

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

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101 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this Specific Plan is to implement the City's General Plan with respect to the development of the Rancho San Clemente. In support of this purpose, the Specific Plan's objectives are to:

- I. Provide planning and design concepts for Rancho San Clemente consistent with the General Plan and policies specific to the Rancho San Clemente area;
- II. Provide for the implementation of the City's Inclusionary Housing Program, Growth Management Program, Urban Design Program, and Master Landscape Plan for Scenic Corridors;
- III. Provide a set of development standards for the Specific Plan Area to implement the foregoing planning and design concepts;
- IV. Regulate land uses and development in conformance with the City's Zoning Ordinance and Hillside Development Ordinance No. 841;
- V. Provide a balance of land uses within the Specific Plan area, including a wide range of housing opportunities, educational, institutional, open space, and recreational uses, with a substantial employment center including commercial, business park, and industrial park in close proximity to residential areas;
- VI. Phase development in step with provision for the infrastructure and services needed to support the new development;
- VII. Reduce intrusion on the natural topography and open space by preserving the primary ridgeline, gateway knoll, and perimeter open space areas.

102 Applicability and Organization of Specific Plan

The Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan is both a planning and a regulatory document to implement the goals, policies, and objectives of the San Clemente General Plan. The chapters are written to guide and regulate land use and development in a manner unique to Rancho San Clemente, while implementing City-wide plans and policies.

The provisions of this Specific Plan apply to all real property within the area known as Rancho San Clemente, depicted on Figures 1-1 and 1-2. The following is an outline of the chapters in this Specific Plan:

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Master Plan
- Chapter 3: Design Guidelines
- Chapter 4: Phasing and Implementation
- Chapter 5: Development Standards
- Chapter 6: Development Review and Applications
- Chapter 7: Definitions

103 Relationship to Other City Planning Documents

I. GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan is the fundamental planning policy document of the City of San Clemente. It defines and sets forth rules by which the community will be permitted to develop in the future. It is intended to guide all planning environmental decisions, and land use in the City for the next ten to twenty years. Goals, objectives, and policies are established by the City's General Plan, which includes elements to address the following: Land Use; Urban Design; Historic Preservation; Economic Development; Mobility and Complete Streets; Housing, Beaches, Parks and Recreation; Natural Resources; Coastal; Safety; Public Services, Facilities and Utilities; Growth Management; and Governance. Separately, the City more regularly adopts updates to the State mandated Housing Element. The City's General Plan also establishes goals and policies addressing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions as well as efficient use, conservation, and generation of energy within the community aimed at reducing the use of fossil fuels for transportation purposes. These goals and policies provide the foundation for two key implementation documents: the San Clemente Climate Action Plan (CAP) and San Clemente Sustainability Action Plan (SAP).

The General Plan establishes what types of land uses will be permitted and where, how dense the development will be, and the proportional relationship of the built environment to the natural environment. The General Plan also identifies the location and amounts of open space to be preserved; the basic design and phasing

of the circulation system; future infrastructure and public services needs; and how environmental resources will be protected. The City's physical form and image, economy, and social fabric are greatly influenced by the General Plan. The General Plan remarks on the crucial role the natural environment plays in sustaining community lifestyle and the local economy. As such, the CAP builds upon the environmental values set forth in the General Plan. The CAP focuses on water, energy, and waste consumption as areas targeted for action to create efficiencies. The Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan is a tool for the implementation of the General Plan and all of its elements that apply to the Rancho San Clemente area.

II. ZONING ORDINANCE

The City's Zoning Ordinance is the document that implements the General Plan. It provides regulations regarding permitted land uses, development standards, the development entitlement process, etc. for all parcels of land within the corporate boundaries of the City of San Clemente. Certain areas of the City, e.g. the Pier Bowl, Rancho San Clemente, Forster Ranch, Marblehead Inland, the Pico Corridor and Talega are zoned SP (Specific Plan). The various adopted Specific Plans for these areas are incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance by reference. They establish regulations applicable to the land within the boundaries of a particular Specific Plan. Likewise, the Zoning Ordinance provides certain regulations that apply within the Specific Plan areas. The Zoning is set forth by the Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan (RSCSP); which establishes the permitted uses and development standards in each zone. Development within Rancho San Clemente shall conform to all provisions contained in this Specific Plan, as well as sections of the City's Zoning Ordinance adopted herein by reference.

III. SIGN ORDINANCE

The Sign Ordinance contains regulations pertaining to signs throughout the City. This Specific Plan incorporates the Sign Ordinance by reference.

IV. DESIGN GUIDELINES

The City's adopted Design Guidelines, which apply to all areas of the City except for the Inland Ranch Specific Plan areas, contain architectural and site design guidelines for use by planners, architects, landscape architects and other design professionals. Their purpose is to implement the General Plan Urban Design Element. Chapter 3 of this Specific Plan contains design guidelines similar in purpose and content to the Design Guidelines, but created for and applicable to areas within Rancho San Clemente.

V. MASTER LANDSCAPE PLAN FOR SCENIC CORRIDORS

The Master Landscape Plan for Scenic Corridors contains streetscape design standards for all arterial highways identified in the Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan. In a manner similar to the Design Guidelines, this Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan incorporates guidelines from the Master Landscape Plan for Scenic Corridors for Avenida Pico and Avenida La Pata.

VI. HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

The City's Hillside Development Ordinance contains regulations pertaining to grading and development in hillside areas such as Rancho San Clemente. Chapter 3 of this Specific Plan contains general grading and other design guidelines which are consistent with and meant to be used in concert with the Hillside Development Ordinance.

104 Rancho San Clemente Area

Rancho San Clemente is located about one-half mile inland of Interstate 5 Freeway and southeast of Avenida Pico with the exception of residential and neighborhood commercial Planning Area 1 located north of Avenida Pico. It is bounded by Marblehead Inland on the west, the Talega and Forster Ranch Specific Plan areas to the north, and Camp Pendleton U.S. Marine Corps Base on the east (See Figure 1-1 Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan Area). Rancho San Clemente consists of approximately 1,943 acres of land with elevations varying from less than 80 feet to more than 900 feet above sea level. This planned community has several significant features, including a primary ridgeline and a prominent knoll adjacent to Avenida Pico. These features are visible from many areas of the community.

Rancho San Clemente Business Park Focus Area

The General Plan provides comprehensive, long-term goals and policies for achieving San Clemente's Vision. The General Plan identifies eight Focus Areas considered to have the most potential for enhancement, including Rancho San Clemente. Focus Area policies provide specific direction beyond policies applicable Citywide.

The Rancho San Clemente Focus Area, identified on Figure 1-2 (Business Park Focus Area), is an industrial office, and vehicle sales and services district in the community. A wide range of employment-generating land uses are provided including manufacturing, research and development, offices, and automotive services. The allowable mix and intensity of uses provides significant job opportunities for both residents and non-residents commuting to the area and allows development to respond to changing market conditions and commercial space needs to boost economic growth.

The location of the Focus Area is defined by the developable areas between Avenida Pico and surrounding areas of Calle Amanecer as well as along Avenida La Pata between Calle Del Cerro and the San Diego County border. Rancho San Clemente Focus Area goals and policies are discussed further in Chapter 2 of the Specific Plan.

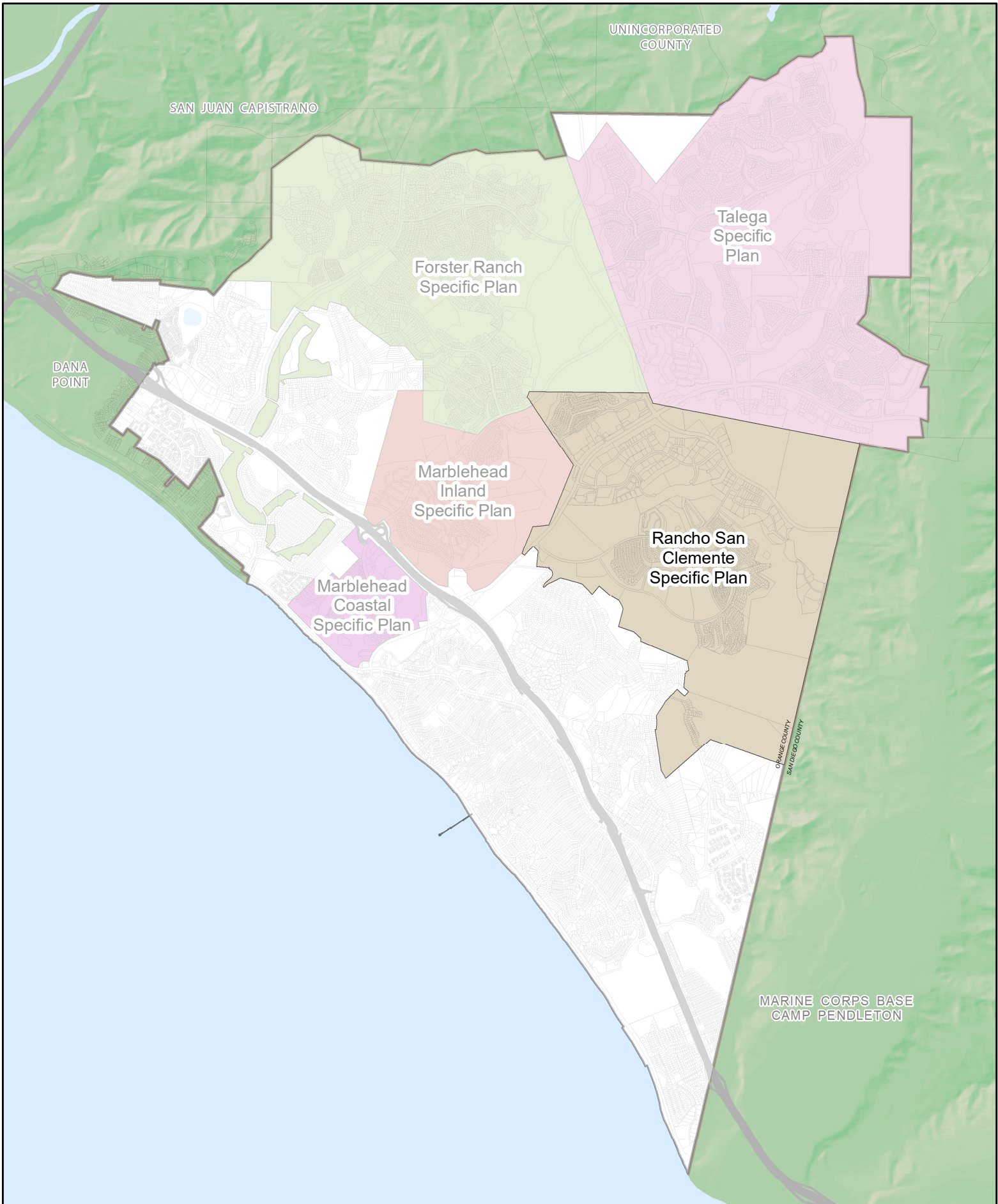
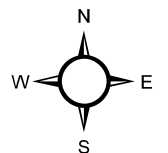
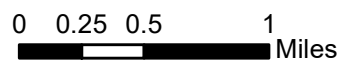


Figure 1-1
**Rancho San Clemente
 Specific Plan Area**

1-6



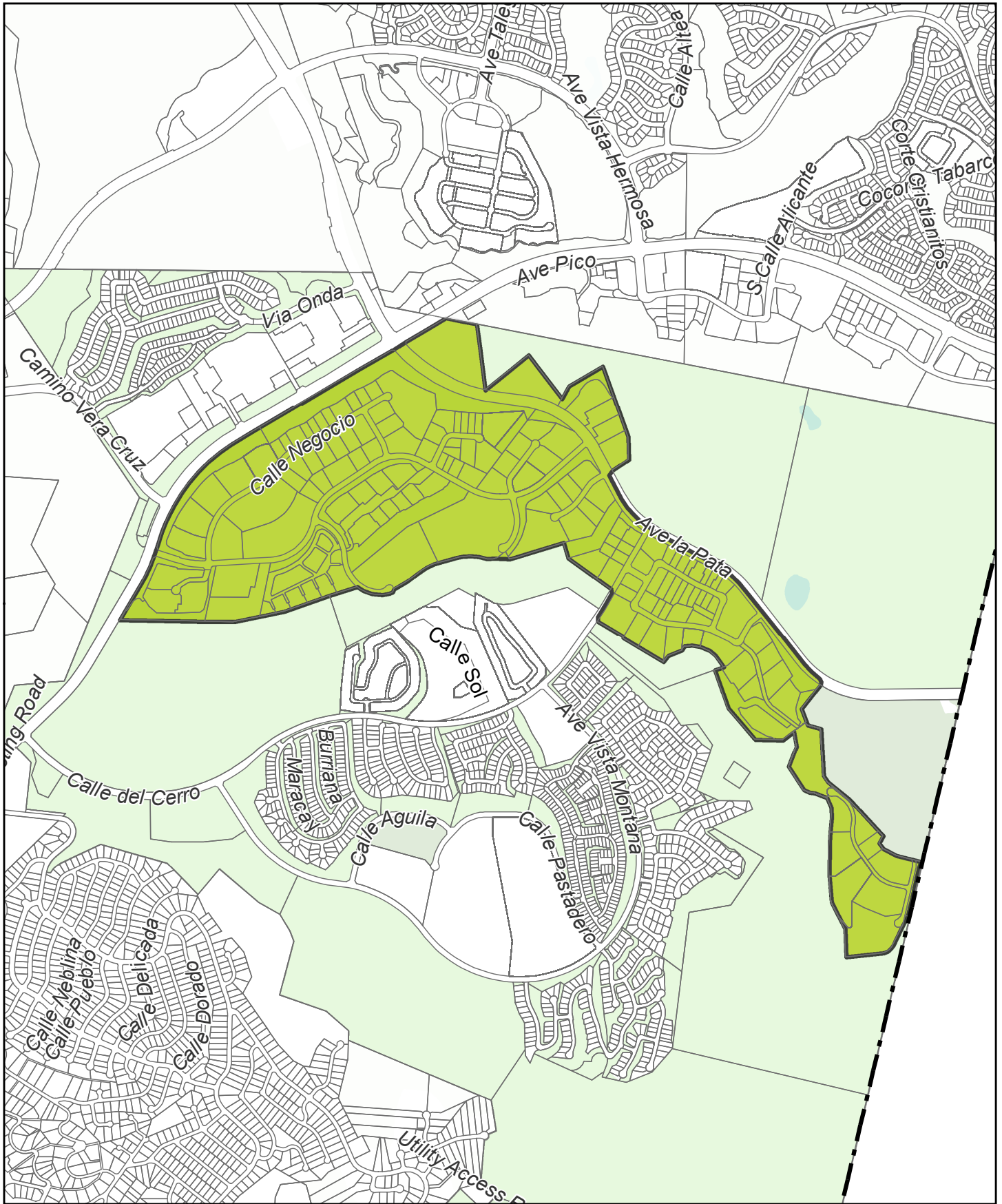
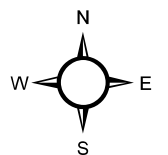
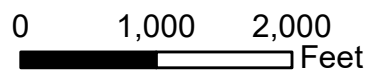


Figure 1-2
**Business Park
Focus Area**



105 General Plan and Zoning

The City's General Plan land use designations for Rancho San Clemente are shown on Figure 1-3 (General Plan Land Use Plan) and supplemented by Table 1-1 (Existing Land Use). They include the following land uses:

RL	Residential - Low Density (Max 4.5 D.U./Gross Acre)
RML	Residential - Medium Low Density (Max 7.0 D.U./Gross Acre)
RM	Residential - Medium Density (Max 15 D.U./Gross Acre)
RH	Residential - High Density (Max 24.0 D.U./Gross Acre)
NC1.2	Neighborhood Commercial
LI	Light Industrial
HI	Heavy Industrial
P	Public
INST	Institutional
OS1	Public Open Space
OS2	Private Open Space

The Zoning for Rancho San Clemente is RSCSP - Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan. This Specific Plan sets forth permitted uses and development standards. Development within Rancho San Clemente shall conform to all provisions contained in this Specific Plan, as well as the RSCSP Zone and sections of the City's Zoning Ordinance adopted herein by reference.

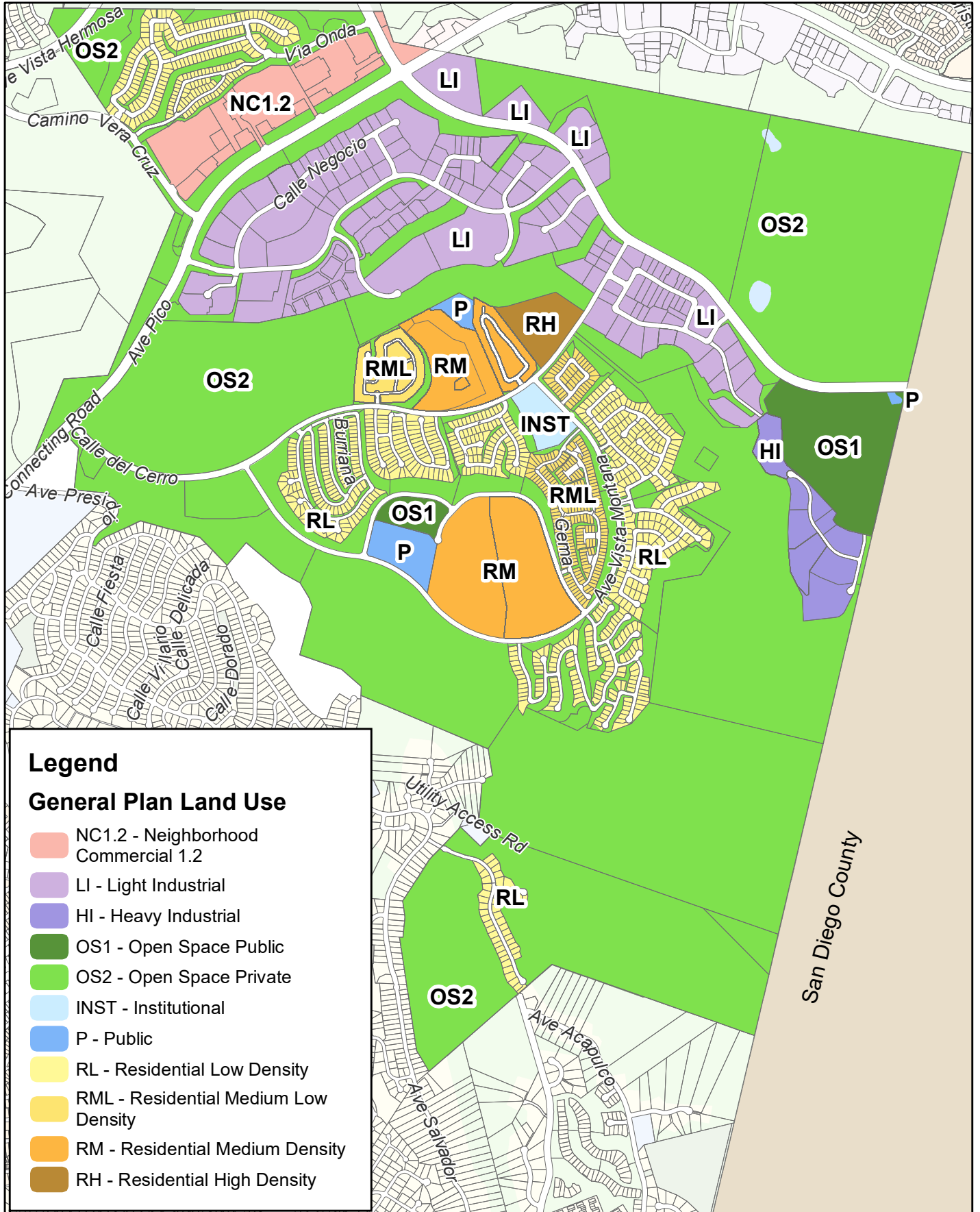
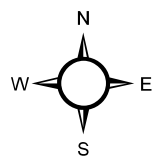
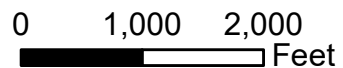


Figure 1-3
**General Plan
 Land Use**



106 Existing Physical Conditions

Rancho San Clemente has been subdivided into either numbered lots for development purposes or lettered lots for permanent open space. The majority of the development area has been either rough or precisely graded. Any new grading proposed in Rancho San Clemente will be to refine rough graded areas already approved for development. The residential "bowl" area in and around Vista Del Cerro and Avenida Vista Montana is almost completely developed and surrounded by permanent open space including a ridgeline pedestrian trail. There is a City neighborhood park and a public elementary school in the bowl area. Planning Area 24 (Sea Ridge Estates) is a custom lot development, remote from the residential bowl area, where all lots have been developed with single-family homes. See Figure 2-1, Master Land Use Plan, for location of planning areas.

North of Avenida La Pata are three Planning Areas and the golf course/clubhouse. On the south side of La Pata, east of Vista Del Cerro are sites for development of auto service uses, business park, business commercial and heavy industrial, as well as the City's Richard Steed Memorial Park softball complex. The 142 acres north of Avenida Pico (Planning Area 1) is planned and developed as a neighborhood commercial and residential area. Table 1-1 (Existing Land Use) provides a summary of development status as of mid-2022:

**TABLE 1-1
EXISTING LAND USE**

Planning Area	Tract	Acres	D. U.	Zoning	GP
1	TT 13530	65 * 77 * *incl. open space	286	Residential Low Density and Neighborhood Commercial	RL / NC1.2
2	T12402 and T 12766	103.1	NA	Business Park	LI
3	T 12124, T 12125, T 12852	93.0	NA	Business Park	LI
4	T 13467 and T 13688	30.6	NA	Business Park	LI
5	Lot 13, T 12125	4.4	NA	Business Park	LI
6	Par. 2, PM 86-330	8.1	NA	Business Park	LI
7	T 14609	30.7	NA	Industrial Park	HI
8A	Lot 3, T 12126	1.1	NA	Business Commercial	LI

**TABLE 1-1
(CONTINUED)**

Planning Area	Tract	Acres	D. U.	1994 Land Use	GP
8B	L3, T 12126 & L7, 8, T 13467	23.9	NA	Business Park	LI
9	Lot 2, T 12126	46.9	NA	softball park	OS-Pub
10A	T 12284	10.3	86	detached condos	RM
10B	T 12378	11.5	250	apartments	RH
11A	T 12283	16.3	114	detached condos	RML
11B	T 12314	20.5	264	attached condos	RM
12	T 12426	28.8	133	SF houses	RL
13	T 12359	21.9	76	SF houses	RL
14	T 12892	21.2	88	SF houses	RL
15	Lot 18, T 12125	7.0	NA	vacant	INST
16	TT 14986	8.8	43	SF houses	RML
17	T 14760	26.9	124	SF houses	RL
18	T 12883	34.0	204	SF houses	RML
19	T 14759	30.0	92	SF houses	RL
20	T 13182	25.7	198	condos	RM
21	T 12864	33.1	130	SF houses	RL
22	Lot 5, T 12127	25.3	368	apartments	RM
23	Lots 12, 13, T 12124	15.7	NA	park/school	OS1/P
24	T 12254	14.8	47	custom home lots	RL
25	Lot 3, T 12125	2.4	NA	Commercial	NC1.2
26	Lot 4, T 12125	7.8	NA	Business Park	LI
27	Lot 16, T 12125	5.6	N	Business Park	LI
ROADS		58.0	NA	built	
OPEN SPACE		1097.0	NA	open space	

107 Rancho San Clemente Planning History

I. ORIGINAL SPECIFIC PLAN

In July 1982, the City Council adopted a new Citywide General Plan. At about the same time, the City Council also adopted a new Hillside Development Ordinance and a major amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. The zoning amendment created a "Development District", designated "D-D" on the zoning map, for the inland area of the City. This D-D District was applied to the four major inland ranch properties (Talega, Forster Ranch, Marblehead Inland, and Rancho San Clemente) allowing a maximum of 1.5 dwelling units per gross acre and required more detailed planning prior to development.

Subsequent to the 1982 General Plan adoption, Specific Plans were adopted for three of the four ranches including Rancho San Clemente. The original Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan was adopted by the City Council on November 16, 1983 by Ordinance No. 876 and amended in 1989 to accomplish the following:

- A. Grading which is responsive to the natural terrain and preserves designated primary ridgeline, gateway knoll, and significant open space.
- B. A change in the mix of housing types that will be available in the various residential areas to be developed on the property.
- C. The addition of a support commercial area for the business park, a 30.7 acre industrial park, a 44.7 acre community park, a mixed use area at the future nucleus of the inland community to provide retail, residential, and business uses, and sites designated Institutional.
- D. A more workable circulation plan.

II. SUBSEQUENT GENERAL PLAN/SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENTS

Land use plans, regulations, and design guidelines have been adopted along with this Specific Plan to ensure development improves Rancho San Clemente in a manner consistent with goals and policies for the area. Several Specific Plan amendments have occurred since the plan's adoption to address various community concerns. Most recently, a 2022 Specific Plan update was completed to amend regulations and design guidelines for consistency with policy, land use, and development standard changes established with the adoption of the 2014 Centennial General Plan and various amendments made to the Municipal Code. The history of Rancho San Clemente planning efforts is summarized below and lists

past amendments affecting development since the Specific Plan's initial implementation.

In 1994, the City Council approved GPA 94-02/SPA 94-02 resulting in several land use designation changes in Rancho San Clemente. In 1995 the City Council approved two more General Plan land use changes in Rancho San Clemente. The changes expanded the Business Commercial, Business Park, and residential Planning Areas.

GPA 94-02/SPA 94-02 was partly initiated by individual property owners and partly by the City. Privately initiated changes were made for Planning Areas 3A, 5, 6, 8A, 8B, 16, and 27. The City expanded Planning Area 8B by 2.03 acres, decreasing Planning Area 4 by the same amount and changed the densities in Planning Areas 10A, 11A, and 18 to reflect actual buildout.

GPA 95-02 changed the land use designation on Planning Area 26 from NC2 Neighborhood Commercial to I2 Light Industrial. GPA 95-03 changed the land use designation for Planning Area 8B from I3 Heavy Industrial to I2 Light Industrial and lowered the maximum number of dwelling units permitted in Rancho San Clemente to from 2,931 to 2,568.

In addition to the land use changes identified above, the Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan was in need of an amendment that would implement the 2014 Centennial General Plan and make it consistent in format with the other inland ranch Specific Plans. 2015 amendments to the Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan served that purposes incorporating policies from the City's Centennial General Plan and other adopted planning programs, and was made compatible with the City's 2015 comprehensive Zoning Ordinance update.

SPA 21-229 addressed amendments made to the General Plan in 2014 and 2015 (GPA 13-043, GPA 15-049). General Plan Amendments GPA 13-043 and GPA 15-049 changed land use designations in the Rancho San Clemente Specific Plan from I2 (Light Industrial) to LI (Light Industrial) and I3 (Heavy Industrial) to HI (High Industrial). In addition, the land use designation for Mixed Use zones in Planning Area 1 changed to Residential and Neighborhood Commercial. The 2021 Specific Plan Amendment also incorporated into the document the General Plan Focus Area for the Business Park and adopted development standards and regulations for permitted and conditionally permitted automotive service uses to address auto-related goals and policies in the Centennial General Plan.

108 Authority and Severability

I. LEGAL AUTHORITY

This Specific Plan has been prepared and adopted pursuant to Sections 65450 through 65457 of the California Government Code (applicable Government Code sections reproduced as Appendix A).

II. SEVERABILITY

In the event that any plan, diagram, regulation, condition, program, or other portion of this Specific Plan is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such portion(s) shall be deemed separate, distinct, and independent provisions of the Specific Plan and the invalidity of such provisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of the Specific Plan.

III. TERMINOLOGY

Within this Specific Plan, words used in the present tense shall include the future; words in the singular shall include the plural. The word "shall" is mandatory and the word "may" is permissive. The word "should" refers to policy guidance which must be followed in the absence of important opposing considerations recognized by the City as valid and overriding. For the purposes of this Specific Plan, certain terms shall be defined as set forth in Chapter 7. Terms not listed shall be defined per the City's Zoning Ordinance, or if not listed in the Zoning Ordinance, shall be construed in accordance with accepted usage.