities.
- Future projects will be reviewed for compliance with the General Plan and applicable community plans. Prior to the approval of any entitlement, the City will evaluate whether proposed projects implement specified land use, density/intensity, design guidelines, Airport/Land Use Compatibility Plans, and other General Plan and community plan policies including open space preservation, community identity, mobility, and the timing, phasing, and provision of public facilities.
- Future projects located adjacent to County MSCP lands and County parks and preserves would require coordination with the County of San Diego to ensure adverse impacts to these resources do not occur.

### **3.8.5 Significance of Impact with Mitigation Framework**

*Environmental/Habitat Plans*

Adoption of the proposed General Plan is not anticipated to have a significant impact on any defined comprehensive resource planning areas because the proposed goals and policies have been established to reduce impacts on sensitive biological resources and to be consistent with the City's MSCP and ESL ordinance. Therefore, the proposed General Plan would not pose a significant impact associated with environmental and habitat conservation plans.

*Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans/Physically Divide Communities/Land Use Incompatibilities*

The Airport Land Use Commission determination process addresses inconsistencies between the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans and draft land use plans prior to adoption. However, there is a mechanism for the City to adopt plans that are inconsistent with Compatibility Plans. Under state law, the City Council may overrule the ALUC determination by a two-thirds vote if it makes specific findings that the proposed action is consistent with the purposes of protecting public health, safety, and welfare, minimizing the public's exposure to excessive noise, and minimizing safety hazards within areas surrounding the airport. If it becomes necessary to adopt a plan that is inconsistent and overrule the ALUC, determination there may be significant and unavoidable impacts.

Physical impacts from future development are unknown and future environmental analysis would be required for any discretionary actions needed to implement the draft General Plan. Impacts due to incompatibilities from future development are unknown and future analysis would be required for any discretionary actions needed to implement the draft General Plan. Because the degree of future impacts and applicability, feasibility, and success of future mitigation measures cannot be adequately known for each specific future project at this program level of analysis, the program-level impacts related to conflicts with goals in adopted plans; incompatible land uses; and that may physically divide established communities remains significant and unavoidable.

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