CHAPTER 2.0
ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The proposed Forrester Creek Industrial Park Project is located in the City of El Cajon, County of San Diego, California (Figure 2-1). El Cajon is located about 15 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean on the eastern edges of the Cities of San Diego and La Mesa and immediately south of the City of Santee. Interstate 8 (I-8) provides the main connection with the City of El Cajon and the Pacific Ocean to the west, and continues eastward across San Diego County and the southwestern United States.

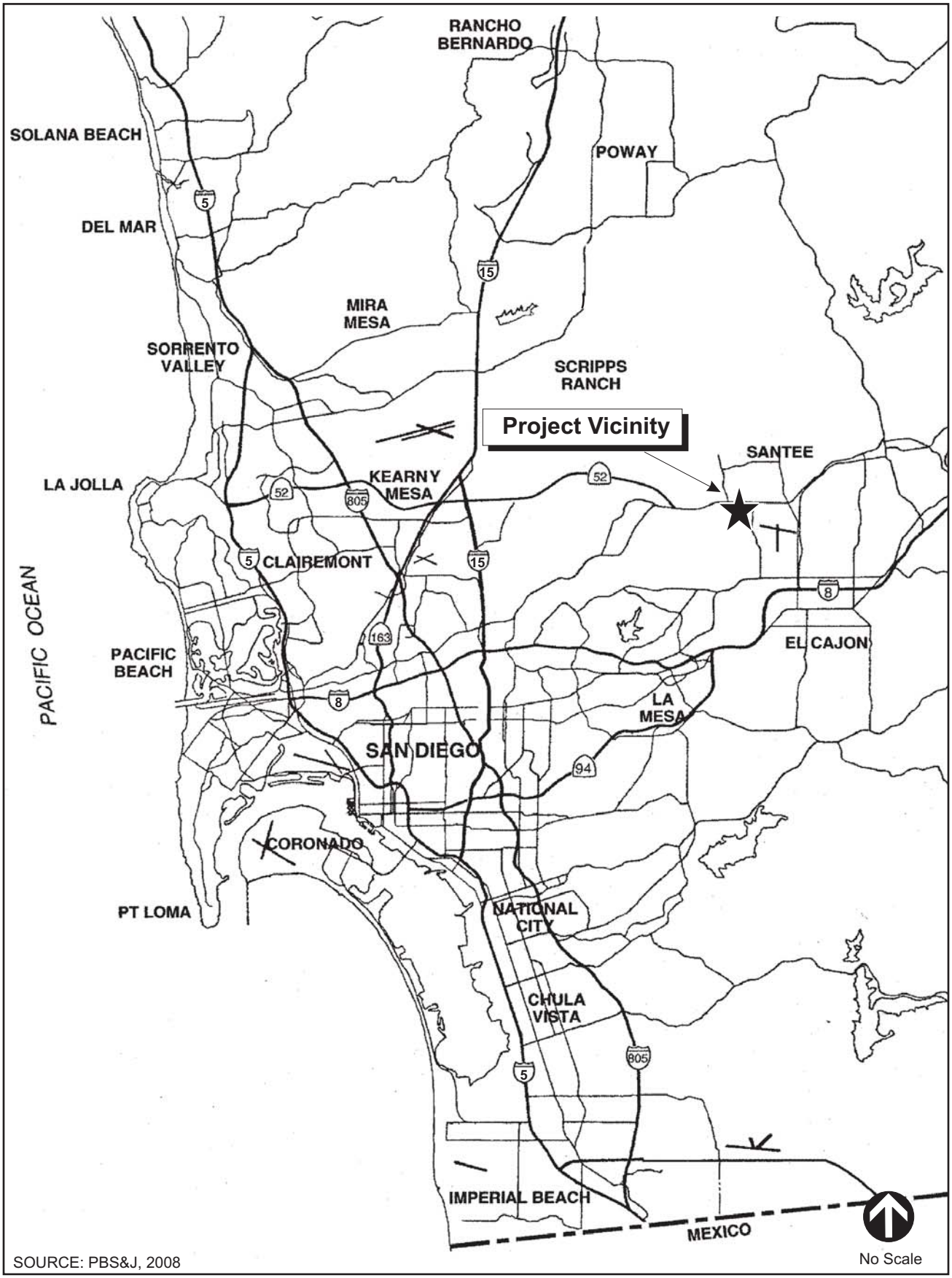
The project site is located at the northwest corner of Weld Boulevard and Cuyamaca Street in the northwestern portion of the City of El Cajon (Figure 2-2). The site is bounded on the north and northwest by the City of Santee. Figure 2-3 provides an aerial photograph of the proposed project site, while Figure 2-4 shows the existing topography of the proposed project site. The site is also part of the Gillespie Field Airport, and is owned and operated by the County of San Diego.

2.2 PROJECT AREA CHARACTERISTICS

2.2.1 CITY OF EL CAJON

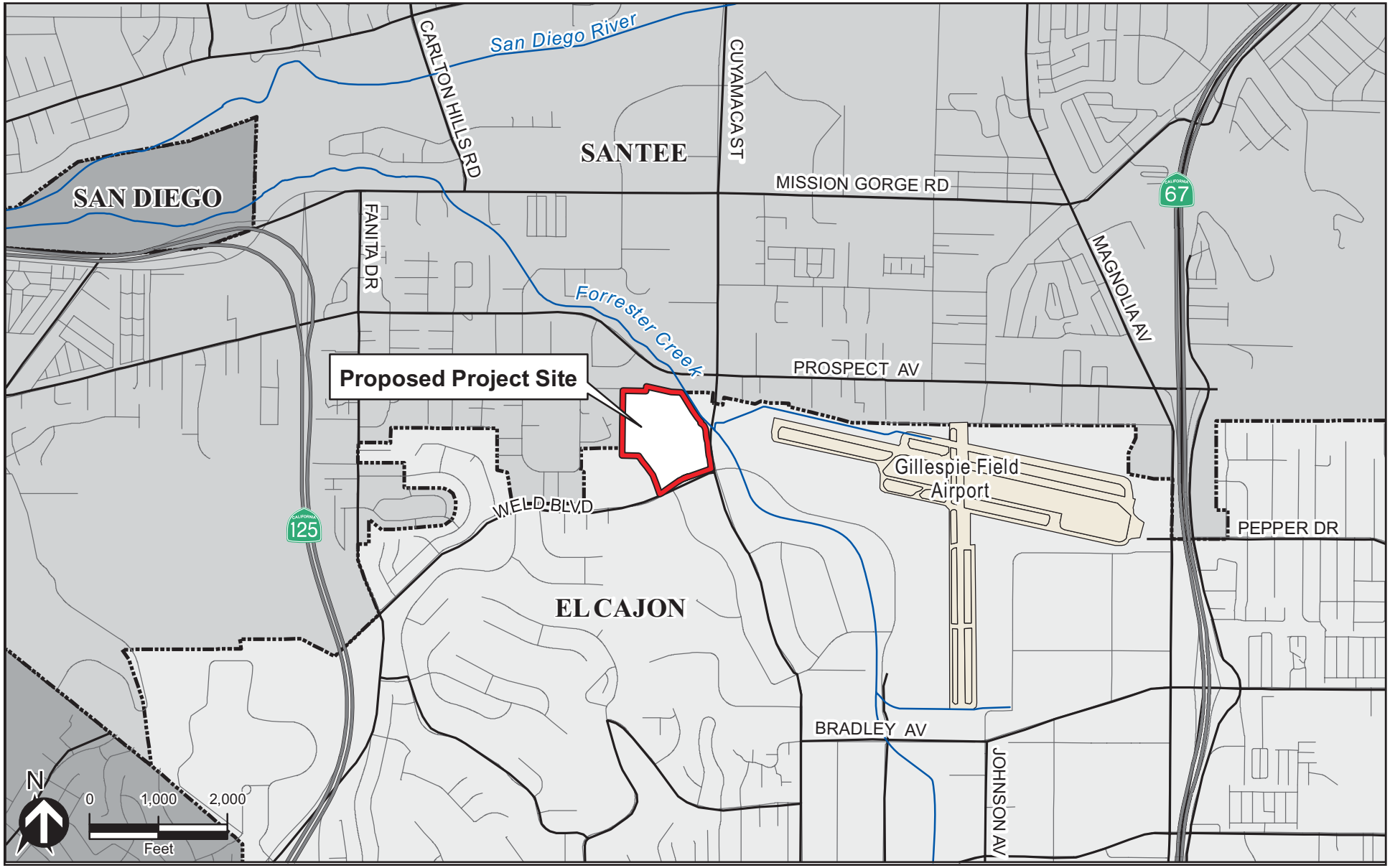
The proposed project would be located within the approximately 12,600-acre El Cajon Community Planning Area, which consists of a broad level valley surrounded by hills rising 200 to 600 feet above the valley floor. The City of El Cajon is bound to the north by the City of Santee, to the west by the Cities of San Diego and La Mesa, and to the south and east by the County of San Diego. The international border with Mexico is located approximately 30 miles to the south, and Los Angeles is located approximately 125 miles north. Access to El Cajon is primarily provided by the following roadways: I-8, which bisects the City into northern and southern halves; State Route (SR) 67, a north-south highway that serves as a connector from Riverside County; and SR-125, a north-south highway that extends along portions of the western edge of El Cajon and connects with SR-52 on the western side of the City. The easterly extension of SR-52 to SR-67 is currently under construction just north of the City boundary.

The El Cajon community planning area is in the eastern portion of urban growth extending from the City of San Diego. Development of the area consists of residential and industrial development, which characterizes the majority of land uses adjacent to the proposed project. Land uses in the project area are described in detail in Section 4.9, Land Use. El Cajon is suburban to the City of San Diego, but contains a large, independent employment base and shopping area that serves eastern San Diego County.



SOURCE: PBS&J, 2008

REGIONAL LOCATION MAP **FIGURE 2-1**

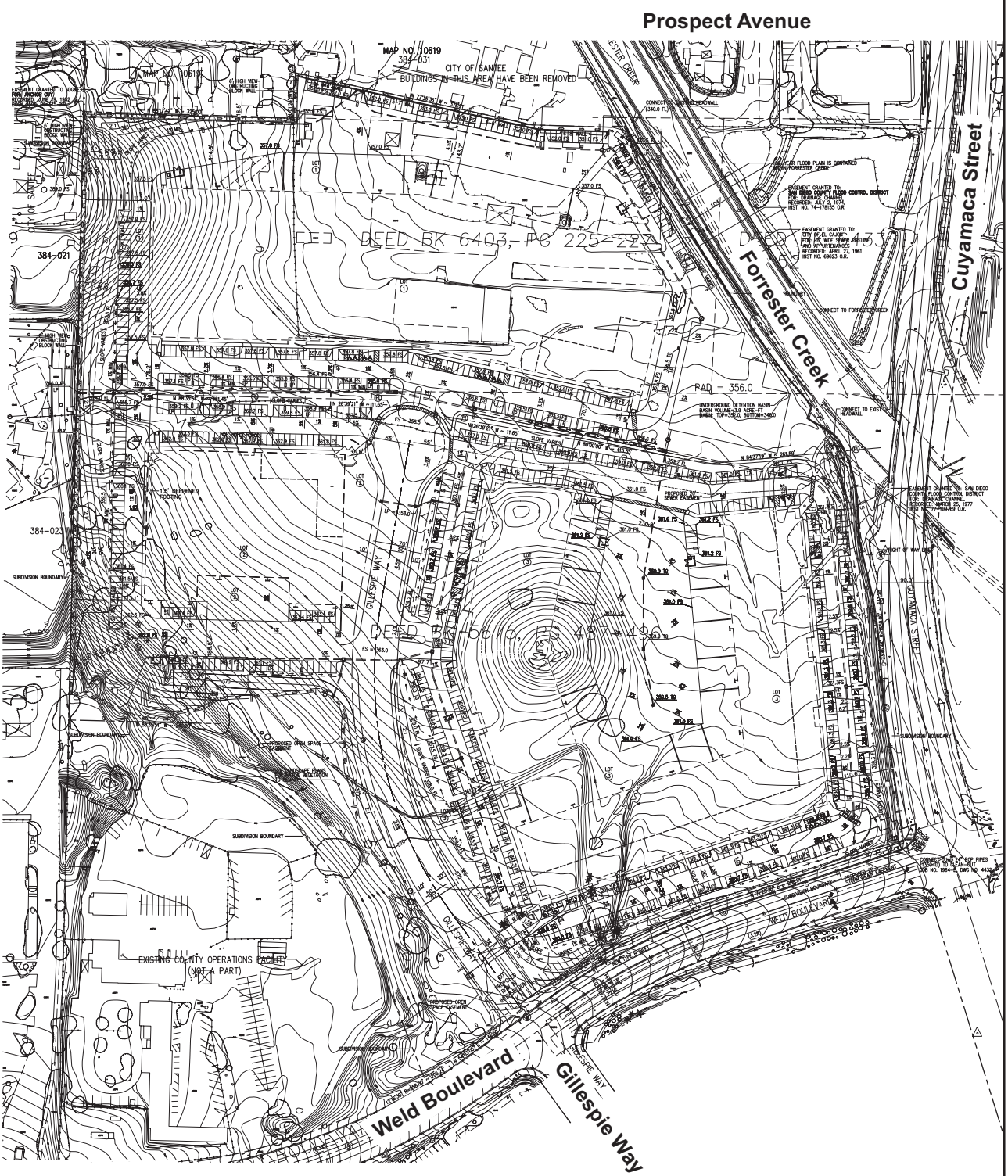


SOURCE: 2004 ESRI Streetmap Dataset

PROJECT SITE VICINITY MAP **FIGURE 2-2**

SOURCE: City of El Cajon, 2008

EXISTING PROJECT SITE **FIGURE 2-3**



SOURCE: Burkett and Wong Engineers, 2009

No Scale

EXISTING SITE TOPOGRAPHY **FIGURE 2-4**

2.2.2 GILLESPIE FIELD AIRPORT

The Gillespie Field Airport is located on San Diego County-owned land on the northern border of the City of El Cajon and the southern border of the City of Santee, approximately 13 miles northeast of downtown San Diego. The Airport is bound by Kenny Street on the north, Magnolia Avenue on the east, Bradley Avenue on the south, and Cuyamaca Street on the west.

The Gillespie Field Airport is a general aviation airport, which consists of approximately 750 acres. Existing industrial development at Gillespie Field includes approximately 160 acres. The project site is the last large contiguous parcel at Gillespie Field that can be developed as industrial. The balance of the airport property is designated for aviation uses except for a 10-acre area along the west side of Marshall Avenue just north of Billy Mitchell Drive, which is designated for public institution.

2.2.3 SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

The City of Santee is located in central San Diego County about 18 miles east of downtown San Diego. It is bordered on the west and southwest by the City of San Diego and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, on the south by the City of El Cajon, on the north by City of Santee and San Diego County lands, and on the east by the unincorporated communities of Lakeside and Eucalyptus Hills. The San Diego River flows through the central portion of the City. The City has approximately 54,000 residents. The City of Santee is an urban development with residential neighborhoods, business communities, and several planned industrial parks.

The City of La Mesa is located in central San Diego County directly east of the City of San Diego. It is bordered to the northeast by the City of El Cajon, to the southwest by the City of Lemon Grove, and to the southeast by the County of San Diego. The City has approximately 56,000 residents. The City of La Mesa is an urban development with residential neighborhoods, parks, golf courses, and business communities.

The City of San Diego is located directly east of the City of El Cajon. The City of San Diego has more than 1.3 million residents and occupies 342.5 square miles. The City of San Diego has many residential neighborhoods, parks, golf courses, business communities, military operations, and several planned industrial parks.

The County of San Diego encompasses approximately 2.7 million acres located in the southwestern corner of California with 18 incorporated cities and numerous communities. There are approximately 2.8 million residents countywide. County of San Diego lands borders the City of El Cajon on the north, east and south. The County also owns and operates Gillespie Field Airport.

2.3 REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

This section provides a general overview of the regional and general plans that are applicable to the proposed project and the consistency of the proposed project with those plans. The project site is located within the planning area of the following regional plans: the California State Implementation Plan (SIP); the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP); the San Diego 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP); the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin; the City of El Cajon General Plan; and the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for Gillespie Field. Each of these plans is briefly identified in the following section, including the identification of any potential inconsistencies between the plan and the proposed

project. A more detailed project consistency analysis with applicable plans is described in Section 4.9, Land Use.

According to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15150 (a), "An EIR may incorporate by reference all or portions of another document, which is a matter of public record or is generally available to the public." Where all or part of another document is incorporated by reference, the incorporated language shall be considered to be set forth in full as part of the text of the EIR." Therefore, each of the following plans is hereby incorporated into the Forrester Creek Industrial Park EIR by reference. The majority of the incorporated documents are available for review Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the City of El Cajon Planning Division, 200 E. Main Street, El Cajon, California 92020. The California SIP is available on the California Air Resources Board website at http://www.arb.ca.gov/planning/sip/2007sip/2007sip.htm. The SANDAG RCP and 2030 RTP are both available on the SANDAG website. The website address for the SANDAG RCP is http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?projectid=1&fuseaction=projects.detail. The website address for the SANDAG 2030 RTP is http://www.sandag.org/index.asp?projectid=197&fuseaction=projects.detail.

2.3.1 CALIFORNIA STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The State Implementation Plan (SIP) was adopted by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to bring non-attainment air basins into compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Due to continued violations of NAAQS in the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB), the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD), in conjunction with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), prepared a Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) for its portion of the SIP. The proposed project relates to the SIP through land use and growth assumptions that are incorporated into air quality planning documents. While the proposed project proposes development other than that specified under the current General Plan land use designation, it is anticipated that the Forrester Creek Industrial Park Project would result in air pollutant emissions similar to those allowable under the current land use designation. Therefore, the project would not affect air quality planning assumptions of the SIP. See Section 4.2, Air Quality, for additional discussion regarding project consistency with the SIP.

2.3.2 SANDAG RCP

The RCP and its Program EIR were adopted by SANDAG in July 2004. The RCP serves as the long-term planning framework for the San Diego region. It provides a broad context in which local and regional decisions can be made that move the region toward a sustainable future. The RCP integrates local land use and transportation decisions, and focuses attention on where and how growth should occur. The RCP contains an incentive-based approach to encourage and channel growth into existing and future urban areas and smart growth communities. Each city and community in the region makes individual decisions regarding land use which the RCP evaluates as a whole; assesses their collective impacts; and examines cumulative development trends well into the future.

The various chapters of the RCP address each of the major elements of planning for the San Diego region: urban form, transportation, housing, healthy environment, economic prosperity, public facilities, and border issues. Each chapter begins with a vision for the San Diego region in 2030 and includes a description of existing conditions, existing plans and programs, an analysis of key issues, and recommended goals, policies objectives, and actions.

The proposed project would be consistent with the goals and approach of the RCP. The project site is located in a developed area of the City bordering Gillespie Field Airport. The proposed project would construct industrial buildings on a currently undeveloped site, which would support the RCP goal of

smart growth in existing urban areas and be consistent with development in the nearby vicinity. The El Cajon General Plan has identified that Gillespie Field is an ideal location for industrial development. The proposed project would require a General Plan amendment to change the current land use designation. This amendment, however, would not drastically change the overall level of development in the area and would further the goals for the area as identified within the General Plan. Approval of the amendment to the El Cajon General Plan would be contingent on consistency with the RCP. This would ensure that the proposed project is consistent with the RCP for the San Diego Region.

2.3.3 SAN DIEGO 2030 RTP

The San Diego 2030 RTP is the transportation component of the RCP discussed above. The main goal of the RTP is to better connect the freeways, transits, and road networks, to homes, schools, work, shopping, and other activities. The RTP is the product of collaboration between SANDAG, all 18 cities and the County government, and transportation entities, including the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board, the North San Diego County Transit District, and the California Department of Transportation, along with a wide range of interest groups and other agencies.

The San Diego 2030 RTP is founded on a land use plan that reflects the commitments from the 18 cities and County to "smart growth." It recognizes that growth and change will continue in the region over the next several decades, and all local jurisdictions can make positive contributions toward preparing for that change. Transportation infrastructure and services must be coordinated with land use planning to avoid increased traffic congestion, reduced mobility, and a deteriorating quality of life. The RTP 2030 is developed around four main components: Land Use, Systems Development, Systems Management, and Demand Management. Each component has a unique, yet interdependent, role in improving mobility and travel in the San Diego region through the year 2030. Land Use determines where homes, schools, work, shopping, and other activities are located and can profoundly affect the way in which residents move around the region. Systems Development provides needed regional transportation improvements, viable travel choices, and connections to daily activities. Systems Management helps to maximize system operations to make the best use of our existing transportation resources and provide travelers with real-time travel information to assist them in making informed travel choices. Demand Management focuses on reducing trips on the transportation system during peak periods and encouraging alternatives to driving alone (e.g., transit, carpooling, vanpooling, biking, and walking).

The Forrester Creek Industrial Park project would be consistent with the Land Use component of the RTP in that it encourages smart growth by its proximity to the Gillespie Field Trolley Station and continues the consolidation of industrial areas within El Cajon. The project would also be consistent with the other three components in that it would not induce local population growth which could impact regional traffic patterns. A traffic impact analysis was conducted for the proposed project and is discussed further in Section 4.12, Traffic. Impacts to traffic conditions on local roadways resulting from the project would be mitigated to a less than significant level.

2.3.4 WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE SAN DIEGO BASIN

The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Water Quality Control Plan (1994), also known as the San Diego Basin Plan, is designed to preserve and enhance water quality and protect beneficial uses of all regional waters. The Basin Plan identifies beneficial uses for numerous individual water bodies throughout the San Diego Region, including Forrester Creek, which borders the project site to the northeast. The Basin Plan also identifies water quality goals and objectives (or standards) for each beneficial use. The designated beneficial uses of individual water bodies, the water quality standards for

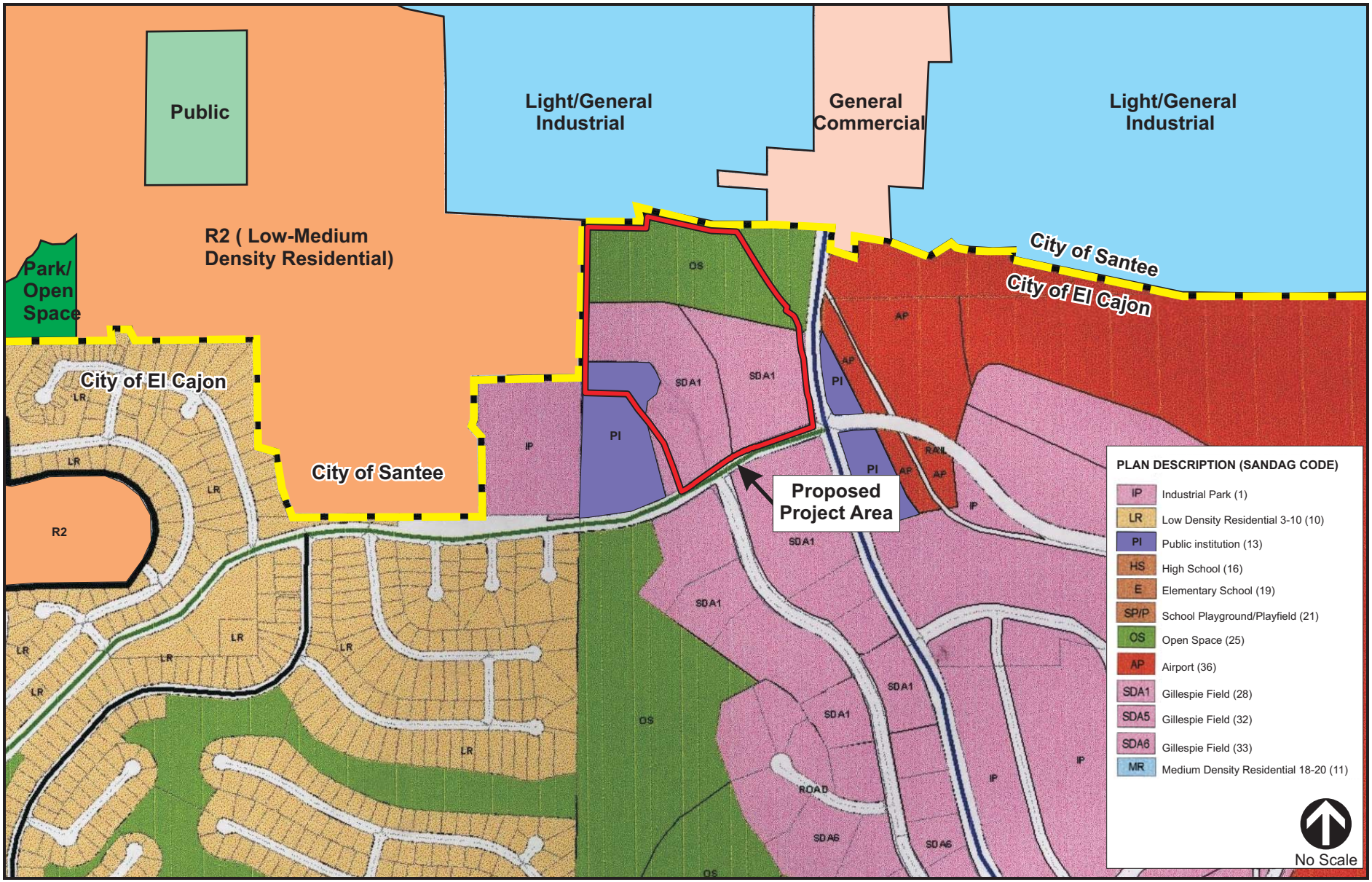
those beneficial uses, and the water quality of a water body is then used by the RWQCB to determine if a water body exceeds applicable water quality standards. If any standard is exceeded, then the water body is identified by the RWQCB as "impaired." An analysis of the proposed project's potential effects on water bodies with regard to impairment and exceedence of water quality standards identified in the Basin Plan are discussed in Section 4.8, Hydrology and Water Quality. As identified in this section, the proposed project would include a series of Best Management Practices (BMPs) which would make the project consistent with the Water Quality Control Plan.

2.3.5 CITY OF EL CAJON GENERAL PLAN 2000

The project area is subject to the City of El Cajon's General Plan (2001), referred to simply as the General Plan. The General Plan is required to include a Land Use Element, which designates the proposed general location and distribution of land uses for housing, business, industry, open space, education, public buildings and grounds, and other public and private uses of land. Other elements of the El Cajon General Plan are the Annexation Element, Circulation Element, Conservation Element, Historic Preservation Element, Housing Element, Noise Element, Open Space and Parks Elements, Safety Element, Hazardous Waste Management Element, and Solid Waste Management Element. The existing General Plan land use designations on the proposed project site are identified in Figure 2-5. As discussed in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, the proposed project would require a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation of the project site from Open Space, Public Institution and Special Development Area 1 to Industrial Park. The proposed project's consistency with the General Plan is discussed further in Section 4.9, Land Use.

2.3.6 AIRPORT LAND USE COMPATIBILITY PLAN FOR GILLESPIE FIELD

The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) for Gillespie Field (San Diego Regional Airport Authority 2004) is mandated by Section 21675 of the Public Utilities Code. The plan was prepared to assist in achieving compatible land use development in the area surrounding Gillespie Field. The plan contains the Airport's Influence Area, projected noise contours, flight activity zones, land use compatibility matrix and plan recommendations. Member agency general and specific plans, zoning ordinances, and building regulations encompassing the airport influence area and airport master plans are subject to a determination of consistency by the San Diego Regional Airport Authority. The proposed project has been designed to be consistent with this plan, including height limits and restrictions required of the Runway Protection Zones. In November 2008, the Airport Land Use Commission made a determination that the proposed project is consistent with the ALUCP for Gillespie Field. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with this plan.



EXISTING GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS **FIGURE 2-5**