

VII. Resource Conservation



Introduction

Escondido's topography, vegetation, open space, cultural, and agricultural assets impart a unique character that is highly valued by the community. Residents consider these important resources for conserving because of their significant contribution to Escondido's overall quality of life. Conserving and sustaining Escondido's important resources are vital keys for maintaining a healthy and vibrant community.

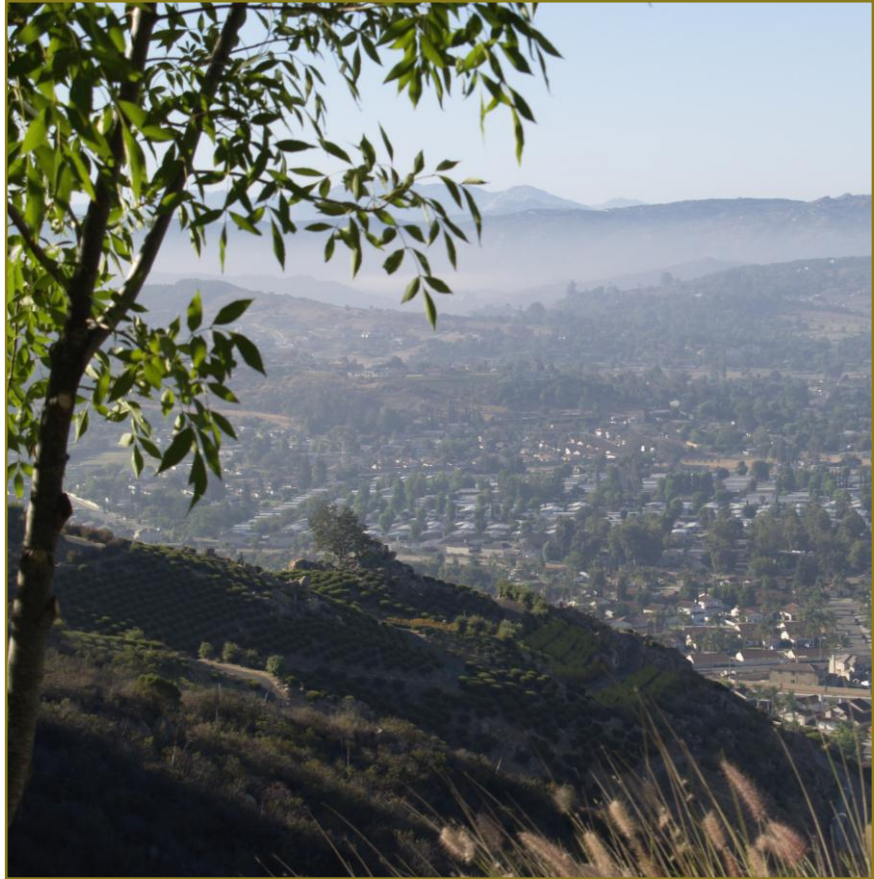
Residents have made a strong commitment to expanding the city's trail and open space system, preserving ridgelines and hillsides, and improving air and water resources to enrich the quality of life for all citizens of Escondido. By providing constructive leisure opportunities, recreational experiences, and programs, the General Plan hopes to contribute to the total health of the individual while meeting the overall needs and desires of the community.

The Resource Conservation Element's Purpose

Escondido's Resource Conservation Element satisfies state requirements for the Open Space and Conservation Elements as stated in the Government Code. Community Goals and Objectives call for creating an aesthetically pleasing environment, as well as conserving Escondido's natural and scenic resources.

The Element's purpose is to identify biologically important open space areas and establish polices for developing a comprehensive system that includes natural areas in concert with the Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) as well as existing and planned park and trail recreational amenities.

A related purpose is to establish policies for conserving other important resources including air and water quality, cultural, agricultural, mineral and energy resources, as well as protecting hillside and ridgeline view corridors with particular emphasis on ridgelines, unique landforms and visual gateways.



A. Relationship to Other Elements in the General Plan

Successful implementation of the Resource Conservation Element’s goals and policies requires consistency with several General Plan elements. The Resource Conservation Element is closely related to the Land Use, Mobility and Infrastructure, Community Protection, and Community Health and Services Elements. The Land Use Element includes a “Public Land” category for public recreation and habitat conservation purposes. General Plan land uses also include culturally and agriculturally significant sites, and policies for conserving these resources to maintain community character.

The Mobility Element identifies key streets and trails ensuring access to open space. The Resource Conservation Element’s relation to Community Protection Element is essential in linking key resources such as water and agriculture and threats such as flooding, wildfire and erosion. Finally, in response to promoting a healthier environment, the Resource Conservation Element relates to the Community Services Element by promoting air quality, opportunities for outdoor activities and a more active lifestyle.

Lake Dixon Open Space
Preserve overlooking
eastern Escondido



B. Coordinated Resource Conservation

Escondido’s many natural resources have been identified by residents as among the community’s most important assets, and call for a coordinated conservation approach. Open space and air quality have been included as two of the General Plan’s Quality of Life Standards (Figure VII-1 and Figure VII-10). Escondido’s character is derived from its varied lakes and natural habitat areas, visually distinctive historic and cultural resources, views of hillsides and ridgelines, and agricultural groves that surround the valley. These dramatic features are characteristics that distinguish Escondido from other areas in the region. The General Plan’s vision is also to ensure that conservation effectively serves as a catalyst for recreation, education, tourism, ecological, and economic enhancement for the community. By coordinating resource conservation efforts residents will benefit from a more aesthetically pleasing, sustainable community, thus promoting a healthier lifestyle.

The General Plan includes Resource Conservation Overlays (Figures VII-2, VII-4, VII-5, VII-6) to guide the establishment of a comprehensive system containing sensitive habitat, steep hillsides, ridgelines, cultural and agricultural resources, and opportunities for trail linkages. Large blocks of publicly owned land such as Daley Ranch, Lake Wohlford and San Dieguito River Park establish the foundation from which habitat linkages can be prioritized and potential property acquisitions can be identified.

Figure VII-1-
GENERAL PLAN
 QUALITY OF LIFE STANDARD # 8

OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

A system of open space corridors, easements, acquisition programs and trails shall be established in the Resource Conservation Element. Sensitive lands including permanent bodies of water, floodways, wetlands, riparian and woodland areas, and slopes over 35 percent inclination shall be preserved. Significant habitat for rare or endangered species shall be protected in coordination with state and/or federal agencies having jurisdiction over such areas.

Escondido’s Lake Dixon



C. Sustainable Biological Open Space

A principle of ‘smart growth’ involves preserving open space, natural beauty, and critically biologically sensitive areas. A key strategy in sustainable habitat preservation is to avoid fragmentation where isolated “islands” of habitat areas are created by poorly planned development patterns and urban sprawl. Isolated habitat areas can be prevented by planning for natural corridors between pockets of habitat and between different types of habitat. Corridors allow wildlife room to roam for access to food, territory and mating. A broad range of habitat is necessary for the dispersal of plants and animals to ensure their viability. Figure VII-2 identifies the major habitat types in the General Plan that is also used for resource conservation planning purposes.

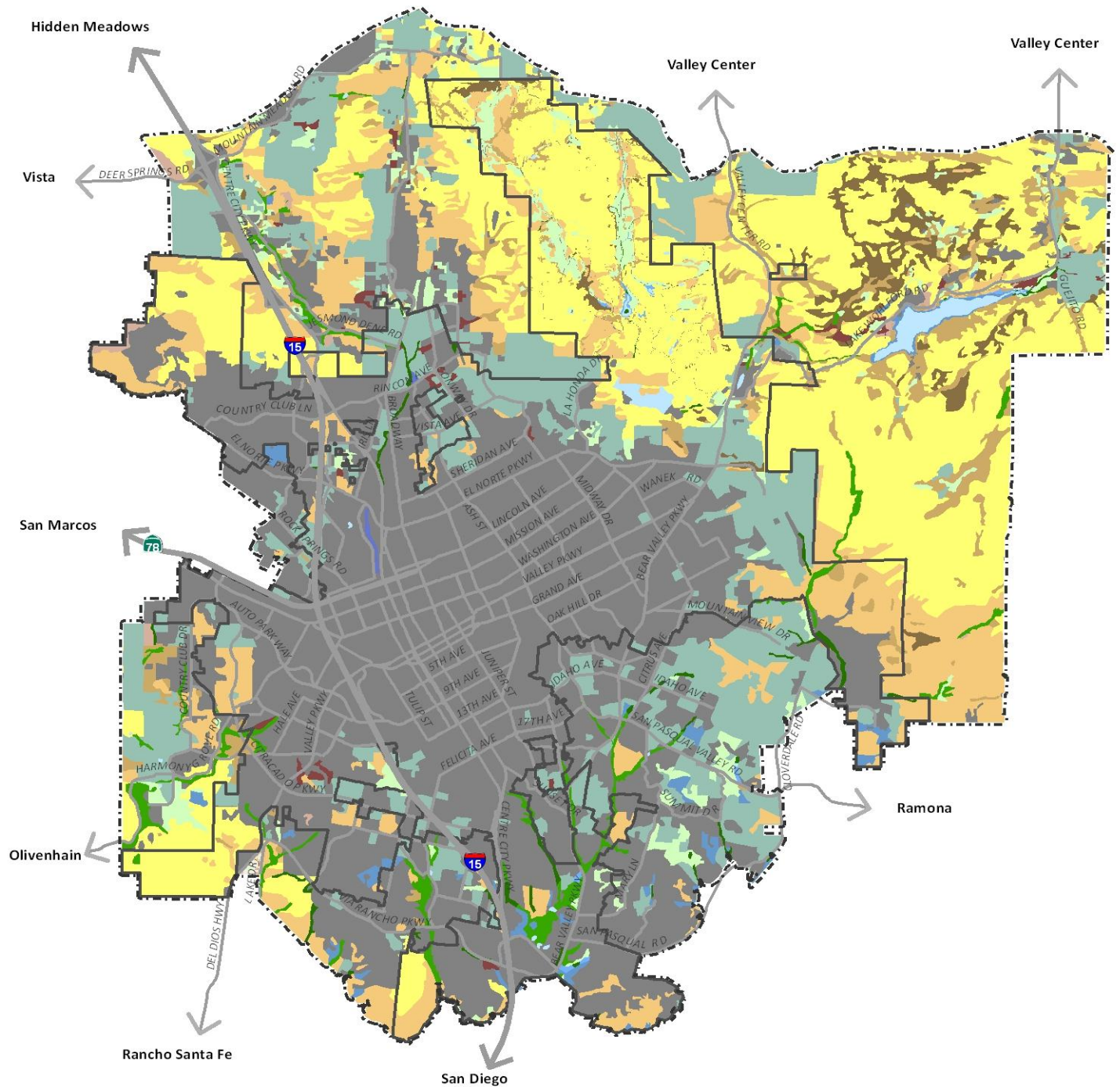
The Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program is an effort initiated by the California Department of Fish and Game to develop a broad-based approach for sustaining biological diversity. The primary objective of the NCCP program is to identify and provide for the regional protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. Escondido is one of seven cities in northwestern San Diego County comprising an NCCP subregion involved in the subregional Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP), which addresses the NCCP objectives. A draft habitat Focus Planning Area has been prepared and Escondido is working with other MHCP cities on a management and financing model to ensure the plan’s sustainability.

Escondido’s habitat preservation efforts also involve coordination with other agencies including the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Army Corps of Engineers, and California Department of Fish and Game.



Lake Dixon Fishing
(above)

Escondido’s Daley Ranch
Open Space Preserve supports
several types of habitats
(above right)



Vegetation Classifications

- Coastal Sage Scrub
- Chaparral
- Coastal Sage-Chaparral Scrub Mix
- Grassland
- Freshwater Marsh
- Riparian Forest
- Riparian Scrub
- Coast Live Oak Woodland
- Englemann Oak Woodland
- Eucalyptus Woodland
- Open Water

- Disturbed Wetland
- Disturbed Habitat
- Agriculture
- Urban/Developed

Legend

- General Plan Boundary
- City Limits
- Highway
- Street
- Lakes

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: City of Escondido, SanGIS

Escondido General Plan

Vegetation Categories
Figure VII-2

Figure VII-3

Threatened & Endangered Species in Escondido (partial list)



Least Bell's vireo
(Federal and State Endangered)



Quino Checkerspot
(Federal Endangered)



Coastal California gnatcatcher
(Federal Threatened)

Southern coastal sage scrub is a habitat located in Escondido that supports a large number of rare and endangered species (above right)



1. U.S. Fish and Wildlife

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is a federal bureau within the Department of the Interior, whose mission is working with communities to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants in their habitats. In addition to managing millions of acres in the national wildlife refuge system the Service enforces federal wildlife laws, protects endangered species, manages migratory birds, and restores wildlife habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife's lists of "endangered" and "threatened" species include several plants, animals and insects native to Escondido (FigureVII-3).

2. California Department of Fish and Game

The California Department of Fish and Game works with the city to maintain native plant and animal communities for their intrinsic and ecological value and their benefits to mankind. For their part of the environmental review and permitting process, the Department of Fish and Game is responsible for administering the California Endangered Species Act to ensure regulatory compliance and statewide consistency. The agency is also responsible for the Lake and Streambed Alteration program and determines whether an agreement is needed for an activity that will substantially modify a river, stream or land area and establishes conditions to protect those resources.

3. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

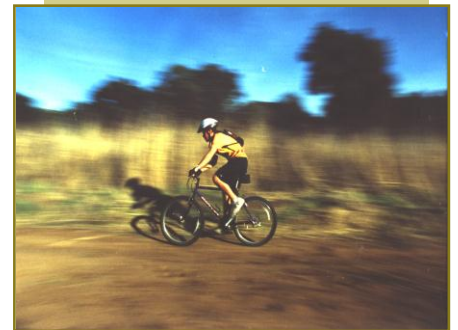
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a federal agency focused on providing engineering services to reduce risks from disaster. For Escondido's habitat preservation efforts, the Corps serves as a contact and permitting agency for projects involving work in stream courses, flood control channels and major drainage systems.



D. Trail Network

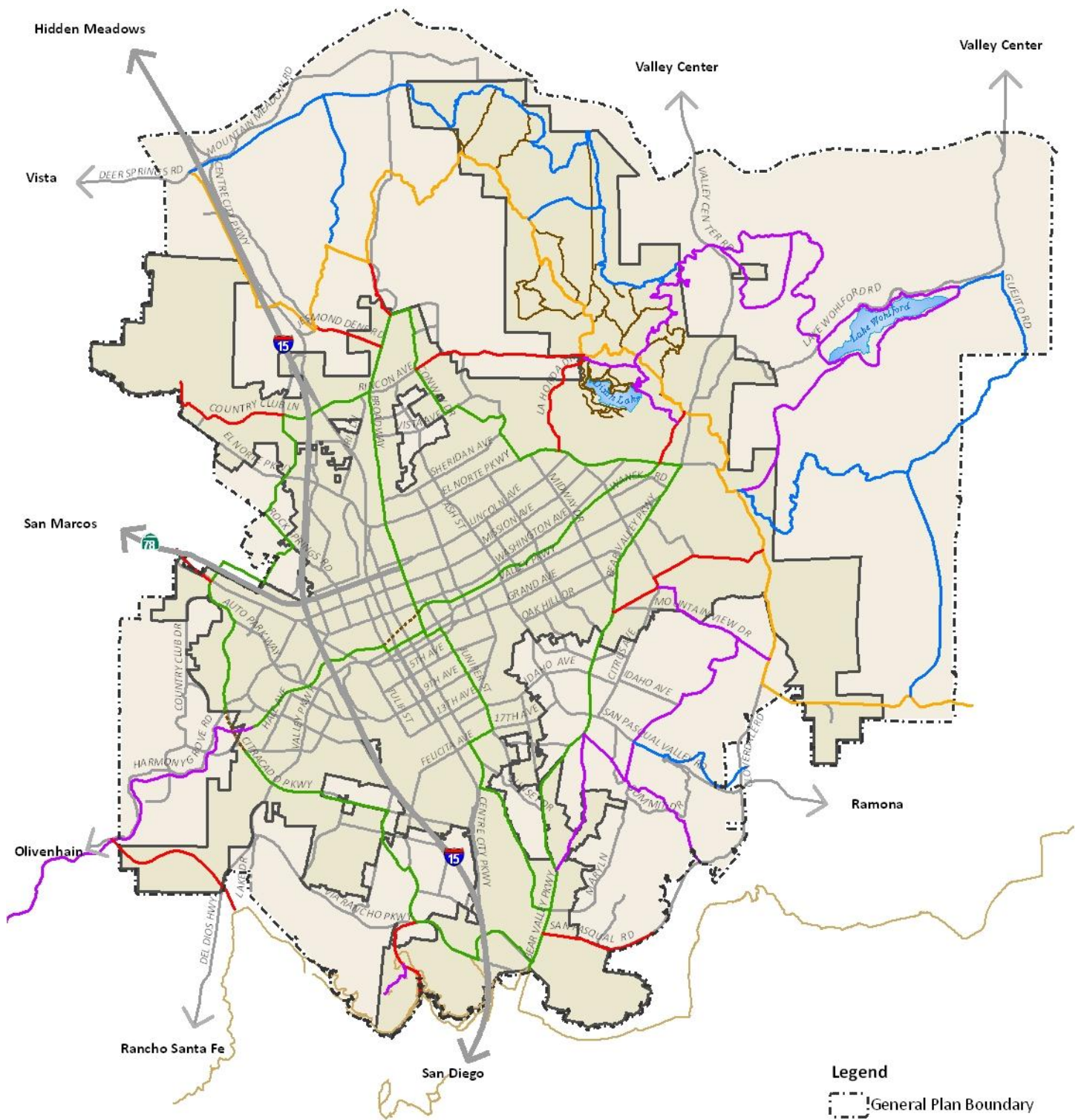
Trails are an important aspect of the General Plan because they provide opportunities for recreation, exploration, instruction, community involvement, economic benefits, and alternative transportation. Extending convenient trail access to open space areas provides an opportunity for educating the community on the importance of preservation and proper maintenance of the community’s sensitive biological resources. Economic benefits can be realized by promoting the qualities of local trails to tourists seeking the unique experience of Escondido’s trails and the opportunities provided by their connection to open space and other recreational amenities.

A coordinated system of urban, suburban and rural hiking trails identified in Figure VII-4 link the city’s park system, schools, open spaces, businesses, and community facilities in the developed valley areas to rural and open space lands including Daley Ranch, San Dieguito River Park and Elfin Forest Recreational Preserve on the perimeter. Escondido Creek, which flows through the central valley area of Escondido in a primarily east-west direction forms the “spine” of the trail system and also serves as an alternative non-motorized access route linking residents to employment, shopping and services. The trail system also links to the Bicycle Master Plan, which further enhances the community’s recreational and alternative transportation opportunities.



Trail Head and cyclist on Daley Ranch trails

Daley Ranch trails as viewed from Stanley Peak (above left)



Trail Type

- Primary Local Rural Trail
- Secondary Local Rural Trail
- Rural Regional Connector
- Urban Trail
- Spur Trail
- - - - - Proposed trail
- San Dieguito River Park Trails
- Daley Ranch/Lake Dixon Trails

Note: The trail locations depict generalized alignments. Please refer to Trails Master Plans for more details regarding alignments, locations, connections, and improvements associated with trails depicted on this map.
 Source: City of Escondido

Legend

- General Plan Boundary
- City Limits
- Highway
- Street
- Lakes
- ▲ 0 0.5 1 Miles



Escondido General Plan

Trails
Figure VII-4

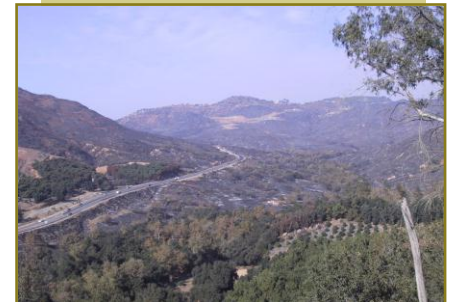


E. Visual Resources

Hillsides and ridgelines provide a visual resource and aesthetic value to Escondido that contributes to the community's sense of identity. The natural setting of the area provides many opportunities for views from surrounding higher elevations. A primary objective of viewshed policies is to preserve and protect existing internal and external view corridors in Escondido, with particular emphasis on ridgelines, unique landforms, visual gateways and edges of the community. Protecting these areas also serves a dual purpose in promoting safety, as development in hillside areas can generate erosion concerns from grading and habitat removal.

While many of the surrounding areas are privately owned there are opportunities to conserve important features while still allowing property owners the ability to responsibly develop their land. Much of Escondido's planning area that contains steeper terrain at higher elevations has been designated for very low density residential and/or agricultural purposes. This allows limited development opportunities while protecting community character.

The community's steep slopes, primary and secondary ridgelines, and prominent natural landforms have been identified in Figure VII-5. This serves as a tool for resource conservation planning purposes to guide open space and viewshed preservation. By maintaining policies that limit development in these sensitive areas, the General Plan can ensure the primary objectives of preserving and protecting key viewsheds. In addition, open space and habitat preservation efforts will be carried out so that the unique character of Escondido will be enjoyed by current and future generations.



*Northern Escondido's
Valley Center Road and
Bear Ridge Mountain Range*

*Escondido looking east towards
the Paradise Mountain Range
(above left)*



Slopes

- Slopes < 15%
- Slopes 15-25%
- Slopes > 25%

- Intermediate Ridgeline
- Skyline Ridge
- * Peaks and High Points

Legend

- General Plan Boundary
- City Limits
- Highway
- Street
- Lakes
- 0 0.5 1 Miles



City of Escondido

Slopes and Ridgelines
Figure VII-5

Source: City of Escondido



F. Agricultural Resources

Escondido's founding is tied to agriculture, which sustained the community and grew its economy for decades. Agriculture remains an important component in the local economy and its operation provides an important visual amenity that gives Escondido its unique character. Consequently its role as a land use is important in retaining community character.

The community's Local Register of Historic Places, agricultural land contracts, and other culturally and agriculturally significant sites have been identified in Figure VII-6 for resource conservation planning purposes as a guide for preserving important open space and viewsheds.

Citrus Groves on Hubbard Hill



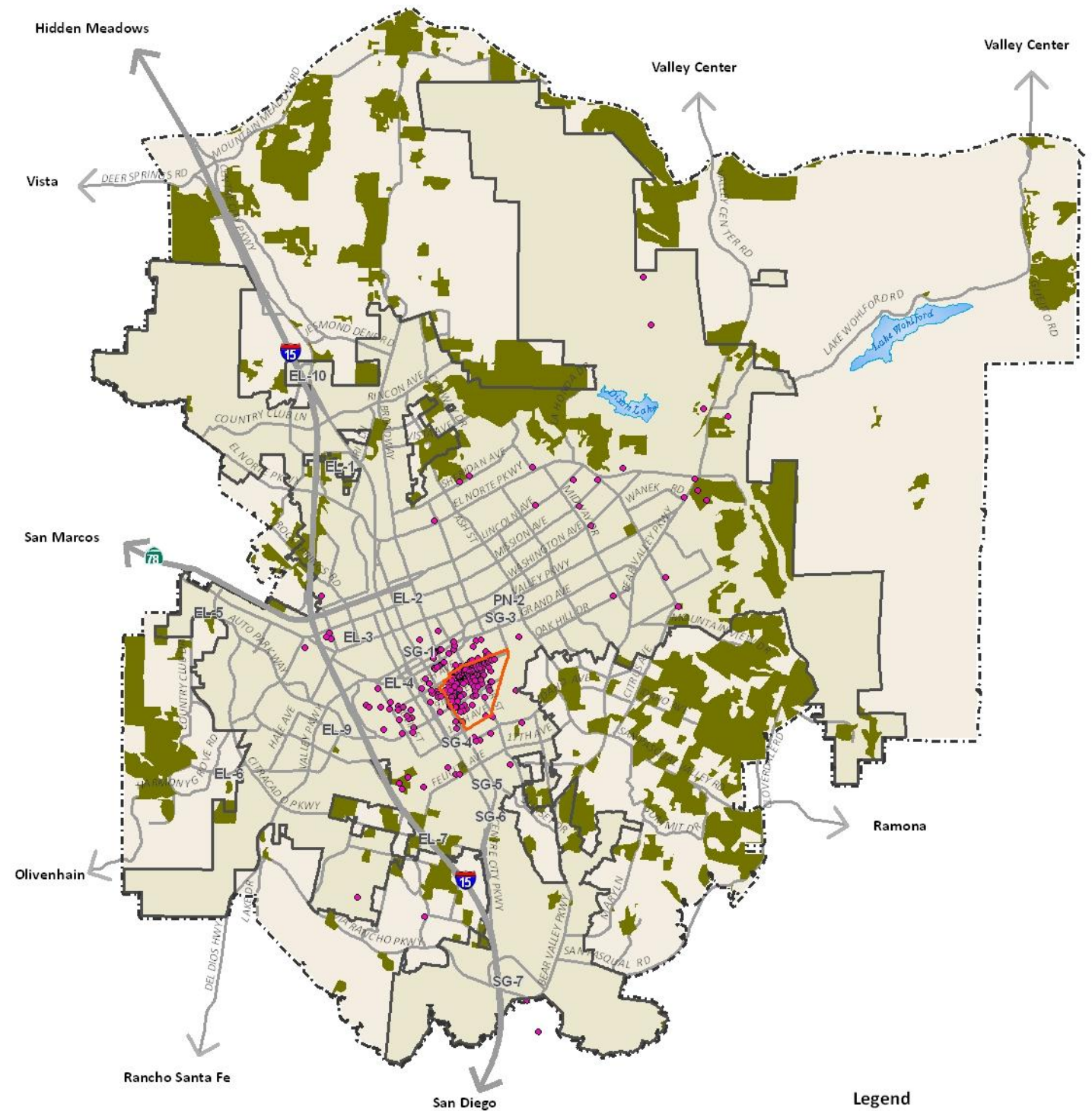
Examples of Local and National Historic Register Homes in Old Escondido



G. Historic and Cultural Resources

Escondido is a city with a unique history that gives the community its distinctively authentic quality. Rich and varied historical and cultural resources include buildings, structures, objects, sites, landscapes, archaeological sites, as well as traditional cultural properties that possess historical, scientific, architectural, aesthetic, cultural, or ethnic significance. The highest concentration of Escondido's historic buildings is in downtown and the Old Escondido Neighborhood Historic District (Figure VII-6). Preserving and interpreting the community's past was cited as an important consideration by many residents during General Plan public workshops.

Conserving archaeological, cultural and agricultural resources helps foster an appreciation of Escondido's past and provides an important perspective and economic opportunity for future planning efforts. Increased awareness of the economic benefits of preservation has also been recognized in the visitor and tourism industry. Interest in statewide heritage tourism and Escondido's ordinances offering economic incentives for preservation have benefited owners of historical, archeological and architecturally significant properties.



Cultural & Agricultural Sites

- Significant Historical Sites
- ▭ Designated Old Escondido Neighborhood
- ▭ Agricultural Areas

Source: City of Escondido

Legend

- ▭ General Plan Boundary
- ▭ City Limits
- Highway
- Street
- ▭ Lakes

0 0.5 1 Miles

Escondido General Plan

Cultural and Agricultural Sites
Figure VII-6



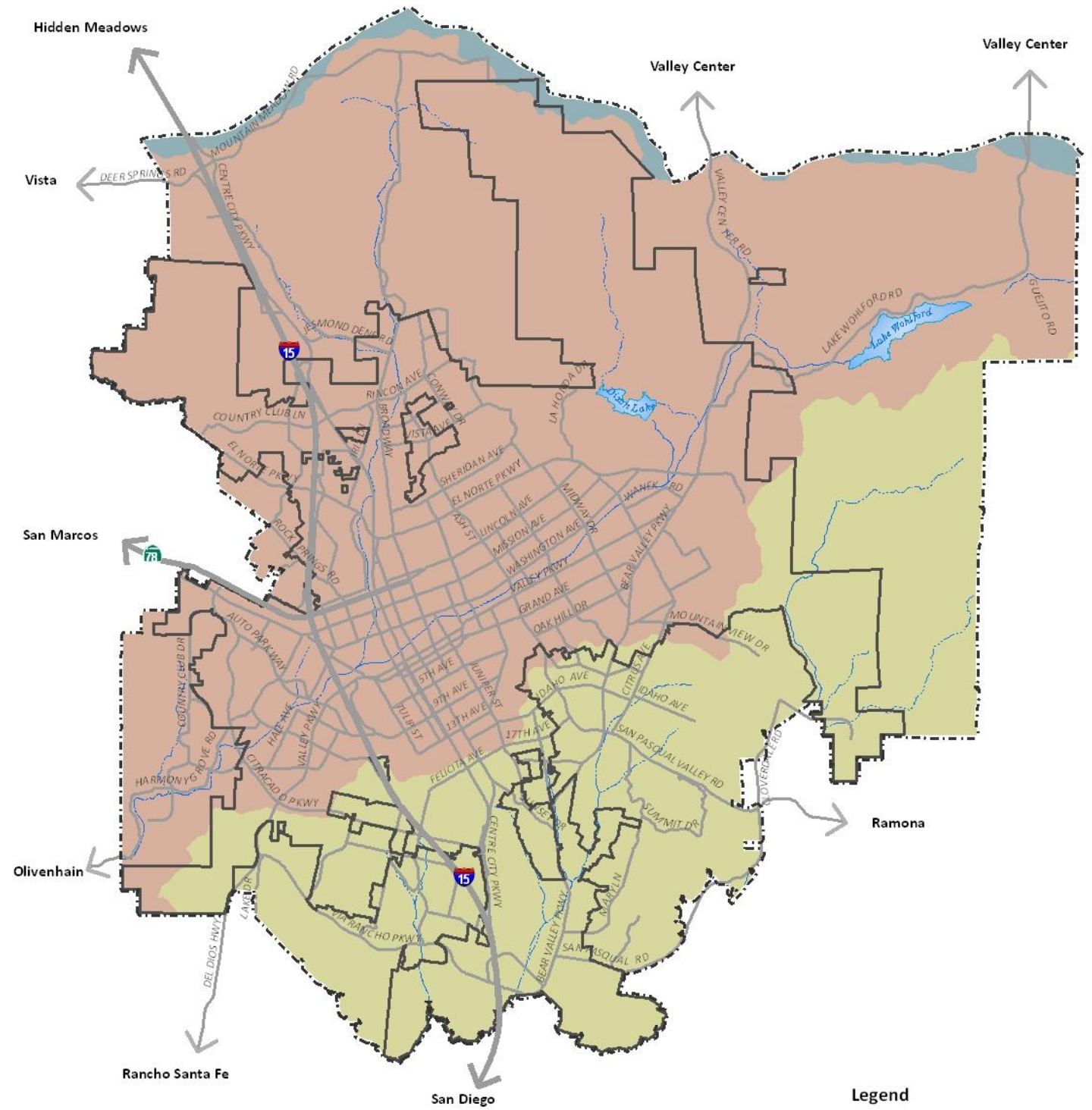
Water diverted from the San Luis Rey River gravity flows through a 14-mile canal excavated by hand in the 1890s through the Paradise Mountains to Lake Wohlford (above).

At the headwaters of one of several creeks that flow to the San Luis Rey River supplying water to Escondido (above right).



H. Water Resources

Escondido’s planning area is located within three watershed areas: Escondido Creek, San Dieguito River, and San Luis Rey Creek (Figure VII-7). Escondido manages two fresh water lakes (Dixon and Wohlford) that provide approximately 15% of the city’s supply and constitute the city’s primary storage facilities for local potable water. A reliable clean water supply is essential for public health, environmental sustainability, and economic prosperity, and is a resource that must be preserved. Threats to a clean water supply come from a variety of sources including industrial activities, improper chemical storage, pollution runoff, improper disposal of wastes and other activities that result in contaminating water resources. Also refer to *Stormwater Management* in the Mobility and Infrastructure Element, and *Floods* in the Community Protection Element.



Watersheds

- Carlsbad
- San Dieguito
- San Luis Rey
- Rivers and Streams

Legend

- General Plan Boundary
- City Limits
- Highway
- Street
- Lakes



Escondido General Plan

Watershed Areas
Figure VII-7

Source: City of Escondido, SANGIS

Figure VII-8

Low Impact Development

Definition:

Low Impact Development (LID):
A stormwater management approach modeled after nature that manages rainfall at the source by using uniformly distributed and decentralized micro-scale controls.

LID's Goal:

Mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology with design techniques that infiltrate, evaporate, detain, filter, and store runoff close to its source.

LID Principles:

- Incorporate site topography
- Reduce impervious surfaces
- Maximize infiltration
- Capture water for future use

Components in LID Design:

- Vegetated Swales
- Vegetated "Green" Roofs
- Detention / Retention Ponds
- Bio-Retention System
- Rain Barrels

Benefits of LID Design:

- Effective Stormwater Management
- Aesthetically Pleasing
- Recharges Groundwater
- Enhances Water Quality
- Reduced "Heat Island" Effect
- Increased Property Values
- Cost Effective

An example of a vegetated swale incorporating LID design principles to treat on-site drainage and recharge groundwater supplies



1. Surface and Groundwater Quality

An important strategy in protecting the city's surface and groundwater quality against erosion and pollutants includes incorporating Low Impact Development (LID) design principles and prohibiting construction in and near natural drainages and waterways including the filling of tributaries, dry washes, and arroyos (Figures VII-8 and VII-9). Promoting sustainable development that does not encroach on important native landscapes while also dedicating land for adequate buffers will aid in species' survival and ensure the quality of Escondido's water resources are maintained. Also refer to *Stormwater Management* in the Mobility and Infrastructure Element, and *Floods* in the Community Protection Element.



2. Urban Runoff

Urbanization increases the variety and amount of pollutants that threaten clean water supplies. Sediment from development and new construction such as oils and toxic chemicals from automobiles, nutrients and pesticides from landscaping, and viruses and bacteria from failing septic systems are examples of pollutants generated in urban areas. These pollutants can have a negative effect on drinking water supplies, recreation, and wildlife.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for areas within Escondido's watershed areas requires that all runoff be tested and treated so that pollutant levels are minimized to the maximum extent possible. Also refer to *Stormwater Management* in the Mobility and Infrastructure Element, and *Floods* in the Community Protection Element.

Figure VII-9
Low Impact Development
Examples

Directing runoff to vegetated areas with absorbent soils effectively filters pollutants and reduces off-site flows



Urbanized southeastern Escondido drains into Hodges Reservoir via streams that flow through Kit Carson Park. Minimizing pollutants in these and all waterways is important for ensuring a healthy environment

Figure VII-10

GENERAL PLAN

QUALITY OF LIFE STANDARD # 9

AIR QUALITY

The city shall establish a Climate Action Plan with feasible and appropriate local policies and measures aimed at reducing regional greenhouse gas emissions. Measures shall include, but not be limited to, reducing the number of vehicular miles traveled, supporting public transportation, participating in the development of park-and-ride facilities, coordinating land-use approvals, accommodating facilities for alternative fuel vehicles, maintaining and updating the city's traffic signal synchronization plan, Promoting local agriculture, increasing landscaping standards, promoting landscaping programs, and encouraging non-polluting alternative energy systems.

An aerial view of Escondido looking southwest; the city's air quality is influenced by local and regional emissions including pollutants generated as far away as Los Angeles



I. Air and Climate

Escondido and surrounding areas are located in the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB). The climate of the SDAB is dominated by a semi-permanent high pressure cell located over the Pacific Ocean. This cell influences the direction of prevailing winds (westerly to north-westerly) and maintains clear skies for much of the year. Escondido residents recognize healthy air as a quality of life. The city is committed to providing a more livable, equitable, and economically vibrant community through the incorporation of sustainability features and reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in concert with state mandates (Figure VII-10).

Climate and local meteorological conditions influence ambient air quality creating two types of temperature inversions that may act to degrade local air quality. Subsidence inversions occur during the warmer months as descending air associated with the Pacific high pressure cell comes into contact with cool marine air. The boundary between the two layers of air creates a temperature inversion that traps pollutants. The other type of inversion, a radiation inversion, develops on winter nights when air near the ground cools through radiation and the air aloft remains warm. The shallow inversion layer formed between these two air masses also can trap pollutants.

1. Air Quality

Air quality reports generated by the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District use the Air Quality Index (AQI), which represents the higher of three pollutants – Ground-level Particulate Matter (PM) with a diameter less than 2.5 microns or 10 microns (PM 2.5 or PM 10 respectively), or ozone (Figure VII-11). For ground-level ozone, these values are based upon an 8-hour running average. Ground-level PM 2.5 and PM 10 are based upon a 24-hour daily average.

Figure VII-11
Air Quality Index (AQI) Color Codes

(AQI) Values	Health Concern	Colors
When the AQI is in this range:	...air quality conditions are:	...as symbolized by this color:
0 to 50	Good	Green
51 to 100	Moderate	Yellow
101 to 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (U.S.G)	Orange
151 to 200	Unhealthy	Red
201 to 300	Very Unhealthy	Purple
301 to 500	Hazardous	Maroon

2. Climate Protection

The amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) in the atmosphere affects climate. Human activity generates GHG emissions through transportation, development and other actions. Reducing GHG emissions is mandated by state law as a cornerstone for protecting the climate. The Escondido Climate Action Plan (E-CAP) establishes goals and policies that incorporate environmental responsibility into the city's daily management of growth and development, education, energy and water use, air quality, transportation, waste reduction, economic development, open space and natural habitats.

The E-CAP involves using energy more efficiently, harnessing renewable energy to power buildings, recycling waste, conserving and recycling water, and enhancing access to sustainable transportation modes. These conservation and development efforts will keep dollars in Escondido's local economy, create new green jobs and improve the community's quality of life. The efforts toward reducing GHG emissions described in the E-CAP would be done in coordination with the city's land use decisions.



J. Resource Conservation Goals and Policies

A complete list of the General Plan Goals is located in the Vision and Purpose. Specific goals related to resource conservation policies provided below are intended to guide development to meet the present and future needs, achieve a vibrant community, and enhance the character of Escondido.

1. Biological and Open Space Resources

GOAL 1: Preservation and enhancement of Escondido's open spaces and significant biological resources as components of a sustainable community.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.1

Establish and maintain an interconnected system of open space corridors, easements, trails, public/quasi-public land, and natural areas that preserves sensitive lands, permanent bodies of water, floodways, and slopes over 35 percent, and provides for wildlife movement.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.2

Maintain open space and rural residential uses around the perimeter of the city to serve as a buffer from the surrounding urbanizing areas.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.3

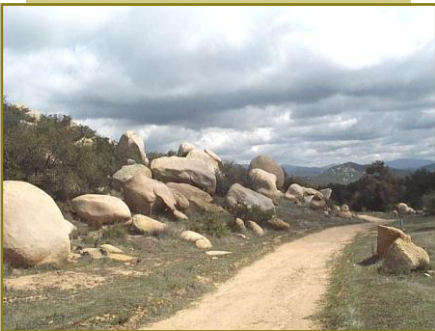
Protect land areas with steep topography (generally over 25%) from intensive urban development, regulate development in areas with topographic constraints such as steep slopes, and include these areas within the overall open space system.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.4

Coordinate the planning and development of the overall open space system with other public facilities and services within Escondido.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.5

Participate in the planning and preservation of an interconnected biological resources and open space plan with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies that enhances the viability of the regional ecosystem.



Scenes from trails in the Daley Ranch open space conservation area

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.6

Preserve and protect significant wetlands, riparian, and woodland habitats as well as rare, threatened or endangered plants and animals and their habitats through avoidance. If avoidance is not possible, require mitigation of resources either on- or off-site at ratios consistent with State and federal regulations, and in coordination with those agencies having jurisdiction over such resources.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.7

Require that a qualified professional conduct a survey for proposed development projects located in areas potentially containing significant biological resources to determine their presence and significance. This shall address any flora or fauna of rare and/or endangered status, declining species, species and habitat types of unique or limited distribution, and/or visually prominent vegetation.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.8

Require that proposed development projects implement appropriate measures to minimize potential adverse impacts on sensitive habitat areas, such as buffering and setbacks. In the event that significant biological resources are adversely affected, consult with appropriate state and federal agencies to determine adequate mitigation or replacement of the resource.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.9

Encourage proposed development projects to minimize the removal of significant stands of trees unless needed to protect public safety and to limit tree removal to the minimum amount necessary to assure continuity and functionality of building spaces.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.10

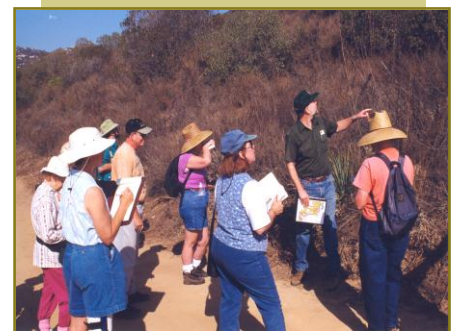
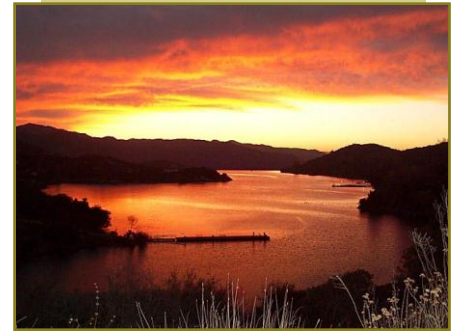
Prohibit any activities in riparian areas other than those permitted by appropriate agencies to protect those resources.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.11

Construct appropriate barriers to be maintained by property owners or homeowners' associations that restrict access to areas containing sensitive biological resources.

Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.12

Promote the use of native plants for public and private landscaping purposes within the city.



Lake Dixon at Sunset (above)

*Guided walking tours
in Daley Ranch*

2. Trail Network

GOAL 2: A network of trails that connect the community and provide opportunities for recreation and alternative transportation use.

Trail Network Policy 2.1

Maintain and periodically update a master plan of trails in coordination with the County, City of San Diego, City of San Marcos, and San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park that addresses specific trail alignments, standards, types of trails, signage, implementation strategies and other factors as determined by the City Council.

Trail Network Policy 2.2

Expand and improve the Escondido Creek trail within the city's trail network that links urban areas with rural and open space areas to promote opportunities for recreation, education, interpretation, and alternative transportation.

Trail Network Policy 2.3

Integrate trails into new and existing developments, and ensure that trails safely interface with neighborhoods.

Trail Network Policy 2.4

Establish a continuous network of landscaped pedestrian and bicycle paths within urbanized areas that provides internal circulation and links Escondido's districts and neighborhoods.

Trail Network Policy 2.5

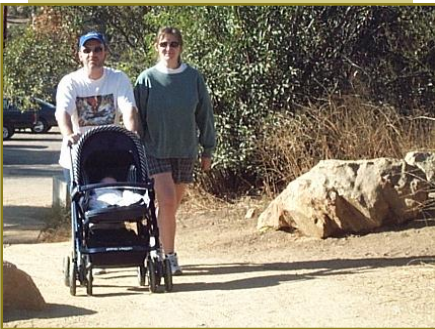
Ensure safe and efficient maintenance of trails that minimize impacts to the environment.

Trail Network Policy 2.6

Work with various agencies within and adjacent to Escondido's Planning Area to pursue appropriate joint use of right-of-way and easement areas for trail extension and development.

Trail Network Policy 2.7

Involve seniors and the disabled in trail planning to determine special improvements for consideration in trail construction to increase enjoyment and accessibility for all users.



Hiking at Lake Dixon

Trail Network Policy 2.8

Consider special facilities and activities such as exercise stations and water fountains that would expand trail usage and increase community activity.

Trail Network Policy 2.9

Employ sustainable practices for landscaping, use pervious paving materials to minimize stormwater runoff, and employ other techniques for the construction and improvement of the trail network.

3. Visual Resources

GOAL 3: Preservation of significant visual resources such as ridgelines, hillsides, and viewsheds that serve as a scenic amenity and contribute to the quality of life for residents.

Visual Resources Policy 3.1

Preserve significant visual resources that include unique landforms (e.g., skyline ridges, intermediate ridges, hilltops, and rock outcroppings), creeks, lakes, and open space areas in a natural state, to the extent possible.

Visual Resources Policy 3.2

Require new development to avoid obstructing views of, and to minimize impacts to, significant visual resources through the following: creative site planning; integration of natural features into the project; appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape; clustering of development to preserve open space vistas and natural features; minimal disturbance of topography; and creation of contiguous open space networks.

Visual Resources Policy 3.3

Maintain density and development standards designed to protect significant visual resources such as existing terrain, steep slopes, floodways, habitat areas, and ridgelines, and to minimize visual impacts of grading and structures.

Visual Resources Policy 3.4

Prohibit development on skyline ridges and seek to obtain scenic easement dedications for these areas from property owners in conjunction with development on other suitable locations of the property. Require property owners of such scenic easements to retain, maintain, preserve, and protect the public view of these areas in their natural state, without obstruction by structures, and prohibit clearing of brush or planting of vegetation except as necessary to reduce fire hazards.



Mountains and hillsides that surround Escondido are prominent visual resource visible from many local streets

Visual Resources Policy 3.5

Regulate development on intermediate ridges, hilltops, and hillsides to preserve the natural appearance and landform, and minimize impacts on terrain with a slope greater than 15 percent subject to the following requirements:

1. Intermediate Ridges and Hilltops
 - a) Prepare landscaping plans that minimize the visual impact of the development from adjoining properties and the valley floor;
 - b) Concentrate development in subordinate or hidden locations, which shall not project above the natural landform;
 - c) Prepare grading plans that minimize disruption of the natural landform and vegetation; and
 - d) Allow development on intermediate ridges only in association with the preservation of significant open space, habitat, cultural resources or agricultural uses within the same project.
2. Slopes Greater than 15 Percent
 - a) Locate development to avoid potentially hazardous areas and environmentally sensitive areas, as well as to avoid dislocation of any unusual rock formations or any other unique or unusual geographic features.
 - b) Design development to minimize grading requirements by incorporating terracing, padding, and cut-and-fill grading that conforms to the natural contours of the site and protects the visual continuity of the hillsides.
 - c) Cluster the overall development pattern in accordance with General Plan provisions to preserve the maximum amount of open spaces and natural setting and to reduce grading, erosion, and runoff potential.
 - d) Landscape the site with existing trees and other natural vegetation, as much as possible, to stabilize slopes, reduce erosion, and enhance the visual appearance of the development.
 - e) Minimize the visual impact of development on adjoining residential areas to the extent feasible.

Visual Resources Policy 3.6

Require that development within the Interstate 15 corridor be located and designed in consideration of its potential visual impacts and preservation of prominent views along the corridor that include: outstanding continuous, panoramic views of the valley floor, surrounding ridges and Lake Hodges, and focal views where the eye is channeled toward a visually dominant feature such as an undisturbed



hillside or steep slopes with rock outcroppings. Require development proposals within the I-15 scenic corridor (defined as the area within 1,750 feet of the freeway) to include a visual assessment and conform to the community design policies which address:

- a) The siting of new structures outside of significant viewshed corridors;
- b) The protection of hillsides and ridgelines; and
- c) The need to blend developments with their setting in terms of height and scale.

4. Agricultural Resources

GOAL 4: Preservation of agricultural resources and continuation of agricultural production in appropriate areas within Escondido.

Agricultural Resources Policy 4.1

Maintain large-lot residential land uses with appropriate zoning designations in agricultural areas that are compatible with preserving agricultural productivity.

Agricultural Resources Policy 4.2

Require agricultural lands to be physically separated from more intensive urban development with intermediate land uses that are mutually compatible, and use landscape screening methods to minimize urban and agricultural conflicts.

Agricultural Resources Policy 4.3

Explore a variety of techniques to preserve existing agricultural lands including:

- a) Agricultural Land Trusts designed as nonprofit corporations organized according to the Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law of California and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- b) Transfer development rights from existing agricultural lands to other portions of the project or City-approved receiver sites, thereby preserving the agricultural lands in permanent open space, consistent with clustering policies.
- c) The “right to farm” in open space areas.

Agricultural Resources Policy 4.4

Encourage the use of water conservation techniques in agricultural enterprises including the use of reclaimed water for irrigation.



Avocado groves surround Escondido's Planning Area

Agricultural Resources Policy 4.5

Support the operation of, and provide venues for, “Certified Farmer’s Markets” to allow farmers in the area to sell their products on-site or off-site as designated locations.

Agricultural Resources Policy 4.6

Permit the development of community gardens on vacant properties in commercial and industrial areas and multi-family neighborhoods, provided that they are managed and operated to prevent adverse impacts on adjoining uses.

5. Historic and Cultural Resources

GOAL 5: Preservation of important cultural and paleontological resources that contribute to the unique identity and character of Escondido.

Cultural Resources Policy 5.1

Maintain and update the Escondido Historic Sites Survey to include significant resources that meet local, state, or federal criteria.

Cultural Resources Policy 5.2

Preserve significant cultural and paleontological resources listed on the national, State, or local registers through: maintenance or development of appropriate ordinances that protect, enhance, and perpetuate resources; incentive programs; and/or the development review process.

Cultural Resources Policy 5.3

Consult with appropriate organizations and individuals (e.g., South Coastal Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System, Native American Heritage Commission, Native American groups and individuals, and San Diego Natural History Museum) early in the development process to minimize potential impacts to cultural and paleontological resources.

Cultural Resources Policy 5.4

Recognize the sensitivity of locally significant cultural resources and the need for more detailed assessments through the environmental review process.

Cultural Resources Policy 5.5

Preserve historic buildings, landscapes, and districts with special and recognized historic or architectural value in their original locations through preservation, rehabilitation (including adaptive reuse), and restoration where the use is compatible with the surrounding area.



The community's highest concentration of historic resources is within the Old Escondido Neighborhood

Cultural Resources Policy 5.6

Review proposed new development and/or remodels for compatibility with the surrounding historic context.

Cultural Resources Policy 5.7

Comply with appropriate local, State, or federal regulations governing historical resources.

Cultural Resources Policy 5.8

Consider providing financial incentives, and educational information on existing incentives provided by the federal government to private owners and development in order to maintain, rehabilitate, and preserve historic resources.

Cultural Resources Policy 5.9

Educate the public on the City’s important historic resources in increase awareness for protection.

6. Water Resources and Quality

GOAL 6: Preservation and protection of the City’s surface water and groundwater quality and resources.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.1

Integrate water management programs that emphasize multiple benefits and balance the needs of urban, rural, and agricultural users.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.2

Protect the surface water resources in the city including Lake Wohlford, Dixon Lake, Lake Hodges, Escondido Creek, and other waterways.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.3

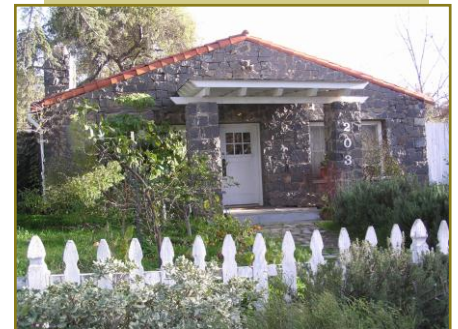
Protect the sustainability of groundwater resources.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.4

Require new development to preserve areas that provide opportunities for groundwater recharge (i.e., areas where substantial surface water infiltrates into the groundwater), stormwater management, and water quality benefits.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.5

Maintain natural and improved drainages as permanent open space.



*Victorian and stone
Craftsman style homes in Old
Escondido Neighborhood*

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.6

Control encroachments into wetlands and designated floodways to protect the community's water resources.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.7

Prohibit development in the areas around Lake Wohlford, Dixon Lake, or Lake Hodges that would detract from their use as watershed areas or as visual and recreational amenities.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.8

Maintain Escondido's natural creek system in an undisturbed state with a minimum of a 50-foot buffer and setback for development, or as established by appropriate wildlife agencies, unless stream course alteration, channelization, and/or improvements are approved by necessary state and federal agencies and the City.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.9

Conserve and restore creeks to their natural states whenever possible, and allow areas where channelization has occurred for flood control purposes to serve as urban open space.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.10

Require that drainage channels be designed to accommodate riparian vegetation growth.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.11

Allow public access to the creeks with that will not impact habitat areas, consistent with sound resource management practices.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.12

Regulate construction and operational activities through the use of stormwater protection measures in accordance with the City's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.13

Regulate discharge from industrial users and use of agricultural chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, etc.) in accordance with local and State regulations to protect the city's natural water bodies.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.14

Require new development to protect the quality of water resources and natural drainage systems through site design and use of source controls, stormwater treatment, runoff reduction measures, best management practices, and Low Impact Development measures.



Urban runoff water quality testing in one of Escondido's channelized waterways

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.15

Protect Escondido's shallow groundwater basin from contamination by regulating stormwater collection and conveyance to ensure pollutants in runoff have been reduced to the maximum extent practicable.

Water Resources and Quality Policy 6.16

Monitor underground storage tanks containing hazardous materials and septic tank systems on a regular basis in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations.

7. Air Quality and Climate Protection

GOAL 7: Improved air quality in the city and the region to maintain the community's health and reduce green-house gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

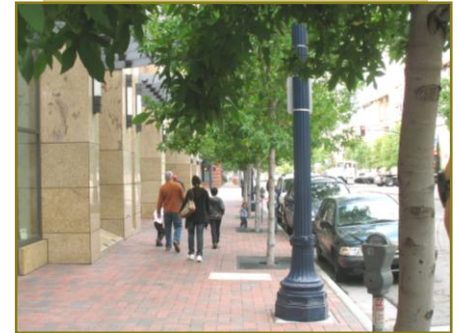
Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.1

Participate in regional planning efforts and coordinate with the San Diego Air Pollution Control District and San Diego Association of Governments in their efforts to reduce air quality impacts and attain state and federal air quality standards.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.2

Reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions through the following measures including, but not limited to:

- a) Implementing land use patterns that reduce automobile dependence (compact, mixed-use, pedestrian, and transit-oriented development, etc.);
- b) Reducing the number of vehicular miles traveled through implementation of Transportation Demand Management programs, jobs-housing balance, and similar techniques;
- c) Supporting public transportation improvements;
- d) Encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation by expanding public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian networks and facilities;
- e) Participating in the development of park-and-ride facilities;
- f) Maintaining and updating the city's traffic signal synchronization plan;
- g) Promoting local agriculture;
- h) Promoting the use of drought-tolerant landscaping; and
- i) Encouraging the use of non-polluting alternative energy systems.



Air quality in urban environments can be improved by planting vegetation in the right of way

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.3

Require that new development projects incorporate feasible measures that reduce construction and operational emissions.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.4

Locate uses and facilities/operations that may produce toxic or hazardous air pollutants an adequate distance from each other and from sensitive uses such as housing and schools as consistent with California Air Resources Board recommendations.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.5

Consider the development of park and ride facilities within the city in coordination with Caltrans.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.6

Restrict the number and location of drive-through facilities in the city and require site layouts that reduce the amount of time vehicles wait for service.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.7

Encourage businesses to alter local truck delivery schedules to occur during non-peak hours, when feasible.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.8

Require that government contractors minimize greenhouse gas emissions in building construction and operations, which can be accomplished through the use of low or zero-emission vehicles and equipment.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.9

Encourage city employees to use public transit, carpool, and use alternate modes of transportation for their home to work commutes.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.10

Purchase low-emission vehicles for the city's fleet and use clean fuel sources for trucks and heavy equipment, when feasible.

Air Quality and Climate Protection Policy 7.11

Educate the public about air quality, its effect on health, and efforts the public can make to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



Ride sharing promotes better air quality, improves efficiencies, and conserves resources