

## **IV. Existing Conditions**

### **A. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the built environment within the Specific Plan area. A brief historical overview of the Urban Core is provided as well as significant historical sites and features in the area. The chapter also details the existing conditions within the plan area in terms of land use and zoning, circulation and mobility, and economic conditions.

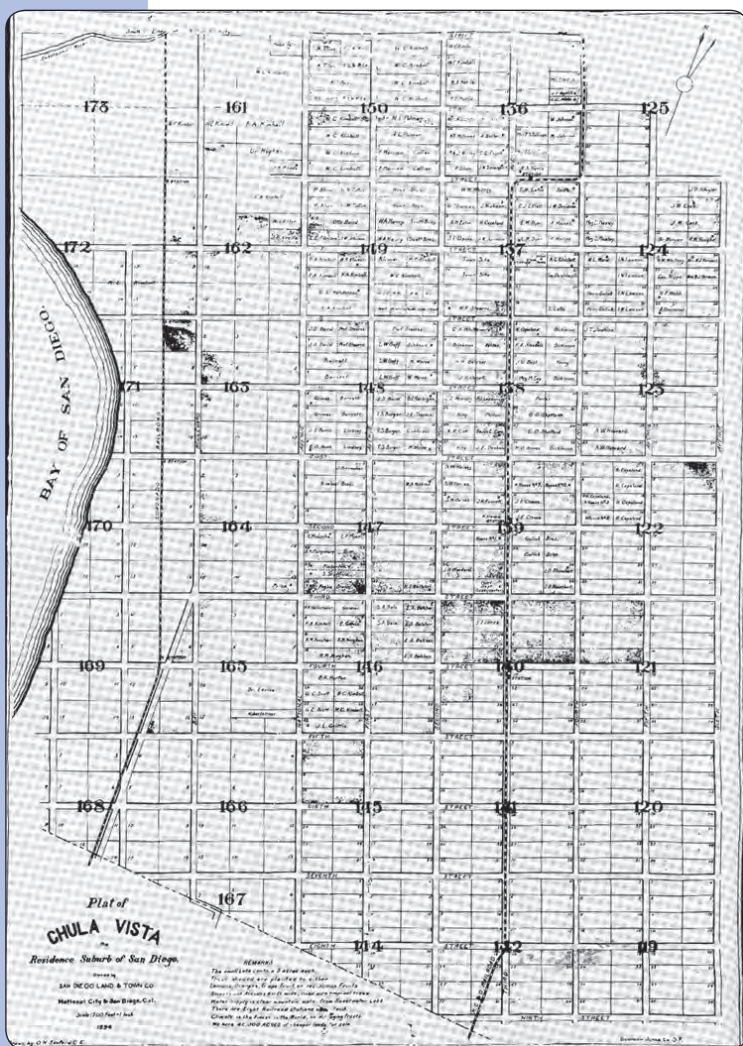
*Chula Vista  
Urban Core*

## B. Historic Resources

### 1. The Early Years Before Incorporation

The Otay Valley has been occupied by Native American cultures for more than 9,000 years. The early Native American inhabitants established settlements, hunted game, and utilized the abundant resources along the river valley. The first western settlers were Spanish missionaries sent by the King of Spain to establish missions along the coast of California. In 1795, the area known today as Chula Vista became part of a land grant from the King of Spain; the area was known as Rancho del Rey or the King's Ranch.

With Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, Rancho del Rey became part of the new Mexican nation and was renamed Rancho de la Nacion, National Ranch. In 1845, National Ranch was granted to John Forster, son-in-law of the Mexican governor Pico. After the Mexican-American War and the subsequent admission of California to the United States, the US confirmed ownership and operation of the ranch by John Forster.



1894 Plat Map of the Chula Vista area

Fig. 4.1

A change of ownership and several significant transportation improvements, such as the addition of several major rail lines, occurred throughout the mid and late 1800's. By 1890 a railroad had been built from San Diego, through Chula Vista, and ending in San Ysidro. In the late 1800's, San Diego Land and Town Company developed the 5,000-acre Chula Vista tract, as a product of the professional town planner, C.W. Dickinson. Lots were originally laid out in 5-acre parcels with 80-foot wide streets. Many of the new owners began citrus orchards on their acreage, particularly lemon orchards, leading to early Chula Vista claims of the "Lemon Capital of the World."

Lot purchasers were expected to build a modern house within six months; the house was subject to architectural approval and had a required setback of 125 feet. Land sales in Chula Vista began in 1887 and proved to be very popular. Most early houses were of a traditional Victorian style. Architecturally, Craftsman folk cottages and bungalows followed the Victorian style and an eventual transition was made to a more Mission Revival and Spanish Mediterranean architecture. Lot sizes also decreased over the years, to an average one-acre and half-acre lots, with continued generous setbacks.

Around this time, the intersection of Third Avenue and F Street was considered to be the center of town. In 1907, the National City and Otay Railroad line was converted to an electric streetcar line. The streetcar line ran north to south along Third Avenue for several years and was eventually replaced by a landscaped median.

## 2. The City of Chula Vista is Formed

In 1911, the City of Chula Vista was officially incorporated with a population of 550. As a top priority, in 1913 the City installed 26 streetlights and paved several streets.



Looking south on F Street east of Third Avenue in 1911.  
The first church and school are to the right.

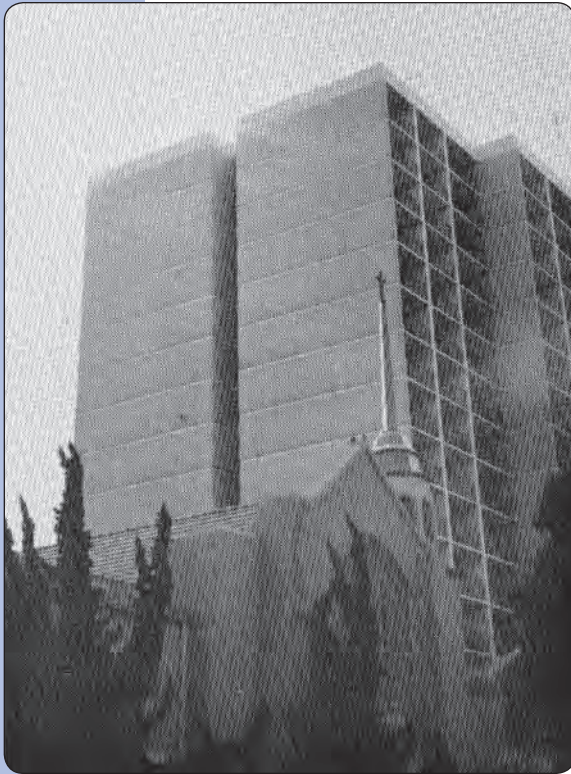
Fig. 4.2

Over the next quarter century, the World Wars proved to have a significant impact on Chula Vista's future. The City's economic system began to shift from agriculture to manufacturing and Chula Vista expanded significantly during World War II due to booming wartime production in local industries. The largest of these companies was the Rohr Aircraft Corporation, a major military supplier during WWII that employed 9,000 at the height of production. In addition, the high concentration of military bases in the



Looking south at intersection of Third Avenue and F Street in 1936

Fig. 4.3



**The 16-story Chula Vista Community Tower was the City's first high-rise**

**Fig. 4.4**

area led to an increase in population as many veterans decided to remain in the area after the end of the war. These major changes caused the population of Chula Vista to triple in the time period from 1940 to 1950.

Major projects from the later twentieth century included the 1962 development of the Chula Vista Shopping Center on Broadway between H Street and I Street and the 1972 construction of the first high-rise building, the 16-story Chula Vista Community Congregation Tower on F Street. Throughout the century, the City of Chula Vista experienced continued annexation and expansion to the east, north, and south and developed into one of the largest communities in the San Diego region. However, in the midst of the expanding community, the central core experienced problems with the changing economic situation and began to develop a blighted atmosphere. In the 1970's, several City redevelopment projects made the first steps toward revitalization of the declining Urban Core.

All great cities evolve over time but only the best cities recognize, build on and enhance their most valued traditions and resources. Beginning with the early 1900's and the City's incorporation, the City of Chula Vista progressed through a series of "lifecycles", each with it's own unique contribution to the City's history. The community's lifecycle during the early 1900's revolved around its agricultural heyday, the mid 1900's are remembered as the "Rohr" ing 50's and the changes of the latter 1900's focused on an expanding the City with annexing new lands and rapidly developing to the east. In 2011 the City celebrated its 100th anniversary and, with the new visions established for the Urban Core, is poised to write the next chapter in its history.

At the start of the 21st Century, citizens of Chula Vista have high hopes for the future of their City. With over 260,000 residents and over 50 square miles of land, Chula Vista is the second largest city in San Diego County. Citizens are eager for the City to reflect and reestablish its prominence and aesthetic quality, especially in the traditional Urban Core.

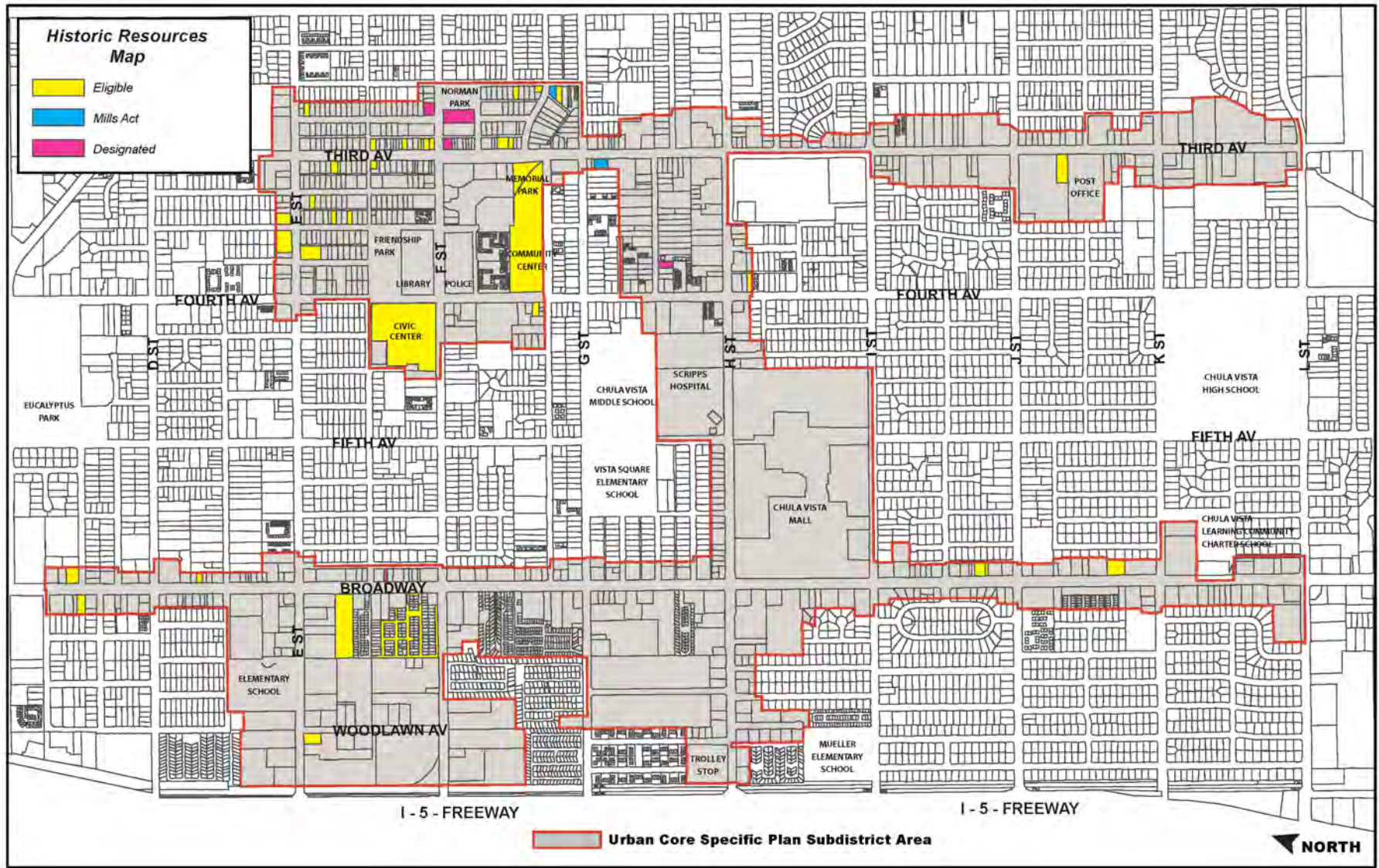
### **3. Historic Sites in the Study Area**

In 1985, the City of Chula Vista sponsored a local historic resources inventory. The inventory was limited to the area bounded by Trousdale Drive to the north, L Street to the south, Interstate 5 to the west, and Hilltop Drive on the east. As a result, approximately 258 properties were included on the survey list with 43 of the properties being included on the Chula Vista List of Historic Sites. There are 68 sites currently designated as historic by the City of Chula Vista. These 68 sites have been determined by the City Council to meet the City's historic criteria.

Currently, there are five designated and two Mills Act historical sites, and approximately 35 sites eligible for historic designation located within the Urban Core Specific Plan area. These historic sites provide context and historical reference for the Specific Plan's architectural and cultural character. (See Figure 4.5 Historic Resources Map.)

The Historic Preservation Program (Title 21, Ordinance 3196) adopted in 2011, provides regulatory requirements, program options and features, surveyed and designated properties, and economic benefits and incentives related to Historic Preservation and development in Chula Vista.

The Chula Vista Heritage Museum is located in the Civic Center branch library where it maintains information on the historical areas and structures in Chula Vista and is an excellent source for further information on historic properties.



Historic Resources Map

Fig. 4.5

**a. 699 E Street – Former Site of Greg Rogers House**

The Greg Rogers House, also known as “Bay Breeze” was built in 1910 at 699 E Street. The home was constructed by Greg Rogers, one of the founders of the City of Chula Vista and also founded the City’s first bank. The 5,700 square foot Craftsman style house had multiple bathrooms and several fireplaces. In 1985, the home was threatened with demolition in its original location and was moved from 699 E Street. The home was eventually relocated to 616 Second Avenue.



Sketch of Bay Breeze, the Greg Rogers House

Fig. 4.6

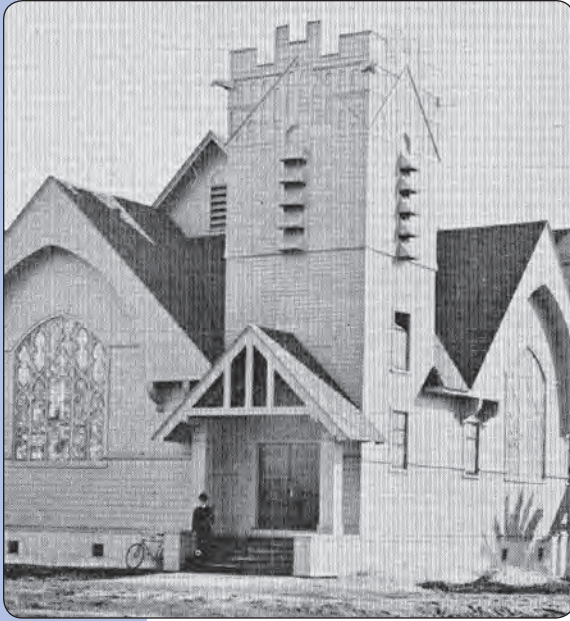
**b. 666 Third Avenue – Our House/Orchard House**

“Our House”, a large home in the Queen Anne style, once stood at 666 Third Avenue; however, the structure was destroyed by fire.



Photo of “Our House” before it was destroyed by fire

Fig. 4.7



*Original First Congregational Church building constructed in 1911*

**Fig. 4.8**

**c. 276 F Street - First Congregational Church**

The First Congregational Church was the first church opened in Chula Vista. The original sanctuary for the church was constructed in 1894 at 276 F Street. Community members raised money to fund the sanctuary construction and the Land and Town Company donated the land. The original structure was torn down in 1951 and a new sanctuary was constructed in its place; the site of the former sanctuary is a City designated historical site.



*New First Congregational Church building constructed in 1956*

**Fig. 4.9**

**d. 301-305 Third Avenue - Melville Block**

The Melville Block was constructed by Edward Melville, one of Chula Vista's first businessmen. The Melville Block consists of a 1911 two-story building in the Eclectic Commercial style architecture. The Chula Vista State Bank originally occupied the corner spaces, followed by the Chula Vista Dry Goods Company. The first story of the building has been significantly altered from its original state and many of the original ornamental features have been removed, but overall the building retains its historical value. The structure was recently noted in a guide to San Diego Architecture published by the American Institute of Architects.



*301-305 Third Avenue is known as the Melville Block*

**Fig. 4.10**



**e. 374 Roosevelt Street – Mark Skinner House**

Constructed in 1924 by Mark Skinner, a well-known local businessman, this house is a unique variation on the Bungalow style popular in the early part of the twentieth century. The original siding on the house has been replaced but the original design theme remains.



The Mark Skinner house at 374  
Roosevelt Street

Fig. 4.11

**f. 382/384 Del Mar Avenue – The First Women’s Clubhouse**

The Women’s Club was the first place in the City of Chula Vista for women active in civic affairs to meet and gather. The Club was involved in many community activities, including fund-raising for various events. The Club first convened at 382/384 Del Mar Avenue in the early 1900’s and met at this site on Del Mar Avenue for many years until the Club eventually outgrew the site and relocated to a larger space at 357 G Street. The building on Del Mar Avenue retains its historical significance as the Women’s Club’s first meeting site.



The First Women’s Club in Chula  
Vista met here on Del Mar Avenue

Fig. 4.12

#### **4. Other Sites of Historic Interest**

The following sections document or describe sites that fall within the Urban Core Specific Plan Subdistrict Area that are other sites of historical interest, and sites that were identified as part of the Cultural Resources Report for the Evaluation of the Historical and Architectural Significance of approximately 50 Properties within the Chula Vista Urban Core.

In addition to the five designated historic sites, the Urban Core Area includes other sites of historical interest. These sites include: The El Primero Hotel, and Women's Club House (both Mills Act participants) The Memorial Bowl (A Works Projects Administration project), The Charles Smith Building, The People's State Bank, Leader Department Store, and Security Pacific Bank. These sites/structures, in addition to others, all contribute to the historic fabric of the Specific Plan area. Important historical sites such as these provide the context of the image, character, and history of Chula Vista's urban core that is to inspire and shape future development within the Specific Plan area.

A photographic essay has been included in Chapter VII - Development Design Guidelines to provide architects and designers with important visual cues that can be drawn from existing development and incorporated into new development. When appropriately, new development can respond to Chula Vista's unique architectural heritage and promote the most positive aspects of existing development.

#### **5. Sites Evaluated for Potential Eligibility as Historic Architectural Sites**

In 2005, the City evaluated approximately 50 properties within the Specific Plan Subdistrict Area for historic evaluation and determination of eligibility for listing. This evaluation is titled Cultural Resources Report for the Evaluation of the Historical and Architectural Significance of 50 Properties within the Chula Vista Urban Core.

This focused survey augments the 1985 inventory and is not intended to be representative of a comprehensive survey of the Specific Plan Subdistrict Area. The area around Third Avenue and F Street is considered to be the historic core of the City and includes important elements of the early residential and business activities of the City. Therefore this area within the Specific Plan Village District was the focus area for historic evaluation.

The structures were selected based on the periods of significance and include mostly structures within the Village District along Third Avenue, the City's traditional downtown, and adjacent side streets. The sites are also all located within adopted redevelopment areas and thus have an increased potential to redevelop over the short to mid term. Five sites were identified as potentially

eligible. For a complete listing of properties inventoried, please see the Specific Plan Program EIR NO. 06-01, Appendix B.

The potential for the existence of other significant historic properties within the Specific Plan Subdistrict Area is possible given the number of older commercial structures and homes throughout the Specific Plan Subdistrict Area. These could be identified as part of a more comprehensive survey conducted in the future.

In addition, the City adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance, establishing design standards, and other relevant requirements for historic properties. Currently, the City of Chula Vista historic preservation program is limited to voluntary historic designation and voluntary participation in the Mills Act. Under the Mills Act, a property owner enters into a contract that gives City oversight on matters of rehabilitation and renovation of the site in exchange for a reduction in property taxes. Conducting a current inventory and establishing an historic designation process, and seeking Certified Local Government designation are top historic preservation priorities for the City.

## **6. How Historic Information Will Be Used**

The inventory of existing historical resources lends important reference for new development in the Urban Core Specific Plan area. While the Specific Plan does not require strict application of traditional historic architectural styles, the historic influences, nonetheless, should be honored and retained where possible. Land use and development recommendations within the plan area will use and refer to the 1985 Historic Resources inventory appendix. In addition, the Urban Core Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides an assessment of limited additional properties within the Specific Plan area that may qualify as historic and establishes mitigation measures to be considered in the event of redevelopment. See EIR NO. 06-01 for specific sites. Other sites that may be identified as part of other historic surveys should also be considered.

Consideration of important historical features is built into the planning process and is an important facet of land use planning and urban design throughout the Specific Plan area. The design guidelines encourage the use of building elements and/or features typically found on historical structures. The development standards emulate the form, massing, and relationship of building to sidewalk of these historical structures.

The Specific Plan is subdivided into various planning districts, each with a special set of planning and design directions. The degree to which historic structures influence the design direction within these districts may vary; however, protection of existing noteworthy structures and respect for the City's heritage is a theme that will guide new development.

## **C. Land Use, General Plan, and Zoning**

### **1. General Plan**

The General Plan (2005) divides land uses into six broad categories: Residential; Commercial; Mixed Use; Industrial; Open Space, Parks, and Public/Quasi-Public; and Special Plan Areas. Of these categories, the Specific Plan area encompasses residential, commercial, mixed use, and open space, parks, and public/quasi-public uses (see Figure 4.13). These designations are further broken down into subcategories, based on density and intensity of the use. For General Plan purposes, densities apply to residential uses and are measured in terms of dwelling units per gross acre (du/ac). Intensity applies to commercial, mixed use, and industrial uses and is measured by Floor Area Ratio (FAR). On the whole, the General Plan provides for an increase in density and intensity for most areas of the Specific Plan. As the population of the City continues to expand, increasing the intensity of uses provides an opportunity for more efficient use of land in the Urban Core and will create a more urban, rather than suburban, context.

One of the most significant changes related to land use designations for the General Plan is the addition of the new Mixed Use category. The combination of commercial and residential activities is expected to provide many benefits, including better utilization of scarce land resources and improved accessibility to public amenities.

Each General Plan land use designation is related to specific zoning districts, which are defined by the zoning ordinance. As an implementing action of the General Plan (2005), several new zoning categories will be created to be consistent with new General Plan standards. The Specific Plan will provide new zoning regulations for sub-district areas within the Specific Plan area. (See Chapter VI - Land Use and Development Standards and Figure 5.1 Specific Plan Key Map.)

### **2. Zoning**

The majority of the original Specific Plan Subdistrict Area is currently designated for some form of commercial uses, though the outer edges of the area permit broader uses. Zoning districts within the Urban Core include: Central Business, Central Commercial, Commercial Thoroughfare, Visitor Commercial, Administrative and Professional Office, Limited Industrial, Public/Quasi-Public, One- and Two-Family Residence, Apartment Residential, and Exclusive Mobilehome Park. (See Figure 4.13 and 4.14.)

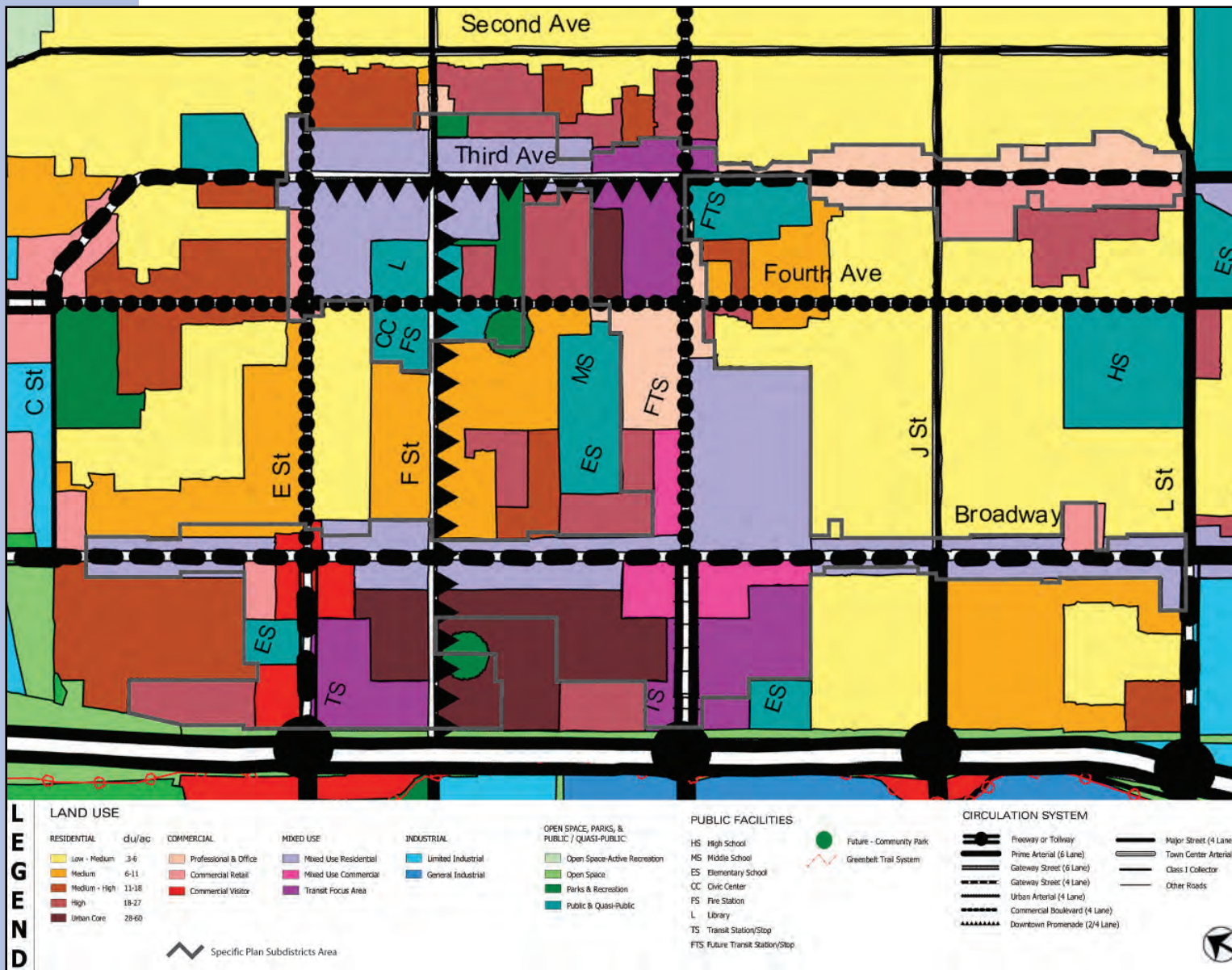
The existing zoning ordinance includes modifying districts for several zones within the Specific Plan area. These existing modifying districts impose special regulations in addition to those otherwise applicable to the zone. The modifying districts appearing within the Specific Plan area are: Design Control and Precise Plan. Property within the Design Control modifying district requires site plan and architectural approval of the City. The Precise Plan modifying district allows for diversification in structures, land uses, density, and landscaping. A precise plan for the area must gain City approval.

The traditional downtown along Third Avenue and the area of the H Street corridor consist mainly of Central Business, Central Commercial, and Administrative and Professional Office uses. These districts are primarily composed of general retail sales and restaurant uses that serve the city as a whole and/or the surrounding community, as well as medical, dental, executive, financial and other offices. Residential mixed-use development may be permitted with a conditional use permit. The center of the H Street corridor is marked by the retail uses of the Chula Vista Mall as a regional shopping destination.

The Broadway corridor is almost exclusively a Commercial Thoroughfare zone. The Commercial Thoroughfare zone allows the same types of retail sales as the other districts, but also permits car dealerships, hotel uses, and other commercial recreational facilities. Less intensive multi-family residential, and occasionally industrial, uses extend out from these three core areas to the edges of the Specific Plan boundaries.

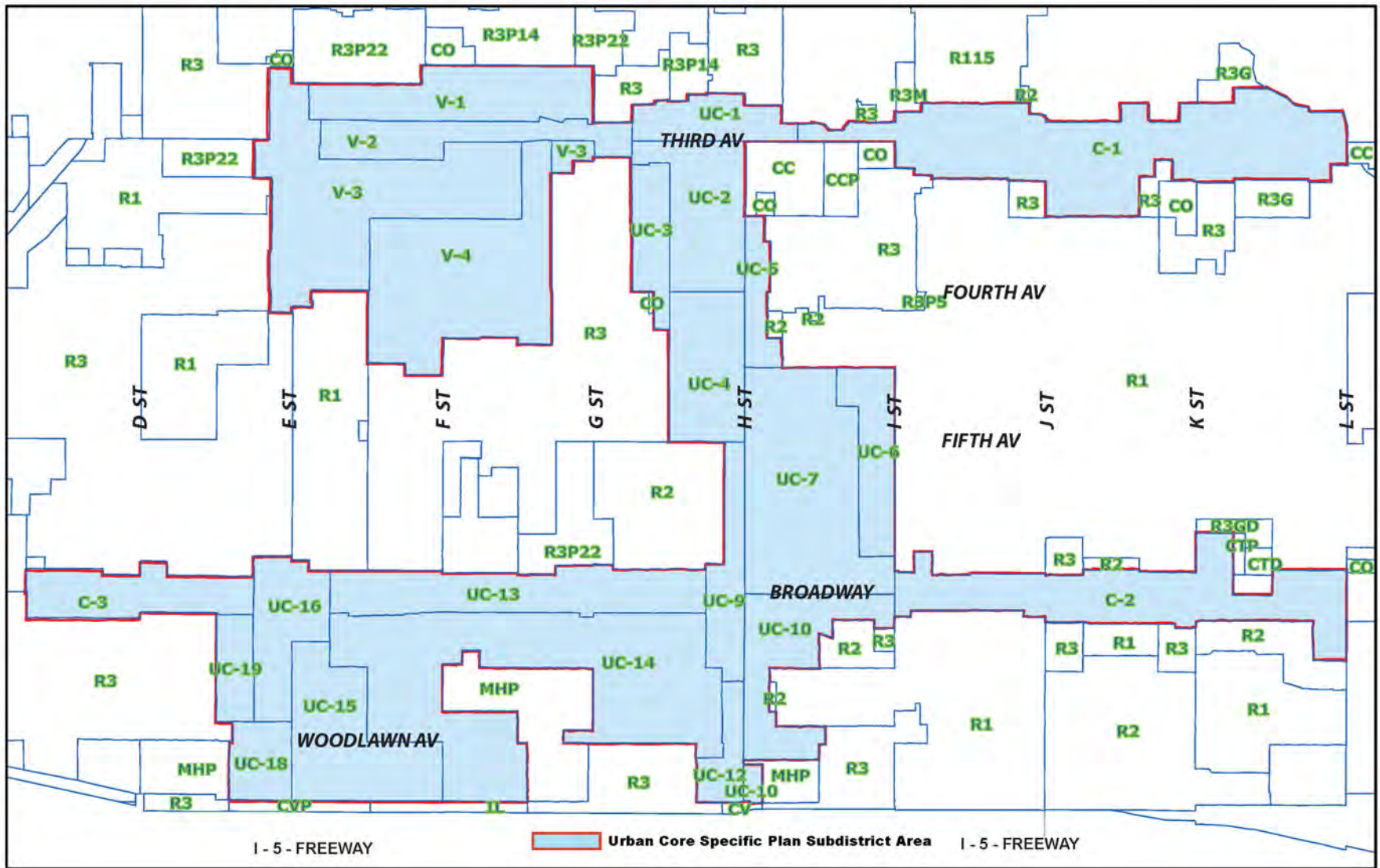
The Specific Plan subdistricts border established residential neighborhoods where measures are warranted to minimize impacts from more intensive commercial activities and development.

The majority of Public/Quasi-Public uses are concentrated in the traditional downtown area of Chula Vista, between Third and Fourth Avenue and E and G Street. The Chula Vista Civic Center is comprised of a number of civic facilities, including the police headquarters, the library's main branch, administration offices, City Council chambers, a public services building, and Fire Station No.1. In addition to civic facilities, the Civic Center and downtown are surrounded by a series of parks and community centers. These public spaces include Will T. Hyde/Friendship Park, Memorial Park, Parkway Gymnasium and Pool, Norman Park and Community Senior Center, and Eucalyptus Park.



Existing City of Chula Vista General Plan Land Use Map (Source: City of Chula Vista)

Fig. 4.13



Existing City of Chula Vista Zoning Map (Source: City of Chula Vista)

Fig. 4.14

### **3. Land Use Opportunities and Constraints**

A primary objective of the Specific Plan is to focus pedestrian-oriented retail and entertainment uses in the downtown core and minimize the amount of auto-oriented uses. The Specific Plan will also allow residential and office uses to mix above retail shops, forming a traditional downtown environment where living, working, shopping, and entertainment all coexist together.

The H Street corridor will have a continued focus on commercial uses, though revitalization of the regional mall area into a more pedestrian-friendly environment is a major goal.

The Broadway corridor will be reinforced as the main visitor-serving area of Chula Vista and new development will support this focus. The corridor includes a substantial number of culturally diverse restaurants, and with proper marketing, this cluster could lend itself to the formation of a successful restaurant row. Major transit centers are located in this area and will facilitate transportation throughout the Urban Core. A redeveloped residential neighborhood, which will provide expanded housing opportunities as well as a variety of recreational opportunities, will augment the aesthetic quality of the Broadway district.

When working toward achieving the Specific Plan vision, several issues have the potential to create challenges for the process. The Specific Plan subdistricts area contain multiple parcels under many different ownerships. Residential development within the Urban Core has occurred over an extended period of time and there are varying ages of the existing housing stock. In terms of commercial activity, there is a current lack of cohesiveness among the commercial corridors within the area. The Urban Core would also benefit from the addition of supporting neighborhood-serving commercial businesses.

The traditional street grid pattern offers a variety of connectivity and accessibility opportunities; however, the traditional grid is interrupted in several places within the Urban Core, limiting current connectivity options. In addition, the Urban Core is currently very automobile-oriented and a lack of pedestrian, bicycle and transit corridors exists. Implementing improvements to these areas will be a focus of the Specific Plan.



## D. Circulation and Mobility

Circulation in the Urban Core is primarily provided through the traditional street grid pattern. H Street, an east-west urban arterial, is the central connector for the Urban Core, supporting important retail commercial activities for the region. Broadway runs north-south and provides a more auto-oriented environment, with a focus on visitor-serving commercial. In contrast, Third Avenue is the heart of the traditional downtown core of Chula Vista and offers a pedestrian-friendly, intimate retail/office environment. Other significant roadways include E Street and F Street. Appendix B provides a complete Traffic Impact Analysis for the Specific Plan.

Though not within the Urban Core Specific Plan area, Interstate 5 and the San Ysidro Blue Line of the San Diego Trolley System form the western border of the Specific Plan area, thus developing a major connection between the Urban Core and the surrounding region and providing extended transportation opportunities. The City is currently served by a variety of mass transit options, including rail, trolley, and bus services.

In general, the street network within the Urban Core of Chula Vista is laid out in a grid system. Roadways running east-west are usually “Streets” and roadways flowing north-south are usually “Avenues”. However, over time, the traditional street grid has been broken. Many roads have been interrupted, especially in the extreme northwestern corner of the Specific Plan area, between the I-5 Freeway and Broadway. The truncated streets create a connectivity problem within neighborhoods. The Specific Plan endeavors to reintroduce the traditional grid, thus diffusing traffic along multiple routes and providing a variety of opportunities for reaching one’s destination.

Another challenge is to improve mobility by clarifying the system of street hierarchy. Though some streets are more significant than others in terms of community services provided, these streets are not differentiated from other roadways in terms of width, number of lanes, or other recognizable features. For example, as the address of a major regional retail center, H Street should be more dominant than some of the surrounding streets that provide access to other neighborhood servicing commercial uses and residences.

The General Plan and Specific Plan both focus on increasing the opportunities for multiple travel modes in this area. The synchronicity of the transit systems is also an important topic. Transit stops for different modes of transit should be located close to one another to provide easy access to changes in mode of travel. The scheduling of transit vehicles, both within a service and amongst services, should be coordinated to allow easy transfers between transit routes and different types of transit services. The Specific Plan addresses these issues and suggests ways to calm the behavior of traffic within the Urban Core.

Other key constraints to mobility within the Urban Core include an environment that is generally unfriendly to pedestrians and cyclists, as well as the lack of links from the Urban Core to other portions of the City, such as the Bayfront area or east Chula Vista.

## **E. Economic Conditions**

The following is a summary of economic conditions that will influence the type and quantity of new and redevelopment activity in the Urban Core Specific Plan area. Appendix C provides a complete Market Analysis for the Specific Plan.

### **1. Existing Conditions and Projected Trends**

#### **a. Regional**

The City of Chula Vista is located in a strong and relatively stable regional economic environment. The City's location within South San Diego County, between the two growing economic hubs of San Diego and Tijuana, is a prime location for capitalizing on regional growth. Regional competition continues to thrive in this market. The diverse regional economy is powered by manufacturing, the military, tourism, business and technology services, and trade.

The defense portion of the City's trade has declined in recent decades due to successful efforts in international relations as well as national economic trends. However, recent international events have led to somewhat of a resurgence in this particular industry. Currently, in spite of its location, Chula Vista is not very competitive in the regional tourism market and tourism is only a minor player in the local economy. Bayfront development may provide a key for regional attraction to Chula Vista. Despite the recent challenges to these sectors, defense, tourism, and the City's proximity to Mexico will continue to be significant factors in the region's economy.

Currently, there is a regional shortage of affordable market rate housing; as long as San Diego County continues to rank as one of the highest priced housing markets in the country, affordable housing will continue to be an issue for the area.

#### **b. Urban Core**

Though the Urban Core exists in a relatively stable economic environment, revitalization is essential to the long-term future of the area. Western Chula Vista, which includes the Urban Core, is relatively built out compared to eastern Chula Vista, presenting both opportunities and challenges for development. Existing SANDAG forecasts predict that the Urban Core may see a declining portion of sub-regional growth over the next 25 years. However, western Chula Vista's share of jobs will continue to remain strong relative to other portions of the City. New competition may elicit a decline in the Urban Core's market share of regional sales, but as the market population grows, local sales are also expected to expand.

In comparison to eastern Chula Vista, the Urban Core overall receives lower rents but has higher land prices, which makes it difficult for new projects to achieve financial feasibility. Rents in the Urban Core, for retail, residential, and office uses, are lower than average, due mainly to the older building stock. Of these, the retail and residential sectors appear to be faring best overall. Rising prices and low vacancy rates are positive indicators for these sectors, despite the low rental rates. Trends show that the Urban Core could absorb at least 3,600 new housing units over the next 25 years while many opportunities exist for the retail sector. The office sector is slightly worse off, with both low occupancy rates and low rental rates. However, recent success in new office development indicates that there is a potential latent demand for higher quality office space in the Urban Core.

## **2. Economic Strategies**

Opportunities for residential development appear to be a major basis for future development in the Urban Core. The shortage of affordable housing stock presents an immediate need and opportunity both within the Urban Core and the region as a whole.

Retail development is also key to the revitalization of the Urban Core. The traditional role of the Urban Core must adjust to growing competition from surrounding areas, including eastern Chula Vista, downtown San Diego, and border communities. The Urban Core should develop a strategy to recapture sales lost to these surrounding locations.

A strategy with high potential for success is that of focusing on a niche market. The Urban Core could greatly increase its retail trade by developing a unique niche environment, focused on culture, music, and food, that would attract its own visitors to the region. Tourism opportunities could increase from this development and the City may expand its regional entertainment value from its current state.

Another viable opportunity is that of leveraging the Mexican market. The Urban Core has potential to increase the quantity of cross-border shoppers for a variety of retail products, services, and entertainment needs.

### **3. SWOT Analysis**

Development prospects within the Urban Core have many competitive strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to capitalize upon or avoid and prepare against. SWOT analysis is a tool used to identify each of these potential market and economic issues early in the planning and development process to help concentrate efforts and avoid diluted or scattered development. Ultimately, the goal of any SWOT analysis is to focus efforts towards achieving early success and generate the momentum necessary to achieve the long-term vision. The following is an examination of the Urban Core's market and economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

#### **a. Strengths**

- Location between San Diego and Tijuana
- Strong and established retail market
- Proximity to the Bay
- Established employment, retail, and residential center with high occupancy
- Public investment in infrastructure
- Quality entry-level and mid-market rate ownership housing
- Transit linkages
- Traditional downtown district
- Good regional access

#### **b. Weaknesses**

- Relatively lower incomes
- Practically nonexistent tourism industry
- Low hotel room costs and hotel occupancy rates
- Aging building stock
- Relatively lower rents
- Public facility deficiencies
- Relatively neutral regional market image
- Weak linkage with the Bayfront

**c. Opportunities**

- Affordable development relative to downtown San Diego
- Ability to capture a larger share of housing demand than SANDAG forecasts
- An alternative urban lifestyle from downtown San Diego
- Coastal view development and links to the Bayfront
- Pedestrian and transit-oriented development
- Intercept Mexican market consumers
- Become South County's office employment, retail, and entertainment center
- Housing for many incomes, preferences, and cultures

**d. Threats**

- Competition from other mixed-use urban nodes in the region
- Competition from Bayfront development if not linked with core
- Competition from the Eastern Urban Center if not adequately distinguished
- Cost and complexity of land assembly and infill development
- Infrastructure and public facility constraints
- Not overcoming "second tier" reputation in regional market
- Exposure to Mexican currency fluctuations