

MOUNTAIN GATE

S P E C I F I C P L A N

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San Diego County
DEPT. OF PLANNING & LAND USE

Specific Plan Text

Prepared for the County of San Diego
in accordance with
Board of Supervisors Policy I-59

July 2001

MOUNTAIN GATE

Specific Plan Text
A Large Scale Project

An Amendment to the Monte Cerno Specific Plan

Proposed by
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July 2001

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MOUNTAIN GATE SPECIFIC PLAN

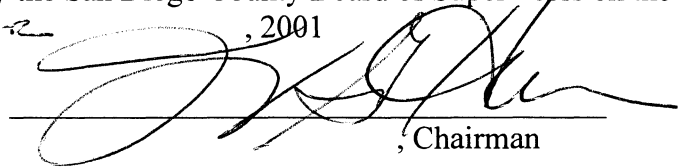
(A LARGE SCALE PROJECT)

SP


CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that the plan consisting of this text, maps, and appendices, is Specific Plan SP (Mountain Gate) and that it was approved by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on the SEVENTH day of NOVEMBER, 2001

Date Nov 7th


_____, Chairman

Attest: _____


_____, Clerk of the Board
for Thomas J. Pastuszka
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

I hereby certify that the plan consisting of this text, Specific Plan Amendment SPA00-001, and that it Planning Commission on the 10th Day of August, 2001.

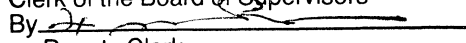
maps and appendices, is the Mountain Gate was considered by the San Diego County



David Kreitzer, Chairman

Attest: _____

Gary L. Pryor, Secretary

Approved and/or authorized by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego
Date 11/07/01 Minute Order No. 2
THOMAS J. PASTUSZKA
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
By 

Deputy Clerk

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Additional assistance in the preparation of this Specific Plan was provided by the following firms:

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Project Background

The 694 acre Mountain Gate Specific Plan (formerly known as Monte Cerno) site is located within the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Planning Area and within the sphere of influence for the City of Escondido. A portion of the property is presently being farmed. Two hundred and sixteen acres of the 694-acre site were planted in avocados during the years 1970-1974. In 1979, an additional 29 acres were planted. The 216 acres were placed under a land conservation contract to the County of San Diego on February 11, 1972, and became a part of Agricultural Preserve Number 12. However, the applicant's environmental consultant prepared a biological survey of the site which revealed 224 acres are currently being cultivated. The Agricultural Preserve was cancelled with the approval of the Monte Cerno Specific Plan on August 13, 1980.

In May of 1979, the owner submitted applications the accordance with the County's procedures to change the zoning of the site to a Specific Planning Area (SPA). On May 9, 1979, an application was made for a San Diego County General Plan reclassification. The application was considered by the Board of Supervisors on May 22, 1979 (GPA 80-01).

Upon submittal of all required documents and necessary exhibits to the County Staff, the amendment to the San Diego County General Plan was considered by the Planning Commission on June 18, 1980. The request for reclassification was denied. The reclassification was appealed to the Board of Supervisors and approved on July 17, 1980, with an underlying land density of Intensive Agriculture. Based upon a slope analysis of the site and land density of Intensive Agriculture, 152 dwelling units were determined to be the site density. On August 13, 1980, the Board of Supervisors adopted the SPA classification with a density of 0.23 dwelling units per acre, which equates to 152 dwelling units.

On February 22, 2000, the applicant submitted an application to amend the Monte Cerno Specific Plan, as well as a Tentative Subdivision Map, and a Zoning Ordinance Amendment. The principal revisions to the Specific Plan include:

- The project has been expanded to include an additional 31.1 acres which brings the total site acreage to 694. The additional parcels allow the project has direct road access to Mountain Meadow Road. The inclusion of the approximately 31 acre parcel, which is (18) Multiple Rural Use classification, will increase the permitted dwelling unit count within the Specific Plan by four (4).
- With the inclusion of the aforementioned four (4) dwelling units, the Mountain Gate project dwelling unit will increase from 152 to 156 dwelling units.
- Grading quantities have been reduced from 1,000,000 cubic yards to 600,000 cubic yards or from 6,579 cubic yards per lot to 3,850 cubic yards per lot. This reduction is achieved through clustering the dwelling units and creating additional open space.
- A reduction in the length of streets from 5.06 miles to 4.13 miles and in the total acreage of streets from 26.3 to 20.2 acres.
- Modification of the lot design to conform to the County's Resource Protection Ordinance adopted subsequent to approval of the Monte Cerno Specific Plan.
- The residential portion of the site is proposed to be zoned S-88 rather than R-S-1.
- The redesign of the project includes the removal the sewage package treatment plant in favor of sewer service via the Valley Center Municipal Water District.
- The Specific Plan name is changed from Monte Cerno to Mountain Gate.

B. Purpose and Scope of Specific Plan

The purpose and scope of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan is to provide for the systematic implementation of the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan and to satisfy the County of San Diego requirement for a large scope project (LSP). The requirements are delineated in the Board of Supervisor's Policy I-59 (as amended) and they emphasize the need for consistency of development in the area. These requirements are:

- ◆ To assure consistency with all existing State laws and local ordinances.
- ◆ To assure conformity to the adopted General Plan Elements including Community Plans.
- ◆ To assure compatibility with adjacent development.
- ◆ To assure consistency with the Regional Growth Management Plan.

- ◆ To assure the availability of public services and facilities adequate to serve the development.

The North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan designates the Mountain Gate (formerly known as Monte Cerno) site as a Specific Planning Area which provides for the development of single-family dwelling units at a density of 0.23 per acre or 152.26 dwelling units. The approximately 31 acre property being added to the Mountain Gate Specific Plan is designated (18) Multiple Rural Use and permits a density of 0.125 per acre or 3.87 dwelling units. Through combining these properties and their associated densities, the total dwelling unit count for the Mountain Gate Specific Plan is 156 dwelling units.

Further, the plan covers a development period of five years from the time of approval of zoning reclassification and tentative subdivision maps. Although Mountain Gate will be developed with semi-custom and tract style single-family homes, the construction of homes may exceed the five-year period. All phased capital improvements will be completed prior to the end of this designated period.

C. Developer's Objectives

The Developer has outlined the following goals and objectives for the realization of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan:

- Mountain Gate shall be a private, phased, semi-custom and tract home residential development which will be responsive to the County of San Diego General Plan and the Regional Growth Management Plan. Phasing will be achieved with the adequacy and availability of public facilities, services, and utilities. The proposed project will create a residential development which will be compatible with the surrounding environment.
- The proposed development shall provide ample open space. This open space area will be adequate for recreational as well as agricultural purposes. Mountain Gate will preserve the rustic character of the surrounding area and existing environment by visually integrating the residences, and open space and agricultural land.

- The proposed development shall be environmentally sensitive. It will preserve the significant landforms (rock outcroppings), mature trees, agricultural groves, and other natural features. Building sites, roads and agricultural areas will be designed in harmony with the existing topography.
- To regulate proposed development so that it is compatible with the site and surrounding topography.
- To minimize view disruptions from each building site.
- The proposed development envisions an entity to operate the remaining agricultural operation, thus preserving the avocado groves and a valuable County agricultural resource.

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan text is divided into five sections which are as follows:

- I. Introduction
- II. Site Description
- III. Project Description
- IV. General Plan Relationships
- V. Plan Implementation

Concurrent with the processing of this Specific Plan Amendment, the applicant is processing a tentative subdivision map, a zoning ordinance amendment, and an Addendum to the Monte Cerno Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

II. SITE DESCRIPTION

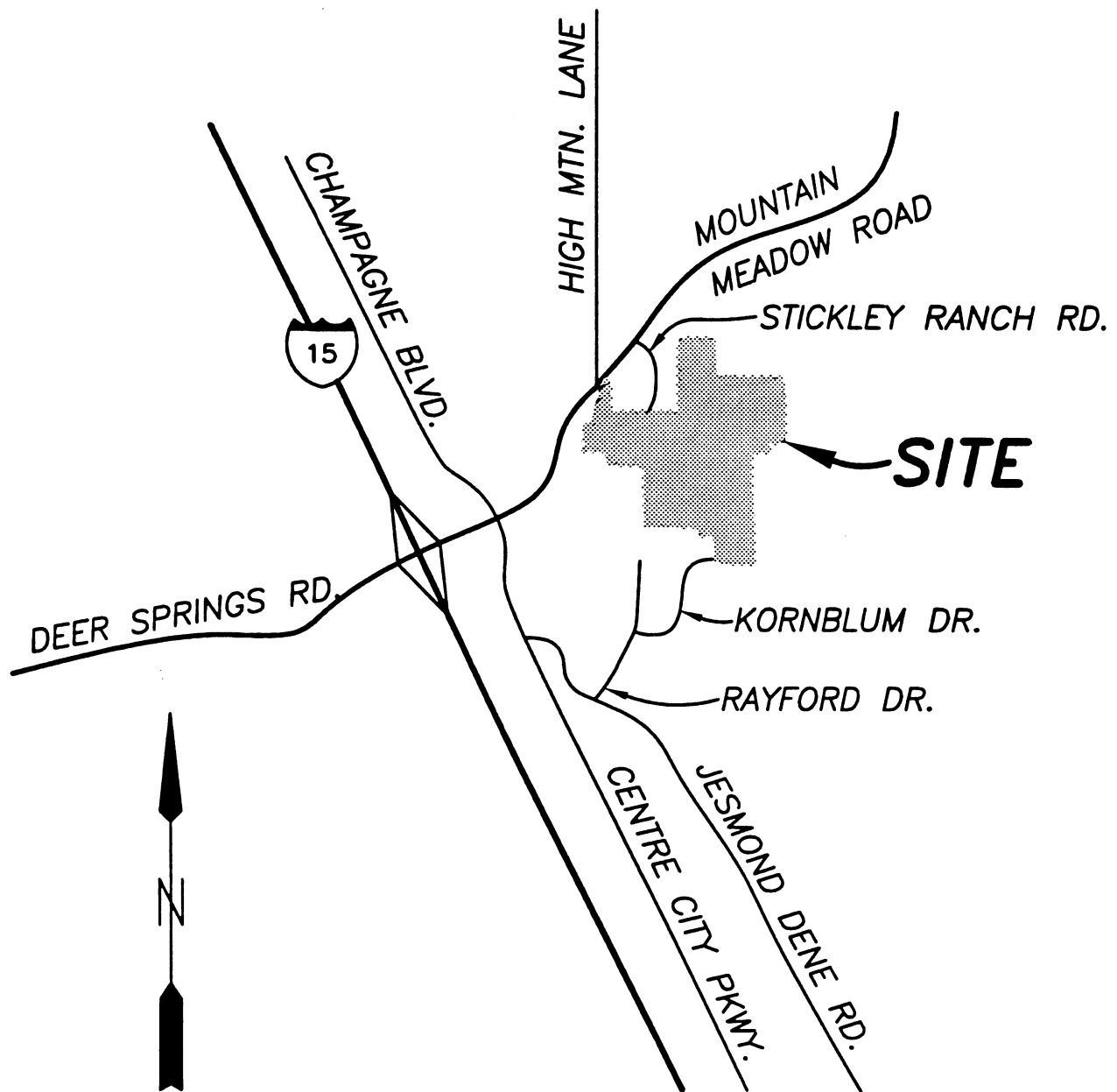
A. Location

The 694-acre Mountain Gate site is located north of the Jesmond Dene community, south of the Hidden Meadow community, and east of Interstate 15 (I-15) and within the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Planning Area and the northern portion of the Sphere-of-Influence for the City of Escondido. The site is approximately 4 miles north of downtown Escondido. Other communities in the vicinity include the following: San Marcos (6 miles to the southwest), and Vista (10 miles to the west). As indicated on Figure 1, the Mountain Gate project will be served via a primary entry road at the intersection of Mountain Meadow Road and Mountain High Drive.

B. Existing Conditions

The site currently has the following structures: a small maintenance building, a residential duplex, and an open agricultural water storage pond. The site surrounds an approximately one-acre property which includes a 1,000,000 gallon steel potable-water tank (owned and operated by the Valley Center Municipal Water District). Portions of the site are within the North Escondido Agricultural Preserve Number 12, and are planted, with the exception of the 29 acres planted in 1979, under agricultural contracts. However, the Agricultural Preserve was cancelled twenty (20) years ago with concurrent with the approval of the Monte Cerno Specific Plan. The existing avocado groves cover approximately 224 acres and have historically generated fewer avocados than the average grove in the surrounding area. The deficient crop yields are attributable to the age of the grove and crop loss through wind damage.

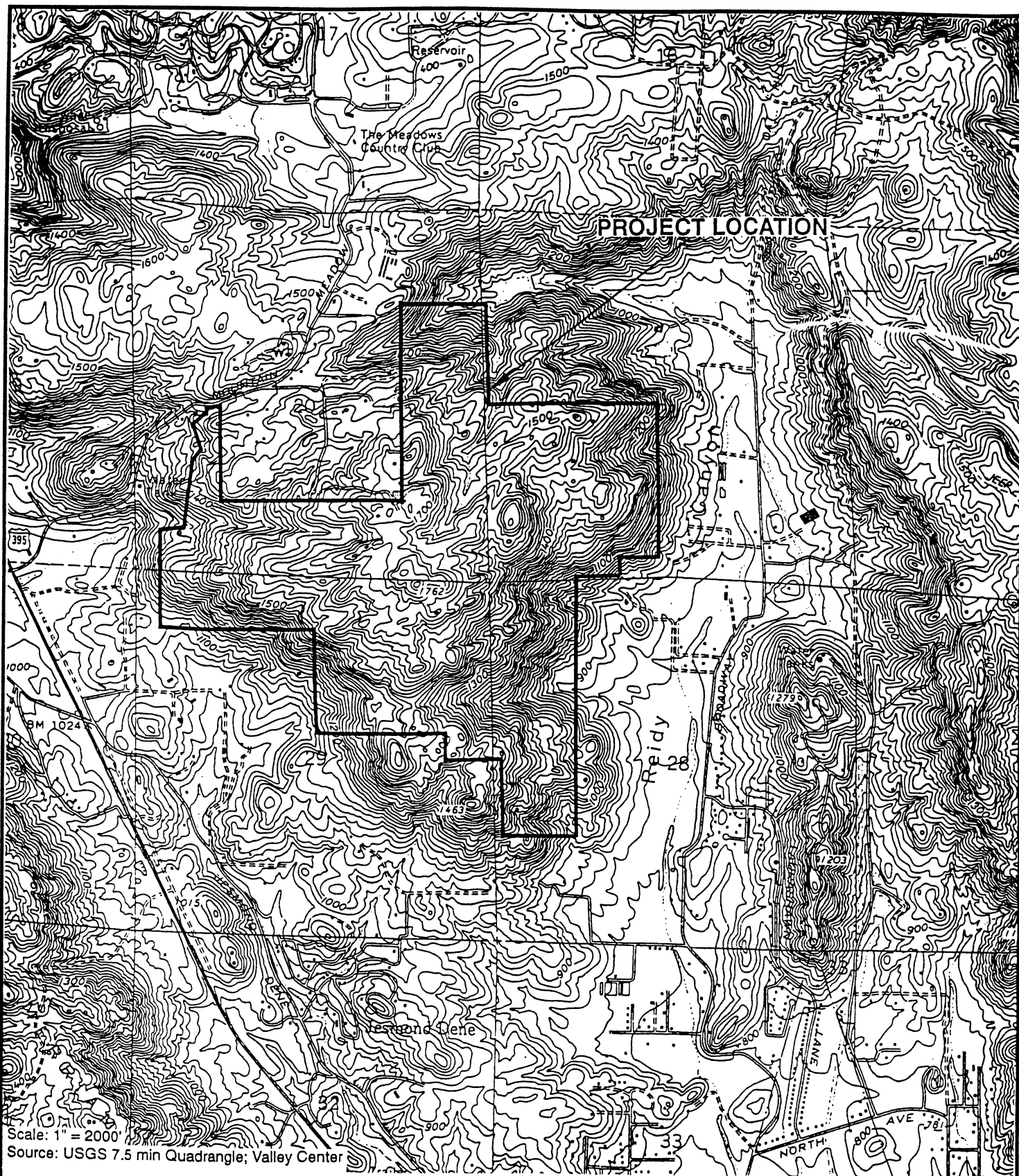
The Mountain Gate project is located in the Peninsular Range province, a region which includes the coastal plain, mesas, foothills and interior mountains and valleys of San Diego County. The Mountain Gate property is located in the foothills of this region. Generally, the site is on the top of a small mountain. The site slopes to the north and east to the floor of Reidy Canyon, to the south toward Jesmond Dene and the west to I-15 (Figure 2). The center of the site is relatively



VICINITY MAP

MOUNTAIN GATE

FIGURE
1



U.S.G.S. MAP

MOUNTAIN GATE

FIGURE
2

flat with a slope between 0% and 15%. The following is a slope classification of the property derived from an analysis submitted to the Department of Planning and Land Use for review.

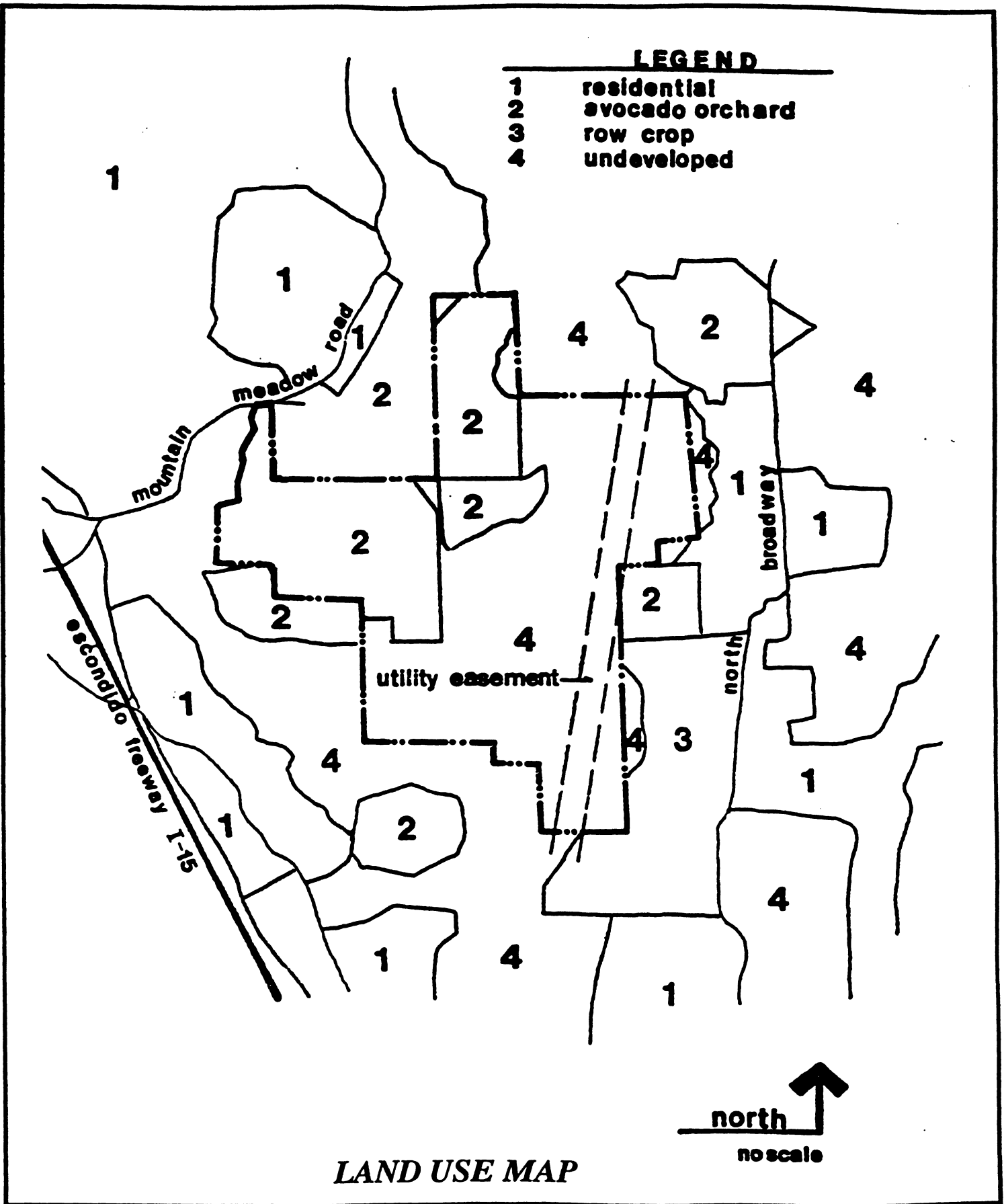
TABLE I
STEEP SLOPES

<u>SLOPE CATEGORY</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>% OF TOTAL AREA</u>
0-15%	90.22	13.0
15-25%	145.04	20.9
25-50%	295.63	42.6
50-100%	<u>163.08</u>	<u>23.5</u>
	693.97	100.0

Based upon the above slope analysis, the residential lots must be designed to comply with the San Diego County Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) which limits grading impacts to slopes that are twenty-five percent (25%) or steeper

A biological survey conducted by Helix Environmental indicates that the vegetation on the site does not include any rare or endangered species currently listed by the Federal or State governments, or the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) as rare, endangered, or threatened species. The biological resources do not pose any major or significant constraints to on-site development; however, the dense chaparral and oak trees in the two drainage areas in the eastern portion of the property warrant preservation as biological preserve areas. Accordingly, no development is planned for this area.

Surrounding land uses include large-lot residential land and the Hidden Meadows development on the north side of Mountain Meadow Road, a mix of small and large lot residential to the west between I-15 and the project as well as on the south side of the site. The North Broadway corridor is located on the eastside of project and is a mix of residential lots and agricultural uses. There are agricultural areas spread throughout the surrounding area. Figure 3 illustrates the generalized land uses in the area.

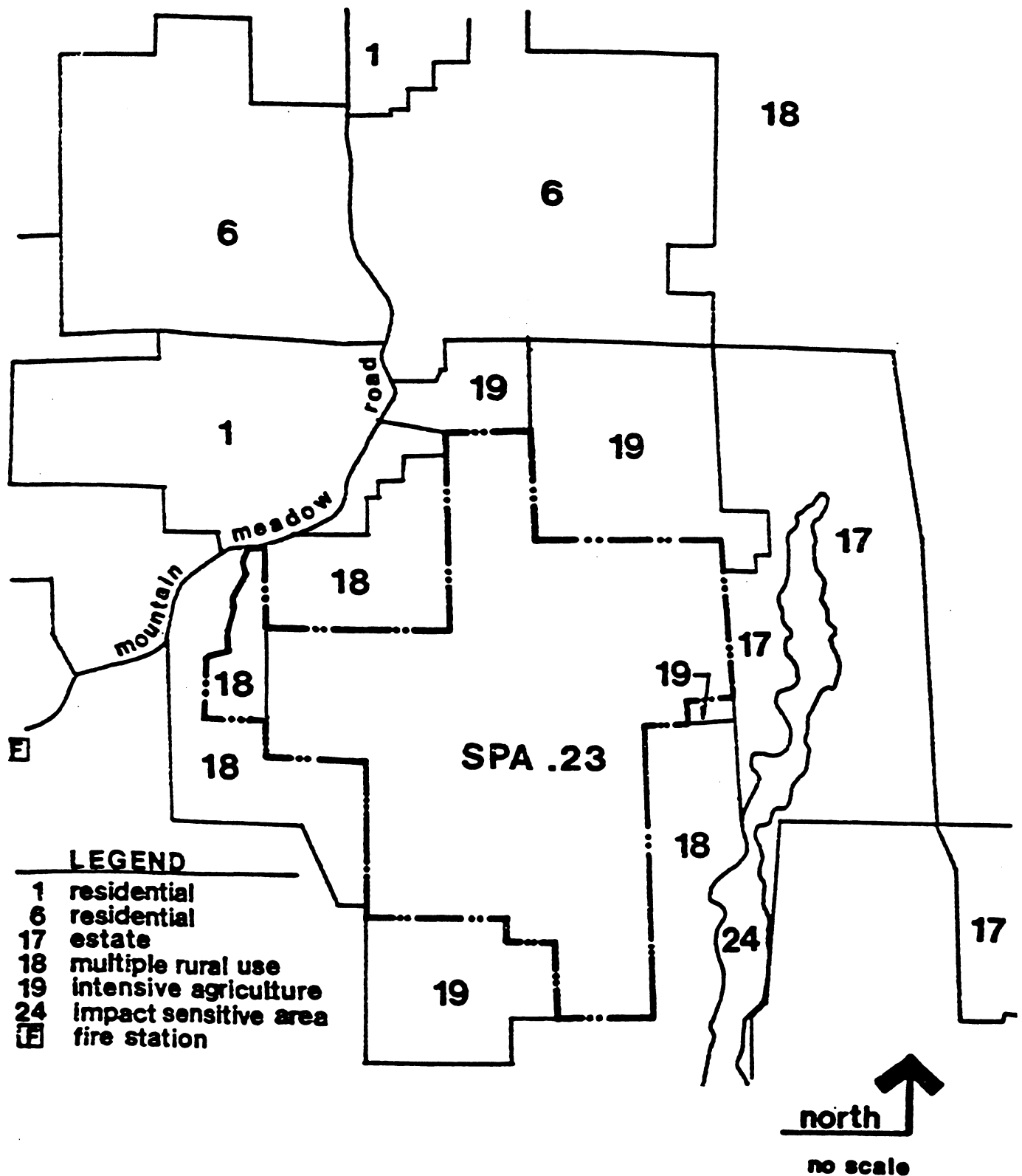


MOUNTAIN GATE

FIGURE
3

C. Planning and Zoning Designators

Mountain Gate is included in the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Planning Area Sheet 2, and is designated as Rubel Specific Planning Area and (18) Multiple Rural Use. These designations permit residential development of 152.26 dwelling units at a density of 0.23 dwelling units per acre (SPA 0.23) and 3.87 dwelling units at a density of 0.125 dwelling units per acre (18) Multiple Rural Use. Figure 4 shows the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Planning Area designations. The (18) Multiple Rural parcel is also located in the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Area, designator "B". The Mountain Gate property is currently zoned A-70-8 acres. The agricultural operation covers approximately 224 acres of avocado trees on the 694-acre site. Zoning reclassification designated to implement the Specific Plan and North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan are described in Section V, Plan Implementation.



GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS

MOUNTAIN GATE

FIGURE
4

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Planning Objective

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan has been designed to:

- Develop a semi-custom and tract single-family residential project in conformance within the guidelines of the County of San Diego General Plan, the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan, I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Ordinance and the Hillside Development Policy.
- Develop a road pattern and clustered lot layout (minimum one (1) acre) that will avoid the use of the southeastern portion of the site and the vast majority of slopes in excess of 25%. This layout provides approximately 563 acres of un-disturbed open space and agricultural purposes (either included in separate lots or covered by open space easements) and will minimize grading while blending more harmoniously with the surrounding area. Additionally, building sites and driveways have been designed with the existing topography to ensure unobstructed views of the surrounding area.
- Preserve rock outcroppings, avocado groves, existing mature Oak Trees in the drainage areas, and other natural features of scenic quality.
- Construct the project's infrastructure, including private roads and public facilities, services, and utilities. Home construction will occur over a period of years in a logical phasing pattern. Construct the project so as to allow the on-going agricultural use of the land.
- Regulate architectural design and construction so that individual units will be compatible with each other, the land, and the surrounding area.
- Professionally develop and maintain the avocado grove to preserve the agricultural character of the area.
- Create a pleasant environment through the sensitive uses of the existing terrain and landscape.

B. Concept

The concept of this project is to provide an environmentally sensitive residential community that respects the natural topography of the land and the agricultural potential of the entire area. As designed, the residential lots have been located on the ridges of the site to minimize impacts to both natural vegetation and the avocado grove. The existing avocado trees which are located on the ridges suffer from the wind damage which causes some of the fruit to prematurely fall from the trees (prior to maturity). Table 2 indicates the planned distribution of residential and open space (agricultural) uses within the Mountain Gate Specific plan. It should be noted that the allocation of the residential density is based upon the proposed zoning reclassification which is necessary to implement the Specific Plan (see Section V for a discussion of zoning).

C. Residential

In accordance with the Mountain Gate Specific Plan, a total of 156 single-family, detached, dwelling units are planned for the development. The residential lots are a minimum of one acre. With the clustering of these lots, approximately 563 acres (either in separate lots or covered by easements) of the 694-acre site are available for the on-going agricultural use and open space. It is the intent of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan that the subdivision be designed to blend into the existing avocado grove and natural open space. Furthermore, in most instances, the steep slopes within the residential lots are not disturbed to create building pads.

Dramatic views are available from many areas of the site; however, the vast majority of the home sites are not visible from the surrounding properties. All of the residential lots and their associated building pads must comply with restrictions relative to building pad grading. Each lot will have a building pad that is specifically designed for the unique features of the individual site. The site grading includes driveway access and open space area within each building pad. The building pads within the project range from 10,000 to 15,000 square-feet in size, exclusive of the driveway. The architecture for each home should be designed to minimize blocking views from other home sites and to limit visibility from the surrounding area.

TABLE 2**LAND USE ALLOCATION**

<u>Use Designation</u>	<u>Proposed Zoning</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Dwelling Units</u>	<u>Density</u>	<u>% Total Area</u>
<u>Residential</u>					
Single-Family Detached	S-88	250.51	156	.66/Net Acre	36.10
Single-Family Attached					
Total Net Residential		250.51	156	.66/Net Acre	36.10
<u>Open Space</u>					
Agricultural	S-88	172.59			
Open Space Area	S-88	250.68			
Total Open Space		423.27			60.99
<u>Streets & Driveways*</u>	S-88	20.19			2.91
TOTALS		693.97	156	.22/Gross Acre	100

* In terms of actual zoning, streets and driveways will be included in contiguous zone designations.

More precise final subdivision map calculations could result in slight modifications of this data, but overall density would remain the same.

D. Agricultural

Approximately 172 acres are designated on the Mountain Gate Specific Plan as agriculture. Areas designated as agriculture would include some canyon areas, natural slope areas, and areas now in agricultural use.

The agricultural lots will be utilized for the movement of farm equipment as well as the maintenance and harvesting of the avocado grove. It is envisioned that the agricultural operation

will be professionally managed, productive, and will continue for many years. Located within this agricultural land would be all the necessary appurtenances and uses required for a successful farm operation. These would include: 1) roads for access to each tree, 2) the irrigation system, and 3) areas for loading the crop for transportation to the operators distribution center. These appurtenances and uses will be screened from the private roads and residences by fencing, the groves themselves, and by distance.

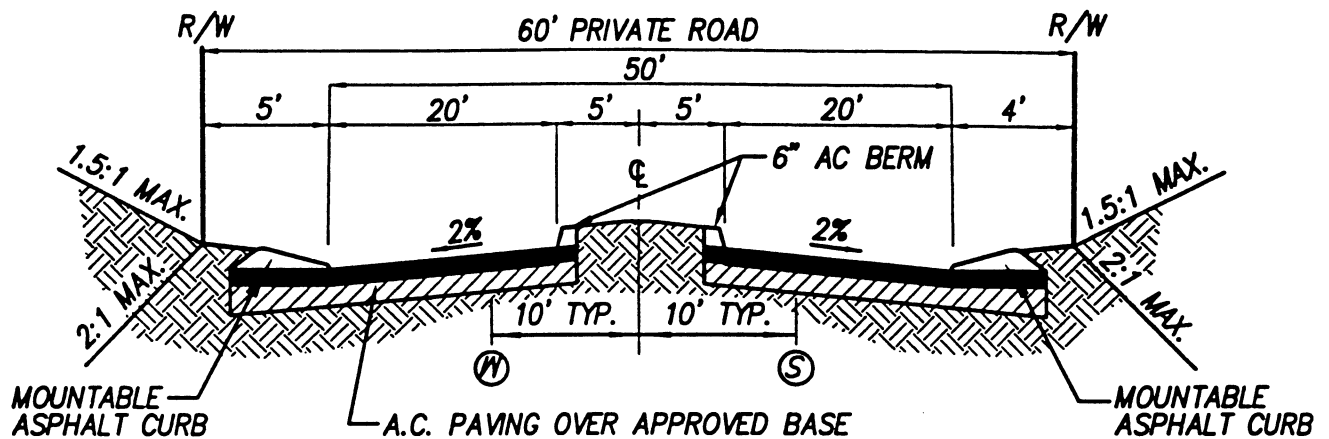
This Mountain Gate Specific Plan envisions the property as blending residential and agricultural land uses; however, the plan cannot predict future economic or grove conditions, or societal needs. Therefore, in the event that agricultural use of the land ceases to be a viable activity, then a Specific Plan Amendment would be required to permit an alternative land use.

E. Vehicular Circulation

The primary access to the Mountain Gate property will occur at the intersection of Mountain Meadow Road and High Mountain Drive. The project entrance will be gated in a manner consistent with the County's Road standards. Access within the Mountain Gate community will be provided via a private road system and will not be subject to an irrevocable offer to dedicate. Development of a private road system is based upon the following:

- The site is topographically isolated for the surrounding properties and connections to the existing road system is impractical, so that there is no foreseeable need for these streets to serve a public purpose.
- The County's fiscal constraints argue against accepting maintenance for roadways which serve no obvious public purpose.
- The proposed development character is that of unique home sites within an isolated area and the use of a gated entry and private roads reinforces the design theme.

The street system within the project will consist of private road easements and will be divided into two roadway classifications. Specifically, the entrance road/gate at Mountain Meadow Road and High Mountain Drive will have a 10-foot median, 40-feet of pavement width within a 60-foot graded private road easement (Figure 5). The street system beyond the southern



PRIVATE ENTRY STREET SECTION

MOUNTAIN MEADOW ROAD TO GATED ENTRY
NO SCALE

Note: Street paving structural section to comply with private street standards.

**TYPICAL PRIVATE ENTRY STREET
CROSS SECTION W/PROPOSED
UTILITY LOCATIONS**

MOUNTAIN GATE

FIGURE
5

boundary of Lot 1 will consist of a 24-foot pavement width (32 feet graded) within a 40-foot private road easement (Figure 6). The road designs include asphalt berms (curbs) and the limit on-street parking of vehicles to specific locations. Where parking is permitted, an additional eight feet (8') of paving will be provided on that side of the street. The tentative subdivision map includes the specific roadway locations and cross-sections.

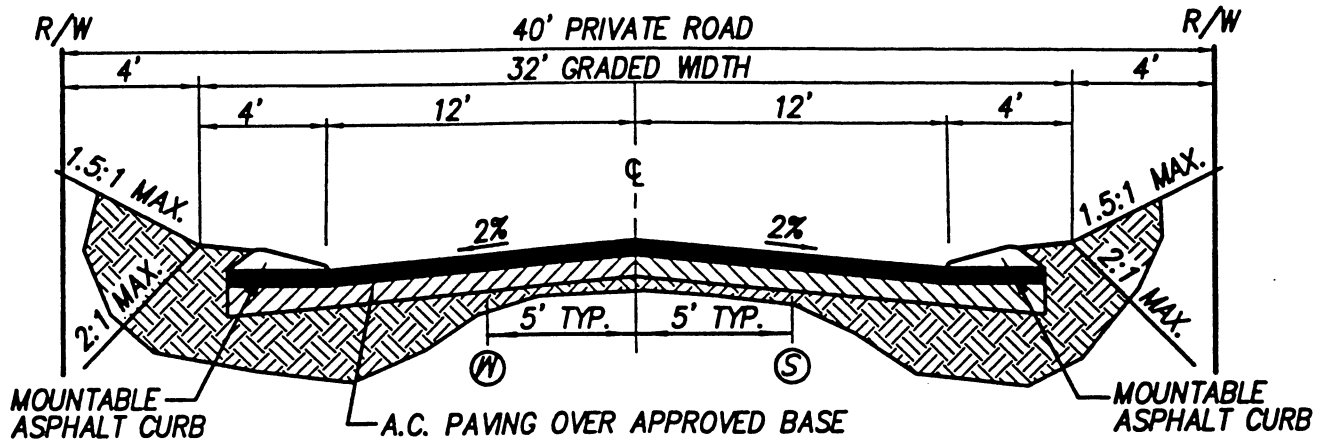
These road classifications are proposed to limit grading impacts and to ensure compliance with the County's Hillside Development Policy. All street geometric design standards utilized will conform to the standards as established for rural roads in mountainous terrain with intermediate surface types as published by the American Association of State Highway Officials. The maximum roadway gradient will not exceed 20 percent. The maximum roadway gradients will only be utilized to minimize grading and conform to the constraints of the terrain.

F. Grading

Approximately 600,000 cubic yards of cut and fill will be necessary to create the internal roadways and building pads. Maximum slope gradients will be 1.5:1 for cut slopes and 2:1 for fill slopes. The maximum height of cut and fill banks will be 35 and 45 feet, respectively. The building sites have been carefully chosen to limit disturbance of the natural terrain and maximize views. To that end, the vast majority of natural slopes with gradients over 25 percent have been preserved and are contained within the agricultural or open space lots. An extensive Visual Analysis was prepared and reviewed by the decision-maker and County Staff to determine that all grading associated with the project was minimized and properly mitigated.

The County's Hillside Development Policy will apply to the tentative subdivision map associated with the implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan. The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is consistent with the Hillside Development Policy through the following design features:

- Limitation of development in areas having steep slopes (greater than 25 percent);
- Inclusion of the steep slopes within the agricultural and open space lots;



PRIVATE STREET SECTION

NO SCALE

- Notes: 1. Street paving structural section to comply with private street standards.
2. Each adjoining residential lot shall have a minimum of two offstreet parking spaces.

***TYPICAL PRIVATE INTERNAL
STREET CROSS SECTION
W/PROPOSED UTILITY LOCATIONS***

MOUNTAIN GATE

**FIGURE
6**

- Clustering of residential lots on the flatter portions of the property, thus preserving the site's natural topographic features, rock outcroppings, and native vegetation and the existing agricultural grove;
- Curvilinear roads have been utilized to more closely adhere to the natural contours of the land thus minimizing landform alteration;
- Cul-de-sac and single-loaded streets have been utilized to limit grading and conform to the natural terrain;
- Hillside street standards are being utilized for this project to minimize grading; and
- All graded slopes (except interior slopes and slopes adjacent to the agricultural areas) adjacent to open space with native vegetation will be revegetated with native plant species in order to return graded areas to the natural condition.

G. Landscape Concept

A conceptual landscape plan shall be submitted with the tentative map and the Director, Department of Planning and Land Use shall approve detailed landscape and re-vegetation plans. Since the project is composed of custom, semi-custom and merchant builder home lots the landscape plan will focus on common areas such as the entry, entry drive, slopes, and other graded areas.

The landscape concept shall comply with the hillside development policy to improve, preserve or enhance the physical features of the site with appropriate native or naturalized vegetation and other species that complement the site character. The landscape concept plan has been prepared to maintain the unique and scenic visual qualities of the site in keeping with the county's scenic resource policies. These policies are outlined in the "Visual Impact Analysis" for the Mountain Gate Project. The landscape plan will soften views of manufactured slopes through use of planting trees and woody shrubs, existing boulders will be retained as much as possible to retain site character and vegetation will be used to screen man-made elements from off-site.

The landscape concept for Mountain Gate is inspired by three main elements. The first is its picturesque setting with its spectacular views among the boulder-strewn hillsides of northern San Diego County. The second is the visually attractive and productive agrarian landscape of

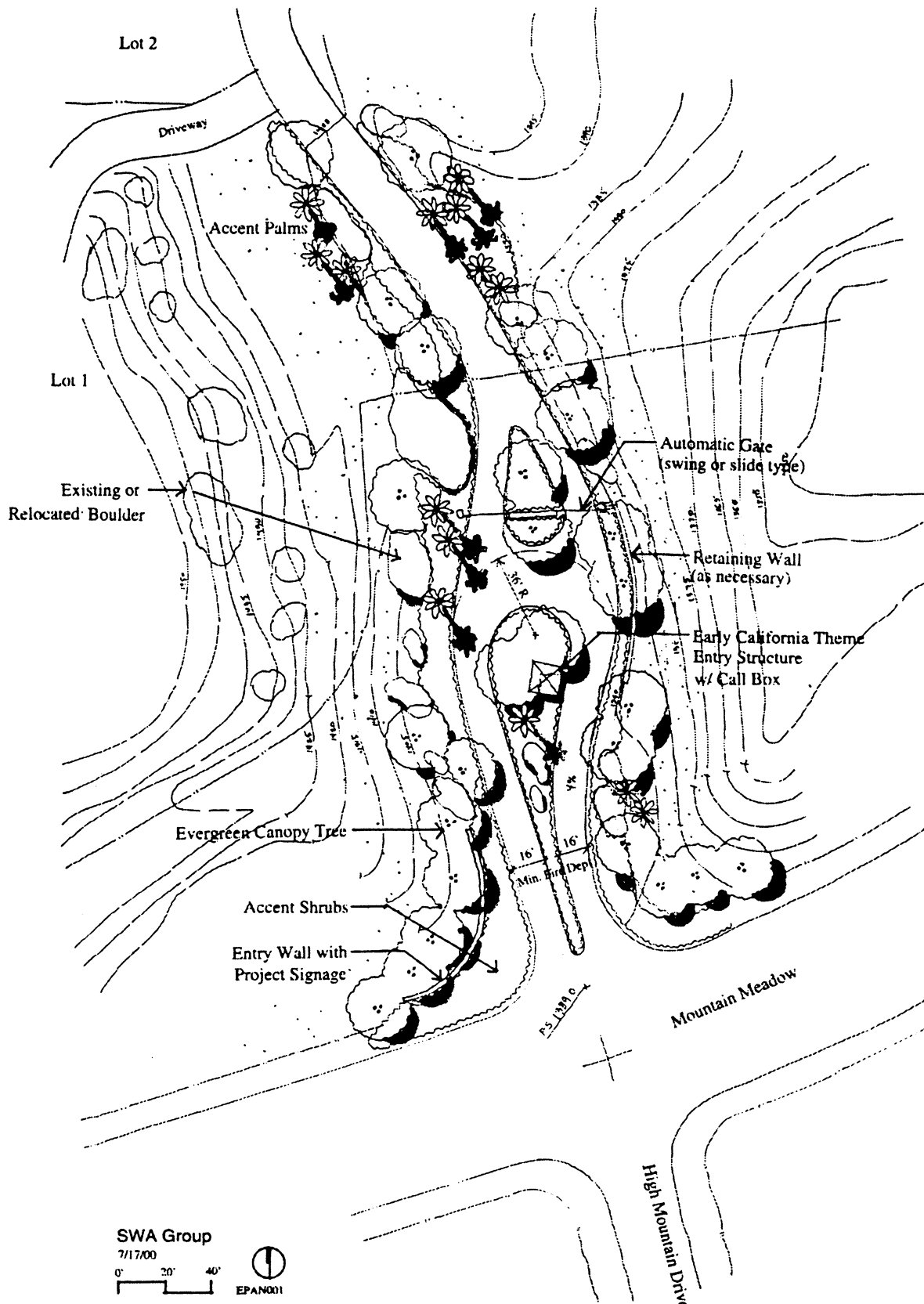
on-site working avocado orchards. Finally, early California themes of ranches and missions which may inspire cultural and historical links in architectural and hardscape elements.

While incorporating the above elements, the landscapes are organized into four distinct but related landscape zones: They are the Entry and Entry Drive, the Orchard, the Chaparral, and the Transition zones. Common in all landscape zones is the element of the boulder and rock outcroppings. Where possible the picturesque rocks and boulders will be preserved or re-located in order to preserve the unique character of the site.

The character and quality of the landscape along the streets, slopes and common areas generally takes on the character and quality of the zone in which they are located. However, in order to provide continuity and definition, a unifying composition of low shrubs or groundcover will be located along the streetscape throughout each zone. A limited palette of ground cover or shrubs is critical in knitting together a fabric that winds through the community linking the landscape zones with a subtle visual background matrix. Accent plants may be used to highlight special locations within the project. Tree planting shall be clustered in natural arrangements framing views and screening man made objects as necessary.

1. Entry Zone

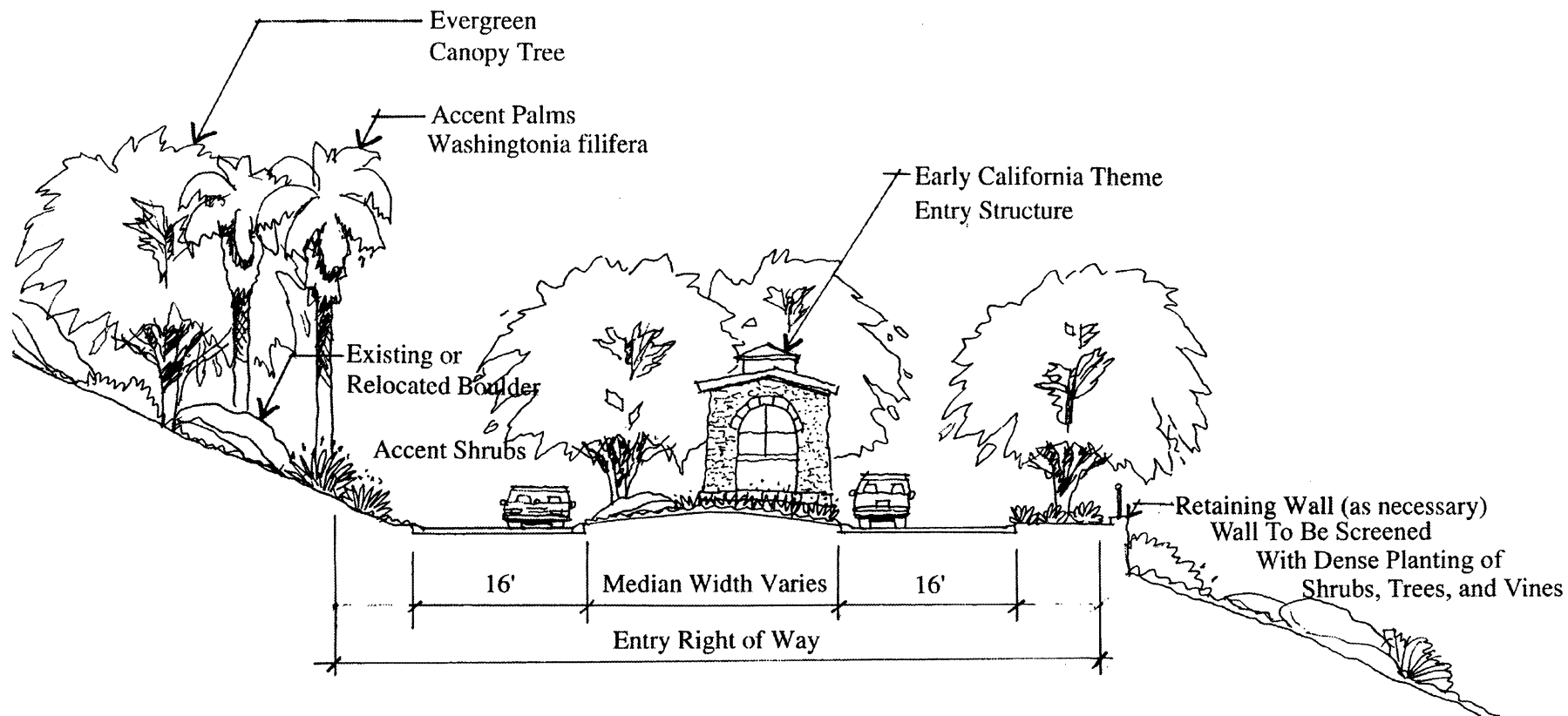
At the entry, naturalistic groves of large canopy trees provide a covered gateway into the project. The entry drive experience winds around orchard and chaparral landscape and large rock outcroppings and opens up to a dramatic view of the interior canyon in Open Space lot C before arriving at most of the residential lots (Figure 7). The trees are distinct in form and color to contrast with both the existing avocado trees and chaparral landscapes. Accent plants with special forms, textures or colors are carefully composed along with selected retained and relocated boulders and rock outcroppings. Hardscape features such as rock walls, special paving, and architectural elements may also be used keeping within the overall concept. Wall heights will be minimized where possible. Walls may be rock-faced or otherwise textured or enhanced to increase their visual appeal (Figure 8).



ENTRY LANDSCAPE - PLAN VIEW

MOUNTAIN GATE

**FIGURE
7**



SWA Group

Section - Entry Landscape

Mountain Gate

ENTRY LANDSCAPE - SECTION

8
FIGURE

MOUNTAIN GATE

The tree groupings and boulder accent compositions will be repeated within the community at key intersections, overlooks, turnarounds and other special areas (Figure 9). This provides recall and continuity which augments without overshadowing the existing landscape character.

The entry improvements shall conform to Section 6708e of the County Zoning ordinance for gated entries, unless an Administrative Permit is granted pursuant to Section 6708h: and shall also conform to County Department of public Works and the County Fire Protection District.

2. Orchard Zone

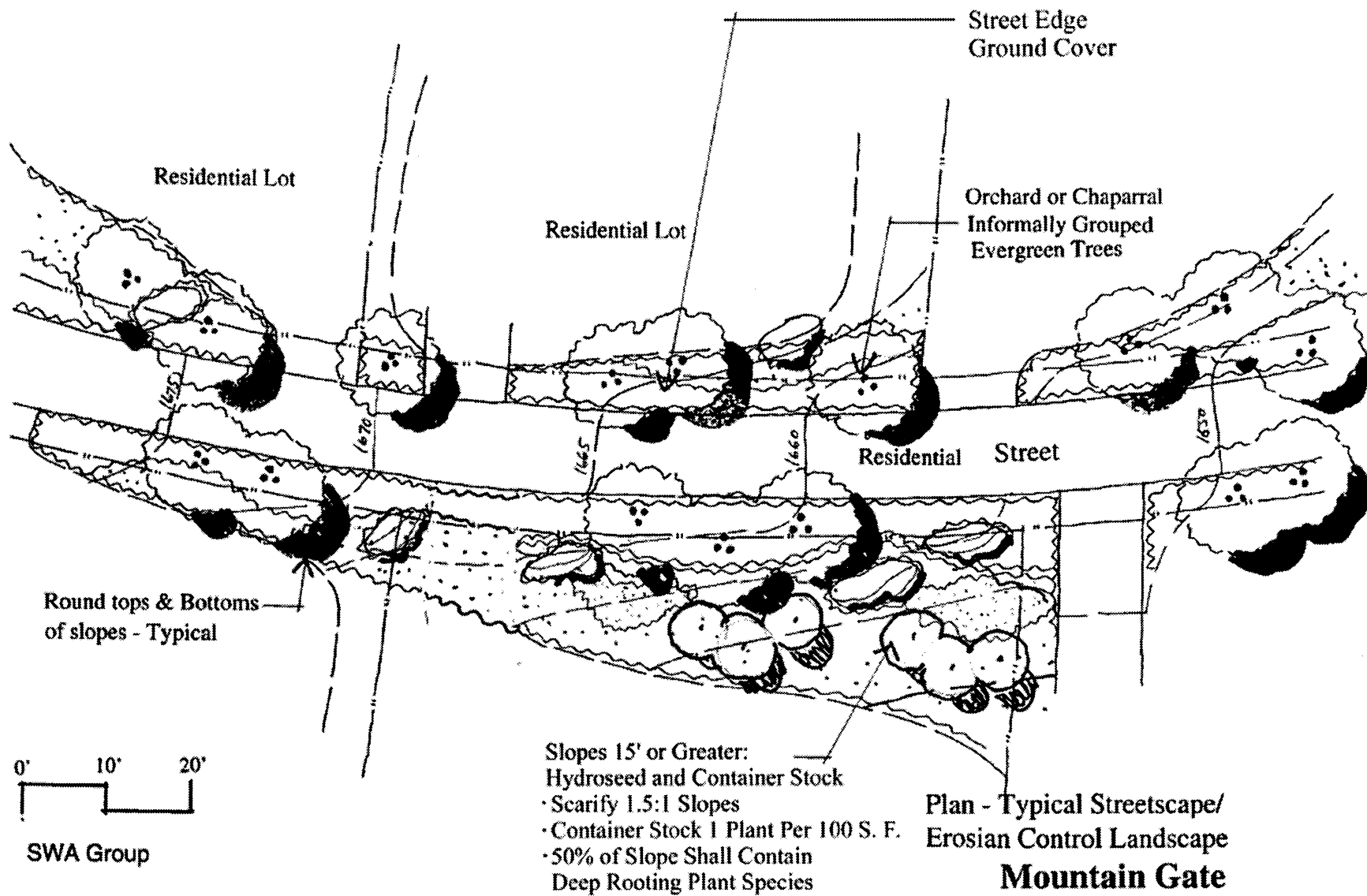
In the Orchard Zone informal groves of dark-colored canopy trees will be located on the slopes along the streets in order to blend with the existing avocado trees to be retained (Figure 10). It is a landscape primarily enclosed within the tree canopy, with directed views to the landscape beyond.

3. Chaparral Zone

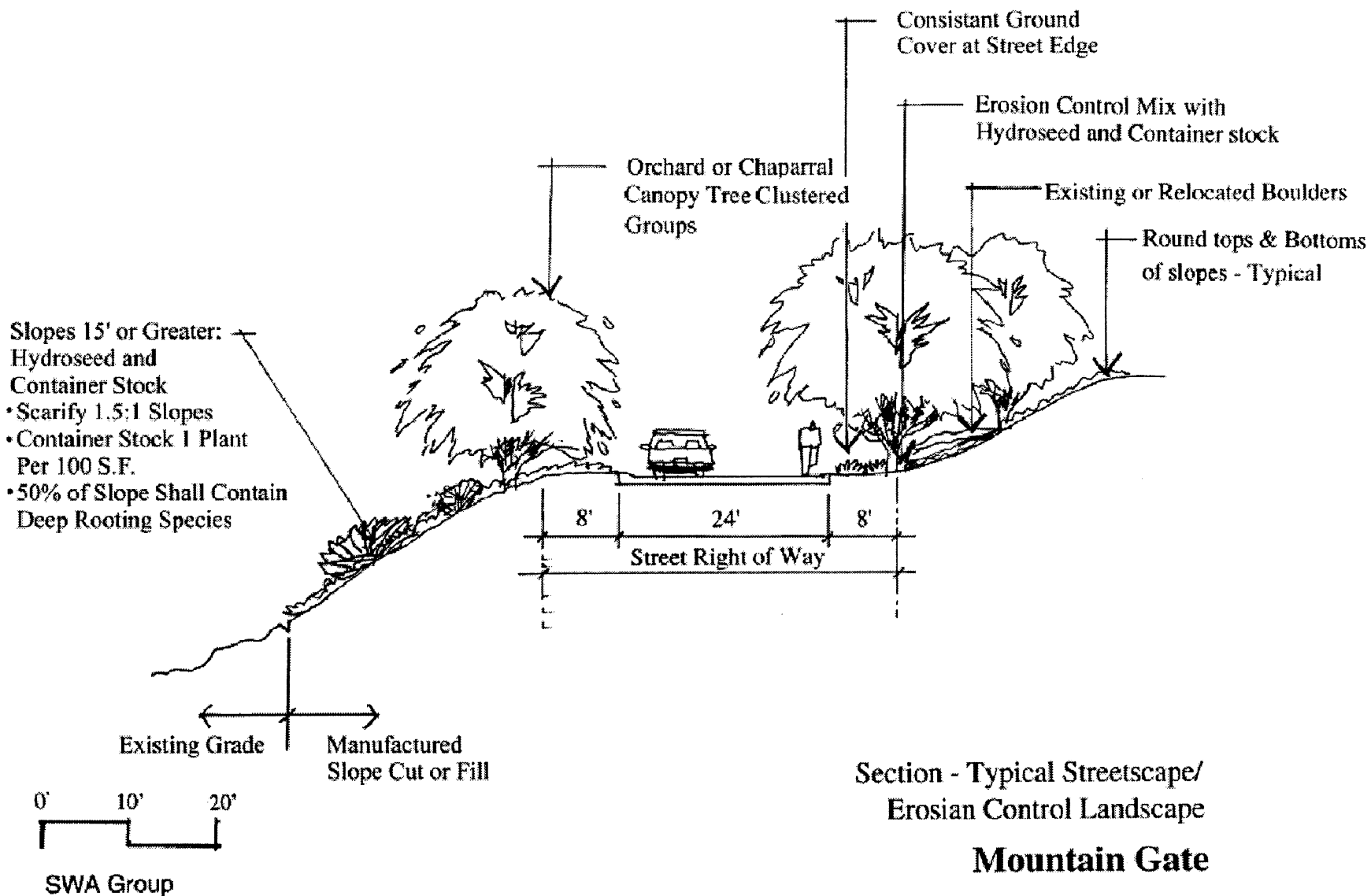
In the Chaparral Zone shrubs and trees will be located informally and in groups to continue that landscape character through the zone. The plant materials have a distinct character with lower growing mounding shrubs, intermittent clumps of large shrubs and fewer trees. This landscape is more open to take advantage of the expansive views and in some cases more rugged terrain.

4. Transitional Landscapes

A transition landscape will occur between those portions of slopes and graded/disturbed areas next to existing adjacent vegetation that are not highly visible from the street. These areas may be visible from areas on and off-site. These areas will be treated to provide erosion control using seed mixes and conform to county standards. The mixes will be designed to use plants that will make a seamless visual transition from the existing adjacent vegetation. Plants for these areas shall consist of a combination of site adaptive and compatible native and non-native species. Builders and Lot Buyers will be encouraged to blend these areas visually with the surrounding landscape and maintain a



TYPICAL STREETSCAPE - PLAN VIEW



TYPICAL STREETScape - SECTION

natural appearing edge. Residential lots that are visible from off-site shall provide adequate screening of the home and other vertical elements. Invasive species are prohibited in all transitional landscapes.

5. Retaining Walls

Because of the steep topographic characteristics of the site, retaining walls are needed to minimize grading impacts. All retaining walls shall be planted with large shrubs, trees and vines to screen the walls from nearby roads, residences or views from off site. Retaining walls shall be a textured material and color shall be darker browns to recede and disappear into the existing landscape.

6. Erosion Control and Screening Disturbed Slopes

Approval of tentative maps for Mountain Gate shall be conditioned on preparation of a detailed landscape plan for planting of graded slopes. In accordance with 87.417 of the County Grading Ordinance, all slopes exceeding three feet (3') in height shall be landscaped with ground cover or other plantings for erosion control. In addition, all graded slopes over fifteen feet (15') in height shall include a combination of trees, shrubs, and ground covers planted from containers to minimize visual impacts. A minimum of 50 percent of the total slope shall be planted with deep rooting species. All 1.5:1 cut slopes shall incorporate techniques to enhance plant establishment such as scarifying the cut face to create water holding pockets, or including 18-inch graded benches in which trees and shrubs can better take hold. All slopes greater than 3:1 and higher than 15 feet shall be planted with rooted container stock with an average rate of one per 100 square feet unless approved otherwise by the Director of Planning and Land Use. Irrigation will be permanent or temporary depending on the situation and location within the project.

Plant selection shall conform to the Plant Lists and shall emphasize those which best blend with, and provide a transition in form and color, to native vegetation on-site.

Retention of avocado grove within the ungraded areas of residential lots is recommended over clearing of these groves during pad grading. While the goal for Mountain Gate encourages lot buyers to maintain the existing grove, it is expected that homeowners may

remove most trees. Areas where trees are removed or residential lot grading is done in advance of building permit issuance, shall be landscaped using native hydro-seed mixture or other suitable landscape technique in order to provide groundcover as an interim soil stabilization and dust control measure.

7. Revegetated Landscape Areas

The project contains several areas of the site, which will be used for non-structural fill. These areas provide opportunities for recreation of native vegetation and habitat enhancement. Generally, these areas will be hydro-seeded with a non-irrigated hydro-seed mix, unless irrigation is required for erosion control or establishment. In order to achieve optimal growing conditions these mixes should be applied in fall or early winter immediately after construction to take advantage of the rain season. The Landscape Architect is encouraged to work closely with the project biologist to establish a suitable seed mix.

8. Brush Management

A brush management zone has been established for the project. Plant material for this zone will be either approved irrigated fire resistant planting or approved non-irrigated, drought tolerant, fire resistant plant material. The shrubs, groundcovers and other plants that will be used in this zone will be designed to provide a smooth visual transition to the adjacent natural vegetation. Darker colored approved species will be used primarily where the adjacent natural vegetation is coastal sage scrub. Lighter colored species and herbs and grasses, which can be mowed appropriately, will be used primarily where the adjacent natural vegetation is chaparral or grassland. All highly flammable species will be removed and thinned. Manufactured slopes will be planted with acceptable species and temporary or permanent irrigation will be installed for plant establishment. Irrigation will be minimized and used only if needed. All landscape improvements will comply with San Diego County Fire code ordinance brush management standards.

9. Irrigation

A water management plan shall be submitted to the Director of Planning and Land Use and shall conform to section 6713 of the Zoning Ordinance and shall follow the guidelines established in

the Landscape Water Conservation Design Manual. At this submittal reclaimed water is not available at the site. If reclaimed water becomes available in the future, reclaimed water shall be incorporated into the project irrigation design. A combination of spray, drip, bubbler, or Microsystems is to be used for trees and shrubs depending on the particular situation. Naturalized grass or coastal sage areas may be irrigated for establishment only.

All backflow prevention devices, irrigation controllers and other utility boxes are to be screened from public view.

H. Phasing

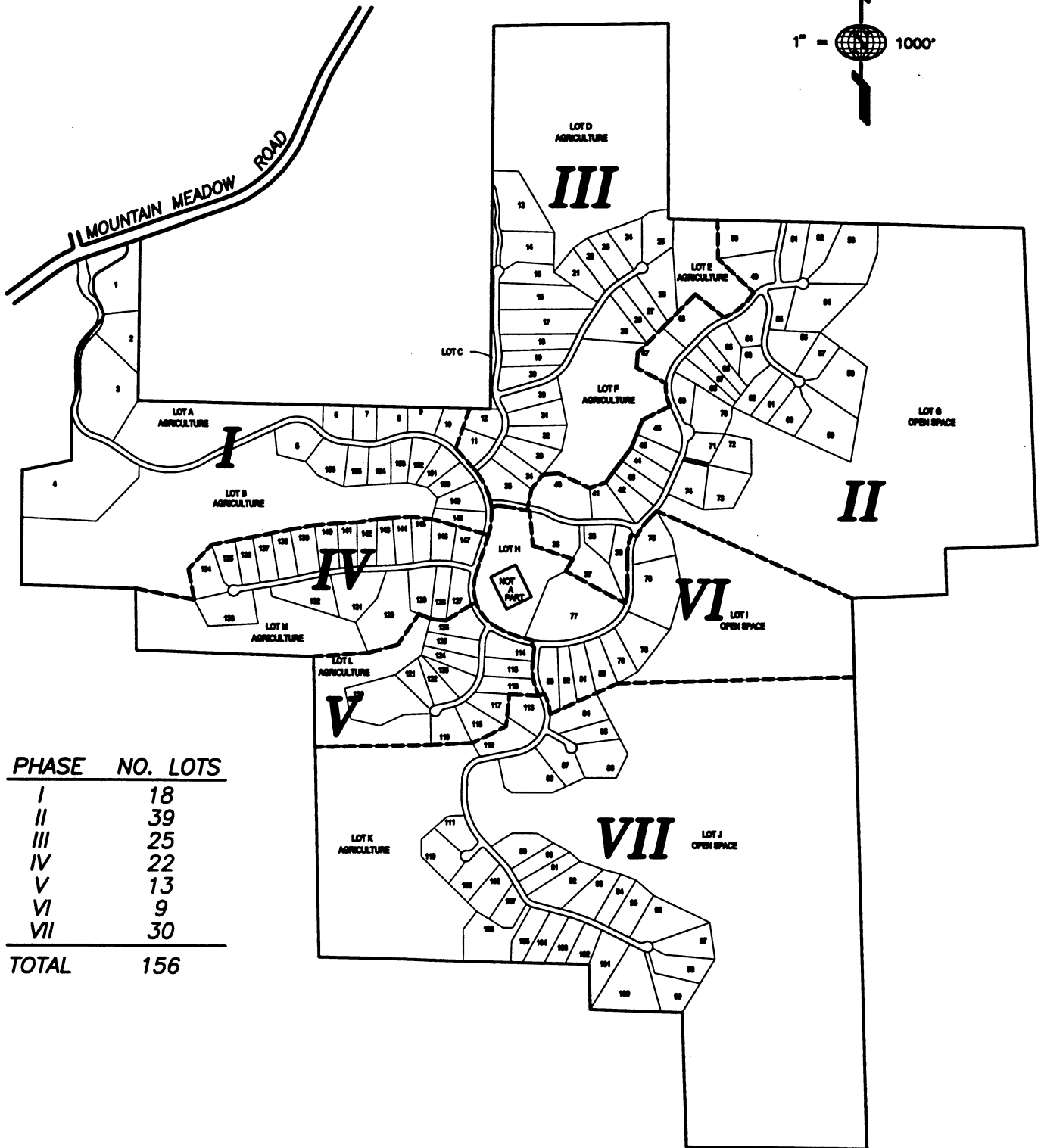
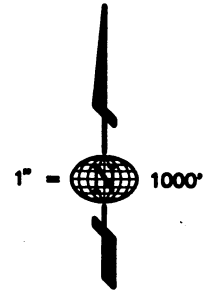
The proposed project will be graded and infrastructure installed in conjunction with a logical phasing plan. The phases will be developed sequentially in the succeeding years as shown on the Tentative Map (Figure 11). The configuration of each phase are subject to changes made by the Developer with the approval of the Director of Public Works; however, the Director may require that a Revised Map be processed and approved. All required and necessary infrastructure, specific to that section of the property, will be installed prior to the issuance of the first building permit for home construction in said area. These facilities will include water and sewer services and the street system to and from the particular area of the project.

I. Public Services and Facilities

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is based upon the provision of adequate public services and facilities. Letters relative to providing services have been obtained from each public service provider that affect the project. These providers and their services or facilities are described below.

1. Sewer

Valley Center Municipal Water District is responsible for providing sewer service for the Mountain Gate project.



TENATIVE PHASING MAP

MOUNTAIN GATE

FIGURE
11

2. Water

The Valley Center Municipal Water District supplies potable-water to the Mountain Gate Specific Plan area for domestic and fire protection purposes. Adequate pressure is available up to elevation 1,700 mean sea level; however, approximately ten (10) lots will require pump station(s) for both domestic water service and fire protection.

3. Electricity

Sempra Energy will provide the electrical infrastructure to the Mountain Gate Specific Plan. However, each homeowner will have the ability to select the provider from which they purchase their electricity. The electric power distribution system will be placed under-ground in the private roadway easements and will extend from Mountain Meadow into the project.

4. Telephone

Landline telephone service will be provided to the site by Pacific Bell. Service will extend from Mountain Meadow Road and will be located underground in the private roadway easements.

5. Police

The San Diego County Sheriff's Department provides police protection for the Mountain Gate project and the surrounding area.

6. Fire

Structural fire protection is provided by the Deer Springs Fire Protection District. The nearest fire station is located at the intersection of Windsong Lane and Mesa Rock Road which is located on the west side of I-15 and less the two miles from the Mountain Gate project.

7. Schools

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is located within the service areas of the Escondido Union High School District and the Escondido Union Elementary School District (K-8). There are two schools located in the area which have sufficient space to accommodate the

Mountain Gate project. However, an additional elementary school is currently in the planning phase and students from the Mountain Gate project may attend the new school.

8. Traffic and Circulation

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan site is located approximately 1.5 miles east of I-15 which is the major north/south transportation route in the area. The primary access to the Mountain Gate project will enter the community from Mountain Meadow Road which is a four-lane collector street with adequate design capacity available for the Mountain Gate project. The entry road will be a two-lane collector with a gated entry that complies with the County's standards for stacking and site distances. This private roadway easement will have paved widths of 24 and 40 feet and vehicular parking will not be permitted on the roadways except at selected designated locations.

9. Health Care Facilities

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan project is located in the Palomar Pomerado Health System.

10. Cable Television

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan area is served by Cox Communications; however, individual property owners may subscribe to satellite service, provided all satellite devices comply with the County's siting and permitting requirements.

IV. SAN DIEGO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN AND NORTH COUNTY METROPOLITAN SUB-REGIONAL PLAN RELATIONSHIPS

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is designed to achieve conformance with the San Diego County General Plan and the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan as well as the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation planning area. This portion of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan addresses the elements of the County General Plan, the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan and the I-15 Corridor Design Guidelines. According to staff with the Department of Planning and Land Use, County of San Diego, the San Diego County General Plan, North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan and I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines maps and text utilized in this analysis were current as of the date of adoption of the Specific Plan.

A. General Plan

1. Open Space Element

The San Diego County General Plan Open Space Goals were adopted on December 20, 1973 and amended on January 11, 1995 and are as follows:

- **Promote the health and safety of San Diego County residents and visitors by regulating development of lands.**
- **Conserve scarce natural resources and lands needed for vital natural processes and the managed production of resources.**
- **Conserve open spaces needed for recreation, educational, and scientific activities.**
- **Encourage and preserve those open space uses that distinguish and separate communities.**

A review of the County's General Plan map for the Open Space Element reveals that the Mountain Gate Specific Plan is in agricultural preserve, open space category 5. This designation has been changed to "Rubel Specific Plan." The on-going agricultural activities are addressed as part of the agricultural discussion in Section III. B.

Agricultural Preserves and Open Space Easements

Goal II Conservation of Resources and Natural Processes

1. Encourage agricultural use of lands with soils which are highly suitable for the production of food and fiber.

Approximately 224-acres of the Mountain Gate site is currently planted with avocado trees. The vast majority of these trees will be retained as part of the Specific Plan. Additional trees may be planted as part of the tentative subdivision map; however, the southeast portion of the site will be maintained in its existing natural state. This area consists of a drainage and native oak trees.

2. Encourage the conservation of vegetation and trees needed to prevent erosion, siltation, flood, and drought.

The majority of the existing vegetation is being preserved as part of the Mountain Gate development. Furthermore, graded slopes within the areas of native vegetation, will be replanted with native species to prevent erosion, siltation, flood and drought impacts.

3. Encourage the conservation of the habitats of rare or unique plants and wildlife.

There are no rare, threatened, or endangered plant materials located on site. However, as mentioned previously, the majority of native vegetation is being preserved, including the oak groves. The preservation of existing vegetation will ensure that habitat is available for wildlife which frequent the site.

4. Encourage the use of minor watercourses as local open spaces.

While the site does include two (2) intermittent streams, they occur as a result of the irrigation run-off from the avocado grove. However, the proposed project avoids impacting both of these areas and they have been placed in either the agricultural or open space lots.

5. Encourage the preservation of significant natural features of the County including the beaches, lagoons, shoreline, canyons, bluffs, mountain peaks, and major rock outcroppings.

The site does not include any beaches, lagoon, shoreline, bluffs or mountain peaks and

will not affect any such off-site features. By clustering the 156 single-family dwelling units on the flatter portions of the site and preserving the vast majority of the site in its existing condition, the canyons, rock outcroppings and steep slopes will be preserved. Additionally, the roadway and building pad designs limit the disturbance of hillsides and focus on preserving the natural features that are unique to the Mountain Gate site.

6. Encourage the use of agriculture to provide visually pleasing open space and variety within an urban environment.

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan provides a unique residential setting with the home sites integrated into the existing avocado grove. As designed, the project will permit existing agricultural lands to remain in active operation while providing for the construction of homes which are necessary to address the pending shortage of residential properties. The on-going avocado operation provides a pleasing environment for the proposed single-family dwelling units.

7. Encourage open space uses to direct urban growth to conform with the goals, objectives, policies, and standards of the San Diego County's General, sub-regional and community plans.

Except for the on-going avocado operation, the open space areas outside of the residential lots will not include active use areas for residents or visitors. The natural open space areas are intended to preserve the native vegetation which will serve to protect local wildlife. Use of the natural open space is discouraged since each residential lot includes approximately 4,000 square-feet of usable open space.

8. Encourage the use of open spaces as a separation of conflicting land uses whenever possible.

The plan has been designed to eliminate land use conflicts. As stated in the previous paragraph, the open space has been separated from the residential land use to reduce impacts to the native vegetation and wildlife.

Open Space Design of Private Lands

Goal I Health and Safety

1. Control development on steep slopes to minimize slide danger, erosion, silting, and fire hazard.

When completed, the Mountain Gate Specific Plan will include approximately 563 acres of agricultural and open space. These areas consist of a majority of the site and the steep slopes. Through the use of the Hillside Development Policy and clustering development in the flatter portions of the site, all feasible measures have been utilized to minimize the affects of development on the site.

2. Control development to assure a minimal adverse polluting effect on reservoirs, lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater supplies.

The Mountain Gate project is not directly located in the watershed for the following: reservoirs, lakes, rivers, or streams. Groundwater supplies will not be adversely affected by the Mountain Gate project. Rather, the removal of the existing well and some of the avocado trees will reduce pumping of well water and the use of farm related chemicals within the site.

3. Protect life and property by regulating use of areas subject to flooding, landslides, high fire hazard and high earthquake potential.

The open space easements are situated for easy access in case of fire in the project. The project includes brush management activities to reduce fire risk to the proposed homes. The site is not subject to flooding and is not in a high-risk area for earthquakes or landslide potential.

Goal II Conservation of Resources and Natural Processes

4. Encourage the conservation of vegetation and trees needed to prevent erosion, siltation, flood, and drought, and to protect air and water quality.

Given the design features incorporated into the project, clustering homes on the flatter portions of the site and utilizing Hillside roadway design standards, existing vegetation and trees will be preserved to the extent possible. Graded slopes will be revegetated with native drought resistant species and paved areas will drain into desilting basins which

will adequately dissipate the erosive power of the runoff. In addition, all grading activities shall comply with the County standards for grading.

5. Encourage the conservation of the habitats of rare or unique plants and wildlife.

Those areas of the project area that are not utilized for agricultural, roadway or residential uses approximately 393 acres will be maintained in their existing native and natural condition.

6. Encourage the use of minor watercourses as local open spaces.

While the site does include two (2) intermittent streams, they occur as a result of the irrigation run-off from the avocado grove. However, the proposed project avoids impacting both of these areas and they have been placed in either the agricultural or open space lots.

7. Encourage agricultural use of lands with soils which are highly suitable for production of food.

The residential development of the Mountain Gate project has been designed to blend with the existing avocado grove. In those instances where avocado trees are removed to accommodate home sites, new trees may be planted to continue the viability of the agricultural operation.

8. Encourage the preservation of significant natural features of the County, including the beaches, lagoons, shoreline, canyons, bluffs, mountain peaks, and major rock outcroppings.

The site does not include any beaches, lagoon, shoreline, bluffs or mountain peaks and will not affect any such off-site features. By clustering the 156 single-family dwelling units on the flatter portions of the site and preserving the vast majority of the site in its existing condition, the canyons, rock outcroppings and steep slopes will be preserved. Additionally, the roadway and building pad designs limit the disturbance of hillsides and focus on preserving the natural features that are unique to the Mountain Gate site.

- 9. Encourage only those uses and activities that are compatible with the marine ecosystem along the shoreline. Designate appropriate areas as underwater or water related wildlife preserves.**

The Mountain Gate project is not located along the shoreline and will not affect the marine ecosystem. Therefore, the project does not designate underwater or water related wildlife preserves.

- 10. Discourage any use of the lagoons that would be incompatible with their natural ecosystem.**

The Mountain Gate project is not located near the County's lagoons and will not affect the ecosystem of the County's lagoons.

Goal III Recreation

- 11. Encourage recreational planning as part of all major residential developments.**

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is based upon preserving both the existing agricultural use and the native vegetation and habitat. To that end, the project does not include a common area recreational lot. Rather, each residential lot includes approximately 4,000 square-feet of "usable" open space which is sufficient open space for recreational activities.

- 12. Encourage the acquisition of historic sites (including unique archaeological sites) and their immediate environs by public agencies or private organizations interested in our historical and cultural heritage.**

A single archaeological site has been identified within the Mountain Gate Specific Plan boundaries. The site has been fully evaluated, cataloged, and determined to be not significant. The site is located in an open space lot; therefore, it will be preserved in its original location.

- 13. Encourage second home and recreational campsite development that will not have a substantial adverse impact on the mountains or desert.**

The Mountain Gate project is neither designated or suitable for either second home or recreational campsite development.

Goal IV Distinguish and Separate Communities

14. Encourage sound environmental planning practices in all developments.

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is based upon sound environmental planning principals. Each land use, agricultural, residential, and open space, have been selected and allocated based upon an analysis of the existing landform and vegetation and the impacts associated with each land use.

15. Encourage the use of open space to separate conflicting land uses whenever possible.

The properties surrounding the Mountain Gate Specific Plan site consist of low density rural residential with agricultural uses. The density within the Mountain Gate property is consistent with the surrounding area; however, the homes are clustered on the flatter portions of the site. The project uses the avocado grove and the existing agricultural operation to screen and separate the proposed homes within the Mountain Gate Specific Plan from the surrounding properties.

16. Encourage an intermingling of open space as an integral part of all major residential development so as to preserve an atmosphere of openness at the neighborhood scale.

As designed, the Mountain Gate subdivision includes several areas of clustered homes. This concept permits the project to include areas of open space between each neighborhood within the Specific Plan. These areas provide buffers between each cluster of homes as well as the surrounding properties.

17. Encourage development that is designed so as to include riding, hiking and bicycle trails.

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan area is not located on a designated riding, hiking or bicycle trail route. Since the project is proposed to be gated, public access through the site is not practical; however, the roadways within the project include a soft shoulder which will be utilized for pedestrian and bicycle movement.

2. Regional Land Use Element

The San Diego County General Plan, Regional Land Use Element, was adopted on January 3, 1979 and amended on January 11, 1995, establishes a number of broad goals and policies relating to the physical development of the unincorporated areas of the County. The overall goal of the Regional Land Use Element is:

- 1. To accommodate population growth and influence its distribution in order to protect and use scarce resources wisely; preserve the natural environment; provide adequate public facilities and services efficiently and equitable; assist the private sector in the provision of adequate, affordable housing; and promote the economic and social welfare of the region.**

It is the goal of the Regional Land Use Element that;

- 1.1 Urban growth be directed to areas within or adjacent to existing urban areas, and that the rural setting and lifestyle of the remaining areas of the County be retained.**
- 1.2 Growth be phased with facilities.**
- 1.3 Growth be managed in order to provide for affordable housing and balanced communities throughout the unincorporated area.**
- 1.4 Urban portions of the unincorporated area be encouraged to either annex to an adjacent city or incorporated and that urban levels of service be provided in an efficient manner and be financed using equitable financing mechanisms.**

2. Land Use Goals

- 2.1 Promote wise uses of the County's land resources, preserving options for future uses.**
- 2.2 Encourage future urban growth contiguous to existing urban areas and to maximize the use of underutilized lands within existing urban areas.**
- 2.3 Retain the rural character of non-urban lands.**
- 2.4 Limit urban densities in non-urban areas to lands within existing Country Towns.**

2.5 Encourage continuance and expansion of agricultural uses in appropriate portions of the unincorporated area.

2.6 Ensure preservation of contiguous regionally significant open space corridors.

3. Environmental Goals

3.1 Protect lands needed for preservation of natural and cultural resources; managed production of resources; and recreation, educational, and scientific activities.

3.2 Promote the conservation of water and energy resources.

3.3 Achieve and maintain mandated air and water quality standards.

4. Capital Facilities Goals

4.1 Assure efficient, economical and timely provision of facilities and services for water, sewer, fire protection, schools and roads to accommodate anticipated development.

4.2 Assure that facilities and services provided by all agencies are coordinated in their timing, location and level of service.

4.3 Provide a facilities program which is capable of future adjustments or revisions to meet changing needs and conditions.

5. Government Structure Goals

5.1 Assure that urban communities are governed in a manner to provide maximum representation and efficient and equitable provision of public services.

5.2 Encourage the transition of urban and urbanizing communities in the unincorporated areas to municipal status through annexation to an adjacent city or incorporation.

5.3 Assure that urban levels of service are financed using equitable financing mechanisms when municipal status is not achieved.

5.4 Coordinate planning efforts with the cities of the region to facilitate annexations and to develop compatible land use strategies.

6. Housing and Social Goals

- 6.1 Encourage development of communities that are accessible to a mix of residents representative of the full ranges of age, income and ethnic groups in the region.**
- 6.2 Prevent or reverse deterioration in areas exhibiting symptom of physical decline by directing public and private investment to upgrade such areas.**
- 6.3 Assist the private sector in the provision of sufficient housing units in the unincorporated area to accommodate regional population projections endorsed by the Board of Supervisors.**
- 6.4 Assist the private sector to assure that adequate, affordable shelter will be available to all socio-economic groups throughout the County.**

7. Economic and Fiscal Goals

- 7.1 Assure the fiscal viability of local government while providing services that meet approved standards.**
- 7.2 Provide equitable service pricing and taxation policies which provide a reasonable relationship between levels of service, costs and revenues.**
- 7.3 Promote access to employment opportunities which minimize unemployment and return the maximum income to the residents of the region.**

The Regional Land Use Element Map identifies the Mountain Gate Specific Plan as part of the North County Metropolitan Sub-region. That portion of the Specific Plan formerly known as Monte Cerno (662.9 acres) is designated SPA 0.23 on Sheet 2 of the North County Metropolitan Land Use Map. The 31.1 acres being added to the Specific Plan is designated (18) Multiple Rural Use. The combined properties consist of 694 acres and will permit 156 single-family dwelling units. The site is outside the current and future urban development areas but within the confines of the Valley Center Municipal Water District. The Rubel SPA falls within the Estate Development Area (EDA).

The broader goals of the San Diego County General Plan located within the Regional Land Use Element related to the environment, capital facilities, government structures, housing, and socio-economic and fiscal planning are preceded by the more specific goals within the North County Sub-regional Plan.

Policy 1: Regional Categories

The following eight regional categories shall guide development within the unincorporated area of the County. These categories are delineated on the Regional Land Use Map.

The Current and Future Urban Development Area Categories taken together constitute the Urban Development Area. The outer boundary of the Urban Development Area constitutes an Urban Limit Line on the Regional Land Use Map and the community and sub-regional plan maps. Urban development will not occur outside the Urban Limit Line during the life of this plan.

1.3 Estate Development Area (EDA)

The Estate Development Area combines agricultural and low-density residential uses (parcels sizes of two to twenty acres will apply). Included in the category are those areas outside the Urban Limit Line but within the boundaries of the County Water Authority.

- **Where authorized, parcel sizes of two to twenty acres or larger will be permitted depending on the slope criteria in the underlying community or sub-regional plan land use designations.**
- **Clustering will be permitted in any land use designation found compatible with the Estate Development Category; however, clustering may be limited by conditions stated in the community or sub-regional plan text and to appropriate areas designated on the community or sub-regional plan map. Clustering as used in this policy is a development technique in which buildings or lots are grouped or "clustered," through an on-site transfer of density, rather than distributed evenly throughout the project site as in a conventional subdivision. It is intended that smaller lots shall be clustered on the more level areas in compensation for larger lots on the steeper slopes. The total number of building lots or dwelling units in a cluster development shall not exceed the number which is allowed by the applicable land use designation and zoning.**

- **Planned development, lot area averaging, and specific plan projects which utilize the clustering technique shall conform to the following standards, as well as to other applicable County regulations; except that specific plan projects that are located in the Specific Plan Area (21) land use designation and are 500 acres or greater in area are exempt from the standards. These standards shall apply to residential, commercial and industrial development.**

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is consistent with the above stated policy and the EDA requirements. Specifically, the Specific Plan permits residential development within the EDA on the Regional Land Use Element Map and within those limits on the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan through the adoption of this Specific Plan and at a density that is consistent with the surrounding rural area.

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is based upon sound environmental planning principals. The development footprint has been sited on the flatter portions of the property and within areas that are disturbed by the on-going agricultural activities. Because the site contains areas of sensitive vegetation, the project has been designed for a minimum lot size of one acre and an average size of 1.6 acres. As stated in the Regional Land Use Element Policy 1.3 listed above, the 694 acre site is exempt from the two acre minimum lot size.

Implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan will provide for the combining of agricultural and residential uses, thus preserving an existing agricultural use and providing new dwelling units. The project grading has been designed to preserve natural rock outcroppings and native vegetation. The Mountain Gate Specific Plan includes the protection and conservation of landforms and natural vegetation outside of the proposed agricultural and residential use areas and other site features through design techniques and the establishment of open space easements concurrent with the approval of final map(s).

Policy 2: Land Use Designations and Use Regulations

The following land use designations and use regulations shall guide development consistent with the regional categories described in Policy 1. Land use designations are

delineated on community and sub-regional plan maps. Use regulations are part of The Zoning Ordinance. Specifically,

- The following land use designations shall delineate locations for residential, commercial, and industrial uses to implement the policies of the regional categories.
- These land use designations shall include the maximum density (and in certain cases, a minimum density) allowed in that designation and shall also include density figures applicable under the "density bonus option" of the Inclusionary Housing Policy.
- The use regulations consistent with each land use designation shall be categorized as follows:
 - Consistent Use Regulation (CUR)
 - These represent use regulations that are consistent with the specific land use designation under consideration. Guidelines for their application are contained in the Plan Implementation Manual.
 - Special Circumstances (SC)
 - These represent use regulations that are consistent with a particular land use designation in existing (as of the date of adoption of this Element) locations, or under unique/unusual circumstances, or when additional density restrictions are required as a condition of approval. Detailed guidelines for the application of "Special Circumstances" are contained in the Plan Implementation Manual.

2.4 Non-Urban Residential Designations

It is the intent of these designations to retain the rural character of non-urban lands (Goal 2.3); to encourage continuance and expansion of agricultural uses in appropriate portions of the unincorporated area (Goal 2.5); and to ensure preservation of contiguous regionally significant open space corridors (Goal 2.6). These designations provide for areas not intended to develop at urban densities. Urban improvement standards will not apply and urban level services will not be provided. Commercial uses may be permitted to serve the needs of the residents except in the Country Residential Development Area Regional Category. There are two Non-Urban Residential Designations:

- (17) Estate Residential (Not applicable to this project.)

➤ **(18) Multiple Rural Use**

This Designation is applied in areas with one or more of the following characteristics: not highly suited for intensive agriculture; rugged terrain; watershed; desert lands; lands susceptible to fires and erosion; lands which rely on groundwater for water supply; and other environmentally constrained areas. The Multiple Rural Use Designation is typically, but not necessarily exclusively, applied in remote areas to broad expanses of rural land with overall low population density and with an absence of most public services.

Minimum allowable parcel sizes are based on slope criteria and criteria established in the County Groundwater Policy. The more restrictive criteria determines the minimum parcel size.

Slope Criteria:

- **Where the average slope of a proposed parcel does not exceed 25%: four-acre minimum parcel size.**
- **Where the average slope of a proposed parcel is greater than 25% and does not exceed 50%: eight-acre minimum parcel size.**
- **Where the average slope of a proposed parcel is greater than 50%: 20 acre minimum parcel size.**

Other than a single-family home on an existing lot, it is not intended that any development occur unless the proposed development has been carefully examined to assure that there will be no significant adverse environmental impacts, erosion and fire problems will be minimal, and no urban levels of service will be required. Notwithstanding any provision of this paragraph to the contrary, a public improvement project may be approved when there are significant adverse environmental impacts if the County decision-maker adopts findings which demonstrate that the significant adverse environmental impacts have been mitigated to the greatest extent feasible and that the project is necessary to protect the public health and safety.

Minimum allowable parcel sizes are as specified above, provided that requirements for adequate immediate and long-term water supply and subsurface sewage disposal can be met, provided that when environmental analysis indicates that significant unmitigable impacts could occur as a result of the parcel size proposed then larger parcel sizes will be required.

Clustering when located within the Country Residential Development Area or Rural Development Area Categories of the Regional Land Use Element (Policies 1.55, 1.3 and 1.4) is permitted within this Designation. The minimum parcel size and maximum number of dwelling units in such cluster development shall be governed by the applicable regional policy. In computing the theoretical maximum number of dwelling units, the following density factor shall apply:

- Where the average slope of a proposed parcel does not exceed 25%: 0.25 dwelling unit per gross acre.**
- Where the average slope of a proposed parcel is greater than 25% and does not exceed 50%: 0.125 dwelling unit per gross acre.**
- Where the average slope of a proposed parcel is greater than 50%: 0.05 dwelling unit per gross acre.**

In both cluster and non-cluster projects, the actual parcel size may be increased and the number of dwelling units decreased for reasons of environmental protection or for neighborhood compatibility or for other reasons necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

This Designation is consistent with the Country Residential Development Area, Estate Development Area, Rural Development Area, Country Town Environmentally Constrained Area, and Special Study Area Categories of the Regional Land Use Element.

2.6 Special Purpose Designations

(21) Specific Plan Area

This designation is used where a specific plan has been adopted or must be adopted prior to development. Land within this designation typically has environmental constraints or unique land use concerns which require special land use and/or design controls. The overall density permitted in a Specific Planning Area shall be designated on the community or sub-regional plan map. This designation is consistent with all categories of the Regional Land Use Element.

Adopted Specific Plan Areas: An adopted Specific Plan Area is an area designated on the map of any sub-regional or community plan of the General Plan where the Board of Supervisors has determined that more detailed planning is required prior to development. Areas suitable for Specific Plan Area designation may include any parcel or parcels, proposed for large-scale urban development, natural resource protection, historic preservation or any other use requiring more detailed planning than contained in the San Diego County General Plan. Once land is designated as a Specific Plan Area no major or minor tentative subdivision maps or reclassifications to more intensive zones shall be approved except in accordance with an adopted Specific Plan, as described in Section 65451 of the California Government Code. The Board of Supervisors may indicate by resolution of adoption of a Specific Plan Area designation any goals, objectives or conditions it deems appropriate.

Note that the FCI may have changed the designation of areas that were formerly designated (21) Specific Plan Area and/or that are subject to an approved Specific Plan. The provision of the FCI may prevent implementation of approved Specific Plans.

This language does not supersede nor replace Policy 3.4. All applications are expected to satisfy both policies.

The language in Policy 2.6 and 3.4 is intended to supersede any language contained in any adopted sub-regional and/or community plan text which may conflict with said policies.

Implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan will provide for the combining of agricultural and residential uses, thus preserving the vast majority of the existing avocado grove while providing 156 single-family dwelling units. The density within both the (18) Multiple Rural Use and (21) Specific Plan Area portions of the site are consistent with the specification of these Regional Land Use Designations and Regulations. The Mountain Gate Specific Plan includes the protection and conservation of landforms and natural vegetation outside of the proposed agricultural and residential use areas and other site features through design techniques and the establishment of open space easements concurrent with the approval of final map(s).

The Specific Plan requires the timely provision of facilities and services for road, water, fire protection, and schools with the approval of the final map(s). The final map(s) will not be approved until all required facilities and services for each phase have been assured through the appropriate County approvals and/or special district approvals.

Policy 3: Community and Sub-Regional Plans

Regional categories delineated on the Regional Land Use Map shall be implemented through land use designations delineated on community and sub-regional plan maps. Within these community and sub-regional plan areas, the following additional policies shall apply:

3.2 Community Plan Designations

Community and sub-regional plan designations, goals, objectives, and policies shall be consistent with the regional categories, goals and policies of the Regional Land Use Element. As the Regional Land Use Element text is amended, community and sub-regional plan provisions referencing or repeating the regional text shall be deemed to incorporate amendments thereto.

Due to the two-mile scale of the Regional Land Use Element Map, irregularities between the community and sub-regional plan maps and the Regional Map occasionally occur. If this happens the community or sub-regional map drawn to legally definable boundaries, shall take precedence over the Regional Map.

3.4 Existing Private Development Plans and Specific Plans

Existing private development plans, specific plans and applications to expand the boundaries of existing private development plans and specific plans may conflict with the categories of the Regional Land Use Element. In these cases, for the purpose of consistency with the Regional Land Use Element, a private development plan or specific plan or expansion thereof will be deemed consistent with the General Plan if one of the following findings is made:

- 1. The project will not adversely affect or promote premature growth to adjacent properties; and**

The project has sufficient facility capacity to accommodate both the present and future population if built out to capacity; and

A substantial private investment in public facilities has been made on the basis of past approvals of development phases, and the proposed development does not exceed the maximum density as granted on the original private development plan/specific plan or the proposed development does not exceed the maximum density as shown on the community/sub-regional plan maps which resulted from previous approvals of private development/specific plans; or

- 2. The density and character of development is substantially in conformance with the Regional Land Use Element goals.**

3.9 Rounding to the Nearest Whole Number When Computing Maximum Number of Dwelling Units

The maximum number of dwelling units permitted within the exterior boundaries of any subdivision or single lot shall be based on the applicable land use designation(s).

Where computation of the total number of dwelling units produces a fraction of one-half or less of a dwelling unit, the total shall be rounded down to the nearest whole number of dwelling units, except that a product of less than one dwelling unit shall be interpreted as permitting one dwelling unit. A total with a fraction of more than one-half of a dwelling unit shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number of dwelling units.

The Specific Plan allows for a maximum density of 156 single-family dwelling units as designated in the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan. The site includes approximately 31.1 acres of (18) Multiple Rural Use and 662.9 acres of (21) Specific Plan Area. The (18) Multiple Rural Use area permits 3.87 dwelling units which is rounded to four (4) dwelling units. The (21) Specific Plan Area (formerly Monte Cerno) area permits 152.26 dwelling units which is rounded to 152 dwelling units. Neither area contains more dwelling units than permitted by the underlying Regional Land Use Designation.

The site conditions, development costs, environmental goals, and density limitations of the property limit the possibility of providing homes that qualify as “affordable”. However, the developer is committed to providing homes that meet the needs of all members of society.

Implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan will provide for the combining of agricultural and residential uses, thus preserving the majority of the existing avocado grove while providing the above stated 156 single-family, detached, dwelling units. The Mountain Gate Specific Plan includes the protection and conservation of landforms and natural vegetation outside of the proposed agricultural and residential use areas and other site features through design techniques and the establishment of open space easements concurrent with the approval of final map(s).

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan requires the timely provision of facilities and services for road, water, fire protection, and schools with the approval of the final map(s). The final map(s) will not be approved until all required facilities and services for each phase have been assured through the appropriate County approvals and/or special district approvals.

Policy 4: Region-wide Action Programs

The following are action programs and statements of policy which are related to both the Land Use Element and community plans. Implementation of these programs would assist in the implementation of the Land Use Element.

The programs outlined and described in this Policy do not apply to the Mountain Gate Specific Plan.

3. Circulation Element

The Circulation Element of the San Diego County General Plan was adopted on December 5, 1967 and amended on July 27, 1994 and includes two sub-elements: road network; and bicycle network. The Road Network Sub-element of the County Circulation Element intends the following:

- **To preserve a corridor uninhibited by any permanent structure for future road right-of-ways for each and every road shown on the Circulation Element.**
- **That all land developments conform to the Circulation Element.**
- **That in road matters the Circulation Element shall supercede any proposal of any Community, Sub-regional, or Development Plan.**

The County Circulation Element does not include roads within the Mountain Gate Specific Plan.

The Bicycle Network Sub-element of the County Circulation Element is designed to “provide for the safe and convenient use of bicycles throughout San Diego County for recreation and as a viable alternative to the automobile as a form of local transportation.” The Circulation Element Bicycle Map does not include any designated or proposed bicycle ways on or near the Mountain Gate Specific Plan. Therefore, it is not necessary to construct a bicycle network within the Specific Plan. Given the grades and desire to minimize landform alterations, it is impractical to construct an on-site bicycle network.

4. Recreation Element

The Recreation Element of the County General Plan was adopted on March 29, 1972 and amended on October 28, 1993 and includes the goals and objectives for the provision of recreational facilities in the unincorporated area of San Diego County. The overall goals of the Recreation Element include the following:

- **Enhance the physical, mental, and spiritual well being of County residents by providing opportunities for relaxation, rest, activity, education, and relationships with their neighbors.**
- **Provide a system of public parks, riding and hiking trails, and outdoor recreation facilities which not only preserve significant areas of natural beauty for citizen enjoyment, but also serve the needs of the citizens in their immediate environments. This system is to be augmented by private outdoor recreation facilities that are compatible with the goals and objectives of the public system.**

The County Recreation Element Plan Map does not include designations for public or semi-public park uses within the Mountain Gate Specific Plan area. However, there are two (2) parks in the surrounding area. The Jesmond Dene Park is located at the intersection of Jesmond Deve Road and North Broadway which is south of the Mountain Gate project. The Walnut Grove Park is located at the intersection of Sycamore Drive and Olive Street which is generally southwest of the project.

As designed, each residential lot includes approximately 4,000 square-feet of "usable" open space. In addition, approximately 81% of the Specific Plan area is proposed for agricultural and open space uses. The Mountain Gate Subdivision Map includes a requirement to contribute a Park Fee as part of the entitlement process.

5. Seismic Safety Element

The San Diego County General Plan Seismic Safety Element was adopted on January 9, 1975 and amended on April 24, 1991. The goals of the Seismic Safety Element are:

- **Minimize the loss of life;**
- **Minimize damage to public and private property; and**
- **Minimize social and economic dislocation resulting from injuries, loss of life, and property damage.**

The Faults and Epicenters Map does not include faults (located, concealed, or inferred) on or adjacent to the Mountain Gate Specific Plan area. The nearest fault is the Elsinore Fault; the nearest concealed fault is on Camp Pendleton Marine Corp Reservation, and the nearest inferred fault is in Vista.

The Landslides Map does not indicate any known landslides on the Mountain Gate site. The nearest located landslide east in Valley Center on Valley Center Road, approximately four miles due east of the Mountain Gate project. Prior to final map approval, a detailed soils and geologic investigation will be conducted and a report submitted for review and approval. Preliminary studies have been conducted for grading purposes and no known hazards have been identified.

As mentioned above, a preliminary soils and geologic investigation and an analysis of ripability were utilized early in the design process. The analysis work is partially responsible for the present configuration of the street network, building pads and open space. Based upon these analysis, the steeper slopes on the site have been preserved in open space.

6. Scenic Highways Element

The Scenic Highway Element of the San Diego County General Plan was adopted on January 9, 1975 and amended on December 10, 1986.

- **It is the goal of the Scenic Highway Element to create a network of County scenic highway corridors within which scenic, historical, and recreational resources are protected and enhanced.**

The Scenic Highways System Priority Routes Map indicates that there are no scenic highway corridors near the Mountain Gate Specific Plan. Interstate 15 is the nearest scenic highway. It is located approximately one and a half miles (1.5) west of Mountain Gate Specific Plan area and is designated as a third priority scenic route. The I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation area, designator "B" covers the 31.1 acre parcel which is designated (18) Multiple Rural.

In order to minimize the visual impacts associated with the implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan, the home sites and internal road system were designed to limit site grading. The home sites were designed to utilize the natural screening of the existing avocado grove and designed to compliment the existing ridges and canyons. For example, the existing canyons were not filled to create a uniform edge with structures perched on the edge of the landform. An extensive Visual Analysis was prepared and reviewed by the decision-maker and County Staff to determine that all grading associated with the project was minimized and properly mitigated.

In addition, the four (4) home sites located within the "B" designator for the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation area shall submit a Site Plans to the I-15 Corridor Design Review Committee for review and approval prior to the issuance of a Building Permit for the homes on said lots.

7. Public Safety Element

The Public Safety Element of the San Diego County General Plan was adopted in January of 1975 and includes the following goals:

- **Minimize injury, loss of life, and damage to property resulting from fire, geologic or crime occurrence.**
- **Maximize public safety factors in the physical planning process.**
- **Optimize organization and delivery of emergency services upon occurrence of fire, geologic activity or crime.**

Fire Hazards

Implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan will reduce the possibility of uncontrolled brush fires occurring on the property. Construction of homes and restructuring of the agricultural operation will create better and more efficient access to remaining open space and native vegetation. The site is served by a 1,000,000 gallon water tank which also is utilized to irrigate the avocado grove. The Deer Springs Fire Protection District has an existing fire station located at the intersection of Windsong Lane and Mesa Rock Road which is located on west side of I-15 and less than two miles from the Mountain Gate project and has a response time of approximately five minutes.

Geologic Hazards

All grading activities within the Mountain Gate Specific Plan area will comply with the County's grading regulations and standards. Pursuant to the findings in the preliminary geologic and soils report, all necessary and appropriate control measures will be included in the grading requirements for the road and building pads. Furthermore, various grading and design techniques for road and building pad construction have been incorporated into the design of the project to minimize the necessary on-site grading.

Crime Prevention

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan incorporates the use of private road easements and a gated entrance near the Mountain Meadow Road. Through the use of these features, access to the property will be reduced and major crime should be discouraged.

Emergency Services

Emergency medical services are presently available from two hospitals in the North County area. These facilities are located in Escondido and Oceanside and include 24-hour emergency room service.

8. Noise Element

The Noise Element of the County General Plan was adopted on February 20, 1975 and amended on December 17, 1980 and includes the following goals:

- **Establish a coordinated set of policies and noise standards for the reduction of irritating and harmful effects of noise to people within the County of San Diego through effective planning, and, if necessary, regulation.**
- **Protect and enhance the County's acoustical environment by simultaneously controlling noise at its source, along its transmission paths, and at the site of the ultimate receiver. First priority shall be given to residential areas to assure an environment free from excessive or damaging noise. Control of noise at its source shall be given priority over changes to residential structures or neighborhoods where practical.**

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan is located in a low ambient noise area and is not subject to adverse noise impacts from airfields or aircraft over-flight. With the exception of the agricultural operations on-site, no other activities exist in the surrounding area which would adversely affect the acoustical environment. The agricultural land uses are not constant noise sources and usually occur during daylight hours.

The only noise source that will occur in the Rubel Specific Planning Area is vehicular noise from the internal road system and the agricultural operation, both of which are relatively insignificant. The topographic differences of the building pads, the roads and agricultural areas permit the internal noise levels to stay below the County standard of 45db(A).

9. Housing Element

The Housing Element of the County General Plan was adopted on December 15, 1999 and includes the following goals:

- **Assist housing developers by ensuring that new residential construction will be made available to meet the needs of the region if adequate public services and facilities are in place. The County shall encourage and facilitate a variety of housing and tenancy types, and price ranges throughout the region.**

- **Assist housing developers in providing adequate affordable shelter within an adequate living environment to all households in the region where public services and facilities are available; maximize the use of all Federal and State programs available to the region to provide housing for very low and low-income households; and encourage joint efforts by the region's jurisdictions and the County to accommodate their share of the regional housing need.**
- **Assist housing developers through the expeditious processing of all ministerial and discretionary land use permits.**
- **Maintain housing stock in good repair and protect residential communities from deterioration. All neighborhoods should have adequate and coordinated public and private services and facilities, clean air, quiet and pleasant surroundings, reasonable assurance of safety and security, and a sense of community life.**

Implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan will result in 156 single-family dwelling units. The Mountain Gate project will provide single-family homes on lots with a minimum size of one acre in a rural setting which is an increasingly difficult housing category to fulfill. The density is consistent with the San Diego County General Plan and the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan. The project satisfies all of the General Plan goals for adequate public facilities and services. Specifically, the Mountain Gate Specific Plan does the following: creates a neighborhood that is unique to the site, allows for a development that is a pleasant and quiet setting, assures a reasonable level of safety and security, and includes significant open space. However, the project does not include low or moderate income housing. The County as a whole is better served with provision of housing for low and moderate income households in areas that are more centrally located relative to public facilities and services associated with the urban core of the County and not available within the Mountain Gate project.

10. Conservation Element

The San Diego County Conservation Element of the General Plan was adopted on December 10, 1975 and amended on November 2, 1993. The purpose of the Conservation Element is to identify and describe the natural resources of San Diego County and prepare

policies and action programs to conserve these resources. Compliance with the San Diego County Conservation Element General Plan goals are list below:

General Conservation

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan provides for the conservation of approximately 393 acres of open space that consists of native vegetation and wildlife habitat. While the site is not adjacent to the County's conservation area or within an Resource Conservation Area (RCA), the site can be made available for monitoring of the open space with native vegetation.

Water

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan area is located in the EDA established in the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan. Water is presently available on site. A water distribution system will be developed within the private road easements during the initial phase of development which will include all grading activities and road construction. Since the site has adequate water service and the groundwater is not available in an adequate volume or quality, the existing well will be capped and well water will not be utilized.

Wastewater Disposal

Wastewater disposal for the project will be achieved through a forced gravity main. Each home will have a septic tank for sorting liquids and solids. Solids will need to be removed on a routine basis by the homeowner as with a septic system. However, the liquid effluent will be pumped into a Valley Center Municipal Water District force main in the street. The force main will be owned and maintained by the Valley Center Water District and will be connected to their force main in Mountain Meadow Road, then pumped to their treatment plant.

Drainage and Flood Control

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan area includes grading for building pads and roadways. Their design is based upon minimizing grading and preserving existing terrain, thus minimizing impacts to the existing drainages. To the extent feasible, building pad and

roadway drainage will be captured or detained, and impurities will be removed to avoid degrading fresh water and increase erosion. However, the project will not divert any existing water flow or increase water volumes off-site.

The Mountain Gate site is not located in or adjacent to a floodplain or floodway.

Water Bodies and Wetlands

The Mountain Gate development is not located near or adjacent to the San Elijo, Batiquitos, Las Pulgas or Santa Margarita lagoons and does not propose any filling or dredging of these lagoons or other tidal areas.

Comprehensive Water Resource Management

The project will comply with the County's Comprehensive Water Resource Management program.

Vegetation and Wildlife

Natural Habitats

The Biological Report prepared for the Mountain Gate Specific Plan determines that the site does not include any rare, threatened, or endangered vegetation or wildlife.

Vegetation removed to grade each residential lot and the roadways can and will be mitigated on-site. The site includes oak trees and chaparral in the two drainage areas in the southeastern portion of the site that is worthy of preservation.

The landscape plans for the Mountain Gate project include native species on all graded slopes. Building pads will be planted per the requirements of the individual homeowner; however, all brush management areas will comply with the requirements associated with the County's Brush Management standards which includes erosion control measures and native plant species.

Habitat Modifications

As proposed, the subdivision is mostly cut into the existing avocado grove. The project was designed to minimize impacts to steep slopes, native vegetation and habitats. The

project impacts include compliance with the County fire-fuel management requirements. As stated above, the site plan includes flood control measures that comply with all County standards and requirements. Preparation of the tentative subdivision map and Specific Plan were based upon a site analysis that included identification of the biological, archaeological, and geological inventory. The goal of the project was and is to avoid significant adverse impacts on biological, archaeological, or geological resources.

Minerals

Sand, Crushed Rock, Dimension Stone and Riprap

The project does not include sand, crushed rock, dimension stone and riprap extraction activities or operations. These activities are in direct conflict with the existing agricultural operation or the proposed residential use.

Other Minerals

The project does not impact any mineral deposit or historical mining operations.

Unique Geological Features

The project has been designed to preserve existing geologic features such as rock outcroppings and steep slopes.

Soils

Agriculture

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan includes the continued operation of the existing avocado grove; however, some of the existing trees will be removed during the creation of the roadways and building pads.

Erosion Control and Hillside Protection Management

Pursuant to the findings in the Mountain Gate preliminary geologic and soils report, all necessary and appropriate control measures will be included in the grading requirements for the roadways and building pads within the Specific Plan site. Various grading and design techniques for roadway and building pad construction have been incorporated into

the design of the project to minimize the necessary on-site grading. These grading and design techniques include clustering of 156 single-family dwelling units on the flatter portions of the site and utilizing Hillside roadway standards. Preserving the natural features that are unique to the Mountain Gate site was the primary focus for designing the roadways and building pads to limit the disturbance of hillsides and rock outcroppings. In addition, all grading activities within the Mountain Gate Specific Plan area will comply with the County's grading regulations and standards.

The landscape plans for the Mountain Gate project will accompany the grading plans for all roadways and building pads. These plans will include planting drought tolerant native species on all graded slopes in order to return the area to a more native condition. The project was designed to minimize impacts to native vegetation and habitats, archaeological resources, and soil erosion.

The project site is not located near or adjacent to any coastal bluffs and will not adversely affect said bluffs.

Astronomical Dark Sky

The Mountain Gate project will comply with the County's dark skies requirements.

Cultural Sites

The archaeological and cultural resource analysis prepared for the Mountain Gate Specific Plan states that a single archaeological site exists within the site. The site has been fully analyzed and cataloged. In order to preserve the integrity of the site, it has been placed in an open space lot and the grading plan specifically avoided disturbing in the surrounding area.

11. Energy Element

The San Diego County General Plan Energy Element was adopted on November 15, 1977 and includes several goals related to the effective utilization of present energy resources and the development of renewable alternative sources. These goals include following:

- **Define and assure adequate energy supplies for San Diego County.**
- **Encourage the utilization of alternative passive and renewable energy resources.**
- **Maximize energy conservation and efficiency of utilization.**
- **Minimize environmental impact of energy sources.**
- **Minimize economic or social impacts of energy supply and demand.**
- **Minimize possibility of energy shortages and resulting hardships.**
- **Seek equitable sharing of both the benefits of energy consumption and the hardships of energy shortage.**
- **Encourage compatibility with National and State energy goals and City and Community General Plans/Regional Comprehensive Plans.**

The Mountain Gate Specific Plan and tentative subdivision map establish the lot sizes, configuration, building pads, and roadways which allow the home builder(s) to maximize solar access and prevailing breezes. All homes constructed within the Specific Plan area must comply with all State and County legislation, ordinances, and codes regarding energy conservation. Passive cooling and ventilation, solar water heating, or cooling and other related devices and techniques will be encouraged.

B. North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan

The North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan was adopted on January 3, 1979 and amended on December 19, 1990. The North County Metropolitan Sub-regional plan supplements all existing elements of the San Diego County General Plan and includes the following goals:

1. **Accommodate urban development in appropriate areas: Accommodate a population of 430,800 persons in the sub-region (includes cities) by 1995, if essential services such as water, sewer, fire protection and schools can be made available.**
2. **Encourage logical city annexations: Encourage the annexation of unincorporated land within each City's adopted sphere of influence.**
3. **Promote agriculture in non-urban areas: Promote agriculture by protecting estate and rural areas from urbanization and incompatible development.**

4. Protect environmental resources: Protect natural and economic resources by designating appropriate lands as rural, estate, and environmentally constrained areas.

As stated previously, the Regional Land Use Element Map identifies the Mountain Gate Specific Plan as part of the North County Metropolitan Sub-region. That portion of the Specific Plan formerly known as Monte Cerno (662.9 acres) is designated SPA 0.23 on Sheet 2 of the North County Metropolitan Land Use Map. The 31.1 acres being added to the Specific Plan are designated 18 Multiple Rural Use on Sheet 2 of the North County Metropolitan Land Use Map. Based upon these designations, the site density will permit the construction of 156 single-family dwelling units. A specific plan provides flexibility in the planning of large-scale projects to ensure consistency and conformity with the needs and desires of the County's General Plan and North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan.

While the property is within the sphere-of-influence of the City of Escondido, it has not been pre-zoned by the City of Escondido. During our discussions with the City of Escondido Planning Department staff, they indicated that several of the properties located between the existing City boundary and the proposed project would need to be annexed into the City of Escondido before annexation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan would be considered for annexation. The City is currently not actively seeking to annex properties in the area. Staff does not expect the intervening properties to request annexation and the Mountain Gate property owner does not anticipate requesting annexation. Since staff does not expect any of these properties to seek annexation, they have not taken a position relative to the Mountain Gate Specific Plan and tentative subdivision map.

Implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan will provide for a combination of agricultural and residential uses, thus preserving the existing avocado grove and providing 156 single-family, detached, dwelling units. The Mountain Gate Specific Plan includes the protection and conservation of landforms and natural vegetation outside of the proposed agricultural and residential use areas and other site features through design techniques and the establishment of open space easements concurrent with the approval of final map(s).

The North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan goal relative to housing is:

- To encourage mobile home park development as a means to promote alternative types of housing, as well as to expand housing opportunities for low and moderate income households.

Prospective mobile home sites are identified in the North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan text and none of those sites are in close proximity to the Mountain Gate project. The topographic condition of the site and lack of urban public facilities and services, render the Mountain Gate Specific Plan area unsuitable for locating mobile homes.

More than thirty-two percent (32%) of Mountain Gate Specific Plan area currently utilized for the avocado grove and it is an amenity for the proposed residential development. As proposed, the project will remove approximately fifty-one (51) acres of the avocado operation which will leave approximately 172 acres for the on-going agricultural operation. The 172 acres equates to more than twenty-three percent (25%) of the site will remain in avocado production. The Mountain Gate project envisions an entity to operate some or all of avocado grove that remain after the creation of the residential portions of the project.

The North County Metropolitan Sub-regional Plan Conservation Element identifies the RCA's within the Plan area. The RCA designation is applied to protect sensitive biological, archaeological, aesthetic, mineral, and water resources. Projects requiring environmental analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) which occur within RCA's should be carefully analyzed to assess their impact on the RCA. The nearest RCA is located southeast of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan site. Despite the fact that the site is not located in a RCA, the biological resources located on-site have been cataloged and considered in designing the Mountain Gate project. The Specific Plan preserves approximately 393 acres of native vegetation and habitat for use by local wildlife.

C. I-15 Corridor Sub-regional Plan

The I-15 Corridor Sub-regional Plan supplements all existing elements of the San Diego County General and North County Metropolitan Sub-regional plans and includes the following goals:

- **Preserve to the extent possible, the scenic attributes of the I-15 Corridor.**
- **Provide a land use pattern sensitive to the opportunities and constraints of the I-15 Corridor.**
- **Provide adequate and equitably financed public services and facilities.**
- **Provide a circulation network capable of handling corridor and subregional traffic, including public and non-motorized modes of travel.**
- **Protect the environmental resources along the I-15 corridor including, but not limited to those contained within "Resources Conservation Areas".**
- **Coordinated planning and development proposals with adjacent jurisdictions, planning groups, and private interests.**
- **Implement the development and concepts contained in the I-15 Corridor plan, as appropriate.**

In order to minimize the visual impacts associated with the implementation of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan, the home sites and internal road system were designed to limit site grading. The home sites were designed to utilize the natural screening of the existing avocado grove and designed to compliment the existing ridges and canyons. For example, the existing canyons were not filled to create a uniform edge with structures perched on the edge of the landform and the vast majority of natural slopes with gradients over 25 percent have been preserved. Site design features include the following:

- Clustering of residential lots on the flatter portions of the property, thus preserving the site's natural topographic features, rock outcroppings, and native vegetation and the existing agricultural grove;
- Curvilinear roads have been utilized to more closely adhere to the natural contours of the land thus minimizing landform alteration; and
- Cul-de-sac and single-loaded streets have been utilized to limit grading and conform to the natural terrain.

Hillside street standards are being utilized for this project to minimize grading; and
All graded slopes (except interior slopes and slopes adjacent to the agricultural areas) adjacent to open space with native vegetation will be revegetated with native plant species in order to return graded areas to the natural condition.

V. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

This section is intended to describe the various discretionary permits and applications which must be submitted and approved in order to implement the Mountain Gate Specific Plan.

A. Specific Plan

The Board of Supervisor's Policy I-59 provides for the implementation of large-scale projects through the approval of a Specific Plan for a project to be developed within a five-year period. The Mountain Gate Specific Plan covers the entire project area and anticipates that all development will be completed prior to the expiration of the five year timeframe which begins with approval by the Board of Supervisors.

B. Zone Classifications

The Mountain Gate property is currently zoned A-70-8, an agricultural zone permitting residential and agricultural uses on a parcel containing at least eight acres. Of the 694-acre site, 224 acres are currently being utilized for an agricultural operation (avocado grove). In order to implement the Mountain Gate Specific Plan and permit concurrent project hearings, an application for a zoning reclassification has been filed in conjunction with the Specific Plan.

The proposed zone reclassification will divide the site into two zones: (1) S-88 for those residential portions of the site; and (2) S-88 for the agricultural and open space areas.

The S-88 zone will be applied to the single-family residential portions of the site which includes 156 dwelling units on approximately 250 acres of the property. The residential lots are generally located on the flatter portions of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan site and have a minimum lot size of one acre.

USE REGULATION:	S-88
NEIGHBORHOOD REGULATION:	J
DEVELOPMENT REGULATION:	
Maximum Density	1
Minimum Lot Size	1 Acre
Building Type	B
Maximum Floor Area	-
Floor Area Ratio	-
Building Height	G
Lot Coverage	-
Minimum Setback	H
Open Space	-
SPECIAL REGULATION:	D & por. B

The S-88 zone will be applied to the agricultural and open space lots which are generally located on the steeper slopes of the site and cover approximately 423 acres.

USE REGULATION:	S-88
NEIGHBORHOOD REGULATION:	-
DEVELOPMENT REGULATION:	
Maximum Density	-
Minimum Lot Size	8 Acres
Building Type	C
Maximum Floor Area	-
Floor Area Ratio	-
Building Height	G
Lot Coverage	-
Minimum Setback	G
Open Space	-
SPECIAL REGULATION:	D & por. B

C. Tentative Map

The Mountain Gate tentative subdivision map will be graded and the required improvements will be constructed in a logical phased pattern. The tentative subdivision map shall show the phase boundaries. After tentative subdivision map approval, modifications to the phasing limits and sequence will be allowed as requested by the Developer and subject to the approval of the Director of Public Works. The homes will be constructed in multiple phases, depending upon market forces.

D. Architectural Design

Prior to issuance of Building Permits for the lots (1 through 4) within the 31.1 acre parcel which is designated (18) Multiple Rural, each home must submit and have approved a Site Plan by the I-15 Corridor Design Review Board. All other lots are not covered by the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines; however, they are subject to the “D” designator which is being added to zoning to ensure compatible architecture with the surrounding area.

E. Proposed Landscape Plant Palette

The following plant palette details plants proposed for the landscape concept described chapter three (III.). Plants are proposed to be from containers and or boxes unless otherwise noted.

Entry Zone

Trees - One or more of the following species may be used as the entry theme tree. This tree will then be repeated along the roadways and within the community as described above.

Platanus racemosa	California Sycamore
Schinus molle	California Pepper
Populus fremontii	Western Cottonwood
Sambucus mexicana	Mexican Elderberry
Washingtonia filifera	California Fan Palm

Shrubs - One or more of the following will be used in small groupings to provide definition screening or directed views.

<i>Comarostaphylis diversifolia</i>	Summer Holly
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	Toyon
<i>Lyonothamnus floribundus</i>	Catalina Ironwood
<i>Rhamnus californica</i>	Coffeeberry
<i>Rhamnus crocea</i> ‘ilicifolia’	Redberry
<i>Rhus integrifolia</i>	Lemonade Berry
<i>Rhus laurina</i>	Laurel Sumac

Unifying Groundcover Matrix - One or more of the following will be used along the roadsides and visible slopes as part of background landscape as described above. This mix is seen in all landscape zones.

<i>Iva haysiana</i>	San Diego Poverty Weed
<i>Ceanothus g. horizontalis</i>	Ceanothus
<i>Rosemary prostratus</i>	Rosemary
<i>Baccharis species</i>	Coyote Bush, Chapparel Broom

Accents - One or more of the following will be used in small groupings primarily with boulders and rock outcroppings to provide color and interest in special areas.

<i>Agave americana</i>	Century plant
<i>Agave attenuata</i>	Foxtail Agave
<i>Yucca brevifolia</i>	Yucca
<i>Yucca Whipplei</i>	Our Lord’s Candle
<i>Mimulus spp.</i>	Monkey flower
<i>Oenothera spp.</i>	Evening Primrose
<i>Opuntia basilaris</i>	Beaver-tailed Cactus
<i>Opuntia littoralis</i>	Prickly Pear
<i>Salvia greggi</i>	Mexican Sage
<i>Salvia leucantha</i>	Mexican Bush Sage
<i>Salvia purpurea</i>	Purple Sage
<i>Salvia sonomensis</i>	Creeping Black Sage Dara’s Choice

Woolly Blue Curls

Trees - Avocado trees and trees that blend with the avocado trees may be used in this zone.

Citrus spp. Lemons, Mandarins, Oranges

Persea americana 'Hass' Hass Avocado

Eriobotra japonica Loquat

Ceratonia seliqua carob

Shrubs and Ground covers are the same as for the entry zone.

Trees - This zone is proposed to have a primarily open character. Trees are to be located in small clusters at special areas and to provide visual interest.

Quercus agrifolia Coast live oak

Quercus engelmanni Engleman oak

Quercus suber Cork oak

Quercus ilex Holly oak

Shrubs and Ground covers are the same as for the entry zone.

Slopes and disturbed areas - The following seed mix may be used on the graded slopes and other disturbed areas that are next to existing adjacent vegetation. All seeded areas should be irrigated until establishment. Container shrubs and trees where used will be bubbler irrigated until establishment.

Achillea millefolium Common Yarrow

Baccharis pilularis 'Consanguinea' Chapparral Bloom

Clarkia bottae Showy Farewell to Spring

Encelia californica Bush Sunflower, California Encelia

Eriophyllum confertiflorum	Golden Yarrow
Iva hayesiana	San Diego Poverty Weed
Lasthenia californica	Dwarf Goldfields
Lotus scoparius	Deerweed
Lupinus bicolor	Sky Lupine
Oenothera spp.	Primrose
Vulpia microstachys	Small Fescue

In addition to the above, supplemental container plantings (1 gallon and 5 gallon) of the following plants will be used in areas which are adjacent to natural vegetation. They shall be used to screen homes and other manmade vertical elements.

Quercus spp.	Oaks
Ceratonia siliqua	Carob
Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon
Rhamnus californica	Coffeeberry
Rhamnus crocea 'ilicifolia'	Redberry
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonade Berry
Rhus laurina	Laurel Sumac

F. Cancellation of Agricultural Contracts

In accordance with the additional development criteria placed upon the Mountain Gate Specific Plan and Large Scale Project, the existing agricultural contracts were cancelled with the approval of the Monte Cerno Specific Plan in August of 1980.

G. Environmental Impact Report

In accordance with the provisions of the CEQA, an Addendum to the previously approved Monte Cerno EIR was prepared based upon the Specific Plan text and tentative subdivision map. Concurrent with the approval of the Mountain Gate Specific Plan, the Board of Supervisors certified the Addendum to the Monte Cerno EIR complies with the provisions of CEQA.

H. Plan Amendments

It is anticipated that modifications to the Mountain Gate Specific Plan, including text and exhibits, may be necessary from time to time. Minor modifications that substantially conform to the Specific Plan will not require a formal amendment.

Proposed modifications and revisions which are in substantial conformance with the Mountain Gate Specific Plan text and exhibits shall be considered minor modifications. The Director of the Department of Planning and Land Use shall determine whether the revision is minor in nature and in substantial conformance in accordance with the Director's authority. The following criteria should be construed as minor modifications for purposes of determining substantial conformance.

- Realignment or modifications to the internal streets servicing the project area, if approved by the County Engineer or designated representative.
- Revisions to approved discretionary actions, provided such amendments do not increase the Specific Plan density.
- Changes in design features such as paving, lighting, or landscaping treatments, and fencing.
- Any other amendment the Director of the Department of Planning and Land Use deems to be minor in nature.

All modifications to the Mountain Gate Specific Plan which are not determined to be minor in nature shall require a formal amendment to the Specific Plan. Amendments to the Specific Plan are expected over the course of time. In those instances where amendments are necessary, they should be expeditiously processed and approved by the County.