



## Introduction

The City of Santee is located in Central San Diego County about 18 miles east of downtown San Diego. Santee is bordered on the west and southwest by the City of San Diego and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, on the south by the City of El Cajon, on the north by San Diego County lands and on the east by the unincorporated communities of Lakeside and Eucalyptus Hills. The area surrounding Santee exhibits scenic undisturbed hills and ridgelines. The San Diego River flows through the central portion of the City providing another example of the rich natural history of the region that still exists today. Figure I-1, the Regional Location Map, illustrates this setting.

Easy regional access, availability of employment, good schools, a safe living environment, availability of affordably priced housing and the pleasant natural surroundings have all contributed to making



Santee a desirable place to live and do business. In fact, the population of Santee has grown from 34,000 persons in 1975 to almost 54,000 persons today.

The transition from a rural community to an urbanized one has not come without the normal problems associated with urbanization, including:

- Traffic congestion,
- Protection of natural resources (hillsides, watercourses, habitat, etc.),
- Community appearance and identity, and
- Provision of a variety of housing choices.

In order to gain local control over issues relating to the rate of development and community form and organization, the citizens of Santee voted to incorporate in December of 1980. As a relatively young city, one of the first goals was the adoption of the City's first General Plan in 1984, which set a clear direction for the future of the community.

Since that time, community leaders have carefully implemented the vision articulated in that original General Plan. The result has been a marked improvement in the quality of development, both public and private. The City has seen a variety of new quality housing built, including apartments, condominiums and move-up single family homes. The City comprehensively planned several industrial parks during the 1980's and watched them fill with employment opportunities. The City adopted a Redevelopment Project Area to eliminate blighted conditions in the City and has amended the plan over the years to ensure it continues to serve the needs of the community.





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The Town Center Specific Plan was adopted for the City's center. This plan espoused the principles of Smart Growth long before that term came into existence. The Town Center has been a great success with over one-million square feet of commercial development (including East County's first retail "power center"), and over 400 residential units, open space and City parkland developed to date. A corridor plan for Mission Gorge Road, called the Mission Gorge Road Design Standards, was adopted to address the image and function of Mission Gorge Road. The success of the plan is reflected in the improvements that have occurred for both public and private improvements along this road.



The City has also embraced principles of environmental stewardship by protecting and enhancing the San Diego River in a manner that is now the model for the rest of the County. The City's own Forester Creek Improvement Project incorporates the only segment of unlined channel along the entire creek and has been endorsed by the regulatory agencies as a prime example of urban stream restoration. The City is also in the process of preparing its plan to implement the Multiple Species Conservation Program, which will ultimately preserve over 2,600 acres of habitat in the City and will strike a reasoned balance of development and habitat preservation.



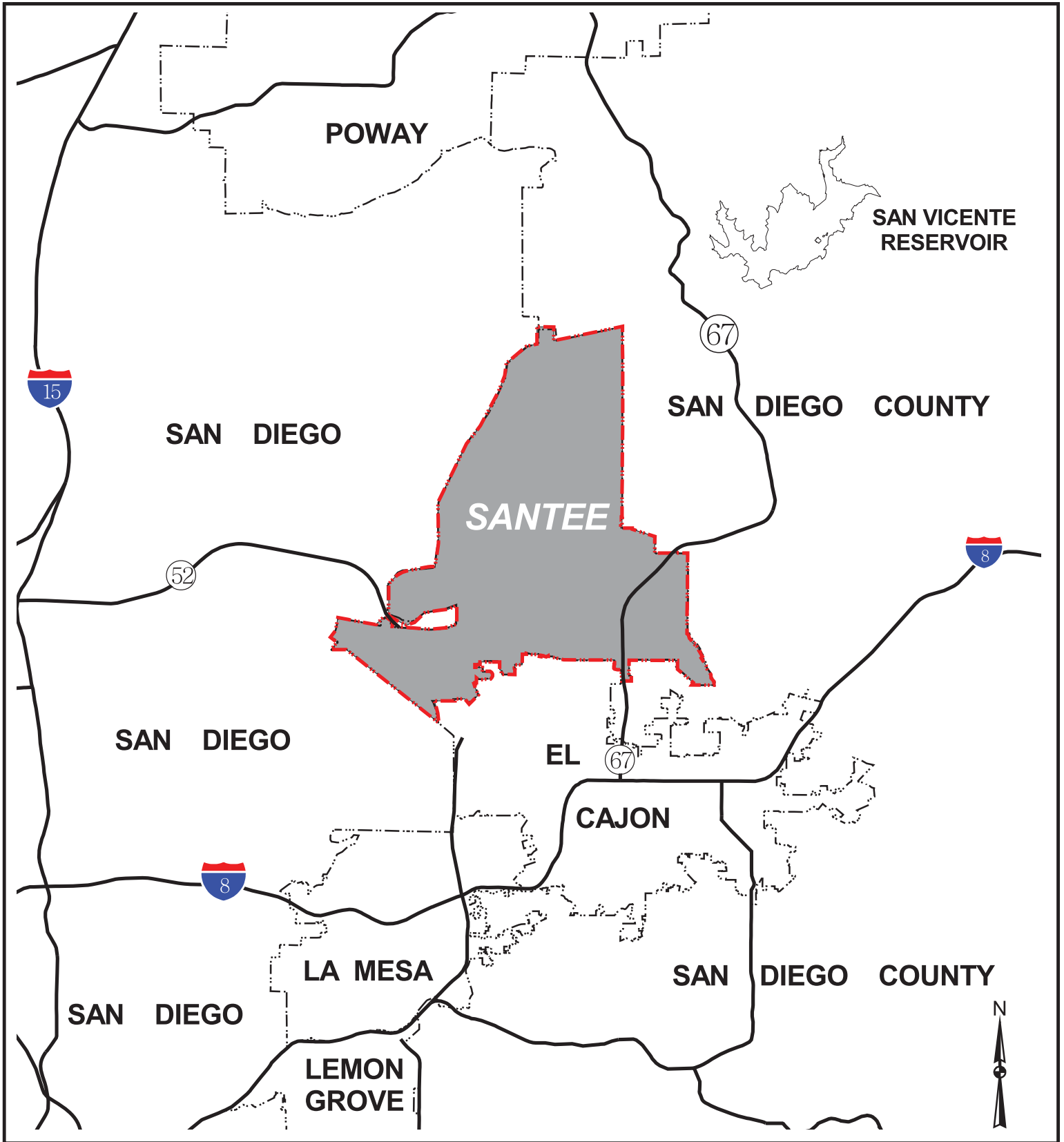
The City has expanded the park system by adding three new parks (West Hills, Shadow Hill and Santee Mini-Park) and renovating the existing parks (Mast, Woodglan Vista Big Rock). The City's newest park, the ambitious 55-acre Town Center Community Park is currently under construction and is expected to open Phase 1 in 2003.

The City has placed a premium on providing a high level of public services to its residents. The City's Fire Department continues to be one of the highest rated departments in the County and the City consistently has boasted one of the lowest crime rates in the County.

Fiscal health has been a top priority over the years, particularly in recent years when state budget problems became local budget problems with forced revenue shifts. The City has maintained healthy budget reserves over the years and the City's ratio of employees to residents is the lowest in the County.

While the City's original General Plan has served the City well over the years, it is necessary to update the Plan to reflect the changes that have occurred in the last 18 years and to refocus the community's vision for the City. This plan is intended to guide the physical development of the City through 2020.





**CITY OF SANTEE  
GENERAL PLAN**



*REGIONAL LOCATION MAP  
FIGURE 1*



**2.0 PURPOSE**

The General Plan is a statement of intent by the City as to the future development of the community. Included as part of this comprehensive statement are goals and objectives which set specific direction and commitments to action. The General Plan also provides the mechanisms to achieve desired community goals and objectives through a coordinated implementation program.

This comprehensive plan and associated implementation procedures have been developed by a thorough examination of the opportunities and constraints presented by the natural and built environments and seeks to maintain and improve the "quality of life" in the community. The General Plan is a dynamic document in that it can and should be revised/updated on a regular basis to respond to changing community goals, physical resources and social concerns.

The preparation of the General Plan also responds to requirements set forth by the State of California Government Code Section 65300 (et.seq.) which states that each "city shall adopt a comprehensive, long-term, General Plan for the physical development of the (County or) City..." Further, Government Code Section 65302 continues that, "The General Plan shall consist of a statement of development policies and shall include a diagram or diagrams and text setting forth objectives, principles, standards and plan proposals." The Government Code identifies nine required Elements of a General Plan as follows:

1. Land Use Element
2. Circulation Element
3. Housing Element
4. Conservation Element
5. Open Space Element
6. Seismic Safety Element
7. Public Safety Element
8. Noise Element
9. Scenic Highways Element

As provided for in State law, the City of Santee has chosen to consolidate several of these elements. The Public Safety and Seismic Safety Elements have become the Safety Element, the Open Space Element has been folded into a more comprehensive Conservation Element and the Scenic Highways Element has been included in the Community Enhancement Element. In addition, the General Plan includes three permissive Elements, which are equally as binding upon adoption. They are:

1. Community Enhancement Element
2. Recreation Element
3. Trails Element





## INTRODUCTION

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### 3.0 ORGANIZATION

The General Plan is divided into six major sections; they are:

- Introduction - describes the purpose and organization of the plan.
- Community Development - includes the Land Use Element, Housing Element, Circulation Element, Recreation Element, and Trails Element. This section addresses the essential development and improvement of land for public and private uses and facilities. It promotes a balance of land uses and housing opportunities, establishes a safe system of movement and public parks and recreation opportunities.
- Resource Management - includes the Conservation Element. This Element addresses the protection and wise management of Santee's wealth of natural resources. Vegetation, wildlife habitat, watercourses and floodplains, cultural sites and open space are covered.
- Public Health and Safety - includes the Noise Element and Safety Element. This section provides for the overall protection of residents from natural and man-induced hazards in the City. It covers hazards related to: seismic conditions, floods, geology and soils, noise, aircraft operations, crime and large-scale disasters.
- Community Design - includes the Community Enhancement Element. This Element sets forth measures to maintain and enhance the appearance, image and function of the City. It plays a key role in strengthening the identity of the City and provide design guidelines within design sensitive areas of the City.
- Glossary - provides a list of the terminology used in the Plan to convey a clear meaning and intent.

Each of the General Plan Elements has been organized to allow the reader to obtain desired information quickly and easily. Maps are provided to illustrate the spatial distribution of applicable policies, natural factors and socio-cultural Elements. The Element format is:

1. Introduction - includes the purpose and summary.
2. Existing Conditions - presents the data base.
3. Needs - statement of identified concerns.
4. Goal - defines the overall needs and desires for the City.
5. Objectives and Policies - establishes clear commitments and action guidelines for the City.





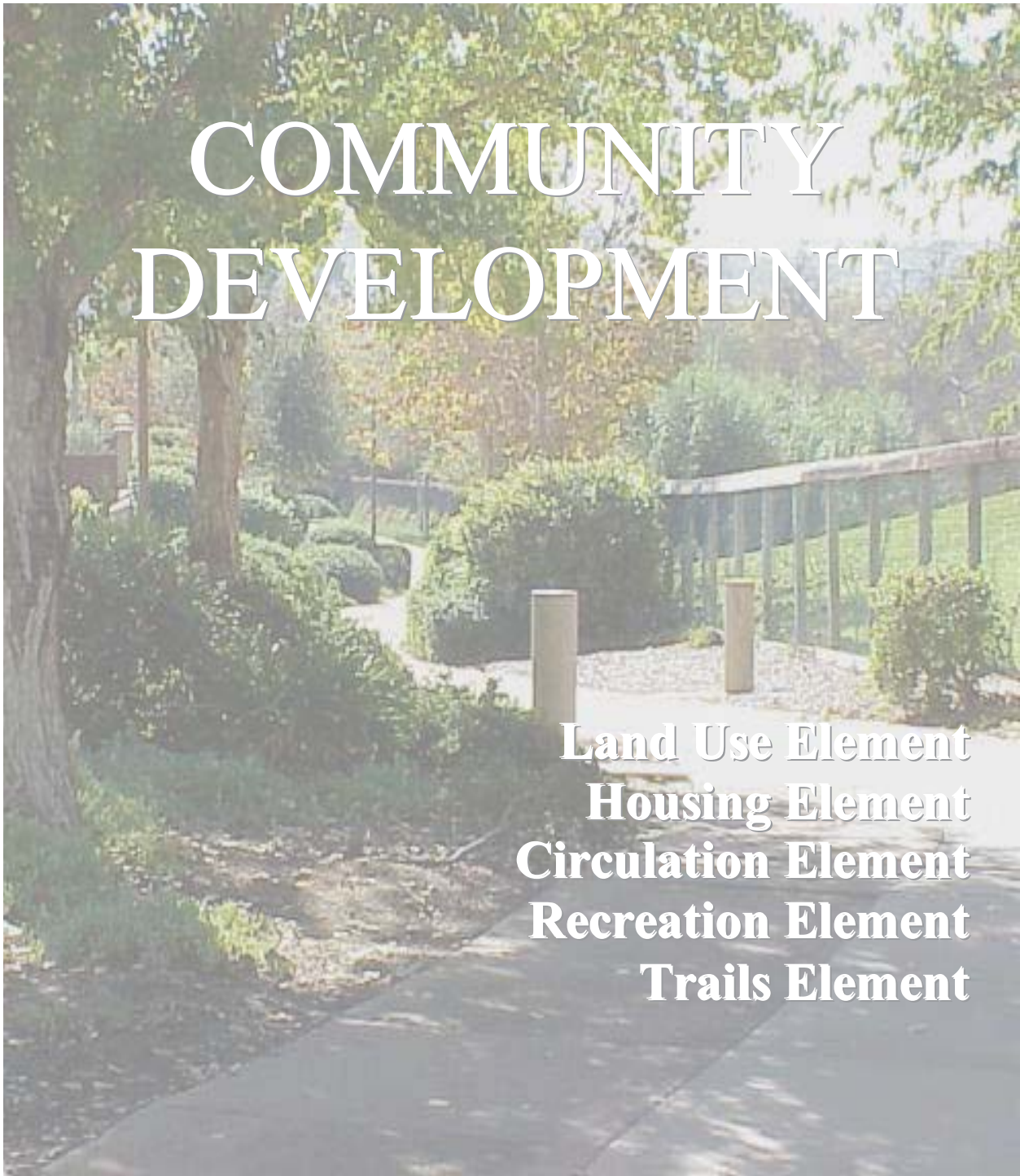
6. Implementation - sets forth a coordinated set of measures to set the General Plan into action.

It is important that the Elements are recognized and used as interrelated sections of an overall comprehensive plan. The General Plan has been prepared to be internally consistent to avoid conflicting recommendations and to provide a systematic approach to decision making.

The Technical Appendix to the General Plan has been prepared as a separate document. It contains related technical studies, and statistics upon which some of the General Plan analysis was based. In addition, a list of selected major sources used in preparing the General Plan is provided.







# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Land Use Element  
Housing Element  
Circulation Element  
Recreation Element  
Trails Element

