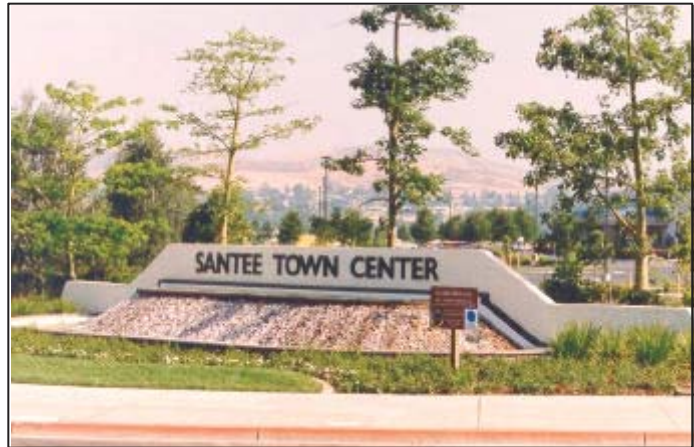




9. COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT ELEMENT

The purpose of the Community Enhancement Element is to address the interrelationships of citizens and the built environment in terms of scale, design, sense of community and well being. Furthermore, it is concerned with the essential functions of livability and quality of life within the community. In terms of identity, the Element provides a mechanism to define and strengthen Santee's identity for residents and visitors alike.



The City of Santee enjoys a beautiful natural setting and, since incorporation, the City has been committed to design excellence so that development will complement the community's environment. Although the emphasis over the past twenty years has been to ensure a higher quality of building design and site design on undeveloped properties, this commitment extends to the quality of life for the existing community as well. As such, the Community Enhancement Element also seeks to outline ample opportunities for citizens to engage in positive community activities, and to facilitate their ability to take ownership of their neighborhood and community.

The Element identifies opportunities to enhance the character and livability of Santee and provides guidelines to achieve such aims. It is the intention of this Element that a private/public dialogue be established whereby creative and innovative design solutions and revitalization programs are realized within the City.

1.0 Statutory Requirements

Section 65302 of the California Planning and Zoning Laws requires each General Plan in the State to contain seven mandatory elements. The Community Enhancement Element is a permissive element adopted by the City to address overall community design and community character issues. Although permissive, it is as equally binding as a mandatory element once adopted by the City.

2.0 Accomplishments since Adoption of the General Plan

Since the adoption of the City's first General Plan in August of 1984, the City has implemented many of the objectives in support of its goal to "integrate the natural and man made environments of Santee to achieve a pleasing, distinctive and well-organized community." Accomplishments include:





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- ◆ Implementation of innovative, balanced site planning that considers topography, compatibility with adjacent land uses, pedestrian connectivity and motorized circulation. Examples include the mixed-use Mission Creek development that includes pedestrian connections to both adjacent schools and commercial developments across the San Diego River.
- ◆ Implementation of a Code Compliance Program in 1984 that has successfully acted to enhance dilapidated and visually negative elements in the community. Between 1996 and 2002, 526 non-operational vehicles were removed from the community and an average of 850 property owners are notified annually to abate weed growth.
- ◆ Renovation of numerous commercial centers throughout the City and application of design standards for new commercial structures that incorporate the adopted Mission Gorge Road Design Standards.
- ◆ The establishment of Town Center as the focal point and activity center of the City through adoption and implementation of the Town Center Specific Plan including development of the Home Depot shopping center, Costco, WalMart, the Promenade, the Mission Creek mixed-use development, Santee Trolley Square, the San Remo subdivision and the Town Center Community Park.
- ◆ Adoption of the Amended Redevelopment Area in 2002 which added significant areas to the City's Redevelopment Plan and which will facilitate the improvement of these areas through private and public investment.
- ◆ Reduction in the number of non-conforming commercial signs along the City's major corridors. In addition, twelve (12) off-site (i.e. billboard) signs have been removed throughout the community to date.
- ◆ Implementation of streetscape design standards that includes landscaping, consolidation of driveways, and combination sidewalk and bicycle paths within Town Center as well as along Mission Gorge Road, Magnolia Avenue and Mast Boulevard.
- ◆ Since 1988, approximately 168 housing units, including mobile homes, have been rehabilitated for lower income households.
- ◆ The City has sponsored tree planting and tree giveaway projects throughout the community resulting in several thousand new trees being planted in existing neighborhoods and at local schools.
- ◆ Incorporation of water features in new development throughout Town Center in order to complement and reinforce the San Diego River as a design element.





- ◆ Establishment of two Landscape Maintenance Districts: the Town Center Landscape Maintenance District and the Santee Landscape Maintenance District. Each district is comprised of multiple zones and ensures the proper maintenance of public interest streetscape landscaping.
- ◆ Enhancement of City gateways at the corner of Mast Boulevard and West Hills Parkway, at Prospect and Magnolia Avenues, and on Mission Gorge Road (western entry) through thematic monument signage utilizing a rustic river rock theme, and landscaped backdrops.
- ◆ Creation of numerous landscape medians throughout the community for safety and beauty.
- ◆ Undergrounding of utilities along major City streets including Magnolia Avenue, Prospect Avenue, Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Street.
- ◆ Adoption of a Grading Ordinance that requires contour grading and slope re-vegetation to create a natural appearance to manufactured slopes.
- ◆ Incorporation of natural design elements such as landscaping, wood, river rock, aggregate and stone in City gateway signs, Town Center sidewalks, and building elevations (City Hall, Santee Trolley Square).
- ◆ The City is preparing a Multiple Species Conservation Plan Subarea Plan that balances development needs with habitat conservation and will ultimately protect one-fourth of the City as permanent open space.
- ◆ The City is implementing a multi-faceted plan called *SANTEE ROCS* (Santee Recreation, Open Space and Conservation System) that brings together several independent but related efforts to create a City-side system of open space, parks and trails.

3.0 Introduction

Prior to the City's incorporation in 1980, development in Santee was lightly regulated, and there was little emphasis on community design, sense of place, or application of site planning principles that promoted efficient, or attractive developments. The County's ordinance was absent design criteria, establishing primarily land use designations / zone classifications that did not address design or performance compatibility, environmental design or architectural distinction.

To address these deficiencies, the City of Santee adopted its first General Plan, and established a Development Review process for new development and redevelopment projects in 1984. A year later, the City's first Zoning Ordinance was adopted. These accomplishments laid the groundwork for the adoption of the Town Center Specific Plan in 1986 and the Mission Gorge Road Design Standards in 1987. Over the years, implementation of the design criteria in these





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plans and ordinances has protected the City's visual assets and resulted in new development that is architecturally distinctive, functional and attractive

Relationship to other Elements - The Community Enhancement Element is required to be internally consistent with the other General Plan Elements. For example, goals, policies and objectives within the Community Enhancement must be compatible with housing programs that seek to preserve older but affordable housing stock in neighborhoods (Housing Element), with programs that improve motorized and non-motorized forms of transportation (Circulation Element), with programs that address the establishment of trails, parks and open space (Conservation and Recreation Elements), and with the Land Use Element which specifies the location, type and amount of housing, commercial services, industrial uses, public facilities and parks and open space that collectively shape the City.

The quality of place and the enjoyment of the built and non-built environments are fundamental to the Community Enhancement Element. These fundamentals are common to the Conservation Element, the Open Space Element, the Recreation Element and the Trails Element. Combined, the City has adopted a plan that brings together several independent but related efforts to create a comprehensive, City-wide system of open space, parks and trails which balances and entwines the built and non-built environments referred to as Santee Recreation, Open Space and Conservation Plan (SANTEE ROCS). Additional information on this plan is contained in other elements of the General Plan.

4.0 Existing Conditions

Over the past twenty years Santee has transitioned from its rural heritage to an urbanized city. Today some areas have fully urbanized while peripheral areas still offer a rural setting. Commercial buildings and homes are lower-profile, typically two stories or less. Neighborhood stability and cohesiveness are apparent in the mature landscaping, and well-kept homes throughout the City. The City has a wealth of physical features that are opportunities for establishment of a strong community identity:

- San Diego River and other waterway corridors
- Undeveloped hillsides and ridgelines
- Town Center
- Santee Lakes and Mission Trails Regional Parks
- San Diego Trolley

Demographically, while still somewhat homogenous, Santee's population has changed over a ten-year period to become more ethnically diverse. In 2000 the City had 52,975 people. Roughly 86% of the population is Caucasian, Hispanic or Latino (10%), Black or African American (1.5%) and Asian (2.5%). Approximately 37 percent of the population is under the age of 24, another 47 percent is between the ages of 25 and 54, and those between the ages of 55 to 85 years comprises roughly 16 percent. The median age is 35 years.





4.1 Human Relations

The City’s residents constitutes a valuable resource. Making the most of this resource requires the full participation of citizens from all cultural backgrounds in all the City’s economic, educational and social endeavors toward community enhancement and quality of life. As evident in Santee, the population of East County is composed of an increasingly diverse population of people of various ethnic, racial and religious groups. In May 2001 the City established a Human Relations Advisory Board to consult with, and provide advice and assistance to the Mayor, City Council and City



Manager on methods of assuring and protecting the rights of all residents of the City to equal economic, political and educational opportunity, to equal accommodations in all business establishments within the City, and to equal service and protection by public agencies. Continued use of this Board, or a similar strategy in the future, would further the philosophy and goal of fostering positive human relations in the community. Efforts include, but are not limited to the provision of a forum for public input, conducting special studies of discrimination, developing a program for crisis intervention,

providing referrals to existing agencies assisting individuals and the preparation and distribution of educational and informational materials.

Other agencies such as the Heartland Human Relations and Fair Housing Association provide human relations services to City residents. In addition, there are active groups at both Santana and West Hills High Schools aimed at reducing discrimination and promoting tolerance and diversity within the schools and community. A Human Relations Advisory Board, or similar group, would partner with schools and law enforcement to resolve discrimination issues.

4.2 Man Made Features

Housing - As of January of 2001, there were approximately 18,475 dwelling units in the City and a population of 53,693. Newer tract housing (single-family detached) is predominant north of the San Diego River. These homes are typically located on standard subdivision 6,000 square foot or greater lots with improvements typical of urban development (curb and gutter, sidewalks, underground utilities, storm drains, etc.).



Multiple-family units (apartments, townhomes and condominiums) are located predominately along the City’s major roads such as Mission Gorge Road, Carlton Hills Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue. As is the case with the City’s single family housing stock, the more recent multiple family residential developments feature more coordinated site planning and greater amenities.



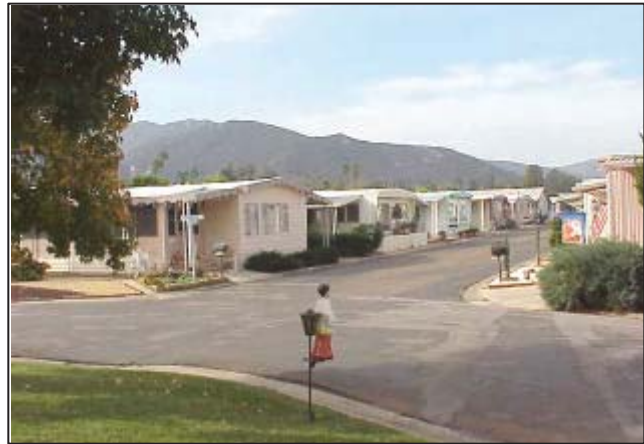


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Mobile homes comprise twelve percent (12%) of the housing stock in Santee (Census 2000). The City's mobilehome stock is located for the most part south of Mission Gorge Road, within self-contained mobile home parks. The City has not added any new mobilehome parks since the adoption of the original General Plan in 1984.

Siting and Design - The internal organization of Santee's older residential areas is not distinctive and clear delineation of neighborhoods and districts is not often apparent. This has been attributed to the rapid housing expansion that started in the mid-1950's. Strong demand led to the construction of single-family detached tract housing developments which were built not as an extension of historical settlement patterns but as an economical response to housing market forces. Consequently, residential district boundaries are defined by physical barriers that exist in the City such as State Routes 67, 52 and 125, major roads, the San Diego River, Forester Creek, Santee Lakes, and steep topography.

Mobile homes are very distinct elements of the residential development within Santee. They are located in self-contained mobile home parks that function as "micro-neighborhoods." Perimeter design treatments typically include landscaping and block walls. The site layout is typically a grid system of internal roads. Design treatment success is varied among the mobile home parks. Some provide community recreational facilities, adequate street setbacks and distinctive landscaping and others do not.



Condition - The older housing stock in the south/central part of the City exhibits the highest concentration of units in need of upgrading (1999 Citywide Housing Condition windshield survey). Mobile home parks as a group are well maintained (Condition Survey of Mobile Home Parks, dated 17, 2001, conducted by Katz Hollis), although some are now quite old.

Curbside appeal is an indicator of the level of stewardship in a neighborhood. Negative features that affect this "appeal" include inoperable vehicles, dilapidated fences and walls, front yard encroachments of temporary structures such shade awnings/canopies and weed growth on vacant lots and parkways. Additionally, slopes adjacent to streets may be neglected behind privacy fences. Slopes with public exposure, such as the north side of Mast Boulevard, can be difficult to access and maintain. The City has proactively planted and maintained trees along some of these areas located along very visible major roads.

Commerce - Commercial land uses in Santee function as activity centers for residents and visitors. Since these areas are highly visible along major streets, they play an important role in image and identity. The City's primary commercial node is Town Center, the City's 706-acre





master-planned city center. Virtually all the significant commercial and office land inventory is located within Town Center.

Large tracts of vacant land in the Town Center have been developed as a retail “power center”, anchored by big box retailers such as WalMart, Costco, and Home Depot. Santee Trolley Square added over 440,000 square feet of commercial space to the inventory in 2002-03, offering general merchandise and other comparison goods shopping and restaurants. This retailing nucleus benefits other retailers in the area. These developments differ from the City’s older commercial areas in that they exhibit coordinated site designs, including reciprocal access and parking, consistent, high quality architecture and a high level of amenities such as water fountains, plazas and enriched building materials. As an example, an amphitheater with an interactive fountain at the terminus of the Trolley line serves as a focal gathering place in the Trolley Square development.

The City’s principal east-west commercial thoroughfare is Mission Gorge Road, which is characterized in large part by older, independently developed commercial properties and retail stores on single sites where there is no anchor tenant. The principal north-south commercial street is Cuyamaca Street, characterized by independently developed commercial lots offering single destination services (banking, automobile, medical services) and products. Destinations are primarily vehicle-dependent, although Santee Trolley Square includes a significant mass transit, pedestrian and bicycle component to offer alternatives to automobile use. The trolley track and red trolleys are distinctive features of this street south of Mission Gorge Road.



Over time, Santee businesses have evolved from predominantly independent “mom & pop” stores to corporate outlets within the strip commercial developments along Mission Gorge Road (Vons, Petco, Henrys, Pep Boys, etc). Neighborhood commercial areas still retain some individual-owned businesses anchored by convenience markets/gas stations.

The neighborhood commercial nodes throughout the City provide convenience goods and personal services that meet the daily needs of the immediate neighborhood. Santee's neighborhood shopping centers are located at major intersections along Mast Boulevard, Magnolia Avenue and Carlton Hills Boulevard. The neighborhood shopping center is typically either a freestanding entity (Santana Village, Carlton Oaks Plaza) or a combination of separate convenience uses.

Siting and Design - In general, the City’s commercial centers have reasonably attractive architecture and site features and many have been renovated to incorporate unifying architectural themes, signage and landscaped features. Only a few of the City’s older centers fall short of





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creating a positive image because of uncoordinated or dated architectural design, inadequate landscaping and lack of sign control.

Strip commercial outlets, sited on lots of varying depths, exhibit a wide range of site planning characteristics with regard to setbacks, architecture, landscaping, signage and access. As a group, these commercial uses do little to promote a recognizable image and visual continuity along Mission Gorge Road, Woodside Avenue and Cuyamaca Street. This type of commercial development is typical of the City's older commercial areas.

The City adopted the Town Center Specific Plan in October of 1986, which established design standards for site planning, public area site improvements, gateway identification, pedestrian and bike paths, street furniture, and signs. Consequently and deliberately, Town Center has established a commercial identity, consistent with the Town Center Specific Plan, that sets the standard for new development. Recurring architectural elements and site features include stucco, terracotta roof tiles, tile accents, decorative railings, water features, shaded seating areas and pedestrian promenades. Additionally, reciprocal access, public seating areas and pedestrian linkages between shopping, residential and recreational uses have been established.

Recognizing the prominence of Mission Gorge Road and its role in establishing an image for Santee, in March of 1987, the City adopted the Mission Gorge Road Design Standards to establish specific design guidelines for this local scenic road. Existing architectural elements formed the basis for the creation of architectural themes for the various segments of the street. Additionally, standards were established for reciprocal access, streetscape landscaping, signage, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements. Over the past 15 years, the Mission Gorge Road Standards have promoted innovative site design and infused architectural interest on a street that was devoid of distinction



Condition - The older commercial centers located Mission Gorge Road between Magnolia Avenue and Carlton Hills Boulevard are experiencing rehabilitation and renovation, with attendant enhancement in landscaping, signage, pedestrian and vehicular access and architecture. Comprehensive sign programs for these centers have successfully reduced sign clutter and improved signage design.

Streetscape landscaping, in commercial developments constructed after incorporation, are well maintained and contribute to a positive image. Much of the streetscape landscaping in the City's commercial core is maintained through Landscape Maintenance Districts. These publicly-operated districts ensure a consistent level of maintenance on the most highly visible landscaped areas.





Industry - Santee’s industrial uses are well established along the Woodside Avenue / State Route 67 and Prospect Avenue corridors. The City’s industrial development is characterized primarily by warehousing, light manufacturing, assembly, and distribution uses. Along the Prospect Avenue corridor between Magnolia Avenue and Cuyamaca Street, industrial uses are intermixed with commercial and nonconforming residential development. In the Woodside Avenue / State Route

corridors, recent industrial development has occurred in comprehensively planned industrial parks. There are three master planned industrial parks in Santee: Wheatlands, Maderalado (adjacent to Wheatlands) and the Prospect Business parks.

Siting and Design - The Prospect Avenue industrial area offers a wide variety of building styles, lot configurations and site features east of Cuyamaca Street, and more cohesive development in an industrial park setting west of Cuyamaca Street. The Woodside Avenue/State Route 67 area exhibits a more consistent planned industrial park concept where building styles, access and landscape treatments act as unifying elements.



Condition - Many of the industrial uses on Prospect Avenue east of Cuyamaca Street were established before incorporation. Uses include contractor storage yards, automobile repair and sales, a Department of Transportation Maintenance Facility and vacant parcels within the Gillespie Field Runway Protection Zone.

Age of industrial structures is the key factor regarding present condition and appearance. The Prospect Avenue industrial corridor is characterized by a mixture of older smaller individually owned businesses and more recent industrial developments. The relatively recent construction of comprehensively planned industrial park development in the Woodside and west Prospect Avenue areas shows consistently well maintained industrial uses.

Trafficways / Streetscapes - Circulation Pattern - Mission Gorge Road establishes the basic primary east-west framework for organization and visual identity for the City and influenced the initial development areas in the City south of the San Diego River. Other major east-west streets include Mast Boulevard and Prospect Avenue. The major north-south streets that cross the San Diego River are Cuyamaca Street, Magnolia Avenue, Carlton Hills Boulevard and West Hills Parkway.

Route 67 trends north-south along the eastern portion of the City establishing a very strong visual and physical barrier between the Rattlesnake Mountain area and the rest of the City. The extension of State Route 52 from Fanita Drive eastward to State Route 67 will extend the





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regional east-west connection through the City, with freeway connections to local city streets at Mast Boulevard, Mission Gorge Road, Fanita Drive, Cuyamaca Street and Magnolia Avenue. Direct freeway to freeway ramp connections to SR125 and SR67 are planned. State Route 125 enters the City from the south and runs parallel to Fanita Drive, terminating at Mission Gorge Road.

Scale - Mission Gorge Road is a wide traffic corridor providing three lanes of service in each direction. Magnolia Avenue and Cuyamaca Street also provide regional connections to the south in addition to serving local, in-city traffic. The remaining major roads and collectors in Santee carry local traffic within and between neighborhoods. As a result, their scale is local and not regional in nature.

State Routes 67 and 125 have peripheral locations in the City. State Route 52 currently terminates at the west end of the City. The extension of State Route 52 through the remainder of the city will have a significant visual effect.

Siting and Design - State Routes 67 and 125 exhibit grade separations, with minimal interface with local streets. The design of State Route 52 that will extend from Fanita Drive to State Route 67 includes ramps for local street interface, and will be elevated from SR125 east to its terminus at SR67. It will introduce ramps, retaining walls, bridge overpasses and slopes through the southern part of the City. This alignment will not only introduce a significant visual barrier, it will also represent a physical barrier between those areas of the City north and south of the freeway.



Mission Gorge Road traverses the City at grade. It is a wide corridor with landscaped medians from its west entry to Fanita Drive, and between Town Center Parkway and Civic Center Drive. Streetscape features such as landscaping, street furniture, thematic signage and enriched paving have been added to significant stretches of this corridor as opportunities have arisen.

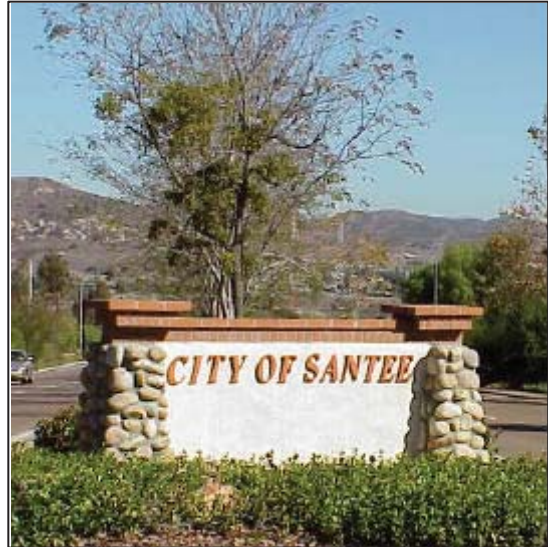
Landscaped streetscapes and pedestrian improvements have established a pedestrian friendly feeling for much of Mission Gorge Road. The older areas of Mission Gorge do not feature an inviting, pedestrian scale.

Class 1 bikeways are designated along portions of Mission Gorge Road, Town Center Parkway, Cuyamaca Street and Civic Center Drive. Given the large traffic volumes and narrow cross-section on Mission Gorge Road, bike travel is difficult along this corridor. The establishment of a combined sidewalk and bikepath within landscaped corridors provide alternative facilities for pedestrians and cyclists on Mission Gorge Road and other streets within Town Center





Major entry points to the City are provided from the west by Mission Gorge Road and from the east via State Route 67 and Woodside Avenue. The west entry along Mission Gorge Road creates a positive statement as the roadway descends into the Santee valley. The statement is one of an open, rural feeling, utilizing open space and the hillsides as a scenic backdrop. The entry from the east is off State Route 67 southbound at Woodside Avenue, where the setting is industrial or northbound at Prospect Avenue where the setting is a mix of industrial and commercial uses. Secondary entry points to the City include Fanita Drive, Cuyamaca Street and Magnolia Avenue from the south, and El Nopal from the east. As a group, these entryways are undefined. In the future, Mast Boulevard will also be a gateway from the east.



Scenic Highways - The State's Scenic Highway Program was established in 1963 to protect and enhance California's natural scenic beauty and to protect the social and economic values provided by the State's scenic resources. While scenic highways have traditionally run through open-space areas, they can include routes that pass through interesting or unique urban sites. A highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view. The City does not include any officially designated existing State Scenic Highways within its boundaries.

To pursue an official State designation for State Routes 67 and 52, the City would first adopt a scenic corridor protection program and then apply to the California Department of Transportation for scenic highway approval. State Route 52, in the vicinity of Santee, has been designated by the State as an unconstructed state highway eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway. State Route 67 is currently designated as a County Scenic Highway. State Route segments within the City limits that merit consideration for a state scenic highway designation would be State Route 67 and State Route 52 eastward from Mission Trails Regional Park to its junction with State Route 125.

Historic Structures - The Edgemoor "Polo Barn" and the Mission Dam Historic site (adjacent to the City) are two significant man-made features illustrative of the Santee community heritage. The green and white "Polo Barn" dates back to 1893 and is considered to be of significant architectural design and a design resource of the community.





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The Granite House, or James Love house, is a historic resource of local significance, located in the City's maintenance yard. It was constructed in 1934 using granite quarried from the Coyote Hill quarry. Relocation of the Granite House is necessary with the Forester Creek channel improvements. As such, its preservation either through reconstruction or use of original materials from the structure at a different location or by other symbolic means is important to the City.

The Mission Dam, in the Mission Trails Regional Park, is a registered historic site just outside the western City limits. It is a significant design resource documenting the heritage of the region and is an example of the historic uses of the San Diego River.

4.3 Natural Features

Open Space - Open space in Santee is predominantly composed by large tracts of undeveloped hillside areas (Fanita Ranch, Rattlesnake Mountain and hillsides in the southwest portion of the City), land in the San Diego River corridor and large centrally located vacant parcels in Town Center. Additional open space is provided by parkland (including that associated with school sites), and interspersed vacant parcels.

In summary, open space in Santee provides a number of community design resources:

- Panoramic hillside views and backdrops,
- Visual relief to the intensive developed areas,
- Visual and physical links to the San Diego River and its tributaries (Sycamore Creek, Forester Creek), and
- Opportunity areas for new high quality development.
- Opportunity for recreational activities that reinforce the environmental setting such as hiking trails.

The City of Santee is also a participant in the Multiple Species Conservation Program through its Subarea planning efforts. Once adopted, the City's Subarea Plan will ultimately preserve one-fourth of the total area of the City in permanent open space.

A more detailed discussion of the City's open space resources appears in the Conservation Element.

Landforms and Views - Encompassed within the landforms of Santee are the flat San Diego River valley and the gently sloping areas which transition to the steeply sloped hillsides associated with major ridgeline systems. The dramatic hillsides, ridgelines, and rock outcrops form a significant design resource.

The orientation of the San Diego River corridor creates impressive long views within Santee and to the surrounding ridgelines and mountains (including El Capitan). The elevated western entry to the City along Mission Gorge Road also affords an opportunity for scenic views along the San Diego River corridor.





The numerous topographic features of Santee and the surrounding vicinity provide distinctive views and vistas from within the developed portions of the City. This provides

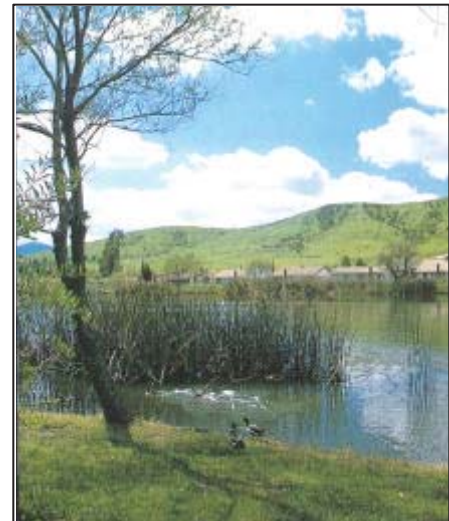


residents with scenic backdrops and visual relief from developed portions of the City. The major ridgeline and hillside systems provided by the undeveloped areas of the northern portion of the City, including the Fanita Ranch, present a large portion of these views and vistas. The Rattlesnake Mountain and Mission Trails Regional Park also provide significant views from within Santee.

Surface Water - Surface water resources are composed of three major elements: the San Diego River, Sycamore Creek/Santee Recreational Lakes and Forester Creek. Secondary elements include Woodglen Vista Creek and Big Rock Creek. This surface water system provides continuous, linear features that not only convey runoff and flood water but also offer scenic, recreational, habitat preservation and open space opportunities.

The most significant surface water element in the City is the San Diego River, which flows east to west through the central portion of the City. The river corridor has been maintained and enhanced in accordance with the City’s 1984 Santee River Park Plan (discussed in greater detail in the Recreation Element) which seeks to establish a linear rustic park in its urban core, with trails, wildlife interpretation signs, parks and passive open space.

The Sycamore Creek/Santee Lakes Regional Park provide a strong linear water element/open space corridor that provides a link to the San Diego River corridor from the northern part of the City. The Sycamore Creek/Santee Lakes Regional Park supports recreational activities including picnicking, walking and biking, fishing and camping.



Forester Creek is currently an unimproved stream that flows into the San Diego River corridor from the south (El Cajon). From a concrete-lined channel in El Cajon, its natural course meanders through a variety of land uses and vacant land, and provides an informal pedestrian link between Cuyamaca Street and Mission Gorge Road. With the completion of the planned Forester Creek Improvement Project this creek will fulfill its potential as a recreational water element/open space link to the San Diego River.





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5.0 Needs

5.1 Summary

Since 1980, the City has focused on introducing new development that is of high quality and contributes toward achieving identified community design objectives in a growing City. Today only 4,418 acres of the City are vacant (includes Fanita Ranch). New or revised policies and objectives that address neighborhood vitality are also timely for Santee as it approaches build-out. Therefore, as the City matures, more and more emphasis is placed on “caretaking” and revitalization of existing neighborhoods, the maintenance and enhancement of commercial and industrial districts, including its streets and the non-built environment (river corridors and parks).

5.2 Revitalization

A community enhancement program recognizes, protects and enhances the city’s neighborhoods and ensures a high quality of life through stable home ownership, housing rehabilitation programs, public participation in community events, public improvements and preservation of the natural environment and open space. The overarching need is to sustain a livable community where people can live, work and play. A community enhancement program recognizes disparate current and future needs and coalesces city resources to effectively:

- Target older neighborhoods in need of revitalization
- Reinforce community identity
- Engage the public as partners with the City through individual neighborhood enhancement efforts such as Neighborhood and Kids Watch Programs
- Disseminate information about City Codes that address health and safety (building and zoning codes, noise abatement)
- Support community events (block parties, neighborhood church festivals, etc)
- Implement residential rehabilitation loan programs
- Promote tree planting programs

There are also older commercial and industrial areas that could benefit from revitalization efforts. In addition to those listed above, tools that could be used to promote this include business improvement districts tailored to specific needs such as building façade or landscaping improvements along street frontages, street amenities and public art programs.

Street Maintenance - Streets also have a fundamental impact on the City’s visual environment and on public activities. Street maintenance through re-surfacing and tree plantings will accent the uniqueness of neighborhoods, parks, pedestrian environments and meeting places. Citizen concerns over the years have been raised about adhering to speed limits on residential streets. A combination of landscape enhancements and other traffic calming measures could enhance quality of life.





Architecture - As land use designations / zone districts change to be responsive to market needs and to the needs for housing, the self-imposed limitation in architectural themes is no longer necessary to assure high quality development and exciting, responsive architecture. As such, the Mission Gorge Road Design Standards have been modified to retain the site development standards, including public improvements and tree themes, and made more flexible in terms of architectural choices (Refer to Section 8.0: Implementation).

Public Arts Program - The arts are a proven asset to a community and a successful component in the revitalization and development of commercial areas. Cultural facilities enhance a community's identity, pride and image and serve as a gathering place. The arts help to bridge diverse cultures, serve as a common ground for collaboration and mutual enjoyment and strengthen family ties by providing activities that encourage the participation of different generations.

Traditionally, Santee residents look to neighboring urban areas for their cultural offerings. However, Santee's corporate base, and therefore sponsorship opportunities, are expanding to support and invest in the community's arts environment. A public arts program can boost economic development and infuse vitality into local businesses. The City may wish to encourage public participation in public space to foster community pride and enhance life experiences in their home town.

5.3 Human Relations

Human relations involves the promotion of tolerance and diversity, and is important to the quality of life. The City has strengthened alliances among key organizations that have roles to play in fostering social harmony (law enforcement, schools). The City should continue to support community and religious efforts and programs that advance tolerance, and embrace diversity and anti-discrimination in the community.

Other future needs include:

- The establishment of the Human Relations Advisory Board, or other similar committee or commission that lays the groundwork for fighting discrimination and \improving racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance in the City.
- Mediation and conflict resolution
- Appreciation of diversity through art programs

5.4 Man Made Features

Housing - Residential development encompasses most of the developed portion of Santee and the condition of neighborhoods reflects on the image and identity of the City. The definition of a neighborhood can include a block or an area of several blocks around residents' homes. It is the section of the City that most residents are familiar with and care the most about. If citizens are going to take pride in Santee, they must first be able to take pride in their home and neighborhood.





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Design treatments (thematic signage and lighting, entry statements, and distinctive landscaping for example) can strengthen and enhance neighborhood definition. A system of neighborhood vest-pocket parks for open space, discouraging through traffic on residential streets, and buffering of adjacent non-residential uses can improve the livability of a neighborhood.

The changing market conditions, housing shortage and decreasing availability of minimally constrained building sites will play a role in the housing type and design. Higher density multiple-family residential development along major streets and in Town Center will introduce three-story buildings where one- and two-story buildings represent the established scale. Additionally, hillside development is becoming more prevalent, where open space protection, fire management zones, vehicular and emergency access and water supply are integral to site design and product type. Large, privately-maintained manufactured slope areas may become poorly maintained if access is difficult, or if they are screened from view.

Other future needs include:

- Reestablishment of vegetation on public and private slopes
- Reduce the visibility of hillside fencing
- Promote a wide range of housing products to meet the needs of all segments of the community and offer more opportunities for distinctive, high-quality development
- Identify neighborhoods that could benefit from broad-based revitalization strategies

Commerce - The development of Town Center in the mid-1980's established a "downtown" in a lush landscaped setting and heralded the type and quality of new commercial development envisioned in the Town Center Specific Plan. Sidewalks and bike paths support non-motorized movement through Town Center. Outside the Town Center, older strip commercial centers have been remodeled to incorporate updated architecture and site improvements. Additionally, opportunities for shared access and reciprocal parking have reduced driveways on Mission Gorge Road and Town Center Parkway.



Many of the City's neighborhood commercial centers, while generally well maintained, would benefit from a comprehensive renovation that enhances facades, coordinates signage and landscaping.





The City has incrementally achieved improvements and enhanced architectural designs on Mission Gorge Road. Success is founded on sign control, streetscape landscaping requirements, site planning and architectural standards. Continued implementation of the Mission Gorge Road Design Standards will ensure continued improvement of this important commercial corridor.

The County of San Diego and the City of Santee have partnered to plan the development of a corporate office park on 104 acres of County-owned land in Town Center. The Master Plan will integrate the San Diego River with the commercial backbone of the City through a series of visual and physical linkages. The Plan will address broad-based design standards for buildings and amenities that are compatible with adjacent development, including environmental protection, enhancement and stewardship, mixed-use development, traffic flow/pedestrian paths view protection and interconnectivity among uses.

Other future needs include:

- Continued renovation of older commercial centers
- Controlled signage that could include a city-wide kiosk program and wayfinding signs that draw from a regional base (Carlton Hills Country Club, Santee Lakes and Mission Trails Regional Parks)
- Ensure home-based businesses do not adversely affect quality of life in residential areas
- Attract and retain businesses that offer a wide range of goods and services to the community
- Explore a public arts program that serves as an economic engine for the community

Industry - The City's more recent, comprehensively planned industrial park development along North Woodside and Prospect Avenues presents a positive image by providing comprehensive site planning and distinctive architectural treatments. The older less cohesive industrial development located elsewhere within the community presents a mix of positive and negative features.

Other future needs include:

- Consolidation of uses
- Upgrading structure conditions
- Site maintenance
- Introduction of landscaped buffers and improved signage

Trafficways/Streetscape - The City's circulation system strongly influences the image and identity of the City, as well as providing a basic framework for orientation and ease of movement. A beautiful street fosters community pride, and attracts and retains homeowners and businesses. One way to achieve this is through tree-lined streets and landscaped medians. The streetscapes of Santee provide a well defined hierarchy based on the function and classification of the street. Features include landscaped medians, street furniture, lighting, enriched paving,





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thematic street tree plantings, distinctive walls and other edge treatments, signs, bus shelters and bus benches, etc.

To advance the planting of both public and private trees, the City, as a member of the National Arbor Day Foundation, has enrolled in the Tree City USA Program, a community improvement program sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation. The city's "urban forest" encompasses not only the trees in one's private yard, but the trees along streets and highways, in parks, along the San Diego River and its tributaries, and in the golf course. A community forestry program offers the implementation structure, makes available resources for that care and educates the public about the importance of trees in their community.

Related to the need for improved entries into the City is the need for introduction of distinctive design treatments at major decision-making points and activity centers. Traffic corridors should have identifiable patterns and design elements which signal the location of these unique areas. Existing major intersections and large commercial developments are also included in those areas that should have distinctive streetscapes. On a larger scale, the absence of landscaping along State Route 67 sends a message of neglect.

Although not completed, the visual effect of State Route 52 through the City will be significant. Caltrans, through its Transportation Art Program, supports the enrichment of the cultural and visual environment for motorists and residents by facilitating and coordinating the placement of artwork by others within the transportation right-of-way. Ensuring high quality landscaping of freeway slopes and interchanges, and design enhancement of major features such as freeway overpasses and bridges will reduce visual impacts associated with freeway construction.

Other future needs include:

- Enhancement of City gateways, including monument signage and landscaping
- Thematic bus shelters that provide shade and relate architecturally to adjacent buildings
- Maintaining an updated street tree list
- On-going street maintenance and rehabilitation, including sidewalk infill
- Enhancement of existing (SR67) and future freeways, including transportation art

Historic Structures - Protection and enhancement of the "Polo Barn" and Mission Dam site (in the City of San Diego) has been guaranteed through listing on the Historical Register. The Granite House will be removed from its location adjacent to Forester Creek due to the construction of the State Route 52 freeway and the Forester Creek Improvement Project.

5.5 Natural Features

Open Space - The large amount of open space resources in Santee today perform many vital functions with regard to aesthetics, community character, resource protection and hazard avoidance. As the community advances in its transition from its rural heritage to an urban community, open space will continue to play these vital roles and should continue to be integrated into the community design strategy for the City.





Open space in the presently undeveloped hillside areas should be strategically maintained for hazard avoidance, maintenance of views and resource protection. Site plans and structure designs proposed for existing undeveloped hillside areas should be sensitive to these open space functions and incorporate open space uses as part of the development proposal.

Landforms and Views - Topographic features should be respected and alteration of landforms kept to a minimum except where public safety concerns are overriding and remedial landform alterations are required. In this regard, proper siting of land uses in terms of their grading, access and site planning requirements is critical to the success of maintaining topographic resources. Rock outcrops or other unique physical features add points of interest and unique design opportunities. As such, they too should be considered for integration into development proposals as focal points or as part of natural open space systems.

Maintenance of high quality views should be considered in the siting and design features of hillside projects and strategic location of open space. Development within the urban area must frame and enhance view opportunities and not block or create significant negative visual impacts on existing community-level viewsheds.

Surface Water

San Diego River Corridor - The San Diego River corridor provides a major focus for community design within Santee and it should be properly utilized to define an overall theme, character and design strategy for the City. Emphasis should be placed on maintaining and enhancing the existing scenic and environmental resources of the river corridor.

New development along the river corridor should utilize the design elements this natural system presents. Introduction of water elements, greenbelts, view orientation to the river and passive water uses that complement the river system should be included in design proposals to create a varied but consistent theme and character for river corridor development. The ongoing implementation of the Santee River Park Plan must balance the need to maintain the integrity of the natural systems with other community needs.

Sycamore Creek/Santee Lakes Regional Park - The Sycamore Creek/Santee Recreational Lakes corridor supports a wide range of recreational uses, preserves significant habitat, vegetation and open space and provides high quality views. Maintenance of these functions needs to be an integral part of community design strategies. Furthermore, strengthening of its linkage to the San Diego River System should be considered as part of a citywide strategy to enhance water features.

Forester Creek - Forester Creek should play a major role in the development of a contiguous water element system throughout the City. The improvement of Forester Creek should be a model of urban stream restoration, balancing the need for flood control with habitat creation, enhancement of water quality and community recreational needs.





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Woodglen Vista Creek - This creek is a tributary of the San Diego River that traverses vacant properties under public and private ownerships. The creek provides a combined opportunity for wetland restoration, improved water quality, pedestrian connectivity to the Town Center Community Park and aesthetic enhancement.

6.0 Goal

To respect and integrate the natural and man made environments of Santee to enhance the quality of life, revitalize older neighborhoods and community places, and sustain a beautiful, distinctive and well organized community for our citizens.

7.0 Objectives and Policies

Objective 1.0 Ensure an environment that promotes racial, ethnic and religious tolerance and which is free from discrimination.

Policy 1.1 The City should continue to support community and religious efforts and programs that advance tolerance, and embrace diversity and anti-discrimination.

Policy 1.2 The City should support the creation of a Human Relations Board or any other group or committee that advances positive human relations in the City.

Objective 2.0 Strengthen neighborhood identity

Policy 2.1 The City shall promote introduction of distinctive landscape treatments, signage, entry statements, etc., in residential areas.

Policy 2.2 The City shall encourage the use of existing natural features (river, hillsides, etc.) as character/theme sources for new residential development.

Policy 2.3 The City should encourage the strengthening of neighborhood edges through strategic location of open space/ recreational buffers, use of distinctive street tree/streetscape designs and changes in residential products/forms.

Policy 2.4 The City shall provide for formation of distinct residential neighborhoods when implementing the Redevelopment Plan.

Policy 2.5 The City shall encourage the formation of a focal point/activity center for neighborhoods when feasible and practical.

Policy 2.6 The City shall identify older neighborhoods in need of revitalization and develop a strategy that utilizes tools such as neighborhood watch, law enforcement,





community services, rehabilitation loan programs, code compliance and waste management services to enhance and stabilize them.

Objective 3.0 Improve the diversity and quality of housing in the City.

Policy 3.1 The City shall encourage innovative site planning and housing product designs.

Policy 3.2 The City shall promote the mix of housing product types and site planning features within larger residential developments.

Policy 3.3 The City shall encourage use of varied setbacks, lot orientations and placement of dwelling units.

Policy 3.4 The City shall discourage the overuse of repetitious dwelling unit designs and site planning features.

Policy 3.5 The City shall encourage adaptive housing products and siting treatments in hillsides and along the river corridor that respect and enhance the features of the natural environment.

Policy 3.6 The City shall support housing in mixed use projects that offer a desirable urban lifestyle.

Objective 4.0 Promote the integration of new residential development with the existing community.

Policy 4.1 The City shall promote the Town Center as a focal point and activity center for the entire City.

Policy 4.2 The City shall ensure that new residential development are adequately linked to the existing community by streets, sidewalks, trails and bikeways.

Objective 5.0 Improve or remove negative visual elements within residential areas.

Policy 5.1 The City shall develop a neighborhood revitalization program that brings together City resources, the resources of other agencies and residents to voluntarily improve the appearance and safety of their neighborhoods.

Policy 5.2 The City shall pursue the rehabilitation/demolition of dwelling units in need of major repairs consistent with the policies of the Housing Element.





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Policy 5.3 The City shall pursue the removal of vehicles on residential property which are abandoned, unregistered or in a state of disrepair that are public safety hazards or community eyesores.

Policy 5.4 The City shall promote trash clean-up events in neighborhoods.

Objective 6.0 Improve the appearance and condition of commercial facilities in the City.

Policy 6.1 The City shall ensure that all new commercial developments contribute towards an overall positive and cohesive visual identity.

Policy 6.2 The City shall promote rehabilitation of commercial sites and investigate funding opportunities for rehabilitation/remodeling of small businesses.

Policy 6.3 The City shall continue to promote commercial signage which consolidates advertising for commercial outlets and presents a cohesive thematic pattern.

Policy 6.4 The City shall develop a kiosk, or similar sign program that will allow for advertising of public and quasi-public events and meet the needs of the community.

Policy 6.5 The City shall investigate partnerships with its corporate base and businesses to develop a public arts program.

Policy 6.6 The City shall ensure all commercial development is designed to a pedestrian scale

Objective 7.0 Consolidate strip commercial uses into functional commercial units.

Policy 7.1 The City shall promote replacement of individual store parking lots and driveways with shared parking areas and driveways whenever possible.

Policy 7.2 The City shall promote coordinated structure setbacks, re-orientation of business entrances, coordinated thematic landscaping, minimizing curb cuts, establishment of reciprocal access points between adjacent properties and consolidation of entrance/exist locations during rehabilitation or redevelopment of commercial areas.

Policy 7.3 The City shall ensure that public streetscape improvements are coordinated with proposed rehabilitation/ redevelopment of commercial areas.

Objective 8.0 Improve the appearance and function of existing and planned industrial areas

Policy 8.1 The City shall explore opportunities for comprehensive industrial development





consistent with the Redevelopment Plan.

Policy 8.2 The City shall ensure that adjacent residential land uses are adequately buffered from industrial uses through site planning and landscaping features.

Policy 8.3 The City shall ensure through the Development Review process that standards established for the industrial areas are maintained.

Policy 8.4 The City shall ensure that all industrial development is attractive and of high quality design to enhance the image of the City.

Objective 9.0 Provide a unifying and distinctive streetscape system throughout the City.

Policy 9.1 The City shall promote visual continuity of trafficways through coordinated landscape plantings, lighting and street improvements which reinforce the hierarchy of the street system.

Policy 9.2 The City shall promote a Citywide street tree and median planting program which enhances views and is scaled in relationship to the function of the roadway.

Policy 9.3 The City shall ensure adequate landscaped buffers are provided between trafficways and sidewalks.

Policy 9.4 The City shall provide for streetscape treatments at activity nodes and major decision-making points, through paving materials and lighting, accent plantings and thematic signage to reinforce their importance.

Policy 9.5 The City shall continue to utilize landscape maintenance districts where practical to ensure the maintenance of streetscape plant materials and hardscape features .

Policy 9.6 The City should consider introduction of sculptural elements to the streetscape at major activity nodes (such as water fountains, public art, etc)

Policy 9.7 The City shall require landscaping and the use of decorative materials for structural features along the State Route 52 right-of-way. Once completed, the City shall explore opportunities for beautification of the freeway right-of-way through Caltrans' Transportation Art Program.

Policy 9.8 The City shall promote and facilitate the beautification of the State Route 67 right-of-way.

Policy 9.9 Upon completion of the State Route 52 to State Route 67, the City shall explore pursuing its designation as a State Scenic Highway, all or in part, as appropriate.





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Policy 9.10 The City should promote a community tree forestry program, using the resources of the Tree USA program or other similar programs that encourage city-wide tree plantings

Objective 10.0 Strengthen the gateways into the City.

Policy 10.1 The City shall preserve the high quality scenic viewshed visible from the western entry along Mission Gorge Road and State Route 52.

Policy 10.2 The City shall maintain distinctive signage, accent plantings and paving materials for entries from the east and south.

Policy 10.3 The City should discourage the placement of temporary signs in gateway setback areas.

Objective 11.0 Remove visually disruptive elements from the street system.

Policy 11.1 The City shall pursue the undergrounding of utilities and/or the relocation of overhead utility lines to enhance road corridors.

Policy 11.2 The City shall ensure all signs are compatible with the overall streetscape design and pursue the consolidation or redesign/removal of those signs which are disruptive elements.

Objective 12.0 Recognize historic structures for their ability to strengthen place identity.

Policy 12.1 The City should ensure that future development respects and enhances the Edgemoor "Polo Barn" setting.

Policy 12.2 The City shall support the continued protection of the Mission Dam Historic Site within the Mission Trails Regional Park.

Policy 12.3 The City should preserve materials of the Granite House in a manner that increases public awareness and appreciation of the City's heritage.

Objective 13.0 Integrate adequate open space uses into new development within the City.

Policy 13.1 The City shall ensure the provision of open space which provides adequate visual relief from developed portions of the City.

Policy 13.2 The City shall ensure that adequate amounts of open space are located along the San Diego River and its tributaries to protect and enhance the river character.





Policy 13.3 The City shall ensure that open space is provided in hillside areas proposed for development that performs multiple functions of view maintenance, resource protection and hazard avoidance.

Objective 14.0 Minimize alteration of existing topography especially in hillside areas during the development and redevelopment process.

Policy 14.1 The City shall encourage and work with developers to minimize the impacts of grading for new development throughout the City.

Policy 14.2 The City shall ensure that development is oriented along natural terrain contours to the extent possible to maintain landform integrity.

Policy 14.3 The City shall require use of contour grading techniques and multi-layered landscaping, whenever possible, to ensure the natural appearance of manufactured slopes.

Policy 14.4 The City shall require the use of hillside development techniques in areas of steeper slopes.

Policy 14.5 The City shall encourage the protection of prominent ridgelines whenever feasible. This shall be accomplished by siting development below ridgelines in such a manner that permits the ridgeline to remain visible.

Objective 15.0 Maintain and enhance existing scenic views.

Policy 15.1 The City shall require revegetation of graded slopes with indigenous plant materials, where feasible, to maintain scenic views and assist in slope stabilization.

Policy 15.2 The City should provide for the maintenance of view opportunities to surrounding hillsides by ensuring proposed structures do not significantly impact existing community-level viewsheds.

Objective 16.0 Utilize the natural design elements presented by the river/creek system within the City.

Policy 16.1 The City should encourage the strengthening of links between the San Diego River, Forester Creek, Woodglen Vista Creek and the Sycamore Creek/Santee Lakes.

Policy 16.2 The City should promote the introduction of water elements (fountains, streams/canals, ponds, etc.) and riparian plant materials (i.e Sycamores, Oaks, etc) into developments along watercourses.

Policy 16.3 The City should ensure that all development along the River corridor maximizes orientation towards the River and enhances the natural character of the River.





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Policy 16.4 The City shall respect the natural stream processes of the San Diego River and its tributaries and ensure that flood control improvements along existing watercourses/channels avoid concrete channelization whenever possible and retain the natural character of the corridor through planting or preservation of native vegetation.

Policy 16.5: The City shall integrate habitat enhancement with recreation opportunities along the San Diego River and its tributaries wherever feasible and practical in meeting recreation and conservation needs.

Objective 17.0 Balance development with natural resource protection needs.

Policy 17.1 The City should provide for the preservation of significant habitat and vegetation in strategic locations along watercourses and in undeveloped hillside areas.

Policy 17.2 The City should promote the incorporation of unique and significant natural resource features (vegetation, habitat, rock outcrops) into development plans.

8.0 Implementation

8.1 Human Relations

The City shall work with a Human Relations Board, or similar committee or board to develop an on-going strategic plan that strengthens collaborative relationships with other organizations and could include the implementation of programs throughout the community that target youth and the disadvantaged, the development of a crisis intervention program, and the distribution of informational materials.

8.2 Man-made Features

Housing

Architecture

- Vary heights of residential buildings when more than one story to include both one and two story elements.
- Maximize design features which reflect an indoor/outdoor relationship, taking advantage of the conducive climate.
- Ensure architectural mass and form is compatible with adjacent structures and maintenance of views.

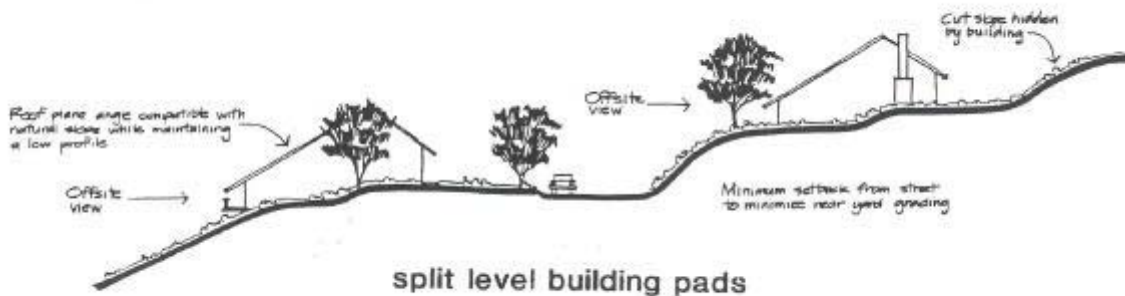
Hillside Development Considerations

- Ensure variety in styles, floor plans and facades.





- Ensure structures are adapted to hillside topography to minimize grading, maintain and enhance views and address public safety hazards.
- Ensure variety in structure types and design details within development proposals.
- Encourage use of split-level pads to minimize grading requirements.
- Ensure structures incorporate fire retardant features to minimize spread of brush fires.
- Ensure scale of individual structures and entire developments respect the scale of natural landforms.



- Allow multi-story structures to minimize site coverage.

Site Planning

- Maximize open space and minimize site coverage.
- Structures should be sited in a way that is sensitive to significant natural features of the Land, including drainage courses, ridgelines, significant habitat and rock outcroppings.
- Maintain the visual integrity of major ridgelines by using low profile, clustered structures.
- Avoid horizontal bands of development and long structures with unbroken facades.
- Utilize varied site plan features such as variable front, rear and side yard setbacks; varied lots sizes and shapes; and variable positioning of structures.
- Use creative architectural solutions in large lot estate development to minimize grading.
- Retain natural landform character by using contour grading that varies slope gradients and provides a smooth, rounded transition to existing grades.
- Design roadways to follow the natural contours, maintain hillside landforms and minimize grading.
- Consider use of split-level roadways, one-way streets and non-standard road widths.
- Integrate safe pedestrian and bike travel into the circulation system.
- Avoid vehicular, pedestrian and equestrian crossing of natural drainage courses; however, when necessary, bridges should be used.
- Maintain natural drainage courses whenever possible.
- Parking facilities should be adapted to hillsides to avoid on-street parking, cluster off-street





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parking areas and incorporate parking within structures or locate on upslope portion of lot

Landscaping

- Require revegetation of graded slopes with native plant species, whenever possible, to retain natural character, reduce maintenance and reduce visual impacts of grading.
- Ensure fire protection fuel modification zones utilize plant materials that provide a gradual transition to natural vegetation to avoid hard planted edges.
- Use native plant species and those adapted to a Mediterranean climate in planting plans.
- Ensure plants used on graded slopes are drought tolerant and fire resistant species.
- Utilize clustered, informal planting plans that reflect the natural hillside conditions.
- Minimize the removal of existing vegetation during development.
- Encourage landscape designs and plantings that require minimum maintenance.

Lighting and Signage

- Integrate residential identification signage into architectural styles and landscape themes.
- Encourage use of directional lighting and full cut-off fixtures, which minimize spillover of lighting to adjacent properties.
- Encourage overall low intensity lighting in hillside developments.

Commerce

Architecture

- Ensure scale of structures reflects the level of activity in that location and is compatible with adjacent uses through visual buffers if necessary.
- Encourage creative/innovative design treatments at focal points and activity nodes.
- Ensure facades are enhanced by architectural details which provide interest and variety.
- Break up long linear buildings into segments that are recessed or projected forward.
- Maximize integration of pedestrian areas into architectural designs to achieve indoor/outdoor relationship at commercial and public use areas.
- Ensure large structures incorporate pedestrian level detailing such as canopies, trellises and additional architectural detailing.

Site Planning

- Alter structure setbacks to allow for varied width landscaped buffers, safe pedestrian movement and overall visual continuity.
- Ensure sidewalks and trails are adequately buffered from traffic lanes.
- Provide planted medians to establish a parkway streetscape and vary function and size of the median depending on adjacent land uses and street classification.





- Ensure medians provide adequate traffic controls and allow safe turning points at intersections and at strategic mid-block locations. Avoid placement of turning points where safety concerns would result.
- Minimize curb cuts to increase traffic safety and pedestrian and bicycle movement.
- Consolidate driveways and parking areas between adjacent lots where feasible.
- Encourage lowering of parking area grades, while allowing adequate surveillance, to minimize visual impacts with the street corridor.
- Provide enhanced transit stops to promote convenience, ridership, and safety.
- Avoid long block walls parallel to the street corridor; where necessary, include relief in wall facade, use of varied construction materials use of landscaped berms and/or low walls.
- Ensure taller structures are adequately set back from roadway to maintain the visual continuity of the corridor.
- Encourage the location of outdoor public areas that are integrated with commercial uses and mass transit facilities.

Landscaping

- Provide accent plantings, enriched paving and other thematic features (ex: bollards, decorative walls or planters) at major intersections and activity nodes.
- Provide formal street tree plantings that ensure continuity through repetition and establish a street corridor theme.
- Provide median plantings (and enriched paving) that enhance views with trees, shrubs and ground cover. Plantings should not obscure views to allow maximum travel safety, legibility of signage and driver orientation.
- Provide roadway edge plantings to reduce impacts of paving/hardscape, buffer adjacent uses and accentuate road character.
- Select plant materials to include consideration of minimum maintenance (drought tolerant, low maintenance, pollution tolerant) features.
- Ensure hardscape areas are designed for minimum maintenance.
- Ensure street tree planting frame and accentuate views.
- Use landscaped berms, or mounds to reduce views into parking lots adjacent from the roadway where feasible.

Lighting and Signage

- Prohibit flashing or moving signage.
- Maximize consolidation and grouping of informational and commercial signage.
- Minimize freestanding signage.
- Ensure signs don't disrupt visual continuity or views and are adequately setback from the roadway.
- Encourage high quality thematic commercial signage that is integrated with the scale and style of architectural and landscaping designs.
- Provide consistency with regard to street lighting fixtures style and location.





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- Minimize spillover of lighting through use of directional, cut-off and non-glare fixtures.

8.3 Natural Features (River/Creek System)

Architecture

- Provide architectural treatments and styles that compliment the natural features of the waterways, including introduction of water elements (fountains, etc.).
- Use low profile structures to maintain view corridors along the watercourses.
- Ensure architectural mass and form respects the natural scale of watercourses and is compatible with adjacent uses.
- Avoid long buildings with unbroken facades.

Site Planning

- Ensure views along and across stream corridors are maintained and enhanced, including from bridge crossings.
- Maximize orientation of structures toward the water corridor.
- Encourage sensitive edge treatments along watercourses through variable structure setbacks and strategic location of open space buffers.
- Provide for the preservation of significant and sensitive wildlife habitats.
- Integrate recreational opportunities and open space / habitat along stream corridors.
- Cluster development, where appropriate, to allow maximization of open space.
- Ensure adequate flood protection measures are contained within all site plans.

Landscaping

- Maximize utilization of native riparian species in landscape plantings.
- Provide informal transitional landscape zones that blend introduced plantings with native stream corridor vegetation.
- Use landscape features to frame and accentuate, and not obstruct, existing views.
- Encourage informal planting schemes to reflect the natural stream environment.

Lighting and Signage

- Encourage signage consolidation.
- Ensure signs do not disrupt visual amenities or views.
- Limit all non-public signs to monument-type design.
- Prohibit flashing or moving signage.
- Emphasize use of low profile signage integrated into architectural and landscaping features.
- Encourage low intensity lighting.
- Ensure minimization of lighting spillover into stream corridor and adjacent uses.





8.4 Mission Gorge Road Design Standards

In accordance with the Objectives and Policies of the General Plan, design standards for coordinating the architecture, access, signage and landscaping of properties within the Mission Gorge Road corridor are part of the City's zoning permit and subdivision map review processes. These design standards are intended to serve as "guidelines" to direct future development, since it is recognized that full implementation of the standards may not be appropriate for all properties along Mission Gorge Road because of existing development patterns or property sizes and configurations. In applying these design standards, it must be remembered that the objective of the General Plan is to both improve the appearance and enhance the viability of commercial properties within the Mission Gorge Road corridor.

Architecture - Architectural design addresses not only the functions of buildings, but also building style through materials detailing colors, textures, and the configuration of the building. Buildings should be complimentary to their surrounding environment. Buildings should address site planning through the use of setbacks, parking, landscaping, entries and special features, such as plazas or fountains.

Design Standard Number 1: New construction of commercial buildings and remodeling of existing commercial buildings shall conform to the Mediterranean architectural theme along Mission Gorge Road between Carlton Hills Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue. West of Carlton Hills Boulevard, an "Old Western", "Turn-of-the-Century", "Alpine" or other distinctive architectural theme may be used, exclusive of "Mediterranean". When justified by special circumstances such as may occur with remodeling, another theme may be used.



Mediterranean - A Mediterranean theme includes Mission and Spanish styles, and is exclusive to Town Center, between Carlton Hills Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue. Materials should include stucco, rough sawn wood for trim and accents, tile roofs, slump stone block, glazed tile accents and tile paving. Architectural form would include arches, gable or hipped roofs, deep-set mansards and parapets. Special features would include fountains and covered arcades.



Old Western - This architectural style is exemplified by the use of rough sawn vertical or horizontal wood siding, wood shingles, and stone. Building forms include gable roofs, porches and false fronts. Special features would include covered walkways and wooden lamp posts.

Turn-of-the-Century - This style includes many forms of Victorian and 19th Century architecture.





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Appropriate building materials include brick, painted clapboard, painted vertical tongue and groove and wood shingles. A variety of forms are in keeping with this style including gable roofs and flat roofs with decorative parapets. Special architectural features include bay windows, period lamp posts, awnings and canopies, and molding.

Alpine – This architectural style relies on natural materials such as stone, shingle and wood compatible with its topographical setting close to the San Diego River and the hillsides. This theme is eclectic in the permissive application of folk styles. The primary areas for the application of form and detailing are in the porch and cornice lines.

Signage

All signs on Mission Gorge should be compatible with the scenic corridor, with one another, and should be consolidated wherever feasible. The size of commercial signs presently allowed by the City are in proportion to the size of the building front. In addition, each individual property is permitted one monument entry sign, which is also proportional to the frontage of the property. While individual businesses can and should retain storefront signs, entry monument signs can be consolidated. Through the use of common entry signage, the identification of consolidated access points can also be provided.

Design Standard No. 2 - Coordination of monument entry signs to identify several individual commercial properties and common access points shall be encouraged.

Design Standard No. 3 - All signs shall be reviewed for their compatibility with the immediately surrounding area and the Scenic Corridor designation of Mission Gorge Road.

Access

Future left turn access to individual properties along Mission Gorge Road will be restricted by the placement of median center dividers. In order that medians not be detrimental for businesses, the consolidation of entrance points to properties should be required. In this manner, traffic safety will be improved by limiting the number of curb cuts and conflict points along the street.

A key point in coordinating the design of properties is the coordination of access and the sharing of parking. In this manner, individual properties would retain their legal identity but would benefit from not being isolated from adjacent properties. The used of shared access and parking also improves options for site design by allowing more flexibility in locating parking areas and buildings. Easements among individual parcels for both access and parking can be required through the Development review process.

With future construction of raised, landscaped medians in Mission Gorge Road, left turn access to individual properties will be restricted. In order that medians not be detrimental to businesses, entry points to several properties should be consolidated. Site planning can be enhanced through the varying of building locations and parking areas on individual properties.





Design Standard No. 4 - Common access points and parking easements shall be encouraged among individual parcels in order to allow coordinated site planning, improved access, and improved traffic safety.

Landscaping/Streetscape Design

To provide a theme or cohesive thread tying all of Mission Gorge Road together, a coordinated streetscape design is necessary. The use of the same variety of tree along all portions of the street with each node having different median designs and landscaping along the side of the road would accomplish this purpose. This is also consistent with the intent of providing each commercial node with a separate identity; although, streetscape designs should be carried out through residential areas as well. Selected street trees should provide shadow and canopy effects which would be both aesthetically pleasing and beneficial by providing shade and lowering street temperatures.

Along the south side of Mission Gorge Road a landscape buffer varying from 20 to 40 feet in width (30 feet average) is encouraged. This buffer area would be improved with a meandering pedestrian path within the 10 feet public right-of-way behind the curb, separated from both street traffic and parking lots. Such a walkway should cross all streets and driveways adjacent to the curb. Through the use of a meandering path, space for mounded landscaping between the curb and the path is encouraged to screen parking lots and pathways from the street.

The landscape buffer dimension is measured from the curb. The thirty-foot average width of the buffer is comprised of the following elements: ten (10) feet behind the curb designated as public right-of-way (required); ten (10) feet behind the right-of-way designated as street yard setback in commercial zones (refer to required setbacks contained in the City Zoning Ordinance); and ten (10) feet beyond the minimum setback to provide landscape area of sufficient width.

North Side of Mission Gorge Road: On the north side of Mission Gorge Road, the landscape buffer should be the same as the Town Center Specific Plan development standards, which is thirty-five (35) feet from the curb. A combination pedestrian and bicycle path (5-foot wide sidewalk and four-foot wide bicycle path) would be provided within 25 feet of public right-of-way behind the curb.

At major intersections, both public street improvements and private development plans will be coordinated to create special treatments. These intersections would include Mission Gorge Road and Mast Boulevard, Mesa Road, Fanita Drive, Carlton Hills Boulevard, Town Center Parkway, Cuyamaca Street, Cottonwood Avenue and Magnolia Avenue. The Design Element of the Town Center Specific Plan requires gateway treatments at two proposed new intersections with Mission Gorge Road.

Two specific elements are important along the Mission Gorge Road corridor: pedestrian and bicycle paths; and selection of street trees for median and landscape buffer plantings.





COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT ELEMENT

Pedestrian/Bicycle Paths - The following dimensions shall apply:

Sidewalk:	five (5) feet wide
Bikeway:	four (4) feet wide

The walkway and bicycle path may be combined. The combined facility should meander within the right-of-way portion of the landscape buffer, and path alignments should be integrated with provision of street furniture, utilities, building entries, driveways, intersections, and bus stop locations. Bike paths should use earth tone colored concrete with a broom finish. Sidewalks should be constructed of one of the following: earth-tone colored concrete, or earth-tone colored concrete with an exposed aggregate finish.

Street Trees - An important element for the entire corridor is the selection and planting of street trees in medians and along the sides of the roadway. Two lists of street trees may be referenced: a list maintained by the Community Services Department that identifies theme trees for medians and parkways; the Town Center Specific Plan design standards; and 3) the Mission Gorge Road Design Standards. Trees are selected for color and ease of maintenance within confined medians and parkways, as well as to establish continuity in theme along Circulation Element Streets.

It is recommended that street tree planting along Mission Gorge Road be consistent with the Town Center design guidelines in those portions of the corridor that abut the Town Center site. Other portions of the corridor should be consistent with the Community Services Tree List.

In addition to median landscaping, a coordinated streetscape design along each side of the roadway should also be required. A landscaping and buffer area of sufficient width to separate pedestrians and bicyclists from both parking and the street should be required. At major intersections, public and private improvement plans must be coordinated to create special treatments.

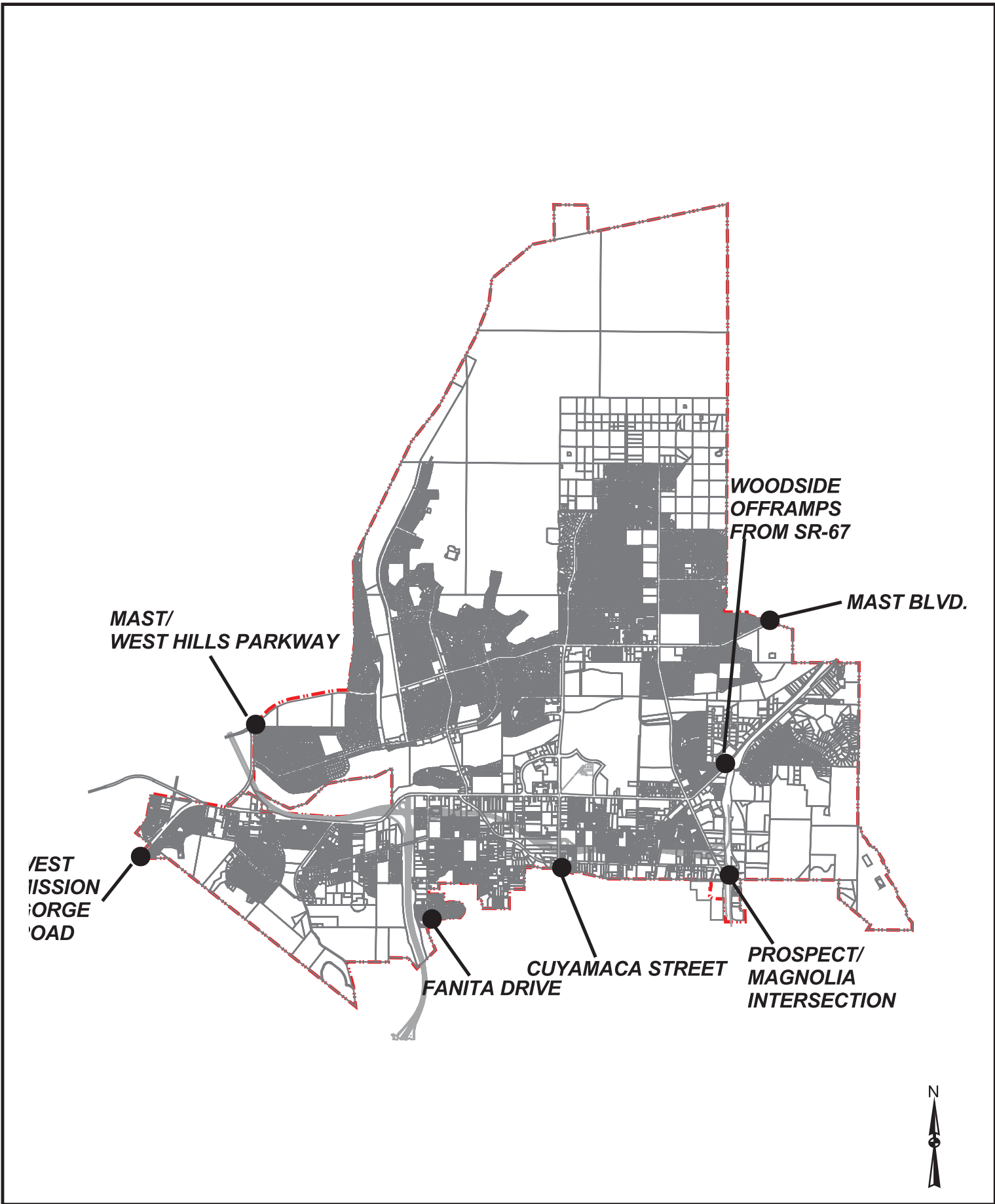
Design Standard No. 5 - Themed street trees for Mission Gorge Road shall be selected and used in all landscaping designs.

Design Standard No. 6 - Landscaped buffers shall be provided along both sides of Mission Gorge Road. On the south side, the buffer shall average 30 feet in width from the curb (20 feet from property line) with a 20 foot minimum width. A five foot meandering walkway within the right-of-way shall be provided. On the north side, the buffer shall be 35 feet in width behind the curb with a combination four-foot wide bicycle path and a five-foot wide meandering walkway. Both paths shall be located within 25 feet of public right-of-way behind the curb.

8.5 Gateway Program

Gateway sites provide recognizable entrances into the City, create community identity and reinforce a positive image.





WEST MISSION BOULEVARD

MAST/WEST HILLS PARKWAY

FANITA DRIVE

CUYAMACA STREET

WOODSIDE OFFRAMPS FROM SR-67

MAST BLVD.

PROSPECT/MAGNOLIA INTERSECTION



Source: City of Santee Department of Development Services



Locations - At least seven gateway sites have been identified along Santee's existing circulation system, and these may increase over time due to city annexations, street extensions (Mast Boulevard) and new freeway off-ramps (Figure 9-1). Gateway signs should be located at the future Cuyamaca Street interchange with State Route 52.

Design Features - A cohesive design consistent with the gateway prototype in regards to materials, copy and letter style. Adjustments may be made to the size and shape to fit a particular site.

- A location within medians is preferable.
- A size consistent with the scale of roadway in which they are installed.
- Placement that does not create any traffic hazards.
- Use of landscaping to frame and accentuate.



Implementation - There are a variety of ways in which the City could obtain the land and funds for the placement and construction of gateway improvements. The method chosen for a particular gateway would depend on the circumstances for each individual site. Alternative types of funding (street improvement funds, grants) shall be examined and used whenever possible.

Gateway construction should be done in conjunction with street improvement projects wherever possible. For sites which adjoin vacant but developable land, the gateway improvements could be required as conditions of approval when the site is developed.

Freeway Exposure - Freeway signs, as “pre-gateway” signs, are also important in creating a sense of pending arrival. The design of freeway signs is pre-determined by the State Department of Transportation. The lack of signs on State Route 52 at the interchange with State Route 163, and Interstate 15 minimizes the city’s presence on the region’s arterials. The City should coordinate with the California Department of Transportation to have signs installed that inform drivers of Santee’s location.

8.6 Development Review Procedure

The Development Review procedure is used by the City to review proposals for commercial, industrial and multiple residential developments. It allows the City to review proposals in terms of land use compatibility and structure and site design features. The objectives, policies and guidelines established by the Community Enhancement Element shall be used to assist the City in the Development Review process, and they provide a framework for developers to use in preparing plan submittals that address community enhancement objectives.





8.7 Zoning

Zoning ordinances implement design objectives, policies and guidelines on a parcel specific basis.

