

August 18, 2021

Marlon Pangilinan, emailed
Senior Planner, City of San Diego
Planning Department

Regarding: Clairemont Community Plan Update, Community Discussion Draft May 2021 Draft

Hello Marlon,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments regarding the May 2021 Draft of the Clairemont Community Plan Update (CPU). As you know, I have been an active member of the Community Plan Update subcommittee to the Clairemont Planning Group and have participated in the majority of the workshops, community outreach, and subcommittee meetings. I appreciate your hard work and your willingness to take into consideration all the comments and feedback you have received. My comments on the May 2021 CUP Draft include the following:

1. **Chapter 2, Land Use Element** (Typo on page 19, should read Chapter 2 not 1)
 - a. Much of the land use recommendations within the plan seem reasonable and responsible given the need for housing and the political will both in San Diego and at the State level. However, given the density bonus incentives already in place, Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance, and additional legislation that is in place and being introduced at the State level, much of the CUP's residential land use density recommendations have been and will continue to be mute. The residential densities established in this plan can be at the least doubled or tripled without discretionary review through "by right" density bonus incentives.
 - b. Given this fact, will the final EIR and technical reports measure impacts based on the base line densities. Or, will it anticipate the impacts associated with the additional density that is available now and in the future through a variety of density bonuses?
 - c. The two greatest concerns I have for the long-term future of Clairemont do not seem to be fully addressed in this plan are:
 - I. Protecting the Canyonlands of Clairemont.
 - i. Like much of San Diego Clairemont is a community of Mesas and Canyons. The plan seems to protect environmentally sensitive lands and designated open spaces such as Rose Canyon and Tecolote Canyon. However, in addition to these signature open spaces, there are numerous finger canyons throughout Clairemont that are also an important part of the community's character and environmental stewardship. Many of these canyons, or "Urban Habitat Lands" support habitat, provide water quality improvements, and are an important part of the visual character of the community. There is supportive language for protecting sensitive species and sensitive lands in much of the plan but it is unclear what mechanism actually protects our neighborhood finger canyons that may not meet the definition of sensitive lands? All canyons are important and should be protected, but are they? For example, policy CE-15 reads in part: "Allow development of limited, low-intensity uses in a manner that respects the natural environment and

conserves environmentally sensitive lands and resources on parcels within designated open space". It is unclear to me that our canyonlands in Clairemont are truly protected.

- ii. Neither Figure 2-1: Land Use Map nor Figure 6-1: Parks and Recreation Facilities includes any recognition of the many neighborhood canyons in Clairemont. In addition, Chapter 7: Conservation does not include any maps of open space in Clairemont beyond the two signature canyons.
- iii. It is my understanding that the Open Space Element of the General Plan includes the recommendation to protect open space for: preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, public health and safety, control of urban form, and for scenic and visual enjoyment. The CPU and Chapter 7: Conservation, supports preservation of the most sensitive lands but does not recognize public health and safety benefit, control and urban form, and scenic and visual enjoyment as important criteria for protection.
- iv. Please find the attached maps obtained from City of San Diego illustrating open space in Clairemont. In the second map I have illustrated in yellow the unrecognized, and one would assume partly unprotected, open spaces in our community. How can all of these open spaces that are integral to the health and wellbeing of our community be protected?

II. Ensuring Quality Development

- i. As noted previously, the CPU is just one mechanism that will guide the character of Clairemont in the future. Density bonuses and incentives is the other. The latter with "by right" development will have little or no design scrutiny. What are the mechanisms that require that projects be designed well? Chapter 2, the land use section, has excellent goals and policies but very little "teeth" to require compliance. There are many policies to "promote", "support", "encourage", "consider",
 - ii. One recommendation is to establish a City-Wide Design Review Committee to review "by right" development over a certain size. This is something that is prevalent in Cities all across the Nation. Appointed members would have professional background to represent all districts and diversity without prejudice or local influence.
 - iii. The other companion recommendation is to expand section 2.6, Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zones. This section provides qualitative directives to certain parcels in our community, but is abbreviated with little detail. And only 5 areas of the community are included in this section. This includes: Clairemont Town Square SDR's with only 6 policies, Bay View Village with only 4, Clairemont Town Square only building massing recommendations, Rose Canyon Gateway only 4, and Community Core only 5 policies. But by contrast, the Mount Etna Site has 15 policies. Please add more detail and recommendations that will guide these developments to a more positive outcome. In addition to the 5 sites in this section, I recommend including all of the Villages, Corridors and Nodes as identified in section 2.5. This would include the 13 most important development opportunities in our community.
- d. Figure 2-1 – The parcels that are bordered by Morena Blvd., Napier St., Chicago St. and Ashton Str. were originally park land surrounded by a commercial core in the historically important Bay

Park Village subdivision. It is disappointing to see this area only shown as a “node” when it is the heart of the Bay Park community. As a long-term vision, I have suggested that some or all of these parcels could become park land in the future returning the Bay Park Village to its original glory. In the Parks Master Plan, the city has set the goal of adding 100 acres of parkland in the next 10 years. Once communities of concern have been made whole from a park’s perspective, wouldn’t it be possible for one or more of the parcels in this area to be purchased and returned to park land?

- e. LU-23 Rose Canyon Gateway Village – This parcel in our community is ideal for affordable housing linked to the Balboa Light Rail Station by a pedestrian bridge. Under “Uses” item B, instead of “Incorporating a minimum percentage of affordable housing. I request that this be rephrased to read: “Incorporating a significant percentage of affordable housing as a high priority”.
- f. LU-26 Balboa Trolley Station Village includes the idea of “supporting the consideration of a pedestrian bridge or aerial skyway or other means to connect to Mission Bay Park and Mission Boulevard”. Is there a reason why this is not illustrated on any of the CUP maps? The Mission Valley CPU that was recently completed includes 9 pedestrian/bicycle bridges and 2 aerial trams that have been clearly illustrated on maps. Why is nothing shown in any of the Clairemont CPU maps and illustrations? Please add this detail.
- g. It is my opinion that a pedestrian/bicycle bridge should be included at the Balboa Station to link the high-density housing planned along West Mission Bay Drive. The ideal location of an aerial tram would be to link the Tecolote Station with Mission Bay, Sea World and Mission Beach at Bonita Cove. This goes outside of the study area but please see the attached illustration for the “Beach Aerial Express”.
- h. To promote neighborhood identity, please add an illustration, or include in an existing illustration, gateway monument locations into the 5 Neighborhoods of Clairemont.

2. Chapter 3, Mobility

- a. Figure 3-1: Planned Pedestrian Route Types does not include any information. When this graphic is complete, please add the pedestrian/bicycle bridge at the Balboa Station and show how bridges can provide access across Balboa at the Community Core.
- b. Thank you for including the Bridge at Balboa Station and the Green Spine in the narration of this section.
- c. Figure 3-2: Planned Bicycle Network. Please add the Bridge at the Balboa Station across I-5.

3. Chapter 4, Urban Design

- a. Figure 4-1: In addition to the Community Gateways shown in this illustration and explained in text, please include potential gateway monument locations into the 5 Neighborhoods of Clairemont. This will expand the identity of these neighborhoods.
- b. Table 4-2: Species on this table are misspelled and inappropriately capitalized. The existing tree pallet on Balboa Avenue is planted with several street tree species that respond to the character

of corridor sections. Examples include Platanus racemose (Misspelled in the Table) in lower areas symbolizing riparian canyon bottoms, and Pine trees in the Mountain streets responding to that theme. The two species in the table do not reflect the entire existing theme for the street. The trees suggested for Morena Blvd also do not exist and do not reflect the existing trees recently planted along the trolley improvements (Jacaranda and Oaks I believe). Please have this table scrutinized more carefully by one of the talented and experienced landscape architects on staff.

- c. UD-48, In addition to drought-tolerant and climate-appropriate plan species please include native species as well to promote biodiversity in Clairemont.
4. Urban Forestry UD-24 – I do not agree that in all cases street trees or trees in general should be spaced at equal intervals. There are times when drifts of trees may be appropriate such as adjacent to open space. Recommend to strike this item.

5. Chapter 5, Public Facilities, Services and Safety

- a. Fire: Lisa Nordqist-Johnson as part of the local Fire Safe Council has produced extensive research and information on the inadequacies of fire stations and equipment in Clairemont. Please consider those findings and include facility improvements that are needed. Fire safety planning should include anticipating 2 to 3 times more density than is included in the CPU.

6. Chapter 6: Recreation

- a. 6.4 Open Space and Trails – As noted previously please strengthen this portion of the document to protect all canyons in Clairemont, not just Tecolote and Marian Bear.
- b. Include a map that illustrates and recognizes both the small and large canyons in Clairemont.
- c. The recommendation for future Joint-use parks at school sites is appreciated. But I would have hoped that within a community as large as Clairemont more than just 3 tiny new pocket parks could be identified. Is it possible to include the Bay Park Town Center Park as a potential new park in the future, as previously discussed?
- d. Table 6-1 identifies current deficiencies in park acreage currently and identifies a surplus of acreage in 2050 with no information on how this was calculated. As previously discussed, the actual unit count in the community is likely to be significantly different than what is anticipated in the plan's baseline zoning. Perhaps a range can be added to recognize that there will be more units than currently included? Shouldn't these calculations be completed using the point system in the new Parks Master Plan?

7. Chapter 7: Conservation

- a. Please refer to previous notes regarding the value of smaller open space canyons in the community. Please add safeguards for these important open spaces.
- b. Throughout this section, please emphasize with more certainty the philosophy of cultivated native plant species to promote biodiversity in the community.

8. Chapter 8: Noise

- a. This section recognizes commercial and industrial activity, motor vehicle traffic, Rail and aircraft noise. Beyond normal motor vehicle traffic, the worst offender of noise pollution is

motorcycles without proper sound attenuation. I would be appreciated if that fact is recognized.

9. Chapter 9: Historic Preservation

- a. As noted previously, I feel that the Bay Park Village Town Center has not be adequately recognized.

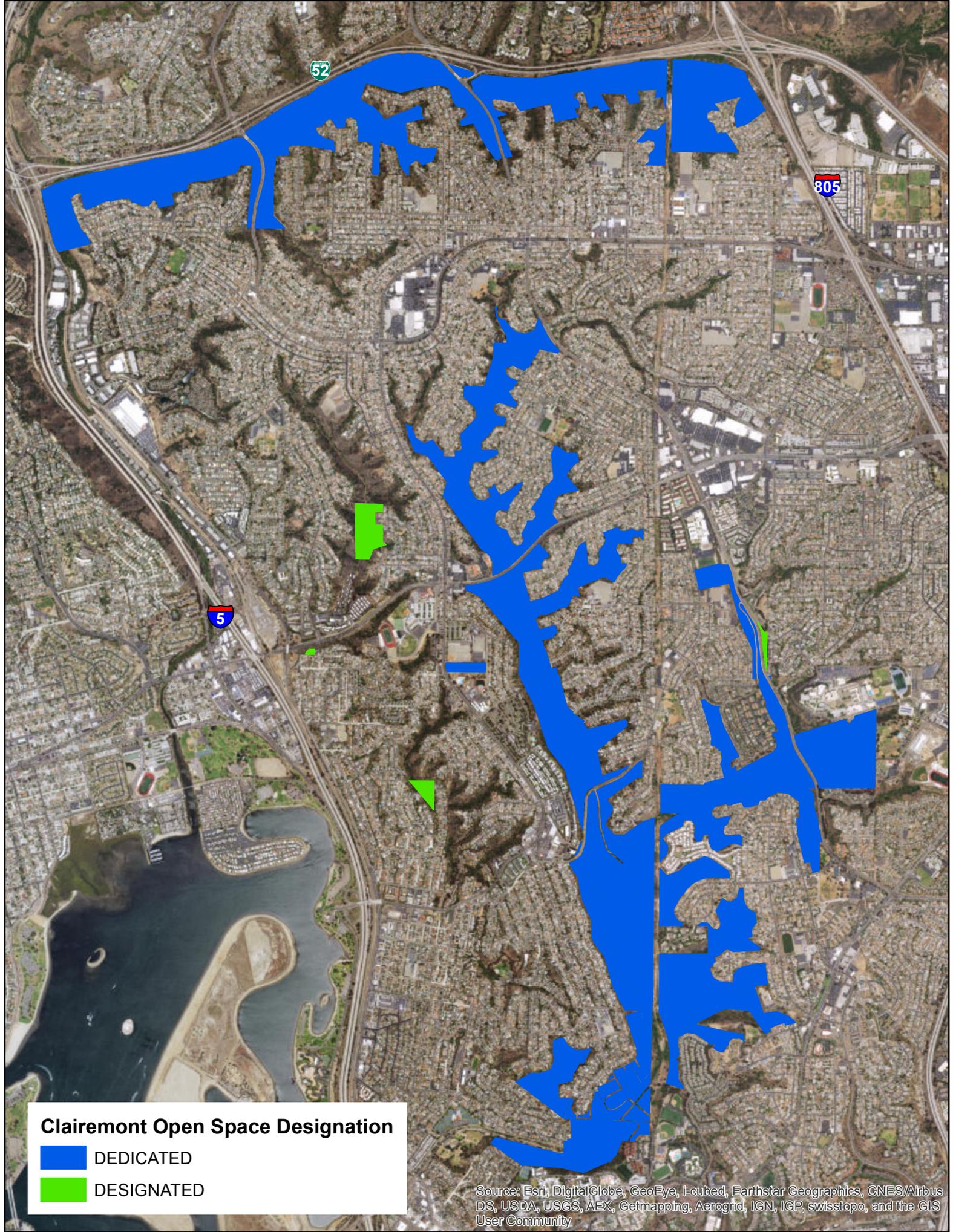
Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Glen Schmidt, FASLA

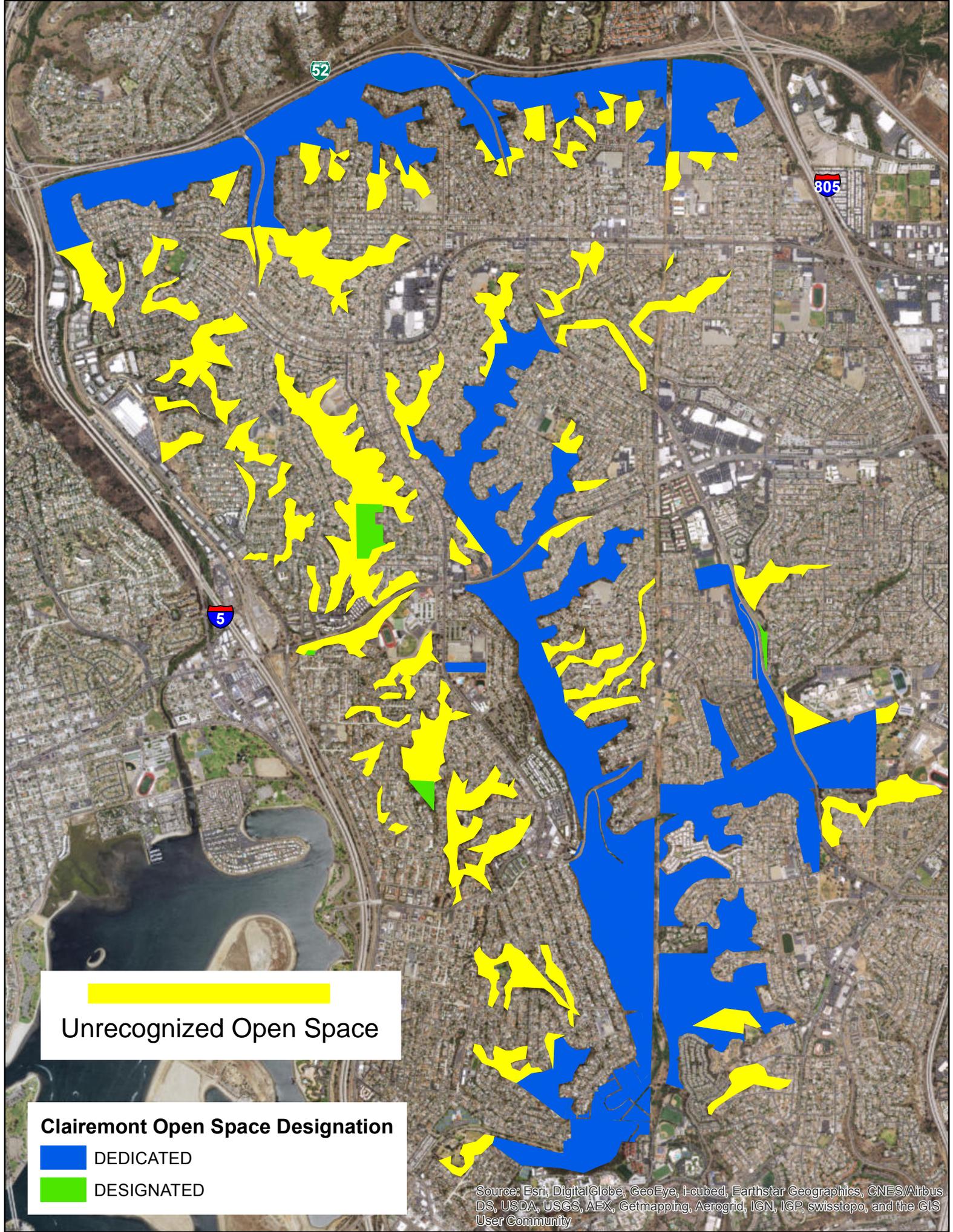
Attachments: Open space maps of Clairemont highlighting unrecognized canyons, "Beach Express Aerial Tram" proposal, Bay Park Village Town Center Park proposal, Green Spine



Clairemont Open Space Designation

-  DEDICATED
-  DESIGNATED

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community




Unrecognized Open Space

Clairemont Open Space Designation

-  DEDICATED
-  DESIGNATED

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Beach Express Skyway

A Vision: Tecolote to the Beach Aerial Tram

Urban aerial trams are in operation around the world providing a highly effective method to move people quickly and efficiently. This community initiated proposal envisions an aerial tram that begins at the Tecolote Light Rail Station with stops at South Shores Mission Bay, Sea World, and terminating at Bonita Cove. This provides convenient access to attractions and beaches in Mission Bay and Mission Beach. Each car could accommodate small groups or families with coolers, chairs, and other gear. Outfitted with racks they also can accommodate bicycles and surfboards. The 3 mile trip could accommodate approximately 1,000 people per hour each direction.

*A vision for community discussion by Glen Schmidt, FASLA
(Graphics By Brynne Ambrose)*



**SCHMIDT
DESIGN
GROUP**



Illustration of aerial tram looking west on West Mission Bay Drive

Beach Express Skyway

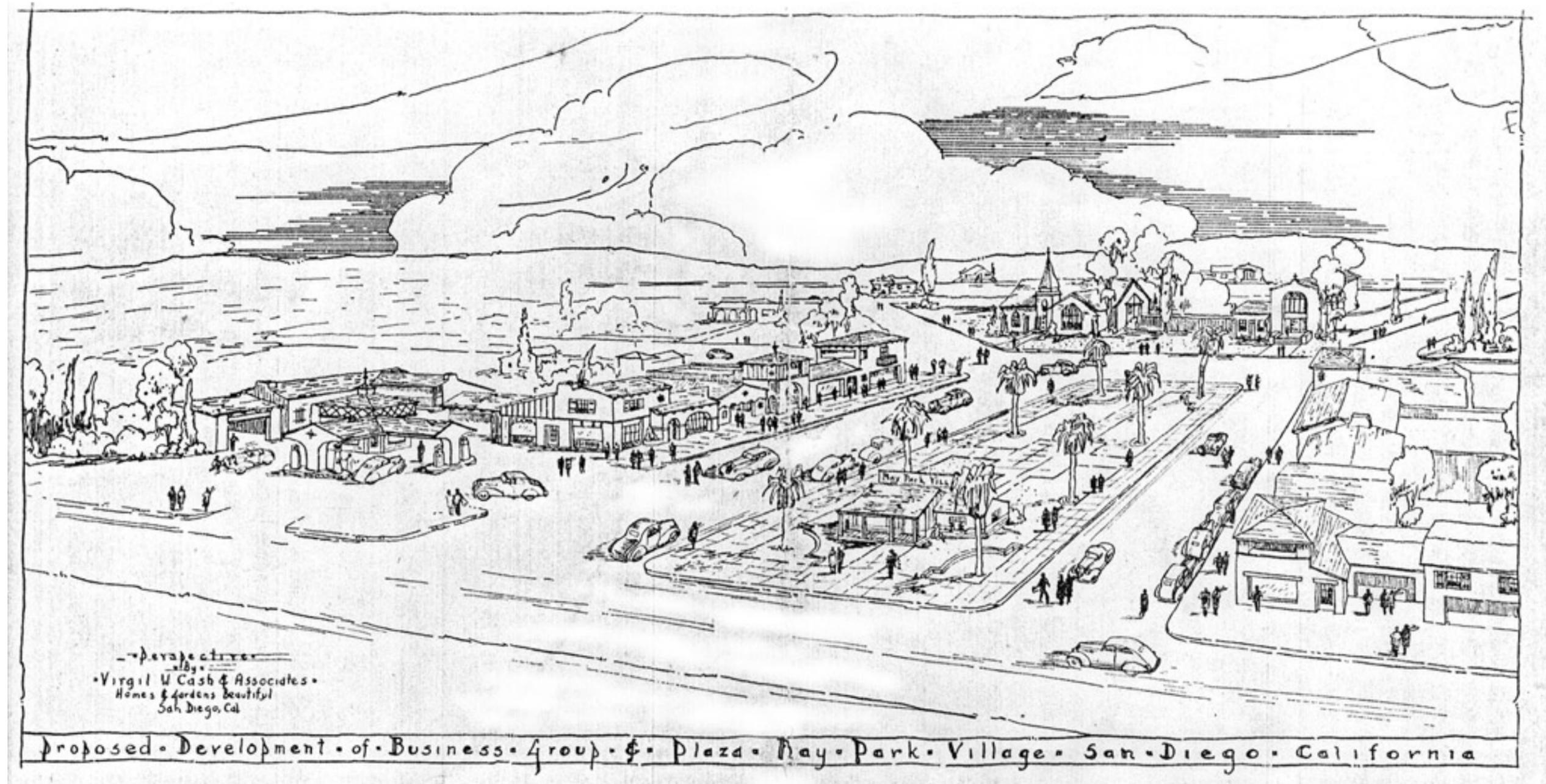
A Vision: Tecolote to the Beach Aerial Tram

*A vision for community discussion by Glen Schmidt, FASLA
(Graphics By Brynne Ambrose)*



**SCHMIDT
DESIGN
GROUP**

Town Center Plaza/Park Concept, 1937



*This sketch, cir. 1937, illustrates the park and plaza at the center of civic and commercial uses. Unfortunately the City began to sell parcels of the parkland in 1958 stating they didn't feel they could afford to maintain the park. **What if** we re-envision this idea and bring back a central Town Center Park for the community of Bay Park?*

Bay Park Town Center Park

Glen Schmidt, FASLA © All rights reserved

Site Existing Conditions, Plan View



The proposal is to make this site a park again, a central meeting place and open space for all of Bay Park.

Bay Park Town Center Park

Potential Alternative 1 – Transform the entire block into a park as originally envisioned



The proposal is to make this site a park again, a central meeting place and open space for all of Bay Park.

Bay Park Town Center Park

Glen Schmidt, FASLA © All rights reserved

Alternative 2 - Retain the Fire Station transform 2 parcels into parkland



Bay Park Town Center Park

Alternative 3 – 1 parcel adjacent to Morena is transformed into parkland



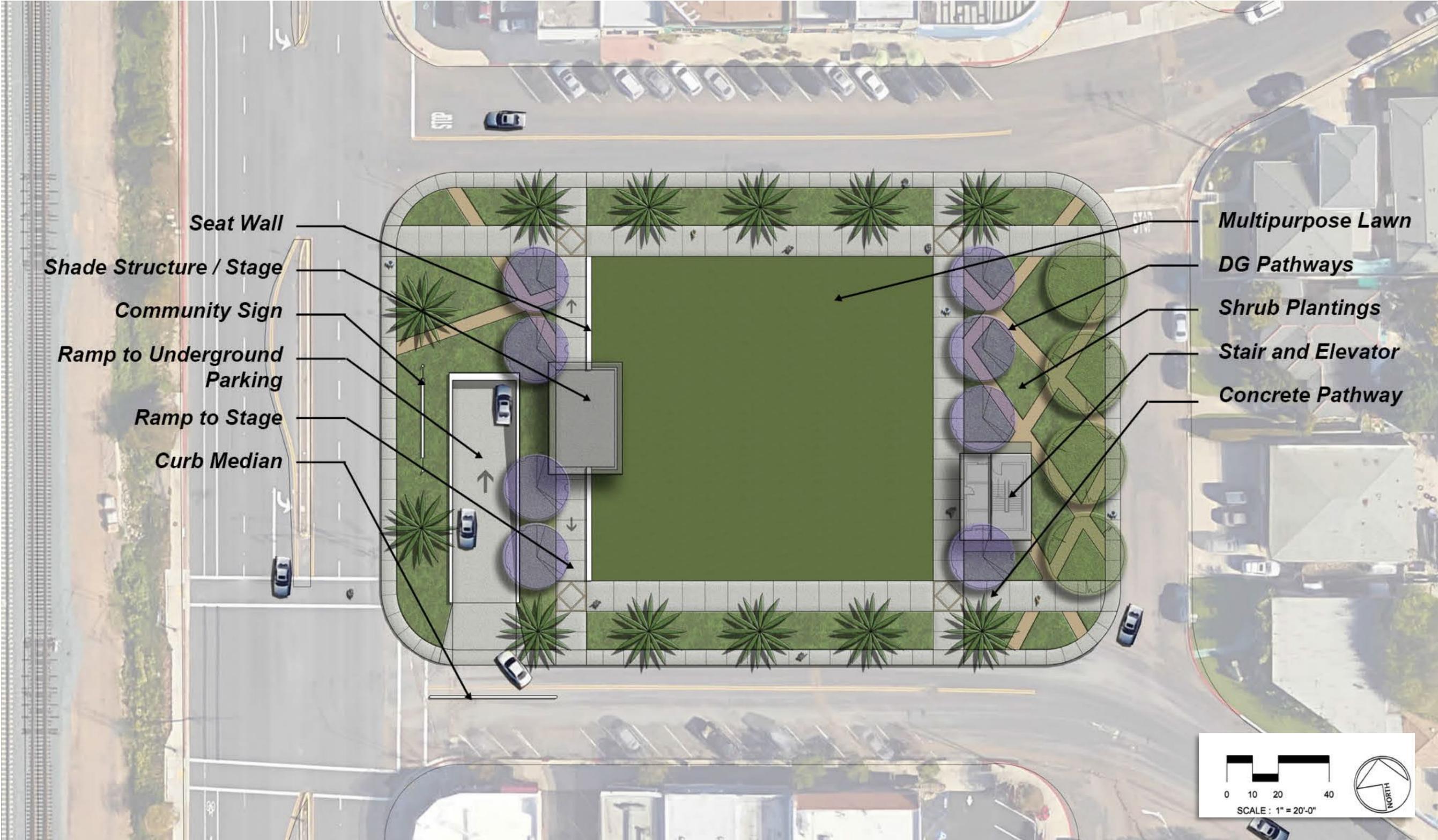
Bay Park Town Center Park

Glen Schmidt, FASLA © All rights reserved



Park Master Plan Design Concept, Plan View

(Includes optional underground parking to be shared with commercial properties nearby)



Bay Park Town Center Park

Glen Schmidt, FASLA © All rights reserved



Bird's Eye Perspective



Bay Park Town Center Park

Glen Schmidt, FASLA © All rights reserved

The Marian Bear Natural Park Citizens' Advisory Group has the following comments regarding the Clairemont Community Plan Update (May 2021 Draft)

1. Our group strongly supports the general recommendations of "Chapter 6: Recreation Element" and "Chapter 7: Conservation Element" as they apply to the park.
2. Please correct the spelling of Marian Bear's name on pages 129, 168, 170, 172.

Thank you for your attention and feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Deron Bear
Chairperson
Marian Bear Natural Park Citizens' Advisory Group

August 9, 2021

City of San Diego
Planning Department
c/o Marlon I. Pangilinan, Senior Planner
9485 Aero Drive MS-413
San Diego, CA 92123

Re: San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club Proposed Land Use Designation Proposal

Dear Marlon:

These comments were unanimously adopted by the Linda Vista Planning Group (LVPG) at its regular meeting on July 26, 2021. LVGP submits these comments in response to the San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club's (SDTRC) proposal to upzone their property for higher-density development and to include this upzoning in the Clairemont Community Plan Update.

The developer has pursued and received approval from the Clairemont Planning Group (CPG) on Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) language that creates a set of development guidelines in the event the project moves forward. While the developer has yet to provide a project specific plan to LVPG for review, the LVPG's Zoning and Land Use Subcommittee has been engaged in discussions with the developer that seek to address issues that concern the Linda Vista planning area in connection with the development of SDTRC.

Accordingly, LVPG asks the Planning Department to consider the following concerns prior to making a final decision on including the proposed upzoning in the Clairemont Community Plan Update:

Affordable Housing: In the CPIOZ language approved by CPG on June 15, 2021, SDTRC may develop up to 200 units on site, or 16-29 units per acre. Housing affordability is a critical issue for residents in Linda Vista and across the City, and one that local, state and federal policymakers seek to address. The Community Plan Update should require SDTRC to meet the City of San Diego's requirement for on-site affordable housing units or 10% of total number of units, whichever yields the greatest number of affordable housing units at the time of project is submitted for approval by the city.

Tecolote Road: In the CPIOZ language, the existing bridge access to SDTRC at Tecolote Road is widened and modified as required by the City of San Diego and Fire Department. Additionally, the plan places primary vehicular access for ingress/egress to the site at Tecolote Road, and any secondary access for emergency and fire access only is required at Knoxville Street, subject to the Fire Department and City of San Diego approval.

To date, it is our understanding that the developer has yet to conduct a traffic study on the impacts of the upzoning proposal, making traffic impacts to Linda Vista unknown. However, the proposed increase in density is likely to create a significant increase in traffic on Tecolote Road and at the intersection of Tecolote Road and Morena Blvd.

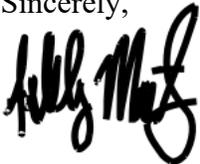
The plan update should include a dedicated left-turn lane on Tecolote Road at the entry to the proposed development. The plan should also include “Keep Clear” indications on Tecolote Road at the Tecolote Canyon recreation facility parking lot ingress/egress. The plan should include consideration of other traffic calming measures for Tecolote Road such as speed humps and traffic circles. Additionally, no street parking on Tecolote Road should be removed.

Parking: The CPIOZ language includes an on-site parking requirement that will meet or exceed City of San Diego requirements for multi-family apartment communities with a mix of garage and surface spaces. The plan states that this site shall be exempt from, not apply for, nor utilize TPA parking standards or benefits that would reduce City of San Diego parking requirements for multi-family apartment communities. LVPG believes the plan should minimally require the developer to provide no less than 1.25 parking spaces per one bedroom unit, 1.75 parking spaces per two bedroom unit, and 2 parking spaces per three bedroom unit, to ensure impacts of the development do not affect parking on Tecolote Road, at the Tecolote Canyon Natural Park, Nature Center and the Tecolote Recreation Center. In addition, the plan should ensure that the development, at any stage or construction or completion, shall not reduce or remove street parking along Tecolote Road.

Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Nature Center: With the increase in traffic along Tecolote Road, access to Tecolote Canyon Natural Park, Nature Center and the Tecolote Recreation Center will be impacted. The development, at any stage or construction or completion, should not interfere with Tecolote Canyon and Tecolote Recreation Center facilities’ time schedules, recreational sport schedules, lighting conditions, parking, or access by the general public.

For the above-stated reasons, LVPG respectfully requests the Planning Department incorporate the above elements into the Clairemont Community Plan Update related to the SDTRC proposed upzoning of their property.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley Martinez", written in a cursive style.

Ashley Martinez

Chair, Zoning and Land Use Subcommittee, Linda Vista Planning Group

Proposal Summary for Clairemont Community Plan Update
Inclusion of San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club Property with CPIOZ and SDR conditions to be
adopted within Clairemont Community Plan Update

Applicant: San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club/Douglas Allred Company and Tom Sheng 76
Enterprises, LP.

Subject Site: 4848 Tecolote Road, San Diego, Ca. Located in Transit Priority Area (TPA), near
Tecolote Station. (Exhibit attached) Currently an operating private tennis and fitness club with
no immediate plans for redevelopment, however, proposal is for long term planning within the
scope of Clairemont Community Plan Update.

Clairemont Community Planning Group Area: After numerous public meetings and workshops,
CCPG voted to approve the proposed change in land use designation (5-4) for this site from 5-
9 du/ac to 15-29 du/ac, along with additional conditions outlined in the attached proposed
Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) language, which is to be included in the
Clairemont Community Plan Update. (CPU)

Linda Vista Planning Group has voted approval with comments for the CPU as well.

Addition of up to 200 for rent apartment units in TPA.

CPIOZ Summary:

Change in land use designation from 5-9 du/ac to 15-29 du/ac.

Maximum of 200 units: site is triangular, with various easements which limits density to
approximately 200 units.

2 and 3 story units

Pre-determined setbacks and building heights. (Exhibit attached)

Plant and maintain street trees

Vehicular ingress and egress main access off Tecolote Road with emergency access off
Knoxville, subject to traffic study and fire department review and approval.

Parking on site to meet or exceed City standards for multifamily.

Bike lane connection at existing bridge, which may require widening subject to traffic and fire
department review and approval.

PROPOSED DENSITIES

109 du/ac

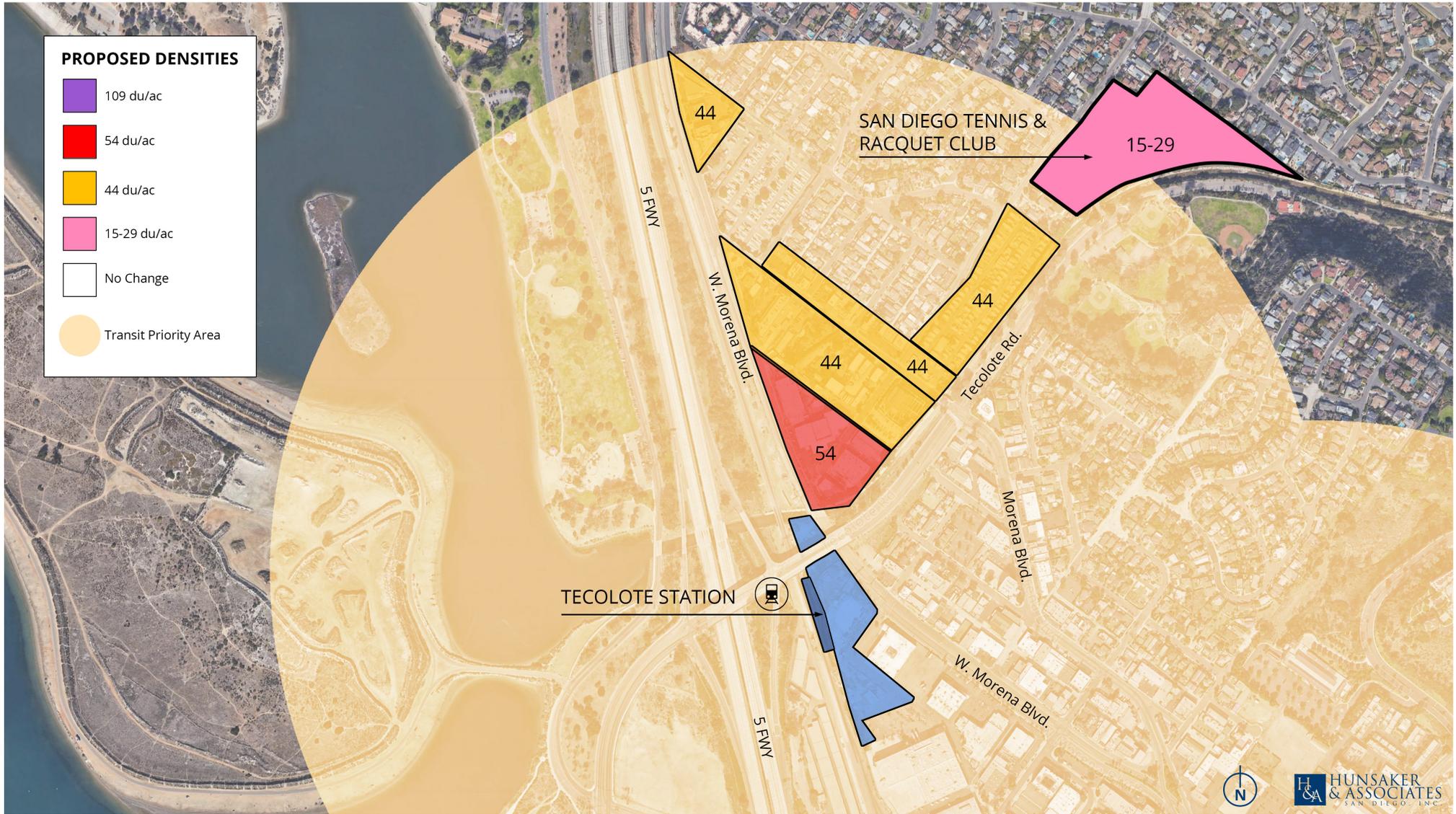
54 du/ac

44 du/ac

15-29 du/ac

No Change

Transit Priority Area



June 15, 2021

San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club

Proposed CPIOZ and SDR conditions in the event of future development at the San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club Site.

Introduction

The Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) Type A is applied to the San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club property located at 4848 Tecolote Road, San Diego, to provide supplemental development regulations (SDR) that are tailored to implement the vision and policies of this Community Plan. Where there is a conflict between a CPIOZ Special Development Regulation and the development regulation of the applicable base zone, the CPIOZ SDR applies.

Purpose

The intent of this CPIOZ is to provide development standards that ensure that:

- The character of existing streetscape and setbacks along Knoxville Street is maintained.
- That proposed new development is sited in such a way that both horizontal and vertical elements within the edge conditions of the site are compatible with the existing neighboring properties.
- That tallest proposed structures are reasonably set back from the existing neighbors and are located in the interior of the project site, per the setback and building envelope exhibit, dated June 9, 2021 below.

Development Standards

The following development standards shall apply to the subject site:

- The residential density applicable to The San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club CPIOZ shall be 15-29 du/ac.
- The total number of dwelling units shall not exceed 200.
- Plant and maintain street trees along public street frontages as determined feasible and agreed upon by the City Engineer.
- Observe articulated minimum front yard setback of 15' along Knoxville Street.
- Provide at least a 20' landscaped setback buffer adjacent to the rear yard fence line of existing residences along Gardena Avenue, 15' along the side yards of existing homes on Knoxville Street, 15' along the western edge of the property adjacent to the existing pedestrian/bike path and 15' along the southern edge at Tecolote Creek Channel. However, landscaped setback buffer along the southern edge of the site along Tecolote Creek may narrow to a minimum of 5' for no more than 10% of the Tecolote Creek Frontage to accommodate parking or private street improvements.
- Allow a maximum of two and three-story structures.

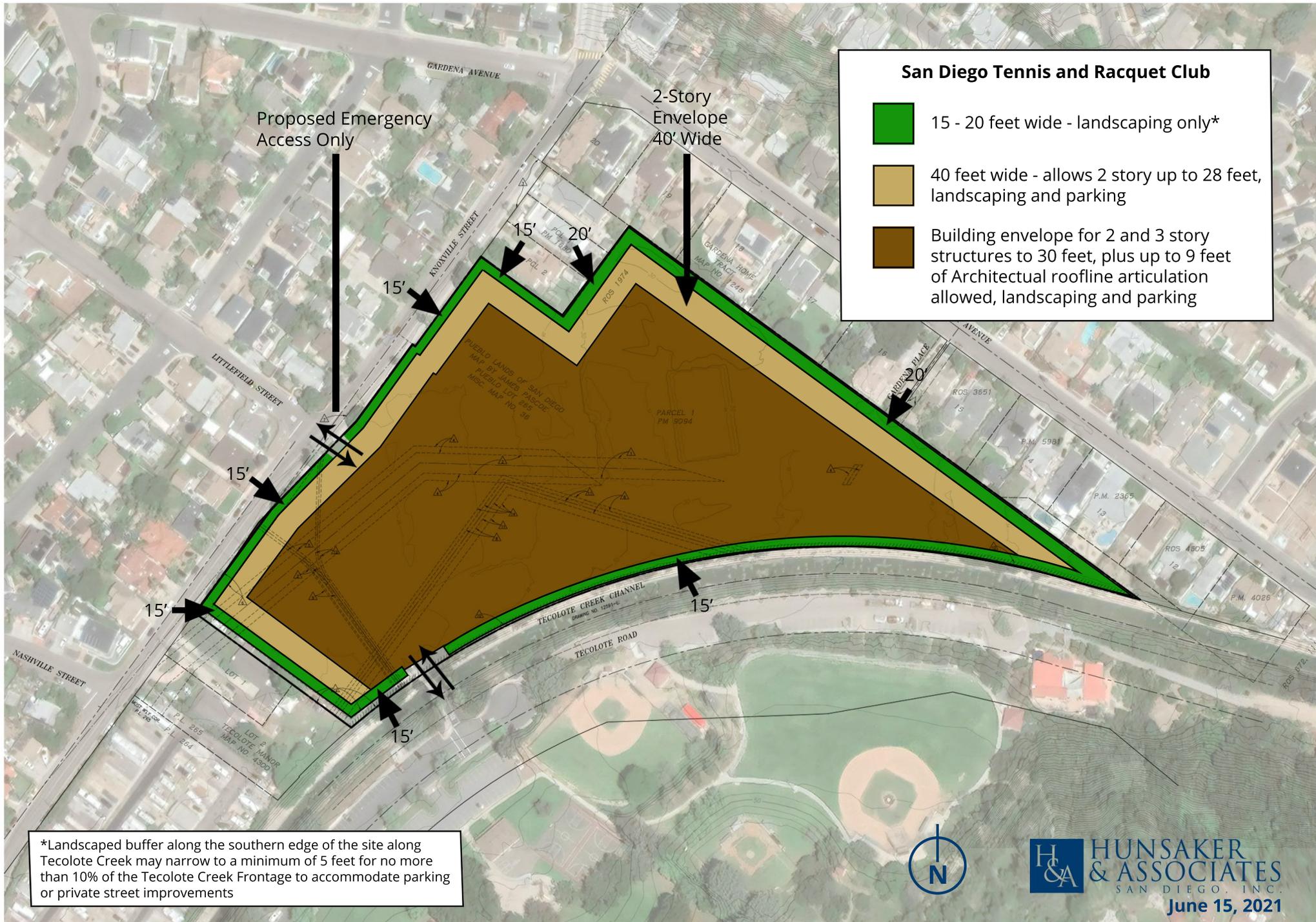
- Structures fronting on Knoxville shall be a maximum of two-story height and provide front door entrances and related walkways oriented towards Knoxville Street, with parking located behind those structures.
- Structures directly adjacent to existing homes on Gardena Avenue shall be a maximum of two-story height and shall be oriented with new structure's back yards to existing Gardena Avenue homes' back yards.
- Primary vehicular access for ingress/egress to the site shall be off Tecolote Road, and any secondary access required off of Knoxville Street shall be aligned at Littlefield Street, for emergency and fire access only, subject to Fire and City of San Diego approval.
- Existing Bridge access at Tecolote Road shall be widened and modified as required by City of San Diego and Fire Department.
- On-site parking shall meet or exceed City of San Diego requirements for multi-family apartment communities with a mix of garage and surface spaces. This site shall be exempt from, not apply for, nor utilize TPA parking standards or benefits that would reduce City of San Diego parking requirements for multi-family apartment communities.
- Three-story structures shall be a maximum of 30' from finished grade plus an additional allowance of up to 9' for roof line architectural articulation, and two-story structures shall be a maximum of 25' from finished grade plus an additional allowance of up to 3' for roof line architectural articulation.
- Development may include project resident amenities including but not limited to; tot lot, community garden, pet relief/play areas, swimming pool and spa with ancillary club house.
- Existing pedestrian and bike access along western edge of site shall remain within existing easement and shall connect via existing bridge with proposed linear park pedestrian and bike paths along Tecolote Creek at the northern edge of Tecolote Road.
- Encourage cooperation with City of San Diego, Tecolote Canyon Natural Park Master Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan to explore covering or capping all or a portion of the Tecolote Creek Channel to create additional public land.

Implementation

As stated in the CPIOZ Municipal Code regulations, any development permit application within the boundaries of CPIOZ - Type A where the proposed development complies with the supplemental development regulations, as stated above, shall be processed ministerially. Any development permit application within the boundaries of CPIOZ - Type A that does not comply with the supplemental development regulations in this section requires a Process Three Site Development Permit. Interior building improvements that do not involve a change of use or provide additional floor area or improvements that do not require a construction permit are not subject to CPIOZ, and exceptions to CPIOZ may be granted for proposed development that is minor, temporary, or incidental and is consistent with the intent of CPIOZ.

***This draft has been modified per the direction of Clairemont Community Planning Group Project Review Subcommittee, and is subject to approval by Clairemont Community Planning Group, City of San Diego, Applicants and each party's respective legal counsel.**

This draft and any related conceptual/illustrative exhibits shall be non-binding until mutually agreed upon, included within the CPU as appropriate and adopted by the City of San Diego.



San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club

- 15 - 20 feet wide - landscaping only*
- 40 feet wide - allows 2 story up to 28 feet, landscaping and parking
- Building envelope for 2 and 3 story structures to 30 feet, plus up to 9 feet of Architectural roofline articulation allowed, landscaping and parking

*Landscaped buffer along the southern edge of the site along Tecolote Creek may narrow to a minimum of 5 feet for no more than 10% of the Tecolote Creek Frontage to accommodate parking or private street improvements





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August 17, 2021

Marlon I. Pangilinan, Senior Planner
Planning Department
9485 Aero Drive MS-413
San Diego, CA 92123

Subject: Clairemont Community Plan Update

Dear Mr. Pangilinan,

On behalf of the YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County, please accept this letter of support along with recommendations to the draft Clairemont Community Plan Update.

San Diego faces many challenges - climate change, housing affordability, and accessible transportation. As advocates for sustainable growth, equitable public policy, and housing affordability, we believe that Community Plan Updates offer the City its best opportunities to address these issues head-on by allowing neighborhoods to re-envision themselves for the 21st Century.

The Clairemont Community Plan has not been updated since 1989 and the neighborhood has changed dramatically. We appreciate the Planning Department's efforts to work closely with community members and the public on updating a plan that brings the much needed housing we need in our region while still respecting the unique character and quality of the community.

We are glad that the plan significantly increases residential and commercial capacity throughout the planning area, and support the proposed mobility concepts, including increased bike lanes, mobility homes, and transportation demand management. Although, we recommend the city adopt NACTO's bike selection tool which would mandate any road with traffic speeding 25 MPH or greater require separated bike facilities and update the bike plan based upon Vision Zero (Safe System) principles. Overall, the



additional zoned capacity of 5,683 units is substantial, and the plan will create new opportunities for attractive and sustainable communities.

While we generally support this plan, we encourage staff to include more density in areas adjacent to trolley stops and within Transportation Priority Areas (TPAs). Allowing increased density in these areas will ensure that more homes get built here while also encouraging alternative transportation options and lower vehicle miles traveled.

The Mid-Coast trolley offers a generational opportunity for San Diego to build a city that is more sustainable, inclusive, and accessible. Unfortunately, the Clairemont Plan does not sufficiently capitalize on the multi-billion dollar investment. Specifically, we do not believe that the areas surrounding the Tecolote and Clairemont Drive stations have appropriate land-use designations to best facilitate smart growth.

Areas around the proposed Trolley Stations must be designated for much higher density mixed-use to better increase transit ridership, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and promote inclusive housing. The draft plan calls for land-use designations around the Clairemont and Tecolote Canyon Stations allowing densities of 0-44 units per acre. This is wholly inadequate to create real transit-oriented development, and the land-uses would squander potential of the Mid-Coast Trolley. Future land-uses should allow at least 100 units an acre around each trolley stop to create real sustainable and climate friendly housing growth. The draft densities must be increased if San Diego is to maintain its position as a progressive land-use and housing leader for other Cities across the state.

Beyond simply raising the maximum densities above those already included in the draft plan, additional land within walking distance must be upzoned for higher density residential and mixed-uses. The draft plan maintains existing low density residential patterns, even on properties with immediate walking access to new trolley stations. Retaining existing patterns of low density, low efficiency land-uses is inadequate for the many challenges we face as a neighborhood, City, and region. All land within half a mile of the proposed train stations should be rezoned to Very High Residential or equivalent. The social and environmental costs of keeping these neighborhoods frozen in time is too great to ignore.

Finally, the continued use of the Clairemont Mesa Height Limit Overlay Zone is not appropriate within 0.5 miles of Mid-Coast trolley stations. We believe the plan should “think bigger” and specifically call for increased height limits that support the proposed densities in the land-use designations.

The YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County respectfully request that the City move forward with a revised plan that better facilitates smart growth around the mid-coast stations. With this plan providing the foundation for Clairemont’s future, we can look forward to a more welcoming, prosperous, and sustainable San Diego. Thank you for your time and consideration.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Marissa Tucker-Borquez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the top.

Marissa Tucker-Borquez
President, YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County

CC:
Mike Hansen, Planning Director
Tait Galloway, Program Manager