

CHAPTER 2.0

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the project description is to describe the project in a way that would be meaningful to the public, reviewing agencies, and decision makers. As described in Section 15124 of the CEQA Guidelines, a complete project description must contain the following information, but is not required to supply extensive detail beyond that needed for evaluation and review of the environmental impact: (1) location and boundaries of the project on a regional and detailed map; (2) a statement of objectives sought by the project; (3) a general description of the project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics; and (4) a statement briefly describing the intended uses of the EIR.

2.1 GENERAL PLAN BACKGROUND

California state law requires each city to adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan to guide the physical development of the incorporated city and any land outside of the city's boundaries that bears a relationship to planning activities. A General Plan clarifies and articulates a city's intentions with respect to the expectations of residents and businesses and its long-term vision for the community. Through its General Plan, a city outlines its goals, policies, and standards to the public and private sectors for meeting community objectives. Since the General Plan is the constitution for all future development, any decision by a city that affects land use and development must be consistent with the General Plan.

The City of La Mesa adopted its first General Plan in 1965. It has been amended and added to periodically as state law has changed and as local needs have changed. A comprehensive update of the General Plan was last adopted by the City Council on March 12, 1996, and the Housing Element was previously updated in 2005. Periodically updating the General Plan provides an opportunity to incorporate emerging issues that affect the community. To celebrate its centennial year of incorporation, the City initiated a comprehensive update of its General Plan. The 2012 General Plan incorporates issues of sustainability, climate change, complete streets, water conservation, and wellness. The 2012 General Plan strengthens policies that preserve neighborhoods and promotes in-fill development opportunities in the City's commercial areas and along transit corridors. The intent is to align the City's 2012 General Plan with regional goals and state legislation that have been adopted since 1996, and to provide comprehensive, long-term direction by establishing locally important goals and policies.

2.2 REGIONAL SETTING AND PLANNING AREA

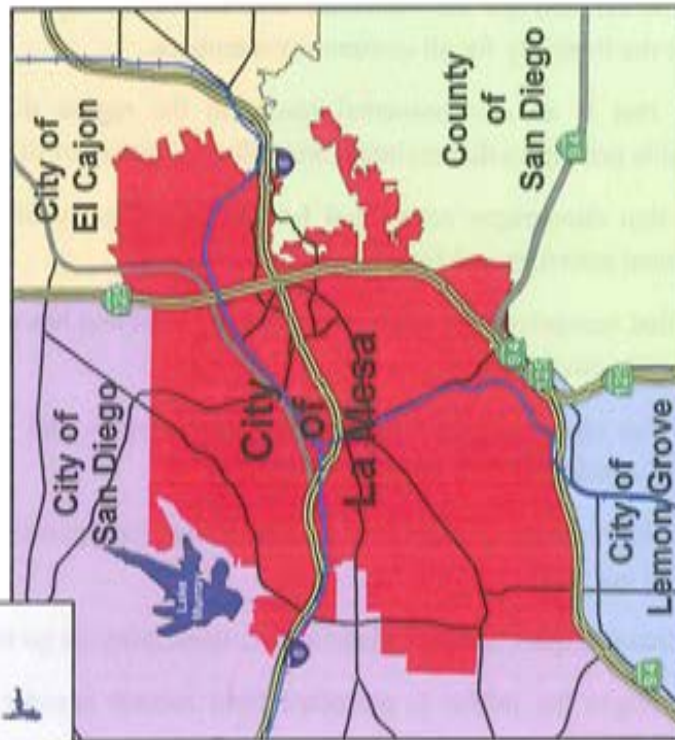
The City is located in central San Diego County, approximately 12 miles east of downtown San Diego (Figure 2-1). The City is surrounded by the city of San Diego to the west and north; the city of El Cajon and the unincorporated communities of Mount Helix, Casa Del Oro, and Spring Valley to the east; and Lemon Grove to the south. Regional motor vehicle access is provided by Interstate (I) 8 and State Routes (SR) 94 and 125. Regional transit access is provided by the Metropolitan Transit System light rail Orange and Green Lines, and five bus routes. No public or private airports are located within the City. La Mesa does fall within the Airport Influence Area (AIA) for two airports that serve small aircraft. Gillespie Field and Montgomery Field are located 6 and 10 miles outside of City limits, respectively.

The planning area for La Mesa encompasses the corporate City limits, which is approximately 9.2 square miles or 5,876 acres. The City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) is coterminous with the City limits.

2.3 PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

A General Plan serves as the blueprint for future growth and development. As a blueprint for the future, the General Plan contains policies and programs that provide decision-makers with a solid basis for decisions related to land use, development, and public investment in infrastructure and facilities. The 2012 General Plan includes inter-related policies and programs to reinforce and build on the City's visions for its future. Visions contained in the 2012 General Plan have evolved over many years of public input, and are as follows:

1. A City that works together with the community to achieve common goals, which include a safe and healthy environment, state-of-the-art resources and technology, unsurpassed quality of life, and an efficient and effectively run government organization.
2. A City where local governmental services, including police, fire, and recreation, meet the needs of its citizens.
3. A City where municipal buildings, parks, streets, and other public facilities are well maintained.
4. A City where sound economic development practices have retained and attracted many successful businesses, providing jobs for its citizens and a sound revenue base for City operations.



- Legend**
- San Diego Region
 - City of La Mesa
 - City of San Diego
 - City of El Cajon
 - City of Lemon Grove
 - County of San Diego
 - Oceans / Lakes
 - Freeways
 - Highways
 - Light Rail Transit
 - Major Road

Figure 2-1
Vicinity Map

Source: City of La Mesa

5. A City that has maintained and improved its downtown as a focal point for community heritage and a place for operating a business, shopping, celebrating, and living.
6. A City where the important travel corridors are tree-lined boulevards serving a rich mixture of residential and commercial land uses, with infrastructure and amenities that support all modes of travel.
7. A City where travel is safe and easily accommodated, whether by car or transit, on a bike, or as a pedestrian.
8. A City where a natural landscape of rolling hills and canyons provides a beautiful setting for its many well-maintained residential neighborhoods, parks, and open spaces.
9. A City that has taken steps to conserve and enhance its local resources, safeguard human health and the environment, maintain a healthy and diverse economy, and improve the livability for all community members.
10. A City that is an environmental leader in the region through implementation of sustainable principles that maintain and enhance quality of life in La Mesa.
11. A City that encourages active and healthy lifestyles by offering a diverse range of recreational activities and facilities.
12. A City that recognizes the value of its natural assets and has taken steps to conserve the quality of its environment.
13. A City that recognizes its own history and preserves and integrates its history in a variety of residential and commercial settings.
14. A City that creates a future for La Mesa that incorporates tangible and intangible aspects of our past.
15. A City that is a quiet and safe place to live, work, play, or go to school.
16. A City where the public is protected from natural hazards and hazards created by human activities.
17. A City where the citizens are prepared for disasters and emergency situations.
18. La Mesa is the healthiest and most livable City in the San Diego region. It is a City that promotes an active lifestyle, social interaction, and healthy eating for all citizens, and where gardening and other types of urban farming are encouraged.
19. A City where everyday trips can be accomplished by walking, biking, or taking transit.
20. A City where children are safe to play in their neighborhoods, and where parks and recreational programming for all ages are available for all residents.

21. A City that encourages sustainable development principles to foster economic vitality, the health of the community, and the natural environment.
22. A City that provides safe and decent housing opportunities for all of its residents, offering a range of housing options.

2.4 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The project analyzed in this Program EIR is the adoption and implementation of the 2012 General Plan. The General Plan contains an introduction and 10 chapters or elements:

- Land Use* and Urban Design
- Circulation*
- Conservation* and Sustainability
- Recreation and Open Space*
- Historic Preservation
- Noise*
- Safety*
- Public Services and Facilities
- Health and Wellness
- Housing*

* Seven elements required by state law

The following subsections describe the 10 elements of the 2012 General Plan in more detail.

2.4.1 Land Use and Urban Design Element

The Land Use and Urban Design Element focuses on the physical form and development of the community. This element also identifies the goals and policies related to the City's role in a regional planning context. The element includes a summary of the planning issues and provides the City's goals, objectives, and policies related to these topics. At the end of the element, existing and proposed programs intended to implement the goals, policies, and objectives of the Land Use and Urban Design Element are provided.

The policies of the Land Use and Urban Design Element emphasize two concepts:

- Preserving and enhancing residential neighborhoods and open space.
- Ensuring that new development and redevelopment along the City's major commercial and transportation corridors are of a high quality and fit well into the fabric of the community.

The 2012 General Plan planned land uses are shown in Figure 2-2.

Opportunity Sites

To address these concepts, the City identified several “opportunity sites” for new development and revitalization. Opportunity sites primarily consist of (1) areas near the City’s five transit stations; (2) mixed-use overlay areas located along University Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, portions of La Mesa Boulevard, and near the Spring Street trolley station; (3) Grossmont Shopping Center; and (4) additional sites where land use designation changes are proposed to better align with existing uses. Figures 2-3 and 2-4 show the anticipated opportunity sites and areas where land use designation changes are proposed.

The 2012 General Plan anticipates that the majority of the growth in the community will take place in these opportunity sites. Table 2-1 summarizes the existing and projected population, housing, and job growth for the 2035 horizon year of this General Plan. Within the planning horizon of the 2012 General Plan, approximately 10,386 more people, 3,145 more housing units, and 5,211 more jobs are expected within the City.

**Table 2-1
Expected Growth in La Mesa**

Year	2012	2035	Net Change	Percent Change
Population	58,296	68,682	10,386	17.8%
Housing (units)	25,840	28,985	3,145	12.2%
Jobs	25,807 ¹	31,018	5,211	20.2%

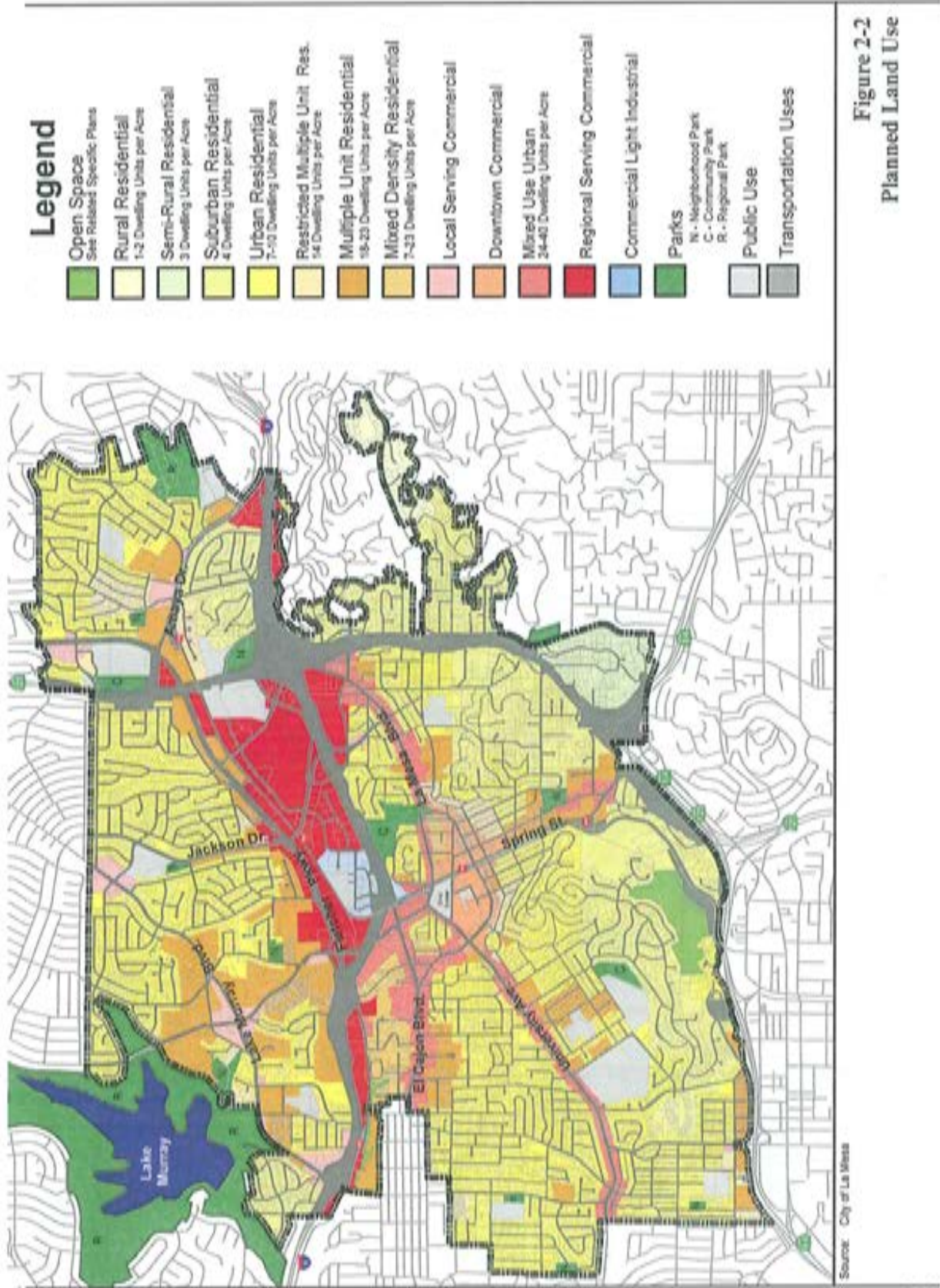
¹ The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) collects address-level employer records from the California Employment Development Department (EDD) and supplements that data with business license records from local jurisdictions and uniformed military jobs numbers from Navy Region Southwest. SANDAG uses 2010 employment data from EDD for planning purposes. At this time, 2012 employment data are not available from EDD.

Source: SANDAG 2011

Transit Stations

La Mesa transit stations are hubs of activity and are anticipated to be used more intensively in coming years. New infill development is encouraged near each station, as described below:

La Mesa Boulevard Station – The downtown location of this station intersects major bus routes and provides transit access to the Civic Center, village commercial areas, and surrounding residential areas. The station has limited parking. The old police station, old post office, and Civic Center parking lot areas offer the opportunity to develop compact new uses that complement the variety of uses in the heart of downtown.

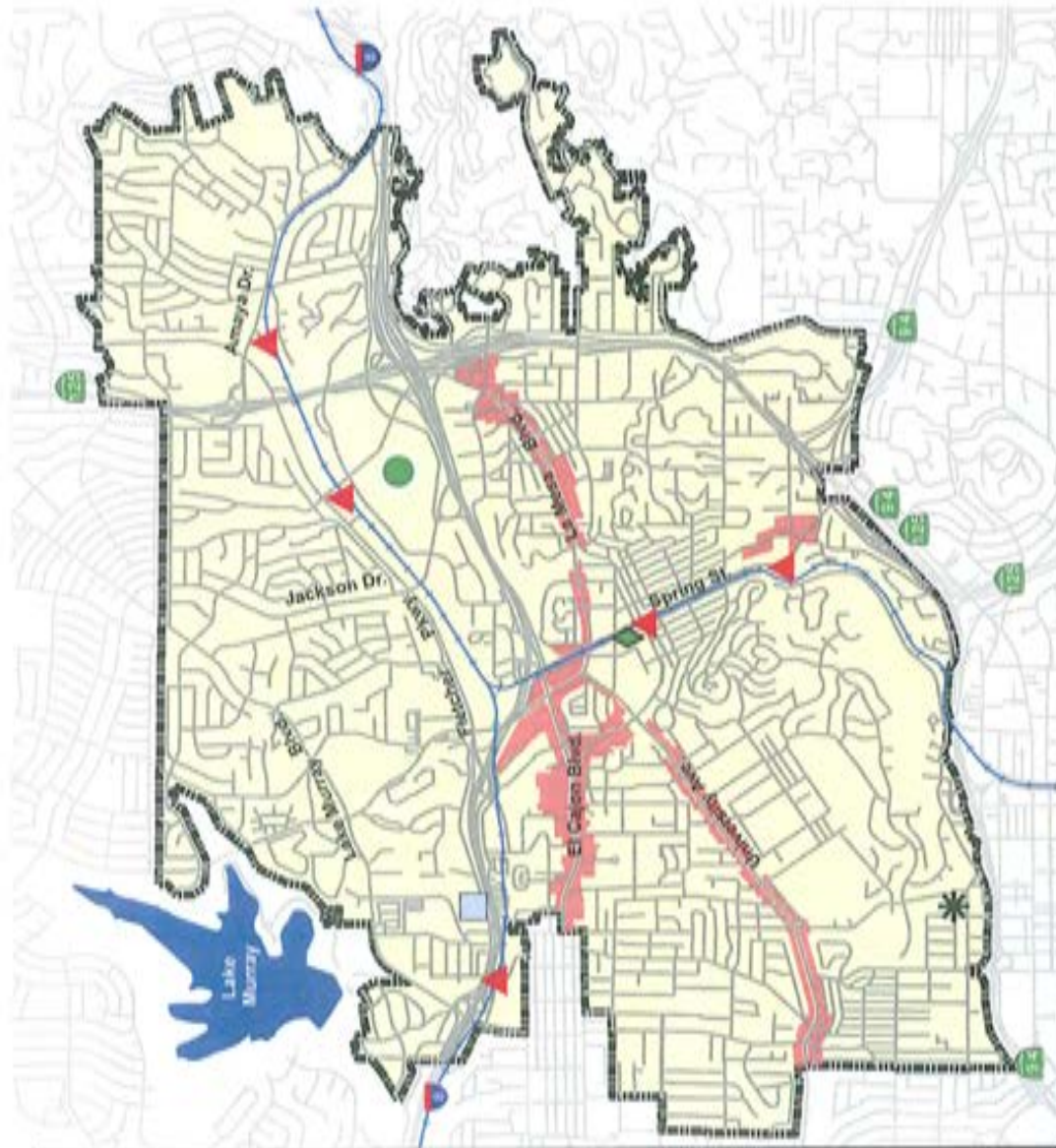


Legend

- Open Space
See Related Specific Plans
- Rural Residential
1-2 Dwelling Units per Acre
- Semi-Rural Residential
3 Dwelling Units per Acre
- Suburban Residential
4 Dwelling Units per Acre
- Urban Residential
7-10 Dwelling Units per Acre
- Restricted Multiple Unit Res.
14 Dwelling Units per Acre
- Multiple Unit Residential
18-20 Dwelling Units per Acre
- Mixed Density Residential
7-23 Dwelling Units per Acre
- Local Serving Commercial
- Downtown Commercial
- Mixed Use Urban
24-40 Dwelling Units per Acre
- Regional Serving Commercial
- Commercial Light Industrial
- Parks
N - Neighborhood Park
C - Community Park
R - Regional Park
- Public Use
- Transportation Uses

Figure 2-2
Planned Land Use

Source: City of La Mesa



Legend

- Mixed Use Overlay
- Grossmont Center
- Former Coleman College Site
- Former Police Station
- Former County PW Facility
- Transit Stations
- Light Rail Transit
- Roads
- Lakes
- City Boundary

Figure 2-3
Opportunity Sites

Source: City of La Mesa





Source: City of La Mesa



0 1,300 2,600 3,900 Feet

Figure 2-4
Land Use Designation Changes

70th Street Station – There is redevelopment potential for more intensive mixed-use projects located near the 70th Street Trolley Station in the Alvarado Creek area. Sites in this area are designated for regional-serving commercial uses to contribute to the local economy such as offices, hotels, multi-family residential, and mixed-use development.

Amaya Station – There is potential for infill development on nearby vacant parcels and development opportunity on the north side of Amaya Drive where there is an under-used shopping center with a substantial amount of surface parking. The south side of Amaya Station features older properties with redevelopment potential.

Spring Street Station – This station is near 300 military housing units. Additional mixed-use infill development could occur in the area surrounding the trolley station.

Grossmont Station – This is a transfer station between the Green and Orange Lines of the trolley. In 2010, the Pravada and Alterra apartments opened at the station, and improvements were made to the platform, including new elevator access from Grossmont Center Drive. With anticipated growth of the Grossmont Medical Campus and Grossmont Shopping Center sites, this station may remain the most used transit stop in the City.

Mixed-Use Corridors

There is potential for compact redevelopment along the City's main corridors. In 2003, the City adopted a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone for lots designated "Mixed Use Urban" along University Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, portions of La Mesa Boulevard, and near the Spring Street trolley station. The overlay zone is intended to revitalize older commercial corridors; increase opportunities for infill housing; encourage innovative retail that is less automobile dependent; and help to create pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods where local residents have access to services, shops, jobs, and transit within walking distance of their homes.

For new development within the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone, new amenities such as street trees and wider sidewalks are required to create a pedestrian realm. A reduction in the number of parking spaces required may be permitted for mixed-use projects that contain retail, restaurants, offices, and other neighborhood-serving uses on the ground floor. Recreation and leisure space must be provided for each residential or mixed-use project containing residential uses. The maximum building height within the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone is 46 feet, unless the Planning Commission grants a height increase through issuance of a special permit.

New development and major renovations within the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone are subject to design review by the City's Design Review Board. Separate design guidelines for properties

within the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone have been prepared to ensure quality design that is sensitive to surrounding properties. The City's mixed-use corridors encourage multiple activities within these neighborhoods, and create opportunities for interaction, economic growth, and improved quality of life.

Grossmont Shopping Center Focus Area

The 2012 General Plan's Regional-Serving Commercial land use designation applies to areas in the City such as Grossmont Shopping Center that are suitable for more intense urban activities that draw customers from outside of the City. Grossmont Shopping Center is a regional-serving mall containing approximately 940,000 square feet of building area, including major anchor stores and a movie theater. The center is located on a 64-acre site bounded by Center Drive to the north, Grossmont Center Drive to the east, Murray Drive to the south, and Jackson Drive to the west. Grossmont Shopping Center was first developed in the early 1960s and features the main mall building surrounded by surface parking lots and smaller satellite buildings. Since most buildings are located in the middle of the property, various options exist for future expansion or redevelopment with new uses. There is an opportunity for new development on this property to define new vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation patterns, locate new buildings and landmarks within the highly visible site, and unify the architectural and landscape design of the site through the City's design review process as remodeling occurs. The 2012 General Plan envisions that this site will become a focus of redevelopment activity within the City's Grossmont Specific Plan area.

Proposed Land-Use-Designation Change Sites

Land-use-designation changes are proposed in several areas to align the land-use designation with the current zone classification and potential future use. These areas are described in Table 2-2 and shown in Figure 2-3. Proposed land-use-designation changes total approximately 12.59 acres out of the City's total 5,876 acres. This is less than one-half of 1 percent of the total area within the City. Therefore, the proposed changes are minimal, and the 2012 General Plan would be considered consistent with SANDAG's 2050 Regional Growth Forecast (SANDAG 2011). As development proposals are received by the City, the appropriate use of the land will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**Table 2-2
2012 General Plan Land Use Designation Changes**

Site	1996 General Plan Land Use Designation	Draft 2012 General Plan Land Use Designation	Site Acreage
1. Former police station site at northeast corner of Allison Avenue and Nebo Drive	Public Use (Civic Center)	Downtown Commercial	1.28
2. Caltrans property west of SR-125 north of Fletcher Parkway	Transportation Uses (transportation right-of-way)	Multiple Unit Residential (18-23 dwelling units per acre [du/acre])	0.77
3. Former County of San Diego Public Works site at the northwest corner of Murray Hill Road and Waite Drive	Public Use (Public Works Facility)	Urban Residential (7 du/acre)	2.94
4. Mission Valley Trolley Extension	Mission Valley Trolley (proposed)	Transportation right-of-way (trolley station)	4.59
5. Vacant private parcel at the northwest corner of Lemon Avenue and Bancroft Drive	Transportation Uses (transportation right-of-way)	Local-Serving Commercial	0.59
6. Vacant Caltrans parcel at the southwest corner of Lemon Avenue and Bancroft Drive	Transportation Uses (transportation right-of-way)	Local-Serving Commercial	0.30
7. Fire Station 12 on Dallas Street, east of SR-125	Urban Residential (7 du/acre)	Public Use (Public Safety facility)	1.75
8. Fire Station 13 on Grossmont Boulevard east of SR-125	Suburban Residential (4 du/acre)	Public Use (Public Safety facility)	0.37
Total acreage of proposed land-use designation changes			12.59

In addition, the Housing Element includes an extensive analysis of properties that could accommodate new housing development. These sites are currently designated as residential or mixed use, and are vacant land or underused sites that are suitable and appropriately zoned for development of more-intense residential uses.

2.4.2 Circulation Element

The City's transportation system is made up of multiple networks that serve the needs of different modes of travel (i.e., cars, public transit, walking, and cycling). The Circulation Element outlines the short- and long-range issues related to the particular components of the transportation network, and establishes goals and policies for maintaining and enhancing this complete transportation system. The Circulation Element also identifies issues related to linking the various networks into a cohesive and effective local transportation system. Linked networks ensure that the local systems work efficiently with neighboring cities and with regional transportation systems, such as transit routes, freeways, and arterial streets.

Key concepts tie the various components of the Circulation Element together:

- The Circulation Plan requires a balance between mobility and access.
- The needs for each of the various modes of transportation must be evenly balanced and effectively linked together into a cohesive system.
- The basic street system in La Mesa is well established and strongly defined by existing development patterns and terrain. This basic street pattern is not expected to change substantially; therefore, most circulation solutions will need to work within the given circulation infrastructure.
- The circulation system should be thought of as a series of paths that not only move people effectively through the City and the region, but also physically define the character and quality of life in the community.
- A safe and efficient circulation system is essential to the health and welfare of the residents of La Mesa, and is essential for the economic viability of the businesses, industries, and services that are a part of the community.

Figure 2-5 and Table 2-3 describe the City's street system.

**Table 2-3
Summary of Street Classifications**

Street Classifications	Number of Miles	Percent of Street Network
Freeway	7.7	4%
Parkway Arterial	2.5	1%
Arterial	14.5	8%
Major Collector	6.1	3%
Local Collector	30.7	17%
Local	107.0	59%
Alley	13.7	8%
Total	182.2	100%

La Mesa's street system is essentially complete, and very few opportunities exist to add new streets or change the function of the existing street network. Improvements to traffic flow and safety would be made primarily through techniques such as changes to traffic signal timing at key intersections and improvements to transit services. Programs to encourage carpooling, walking, and bicycling would also increase mobility and reduce traffic congestion. The City's Sidewalk Master Plan establishes priorities for complete street improvements to address pedestrian circulation within the public right-of-way. Proposed improvements to the City's sidewalks and bikeways are illustrated in Figures 2-6 and 2-7, respectively. In addition, La Mesa is served by a light rail system and several bus lines provided by the Metropolitan Transit System

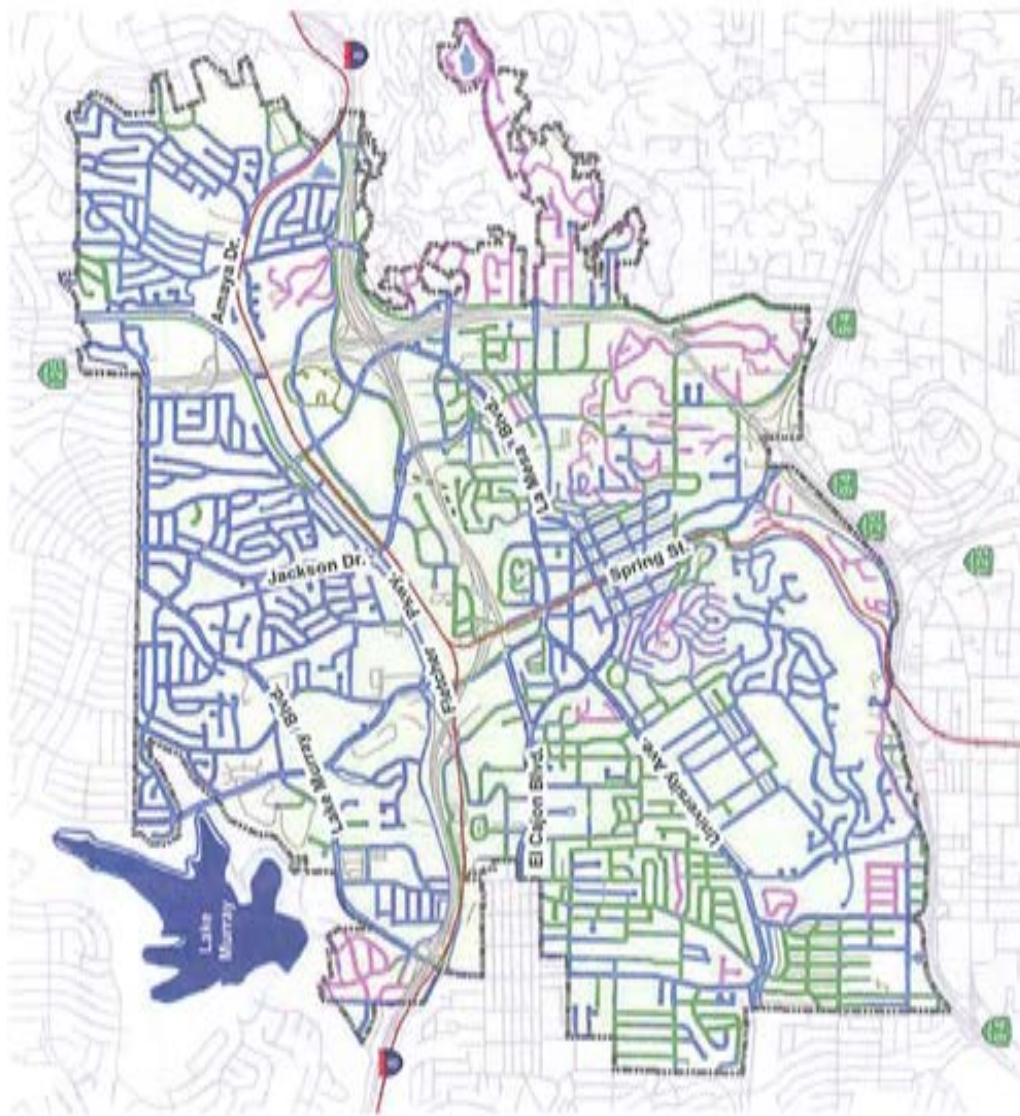


- Legend**
- Street Designator**
- Freeway
 - Parkway Arterial
 - Arterial
 - Major Collector
 - Local Collector
 - Local Collector (Planned)
 - Local Street
- Other**
- Light Rail
 - Light Rail Station
 - City of La Mesa
 - Lakes

Source: City of La Mesa

0 1,300 2,600 3,900 Feet

Figure 2-5
Circulation Plan



Legend

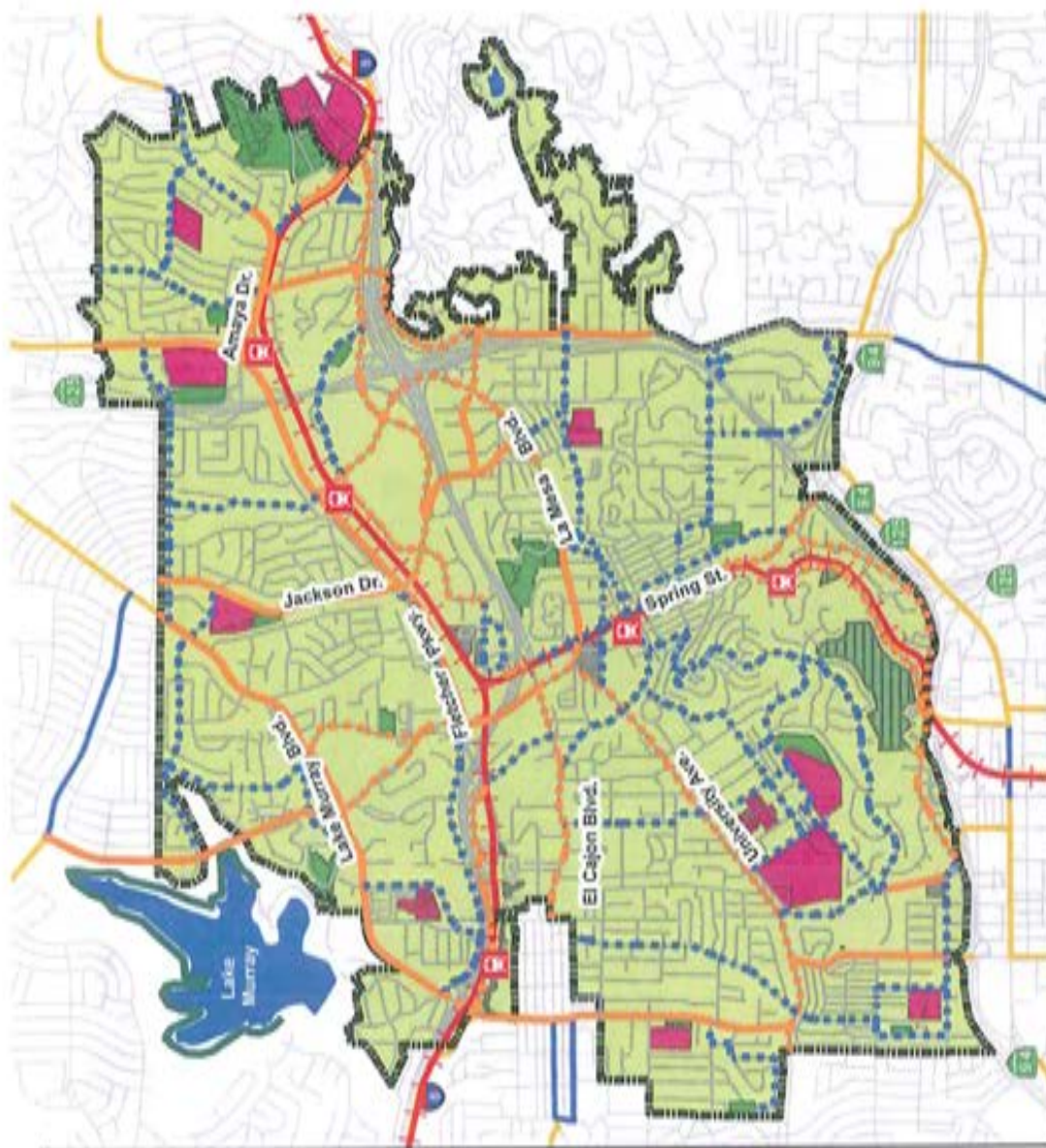
- Existing Sidewalk
- Proposed Sidewalk
- No Sidewalk
- Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
- City Boundary
- Light Rail Transit
- Roads / Alleys
- Lakes

**Figure 2-6
Sidewalk Masterplan**

Source: City of La Mesa

0 1,300 2,600 4,200 Feet





- Legend**
- Bicycle Facility Class
- Class 1 (Solid Orange Line)
 - Class 2 (Dashed Orange Line)
 - Class 2 (Proposed) (Dotted Orange Line)
 - Class 3 (Dashed Blue Line)
 - Class 3 (Proposed) (Dotted Blue Line)
- Public Facilities (Grey)
 - Public Parks (Green)
 - Open Space (Light Green)
 - Lakes (Blue)
 - Public Schools (Pink)
 - Roads (Thin Grey Line)
 - City of La Mesa (Thick Dashed Black Line)

Source: City of La Mesa



Figure 2-7
Bicycle Facilities Plan

(MTS). MTS is the regional transit service provider in the southern half of San Diego County, connecting La Mesa to the greater San Diego metropolitan area. Figure 2-8 illustrates transit services throughout the planning area.

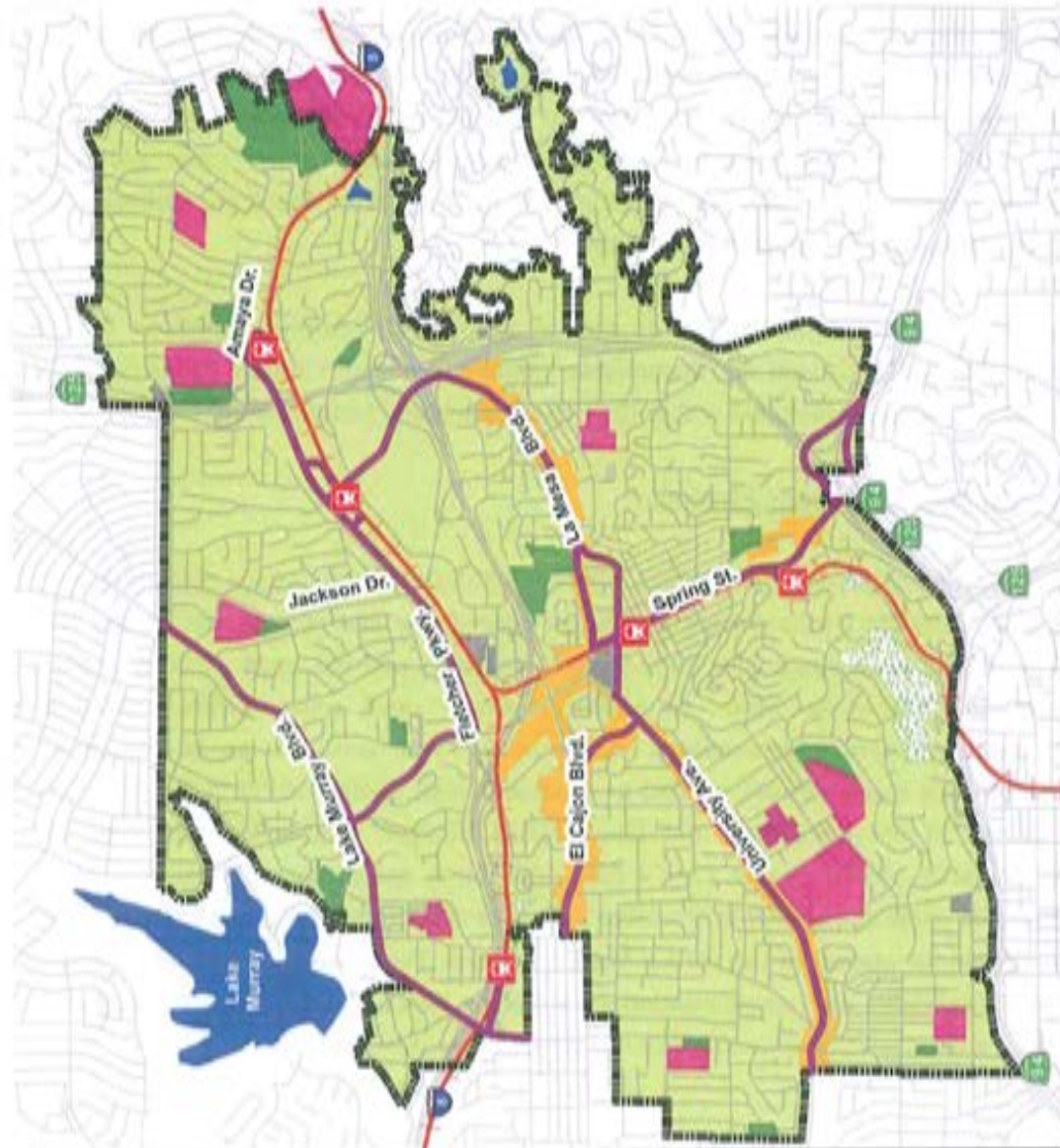
2.4.3 Conservation and Sustainability Element

The purpose of the Conservation and Sustainability Element is to accommodate population growth and future development in the most environmentally sustainable and non-polluting ways possible. Approximately 98 percent of the City's land area is developed with residential and commercial land uses. La Mesa does not have many of the resources typically discussed in a conservation element, such as significant natural habitat areas, bodies of water or coastal zones, agriculture, or mineral resources. These issues are important to the community in a regional context though, and the goals and policies in the Conservation and Sustainability Element reflect this interest in supporting regional conservation efforts. Resource conservation issues that are also of regional interest but that apply more directly to local implementation are air quality, water supply, solid waste management, sewage treatment, and storm water pollution management. These topics as they relate to conditions in the City of La Mesa are addressed as part of the Conservation and Sustainability Element.

Sustainability concepts that address initiatives such as the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill [AB] 32) and the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (Senate Bill [SB] 375) are also included within the Conservation and Sustainability Element.

2.4.4 Recreation and Open Space Element

The purpose of the Recreation and Open Space Element is to establish the goals, objectives, and policies needed to meet the City's current and future open space and recreational needs. The backbone of the City's open space plan is the City's 14 parks and the open space resources provided by schools within La Mesa. In addition, private open space within residential developments and commercial recreational opportunities will continue to be important components of the open space network needed to maintain a high quality of life in the City. The open space section of the Recreation and Open Space Element establishes guidelines for balancing the demands placed on the City's parks and open space areas. There is a close relationship between measures needed to conserve natural resources and those needed to provide open space to sustain the quality of life for La Mesa's citizens. The Recreation and Open Space Element includes highlights and recommendations from the Parks Master Plan to incorporate recommendations and policies relative to parks and recreation within the City.



Legend

- SD Trolley System
- Trolley Stations
- Bus Routes
- Mixed Use
- Overlay Zone
- Public Schools
- Public Facilities
- Public Parks
- Open Space
- Lake
- Roads
- City of La Mesa

Source: City of La Mesa



Figure 2-8
Transit Service

2.4.5 Historic Preservation Element

The purpose of the Historic Preservation Element is to provide a long-range blueprint to guide the process of historic preservation in La Mesa, including identification and treatment of historical and cultural resources, to support program management and decision-making, and to integrate preservation planning into the comprehensive urban planning and development process. The Historic Preservation Element provides goals, objectives, and policies intended to sustain and improve the quality of La Mesa's built and cultural environment, and to promote awareness and enthusiasm for the unique identity and heritage that La Mesa possesses.

2.4.6 Noise Element

The purpose of the Noise Element is to identify existing noise problems in the community and provide guidance to avoid noise problems in the future. The Noise Element quantifies the community noise environment in terms of noise exposure contours. These contours are the basis for the development of land-use compatibility guidelines. A noise contour map assists in analyzing decisions regarding the placement of noise-sensitive land uses such as housing units, schools, hospitals, and libraries. Where noise-sensitive uses are proposed in areas exposed to high noise levels, the Noise Element outlines policies and noise-attenuating measures, including building placement, type of construction, and materials selections.

2.4.7 Safety Element

Ensuring the health and safety of La Mesa's citizens and maintaining the quality of life in the community are long-standing goals for the City. The purpose of the Safety Element is to incorporate safety considerations into the planning process to minimize the impact on the community of hazardous conditions or emergency situations. The Safety Element also incorporates the City's Emergency Operation Plan.

The Safety Element identifies hazards within the community and contains policies designed to minimize risk to the public. The following identified areas of concern are addressed in this element: flood hazard, geologic hazard, seismic safety, fire safety, hazardous materials exposure, disaster preparedness, and citizen safety. Some related policies and programs are also found in the Public Services and Facilities Element. Many of the policies and programs addressed in the Safety Element reflect this long-standing commitment. In addition, the Safety Element recognizes that the best policy is being prepared and maintaining the ability to respond effectively to unforeseen events.

2.4.8 Public Services and Facilities Element

State law does not require that a general plan include a Public Services and Facilities Element. Public services and facilities are, however, linked to the General Plan through the City's Capital Improvement Program. Every 2 years, the City Planning Commission reviews the proposed Capital Improvement Program. This program must be found consistent with and serve to further the goals and policies of the General Plan.

Planning for future services and facilities is among the most important role of local government. The General Plan can help estimate the potential for growth in the residential and commercial sector. Growth in these areas affects the demand for services and facilities. Anticipation of, and response to, increased services and facility demands can help to achieve the goals of the General Plan and provide for orderly growth within the community to sustain La Mesa's quality of life expectations.

Since there is not much undeveloped land left in the City, the 2012 General Plan needs to address the redevelopment of older commercial areas and the allowance for appropriate forms of infill development. Analysis of the service and infrastructure needs for this redevelopment is important to make sure that the redevelopment will be supported without overtaxing existing systems, both physically and financially. Understanding and planning for replacement of older infrastructure is important for residents, property owners, and those wishing to invest in La Mesa's future.

2.4.9 Health and Wellness Element

State law does not require that a general plan include a Health and Wellness Element, but the inclusion of such an element reflects goals and policies that the City embraces. The Health and Wellness Element describes the measures that La Mesa will take to make the health of the community a priority and to achieve its vision of being the healthiest and most livable city in the San Diego region. The Health and Wellness Element offers policy guidance that will enable La Mesa's residents to achieve an active lifestyle; have access to healthy food choices; enjoy a safe, livable community; and raise healthy, active children.

2.4.10 Housing Element

La Mesa has a population approaching 60,000, and is a mature suburban community. Since vacant land in the City is limited, future residential development will occur primarily through infill on underused properties and through public- and private-sector redevelopment efforts.

The Housing Element is intended to guide residential development and preservation in a way that coincides with the overall economic and social values of the community. Residential development should also be consistent with the regional housing needs that are determined by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and the California Department of Housing and Community Development. The residential character of a city is largely dependent on the type and quality of its dwelling units, their location, and such factors as maintenance and neighborhood amenities. The Housing Element reflects the need to provide housing for all economic segments of the community and legal requirements. The Housing Element establishes policies that will guide City officials in daily decision-making, and sets forth an action program designed to enable the City to realize its housing goals.

A successful strategy for improving housing conditions must be preceded by an assessment of the housing needs of the community and region. The Housing Element discusses the major components of housing need, including trends in La Mesa's population, households, employment base, and the type of housing available. Housing needs in a regional context is also presented. The Housing Element analysis is broken down into four major subsections. Population characteristics analyzes the City in terms of individual people and attempts to identify any population trends that may affect future housing needs. Household characteristics analyzes La Mesa in terms of households or living groups to see how past and expected household changes will affect housing needs. Employment analyzes residents in terms of occupation and employment sources, as this directly affects the need for, and location of, housing. Housing stock analyzes the housing units in La Mesa in terms of availability, affordability, and condition. This assessment of La Mesa's housing needs serves as the basis for identification of appropriate policies and programs related to future housing development.

2.4.11 Implementation Program

Each General Plan element includes implementation programs to ensure that policy direction is translated from general terms to specific actions. The implementation programs provide strategies to activate the policies and plans identified in each of the General Plan elements. Various implementation programs serve as a basis for future decision-making related to approval of development proposals, assignment of staff, and expenditure of City funds. The programs specifically identify individual program responsibility, funding sources, and the timeframe for completion.

2.5 INTENDED USES OF THE PROGRAM EIR

This Program EIR serves as the basis for environmental review and impact mitigation for adoption and implementation of the 2012 General Plan. The City will review subsequent

implementation projects for consistency with the Program EIR, and prepare appropriate environmental documentation pursuant to CEQA provisions for Program EIRs and subsequent projects. Subsequent projects under the Program EIR may include the following implementation activities:

- Rezoning of properties
- Approval of Specific Plans
- Approval of development plans, including tentative maps, variances, conditional use permits, and other land-use permits
- Approval of development agreements
- Approval of facility and service master plans and financing plans
- Approval of funding of public improvement projects
- Approval of resource management plans
- Issuance of municipal bonds
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for implementation of the General Plan
- Acquisition of property by purchase or eminent domain
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for public and private development projects

The following lead, responsible, and trustee agencies may use this Program EIR in the adoption of the General Plan and approval of subsequent implementation activities:

- City of La Mesa
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- California Department of Conservation
- California Department of Housing and Community Development
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California State Lands Commission
- California Water Resources Control Board, Region 9
- San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
- San Diego County Air Pollution Control District

- County of San Diego
- San Diego County Regional Airport Authority
- Helix Water District
- Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority
- Grossmont Union High School District
- La Mesa Spring Valley School District
- Lemon Grove School District
- Grossmont Healthcare District
- City of Lemon Grove
- City of El Cajon
- City of San Diego

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