

BUENA CREEK MOVES



Community Based Transportation Buena Creek Neighborhood Mobility Plan

County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

County of San Diego

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Southeast corner of Santa Fe Ave looking southbound

“

[We need] better connection between bus [and] trolley.
The bus leaves without waiting for people to get off [the SPRINTER] or
other buses.

”

- Springer Commuter
October NCTD SPRINTER Tabling

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Buena Creek community is a unique and diverse area of unincorporated North County San Diego located between the Cities of Vista to the west and San Marcos to the east. The Buena Creek community is located near State Route (SR) 78 with access to nearby shopping, dining, and entertainment options. The Buena Creek community is unique in that fact that is the unincorporated area's only community with light rail service with a North County Transit District (NCTD) SPRINTER stop at the Buena Creek Transit Station.

What is Buena Creek MOVES?

Buena Creek MOVES (Mobility Options Via Efficient Solutions) is a community driven approach to identifying mobility challenges and needs in an effort to improve access, safety, and connectivity within the Buena Creek area. It is one of four pilot communities (Buena Creek, Casa de Oro/Valle de Oro, Lakeside, Spring Valley) selected under the County's Community Based Transportation Program (CBT).

The CBT Program endeavors to advance collaboration with San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), local transit agencies, and other community partners and residents to engage in community-based planning initiatives that seek to improve the quality of transportation, transit, and mobility. The CBT Program and this subsequent Buena Creek MOVES plan is funded through the SANDAG Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) Cycle 5 Grant.

Buena Creek MOVES seeks to:

- Encourage and create opportunities for all community members to participate in the vision development, prioritization, and decision-making of travel options.
- Show how working collaboratively to improve neighborhood mobility and expand community capacities can promote community health, safety, housing, equity, and restorative justice.
- Grow active transportation networks (e.g., walking, biking, rolling, micro-mobility, and public transit).
- Better connects the Buena Creek community to the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station and other transit options.

**Mobility
Options
Via
Efficient
Solutions**



Why does it matter?

Buena Creek MOVES focuses on achieving greater equity and expanding mobility options within the community. Buena Creek MOVES explores unique opportunities to educate, analyze, and develop potential multi-modal, bicycle, and pedestrian improvement opportunities related to mobility.

How does it work?

The Neighborhood Mobility Plan (NMP) process is anchored by community engagement, involving local residents, businesses and other stakeholders to understand the community's needs and concerns as it relates to mobility. Feedback from the community is used to develop potential multi-modal, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements that are aligned with their specific needs and overall goals. The final component of the NMP is to explore funding opportunities to implement these potential improvements.

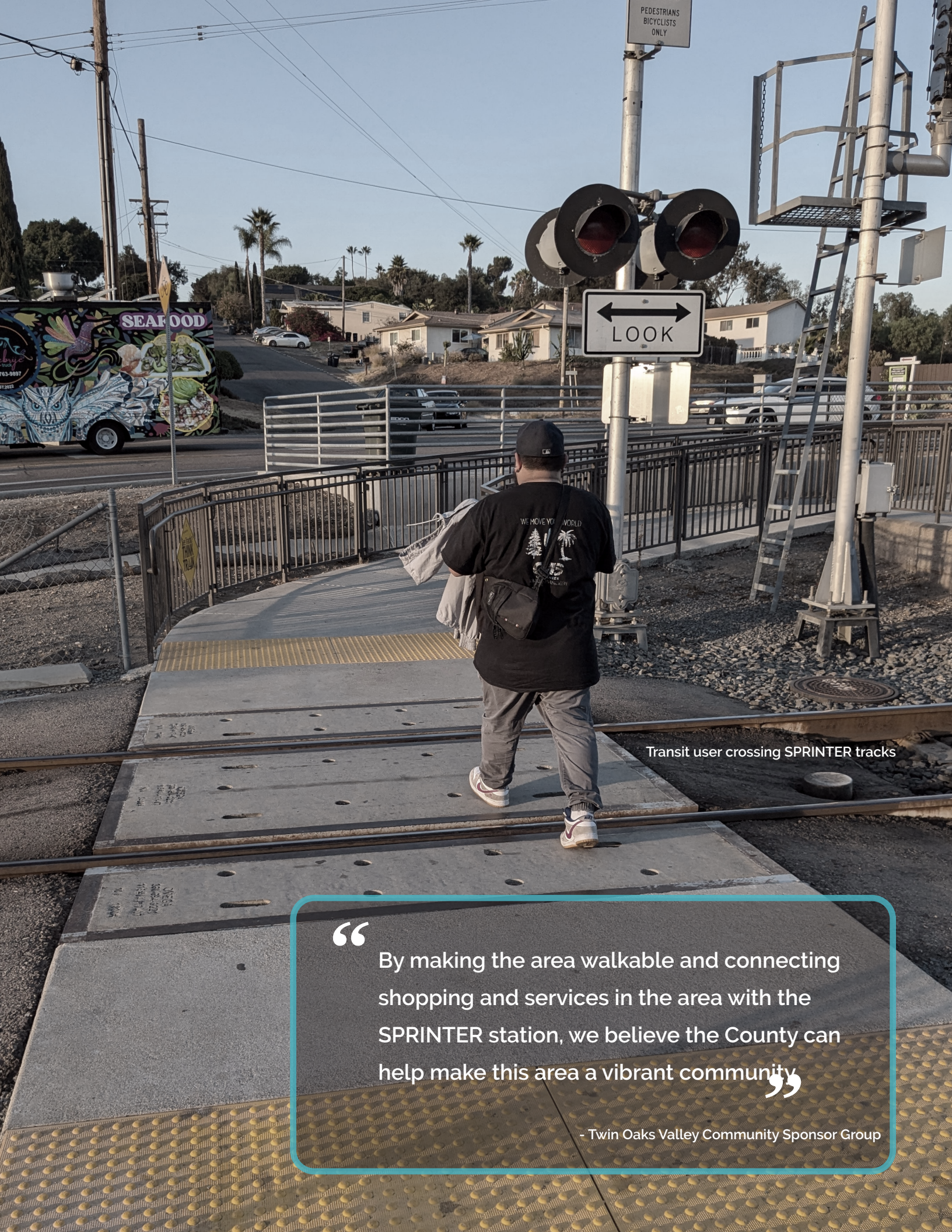
This document also helps to connect other County-adopted plans, policies, regulations, standards, and best practices relating to mobility and active transportation as it relates specifically to the Buena Creek community. Chapter 2, Policy and Planning Context discuss how this NMP complements, and/or are consistent with other policies, plans, and standards.

The Buena Creek MOVES document reflects ideas driven and supported by the community. Community support is critical to securing future funding for mobility improvements—whether through grants, the County's Capital Improvement Program, or other funding mechanisms. The NMP document serves as a foundational reference to guide future coordination, funding requests, and infrastructure planning efforts. It may also inform development proposals by private entities seeking to support mobility improvements.

The potential recommendations in this document are intended for use when designing new projects at new locations or designing reconstruction projects on existing facilities. Projects on existing roads particularly call for a flexible, performance-based approach to design. The document also encourages flexible design, which emphasizes the role of the planner and designer in determining appropriate design dimensions based on project-specific conditions and existing and future roadway performance more than on meeting specific nominal design criteria.

The fact that new design values and concepts are presented herein does not imply that existing streets and highways are unsafe, nor does it mandate the initiation of improvement projects. The roadway, vehicle, and individual users are all integral parts of transportation safety and efficiency. While this document primarily addresses design concerns, a properly equipped and maintained vehicle and reasonable and prudent performance by the user are also needed for safe and efficient operation of the transportation facility.

The concepts identified in the planning document are not currently funded, rely on other jurisdictions, and also might be part of future development conditions on private projects, therefore the County has not committed to any identified projects in this planning document.



Transit user crossing SPRINTER tracks

“

By making the area walkable and connecting shopping and services in the area with the SPRINTER station, we believe the County can help make this area a vibrant community”

- Twin Oaks Valley Community Sponsor Group

1. INTRODUCTION

Buena Creek, an unincorporated community in northern San Diego County, faces mobility challenges due to limited multimodal transportation options and gaps in connectivity to regional transit networks. The community has unique needs due to its semi-rural nature and reliance on personal vehicles, which creates barriers for residents who depend on walking, biking, or public transit. Buena Creek MOVES aims to address these challenges by identifying transportation barriers, engaging the community, and developing actionable solutions that improve safety, access, and mobility.

The Neighborhood Mobility Plan (NMP) for Buena Creek, also known as Buena Creek Mobility Options Via Efficient Solutions “Buena Creek MOVES”, is part of the County of San Diego’s Community Based Transportation (CBT) Program. The CBT Program is a collaborative process intended to bring local residents, community organizations, and County staff together to identify multimodal transportation challenges and needs specific to individual communities within unincorporated San Diego County. As part of the County’s broader CBT Program, the CBT Framework Guidelines provide a structured approach to identifying mobility barriers and recommending equitable solutions in unincorporated communities. The Guidelines include a Transportation Toolbox—a menu of flexible infrastructure improvements and programs that promote multimodal access and safety. The Buena Creek MOVES Plan applies these tools to recommend context-sensitive improvements that align with community input and technical findings.

Buena Creek MOVES is the result of a collaborative effort with San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), local transit agencies, and other local community partners to engage in community-based transportation planning initiatives that seek to expand transportation options and improve quality of service.

The recommendations identified in this NMP provide focused recommendations all within the context of the General Plan Mobility Element and will serve as a blueprint for planning future transportation and mobility related infrastructure within the Buena Creek community while improving connections to key destinations for residents.

Multimodal transportation refers to an interconnected system that supports multiple forms of travel, including walking, biking, public transit (such as the SPRINTER and local bus routes), and emerging mobility options like micro-transit or e-scooters.

1.1 Purpose of the NMP

Buena Creek MOVES serves as a guide for achieving greater equity and expanding mobility options within the Buena Creek community and supports the goals of the County's 2021 General Plan Environmental Justice (EJ) Element. This EJ Element contains Implementation Action 7.6.2.B whose goal is to "Collaborate with SANDAG, local transit agencies, and other community partners to engage in community-based transportation planning initiatives that seek to expand operation hours and improve quality of service."

The development of the Buena Creek MOVES Plan also presents opportunities to promote sustainable mobility solutions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in alignment with the County's 2024 Climate Action Plan (CAP). By encouraging active transportation, improving transit access, and reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips, Buena Creek MOVES helps support the County's sustainability goals, specifically supporting implementation of the following policies from the 2024 CAP:

- CAP Goal T-5.1: Implement the County's Active Transportation Plan to install 345 miles of sidewalk and 315 miles of bikeways by 2030 to encourage alternative modes of transportation in the unincorporated area.
- CAP Goal T-6.2: Increase access to Transit Priority Areas by 5% in the unincorporated area and implement transit-supportive

roadway treatments such as traffic signal communication and curb extensions along County-maintained roadways to optimize traffic flow for transit and pedestrians by 2030.

- CAP Goal T-6.3: Increase access to first/last mile transportation services and connections (e.g., neighborhood electric vehicles, microtransit, bike/scooter-share) to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 7% within the unincorporated area by 2030.

The Plan is intended to be a "living document" that evolves and grows with the community and offers guidance on the mobility options that will advance transportation infrastructure within the Study Area. The Plan will identify transportation investment opportunities consistent with the County's General Plan, CAP, and other related plans.

1.2 NMP Development Process

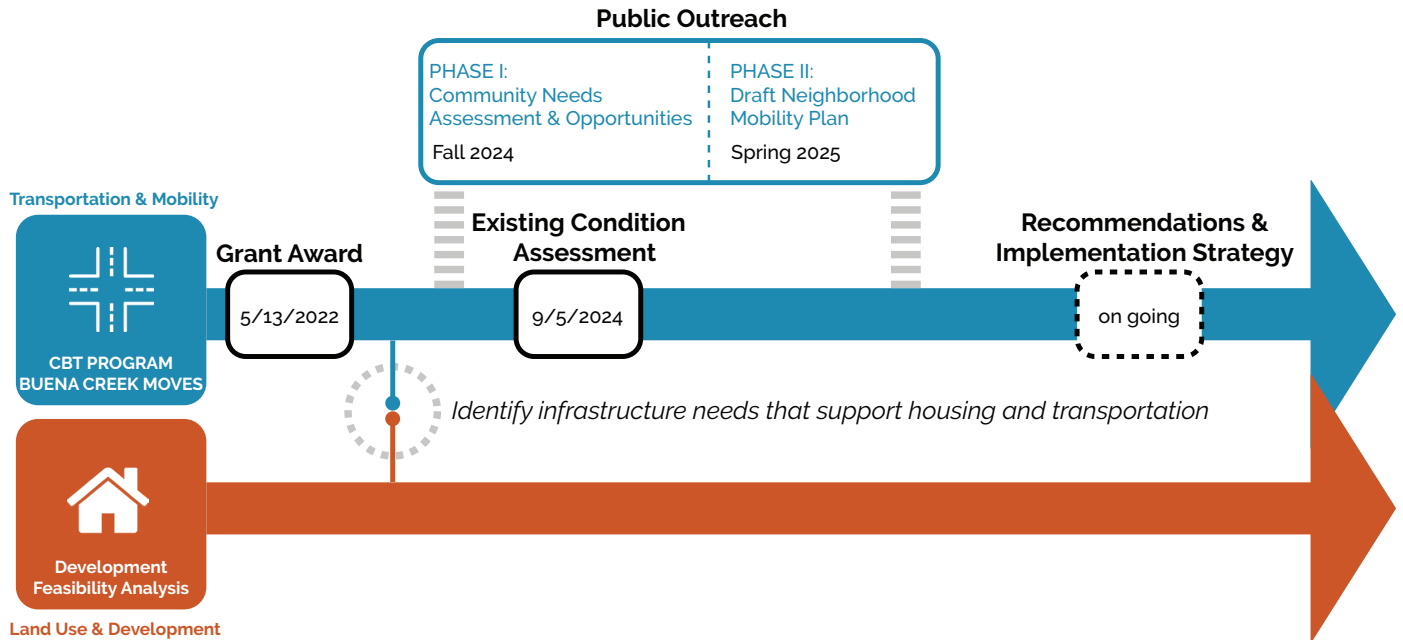


Figure 1-1. NMP Process Overview

The County of San Diego initiated the overall CBT Program plan development process in 2022 after it was awarded the Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) grant from SANDAG, which funds comprehensive public infrastructure projects and planning activities that facilitate compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development and increase housing and transportation choices. The County proposed a collaborative approach to expand mobility options in the unincorporated areas through the development and implementation of the CBT Program. **Figure 1-1** summarizes the typical process anticipated in developing an NMP.

The NMP process is an extension of the County’s community planning programs to help inform potential future General Plan updates including the mobility, land use, and safety elements.

The County conducted a DFA in Buena Creek to identify key barriers to housing development and recommendations to address those barriers. The DFA analysis considered development potential, infrastructure advancements needed to enhance development feasibility, financial and market constraints. The NMP study area is a subset of the DFA study area, but also extends beyond it in key locations to allow for in-depth analysis of the mobility barriers and opportunities in the Buena Creek community. Buena Creek MOVES has taken a holistic approach to incorporate recommendations from the DFA as it aligns with outreach from Buena Creek MOVES. While the DFA, in conjunction with DPW’s Infrastructure Gap Analysis, studied gaps in mobility infrastructure in specific areas, the Buena Creek MOVES will more comprehensively address transportation and connectivity concerns between, and beyond, these areas.

1.3 Goals & Objectives

In July 2021, the County adopted a new General Plan Environmental Justice Element. The Environmental Justice Element contained Implementation Action 7.6.2.B whose goal is to “Collaborate with SANDAG, local transit agencies, and other community partners to engage in community-based transportation planning initiatives that seek to expand operation hours and improve quality of service.” On December 10, 2021, SANDAG adopted its 2021 Regional Plan and a Sustainable Communities Strategy (Regional Plan), which included developing a network of Mobility Hubs that “includes our region’s urban core and 30 Mobility Hubs that were identified based on land use and employment characteristics, travel patterns, and demographics.” Less than 1% of unincorporated San Diego County was within the sphere of influence of the proposed Mobility Hubs, where transit and on-demand travel infrastructure investment were focused. Mobility Hubs were key locations where the 2021 Regional Plan aimed to converge multiple transportation options (including transit, bike-sharing, and on-demand services) to improve connectivity and reduce reliance on personal vehicles. The disproportionate distribution of Mobility Hub areas had a constraining impact on unincorporated communities and neighborhoods where transportation and investment resources are greatly needed. The County continues to collaborate with local transit agencies in order to implement the neighborhood’s vision for sustainable development and improved mobility through this area. In December 2023, the County entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the North County Transit District to solidify a formal

partnership to pursue grant funding and other funding opportunities for improvements around the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station.

Buena Creek MOVES, as part of the CBT Program, will function as a tool for achieving the goals outlined in this report and is intended to bring Buena Creek residents, community organizations, and County staff together to identify multimodal transportation challenges and needs in the local community. Buena Creek MOVES provides a toolbox of mobility solutions for an unincorporated community to form this NMP. Further opportunities to implementing the potential recommendations in this report are outlined in Chapter 7.

Buena Creek MOVES focuses on achieving greater equity and expanding mobility options within the community. It explores unique opportunities to educate, analyze, and develop recommendations related to mobility that can directly contribute and complement County plans and policies to reduce GHG emissions. Buena Creek MOVES also identifies community specific opportunities to align with potential increased infill development and density close to the Buena Creek Sprinter Station that are consistent with the 2021 Regional Plan and the County’s Climate Action Plan, ultimately facilitating a reduction in dependence on auto-centric mobility.



In support of the overall goals of the County's General Plan Mobility Element to create a more efficient and sustainable transportation system, the overall CBT Program, as well as this Buena Creek MOVES NMP, seeks to:

- Analyze opportunities to better connect unincorporated communities to SANDAG's 2021 Regional Plan (as well as the future 2025 Regional Plan) and further state planning priorities (e.g. infill development, job/housing balances, equity)
- Coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies on related long-range planning efforts.
- Accommodate multimodal travel options (e.g. walking, biking, rolling, micro-mobility, and public transit).
- Recommend traffic safety improvements for all road users including auto drivers, bicyclist, and pedestrians.
- Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through reduced reliance of single-occupancy vehicles.
- Establish and grow the active transportation networks in unincorporated communities consistent with the County's ATP as well as SANDAG's "Riding to 2050" Regional Bike Plan (2010).
- Expand community capacities and collaborative relationships to help address community needs such as health, safety, housing, equity, restorative justice and mobility.
- Identify future opportunities and resources from local, state, and federal agencies to further any future land use changes, policy changes, and investment to achieve community visions.
- Facilitate the continuous refinement, pilot program development and project implementation concurrently with the County's Sustainable Land Use Framework (Framework) development and Integrated Planning Approach (IPA) as well as the DFA to engage communities, explore data, capacities and needs, and develop community "visions."
- Encourage and facilitate opportunities for all community members to participate in the vision development, prioritization, and decision-making.
- Utilize a consensus-based approach, to check in on the consensus of community recommendations at multiple points in the visioning and prioritization process.

The County has conducted a Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA) in the Buena Creek community to identify improvements needed to facilitate development, infrastructure advancements that will enhance development feasibility, and associated cost and timeline for building needed infrastructure. The CBT Program, and the resulting Buena Creek MOVES plan, are not limited to the study area boundaries set by the DFA project. Buena Creek MOVES will be holistic approach that will incorporate recommendations from the DFA as it aligns with outreach from Buena Creek MOVES. While the DFA, in conjunction with DPW's Infrastructure Gap Analysis (IGA), studied gaps in mobility infrastructure in specific areas, Buena Creek MOVES will more comprehensively address transportation and connectivity concerns between, and beyond, these areas. With the findings and outcomes from both the DFA, IGA, and CBT Program, the County will be in a strong position for future competitive funding resources/opportunities to implement the recommendations from each study/project/program.



DEVELOPMENT FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS



**Housing
Development**



**Road and Sewer
Infrastructure**



Parks Improvements



Access to Transit

Figure 1-2. Development Feasibility Analysis Project
Source: DFA Project

1.4 Study Area

In order to provide an in-depth assessment for the Buena Creek community, a boundary at the neighborhood level was established to define the limits of the study area. A narrowly defined study area ensures that the analysis remains focused on specific mobility issues and recommended transportation investments that address those issues.

For the purposes of Buena Creek MOVES and the Buena Creek NMP, the study area includes the unincorporated County within 1-mile of the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station. This general boundary represents the “focus” of this study, but the NMP is not restricted or limited by it and the assessments and potential recommendations outlined in this report may fall outside this radius. This 1-mile radius also allows this assessment to concentrate on specific issues without broad generalizations. In addition, SANDAG defines a “Transit Oriented Development” as a “development immediately adjacent to an existing or planned transit station”. Furthermore, in their

report, Transit Oriented Districts; A Strategy for the San Diego Region (September 2015), SANDAG further expands upon this by defining a “Transit Oriented District” as “places within 5 minutes of an existing and planned transit station” which would include:

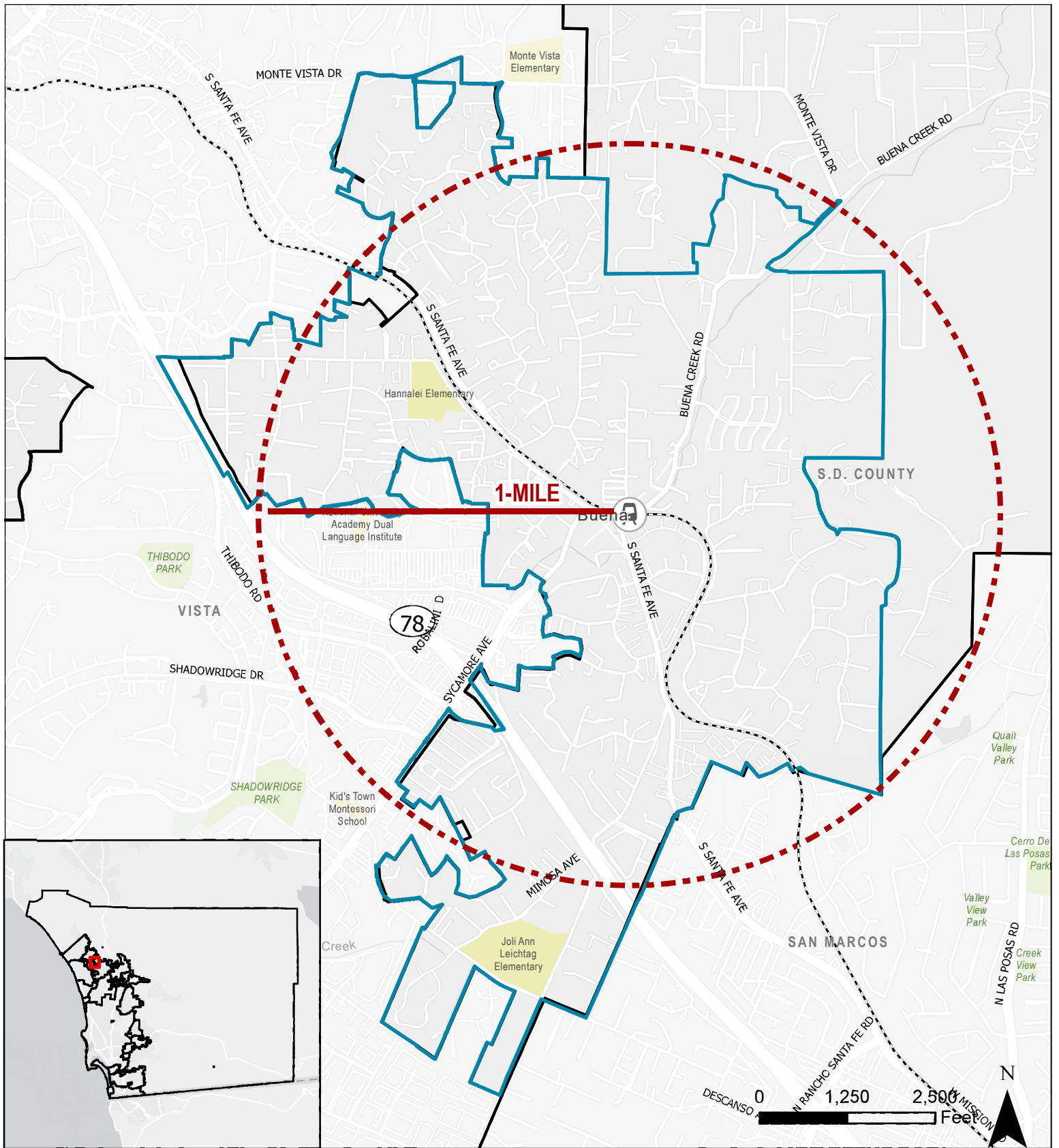
- 0.25 miles by walking (at 3 mph)
- 0.75 miles by biking (at 9 mph)
- 2.0 miles by vehicle (at 25 mph)

Figure 1-4 shows the overall study area in relation to the neighboring Cities' of Vista and San Marcos and identifies the study Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA) boundary. As shown, these city limits are generally within the 1-mile boundary.

The study area includes three census tracts, two of which (199.02 and 199.03) the majority of the census tract falls within the general study area boundary, however one tract (200.17) extends beyond the study area and unincorporated County of San Diego boundary into the City of Vista.



Figure 1-3. Development Feasibility Analysis Project Study Area
Source: DFA Project



Legend **Buena Creek**

- NMP Study Area
- Development Feasibility Area
- Buena Creek SPRINTER Station
- SPRINTER Transit Route
- School
- Park
- City Boundary

Figure 1-4. Neighborhood Mobility Plan Study Area

“

Motorized wheelchair gets caught on curbs, part of sidewalk near Buena Creek SPRINTER Station (over creek) is wooden, wheelchair can't go over that well, has to roll on the road against traffic to get up the street.

”

- Buena Creek Resident
October NCTD SPRINTER Tabling



Pop-up tabling with County Staff at Buena Creek Transit Station

2. POLICY & PLANNING CONTEXT

Existing County-adopted plans, policies, regulations, standards, and best practices relating to mobility and active transportation were reviewed to align this NMP within the existing regional framework. The following provides an overview of these efforts as they relate to prioritizing investment in Buena Creek MOVES study area. The recommended improvements in this NMP complement, and/or are consistent with these policies, plans, and standards.

2.1 Regional Plans

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) 2025 Regional Plan

Every four years, SANDAG updates the Regional Plan which serves as a long-term blueprint for the San Diego region. The Regional Plan aims to improve transportation, equity, and the environment while considering the growth of the region and coordinating land use and housing. SANDAG adopted the 2021 Regional Plan on December 10, 2021 and the development of the 2025 Regional Plan was ongoing during the planning process of this NMP. A draft version of the 2025 Regional Plan was published for public review in May 2025 and the final draft was adopted on December 12, 2025.



Figure 2-1. SANDAG 2021 Regional Plan (Adopted Dec 2021)



Figure 2-2. SANDAG 2025 Regional Plan (Adopted Dec 2025)

Source: SANDAG

access, supporting the identified need for improved pedestrian infrastructure, first-mile/last-mile connectivity, and safer road conditions in Buena Creek.

Additionally, the County's General Plan Mobility Element Network provides the planned road network to accommodate the General Plan. It encompasses existing roads built to the Mobility Element Network classifications, existing roads not yet built to these classifications, and unbuilt planned roads. Mobility Element Network road classifications are applied to roads in the Mobility Element Network; however, the Mobility Element Network does not cover all public roads.

[County of San Diego Active Transportation Plan \(ATP\)](#)

The County of San Diego's Active Transportation Plan (ATP) approved by the Board of Supervisors in October 2018, supports efforts to promote active transportation options through pedestrian and bicycle improvements in the unincorporated county. The ATP goals include:

- Increasing biking and walking trips;
- Increasing safety and mobility for non-motorized users;
- Advancing the efforts of regional agencies to achieve greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals;
- Enhancing public health, including the reduction of childhood obesity.

The ATP included a Pedestrian Gap Analysis (PGA) which reviewed sidewalk conditions across unincorporated San Diego County, including the Buena Creek community. The ATP's sidewalk gap analysis directly informs proposed pedestrian infrastructure improvements, ensuring alignment with countywide pedestrian safety and accessibility goals.

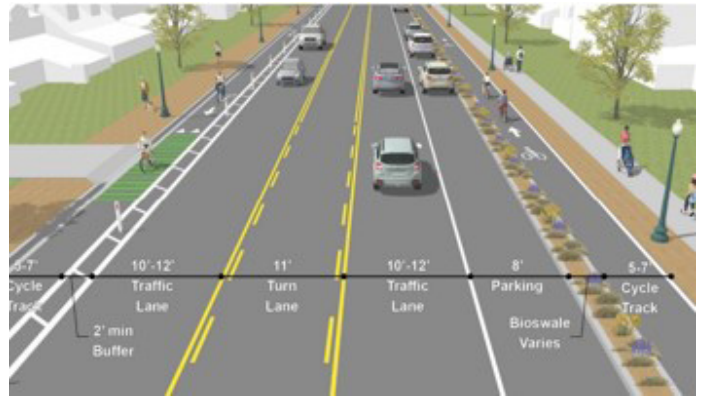


Figure 2-4. Illustration from County of San Diego ATP, Class IV bikeway

Source: County of San Diego

[County of San Diego Public Road Standards](#)

The County of San Diego Public Road Standards (March 2012) serve as guidelines for the design and construction of public road improvement projects within the unincorporated County. Among other guidance, these standards identify the minimum width of roads, sidewalks, and bike lanes for all County initiated projects and private development projects.

Local Roadway Safety Plan (LRSP)

The County's Local Roadway Safety Plan (2022) provides a framework for analyzing, identifying, and prioritizing roadway safety improvements to reduce severe injury and fatal collisions on local roadways. The LRSP identified 3 ranked intersections and 3 ranked roadway segments within the extents of the Buena Creek MOVES study area boundary. These rankings provided guidance for the NMP recommendations as well as a reference to ensure alignment and consistency with the analysis findings in the NMP.



Figure 2-5. Intersections and Roadway Segments identified by LRSP

Source: County of San Diego Local Roadway Safety Plan

North County Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan

Caltrans and SANDAG developed a Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (CMCP) for North County adopted in June 2023. The CMCP outlines possible strategies to bring more travel choices to the region while improving transportation safety and connectivity. The North County CMCP study area focused on connectivity for all transportation modes on State Route 78 (SR 78) from Oceanside to Escondido in the east and its connections with Interstate 5, Interstate 15, Interstate 8, and State Route 76.

The CMCP developed nine Strategy Layers—based on SANDAG's 5 Big Moves identified in the 2021 Regional Plan—to overlay onto North County's key roadways, mobility corridors, and activity centers. The CMCP includes 48 Program and Corridor improvements that improve safety, mobility, accessibility, connectivity, and travel reliability, as well as reduce travel time and strengthen resiliency to climate change. The proposed strategies work together to create a holistic transportation and mobility system that meet the plans, goals and objectives:

- Improve safety and quality of life and promote community vitality
- Provide sustainable solutions leading to the reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled
- Connect North County communities
- Focus on traveler choices and experience solutions
- Foster equitable access to opportunities
- Provide a foundation for the future

CMCP transportation recommendations related to the Buena Creek MOVES study area included providing a flex/micro transit service along Twin Oaks Valley Rd with flex service zone between Buena Creek Rd and Wild Canyon Dr as well as safety improvements near Buena Creek SPRINTER Station.

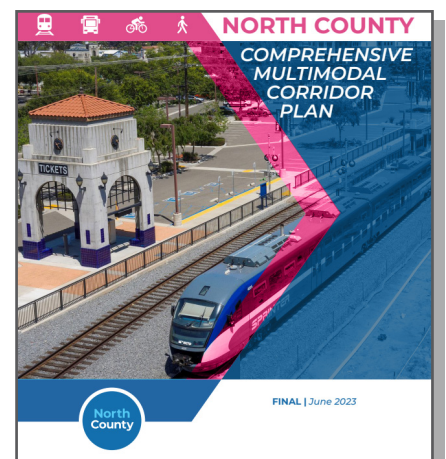


Figure 2-6. North County Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan

Source: SANDAG

2.2 Local Plans

Buena Creek Market Study

The Buena Creek Market study was completed in 2021 by the County of San Diego to identify opportunities to acquire land to support potential future transit-oriented development (TOD). As identified in the study, “new transit infrastructure, supported by transit-oriented land use planning, could transform the Buena Creek area into a thriving mixed-use, mixed-income, walkable community.”



Figure 2-7. Buena Creek Market Study

Source: County of San Diego

Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA)

The Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA) identifies factors that impact development (e.g. market conditions, lack of infrastructure, regulatory barriers, etc.) and seeks to understand how to best facilitate housing development within four unincorporated communities located near transit, jobs, and public facilities. Initiated in 2023, the DFA considers four communities of focus: Buena Creek, Valle de Oro/Casa de Oro, Lakeside, and Spring Valley.

As part of this project an Infrastructure Gap Analysis was conducted which reviewed the existing cross-section of roadways including presence of sidewalks, bike lanes, on-street parking, and travel lane widths. The existing cross sections were then compared to the ultimate built-out conditions based on the ultimate classifications of the roadways. Many key roadways in the Buena Creek community lack sufficient pedestrian and bicycle facilities, increasing the risk of conflicts between vehicles and non-motorized users. These gaps in multimodal connectivity present a barrier for non-vehicle owners in navigating in and around the area. This NMP incorporated findings from the gaps analysis and helped inform recommendations.



“

Too long wait times for rail gate to rise after train has come through.

”

- Buena Creek Resident
October Community Workshop

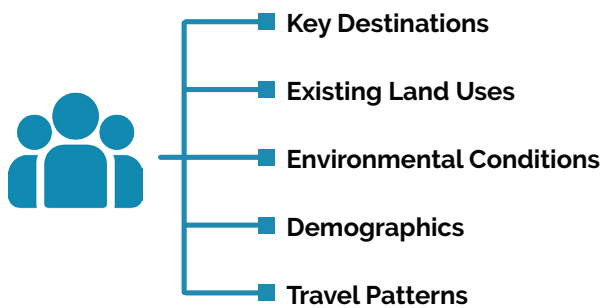
3. COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Buena Creek community is located in North County of unincorporated San Diego County nestled between the City's of Vista to the west and San Marco to the east. The Buena Creek community is unique in that it is the only area within the unincorporated area with light rail service via the SPRINTER line operated by North County Transit District (NCTD). The SPRINTER line connects from Escondido to Oceanside and generally follows the SR-78 corridor. In addition, there is no Community Planning Group (CPG) established for the area, however the Twin Oaks Valley CPG has historically included the Buena Creek area within it's sphere of influence. A CPG is an advisory body that is made up of local residents to participate in local decision making processes.

Understanding the overall community, who lives here, how they interact with their environment, and what challenges they currently face in regards to mobility helps frame the baseline conditions, potential gaps and concerns, and the physical conditions of transportation within Buena Creek. The following community profile considers various characteristics such as:

- Key destinations in and around Buena Creek
- Existing land uses
- Environmental conditions (weather, air pollution, etc.)
- Demographics
- Travel patterns

The factors detailed above help explain why people choose specific modes of transportation, offering insights into the types of transportation options and supportive infrastructure needed to support those modes. Input from the community coupled with a comprehensive understanding of existing conditions sets the foundation for developing a plan that reflects the community's needs and is consistent with the community's goals. A full review of the existing land uses, population, housing, demographics, and socioeconomic data was conducted as part of the Existing Conditions Assessment and is contained in [Appendix A](#).



Community Profile Highlights

- Buena Creek Transit Station is the only light rail service in unincorporated San Diego County
- High cut-through area for those commuting between Vista and San Marcos via South Santa Fe Avenue as well as SR-78 to/from I-15 via Buena Creek Road
- Existing business and land uses reflective of high auto dependence
- Income indicators help identify transportation affordability (vehicle ownership and mobility choices/options).
 - ◊ Majority (22%) of income earners fall into range of \$50-\$75,000 per year
 - ◊ Less than 10% of income earners fall below the poverty threshold
- Less than 1% of commuters use public transportation

Figure 3-1. Community Profile Characteristics

3.1 Land Use & Housing

Existing Land Uses

The majority of the Buena Creek study area is designated as low density residential as shown in **Figure 3-2**. There is an identifiable commercial corridor that follows Santa Fe Avenue which run northwest to south through the study area. This corridor supports the adjacent community and includes commercial offices, retail, places of worship, schools, and industrial warehouses. There are a few key destinations located along the Santa Fe Avenue corridor which may drive activity from the local neighborhoods. Hannalei Elementary School and Stonebrooke Church are important destinations located at the most northern boundary of the study area. Notably, there are no public recreation spaces within the study area and most of the commercial businesses are related to automotive or repair services.

Extending east and west from the commercial corridor are single family neighborhoods with pockets of rural estate lots and vacant undeveloped land. Higher density, multifamily residential properties are located closest to the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station as along with pockets in the most northern and southern points along Santa Fe Avenue within the study area. There are two mobile home parks, one is located directly across from

the SPRINTER Station and one is located southwest across SR-78 via the Mimosa Avenue underpass.

The predominance of low-density residential land use and auto-oriented commercial businesses suggest a strong reliance on personal vehicles, underscoring the need for enhanced infrastructure for alternative modes of transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit. In addition, the lack of public recreation and green spaces may negatively impact active transportation choices.

Population & Household

The population of the Buena Creek community according to 2022 US Census data, is approximately 11,882 and is made up of 3,759 households, as shown in **Table 3-1**. This equates to an average number of persons per household of approximately 3.1, which is higher than the County and statewide averages of 2.7 and 2.8 respectively. Larger household size can be an indicator for a need for more affordable units and lower income households.

Table 3-1. Number of Households and Size by Census Tract

	199.02	% of Total	199.03	% of Total	200.17	% of Total	Total
Number of Households	1,270	34%	1,474	39%	1,015	27%	3,759
Household Size (average)	3.4	-	3.2	-	2.6	-	3.1

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Data 2022

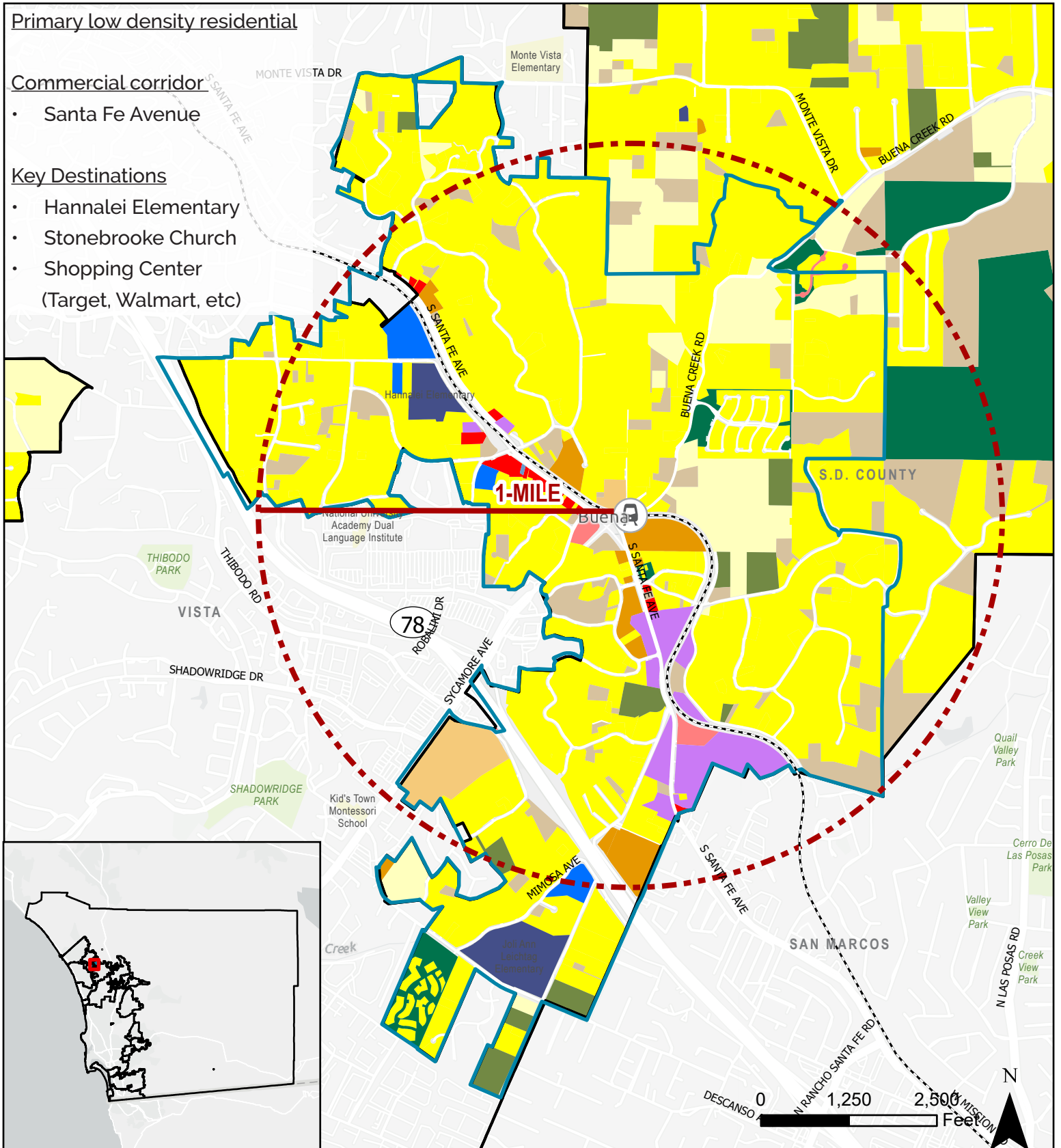
Primary low density residential

Commercial corridor

- Santa Fe Avenue

Key Destinations

- Hannalei Elementary
- Stonebrooke Church
- Shopping Center (Target, Walmart, etc)



Legend

Land Use	Heavy Industrial
Spaced Rural Residential	Light Industrial
Single Family Residential	Institution
Mobile Home Park	Education
Multi-Family Residential	Transportation, Communications and Utilities
Mixed Use	Agriculture
Commercial Office	Recreation and Open Space
Commercial Retail	Vacant

Buena Creek

Figure 3-2. Existing Land Use

3.2 Socio-Economic Characteristics

Age Groups

Buena Creek's current and future mobility needs are influenced in part by the age characteristics of its residents as each age group typically has specific needs and preferences. For instance, a higher proportion of young families generally indicates a need for safe access to schools and seniors may require convenient transit options as well as additional amenities at transit stops.

Figure 3-3 summarizes the population's age distribution by gender. In 2022 the largest age group was 20 to 29 years (14.8%) followed by the 30-to-39-year age group (14.3%) with the smallest age group being 70 years and older (7.9%). These age trends show that there is a greater population of younger adults to middle aged residents with children. More than half (54.9%) of the population of Buena Creek residents are of professional working age (20 – 59 years) and 26% of the population being of school age or small children.

Cultural Diversity

The Buena Creek community is racially and ethnically diverse as a whole. The two largest groups of residents in the community identify as Hispanic/Latino and White at 45% and 38%, respectively. As shown in **Figure 3-3**, The next largest groups are African American and Asian both of which make up 5% each. **Figure 3-3** also summarizes the primary languages spoken at home with just over 60% of Buena Creek's residents speak English as their primary language at home which is nearly

double the next highest language spoken. At 34% the second most common language spoken in the Buena Creek community is Spanish. No other language accounted for more than 2%.

Income Indicators

Understanding the income distribution within a community helps identify potential transportation affordability and access barriers. Some of those indicators are poverty and vehicle ownership which can be a telling statistic of mobility choices and options.

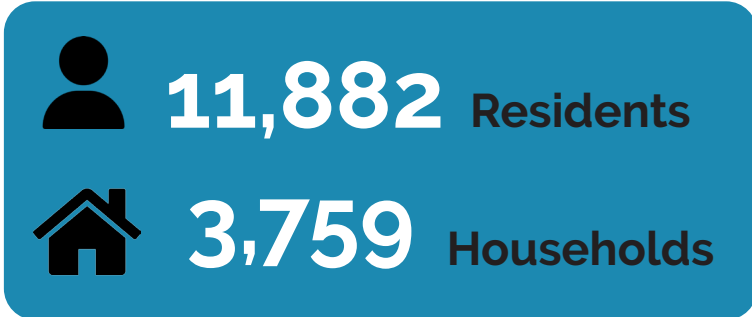
The income distribution in the Buena Creek community varies and aligns with the median household income data seen in **Figure 3-4**. The largest household income category was between \$50,000 to \$74,999 (22%) followed by \$100,000 to \$149,999 (17%). Just over 40% of all households in the Buena Creek community make \$100,000 or more, while 22% of the households make \$49,999 or less.

Poverty is defined by incomes falling below the annually defined thresholds for family size by the US Census. The percent of the population whose income is below poverty level is less than 10 % throughout the entire Buena Creek study area. There are some pockets of 10 – 20% just outside of the study area to the north, west, and south but each of the tracts that comprise the Buena Creek have the lowest percentage of residents experiencing poverty.

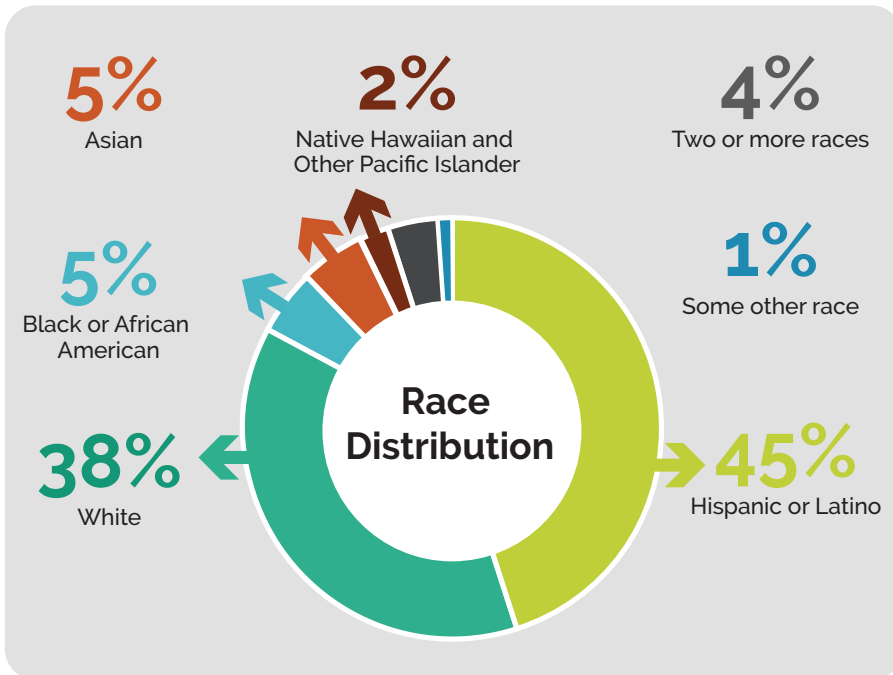
POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS



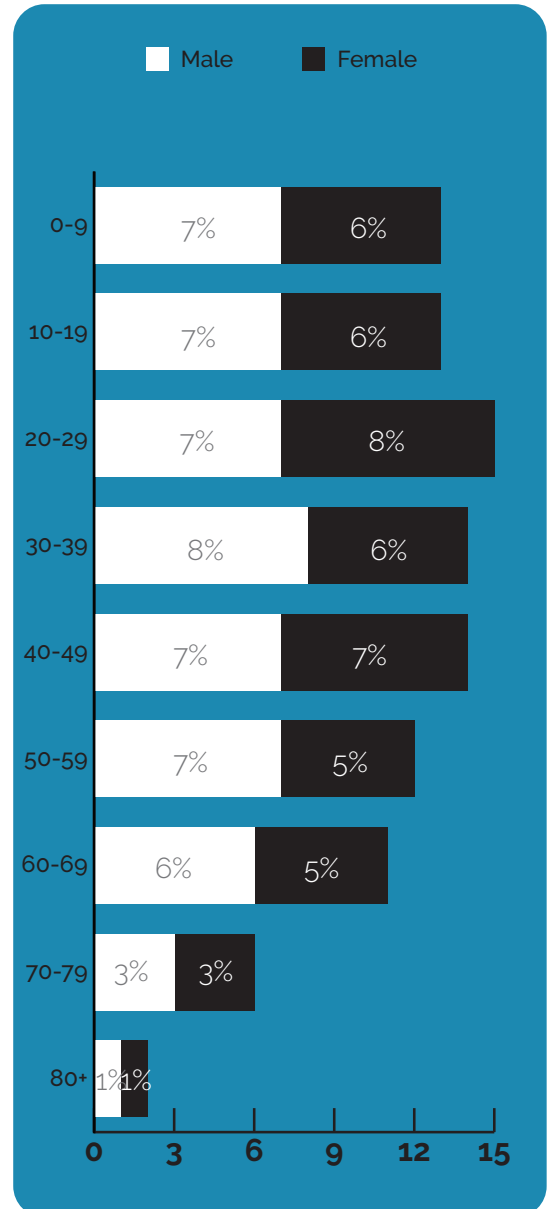
POPULATION



RACE & ETHNICITY



AGE GROUP



PRIMARY LANGUAGE

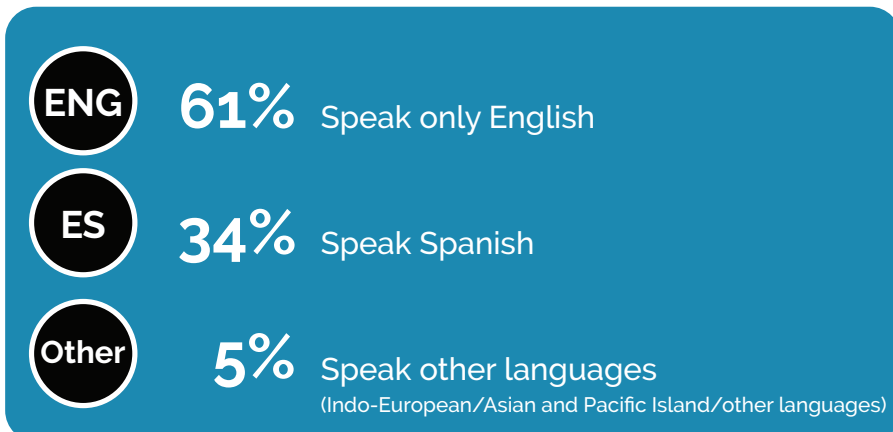
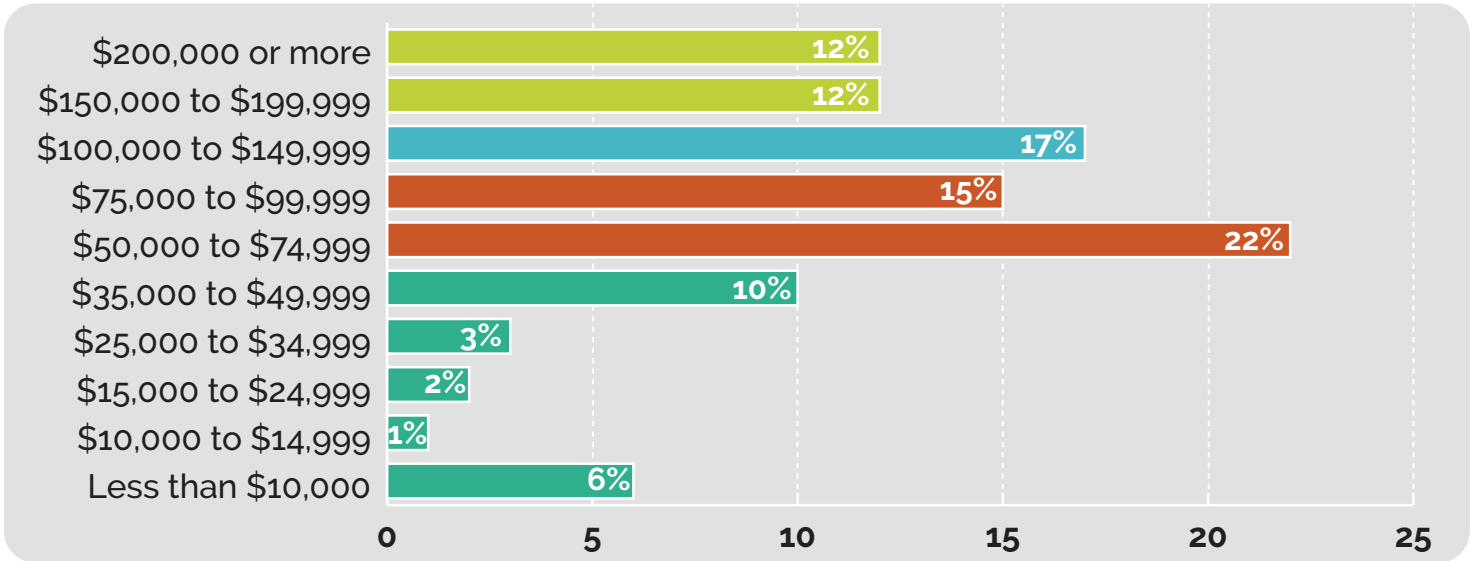


Figure 3-3. Population & Demographics
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Data 2022

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

24% Earn over \$150,000
 17% Earn between \$100,000-\$150,000
 37% Earn between \$50,000-\$100,000
 22% Earn less than \$50,000

Income Distribution



Employment by Industry

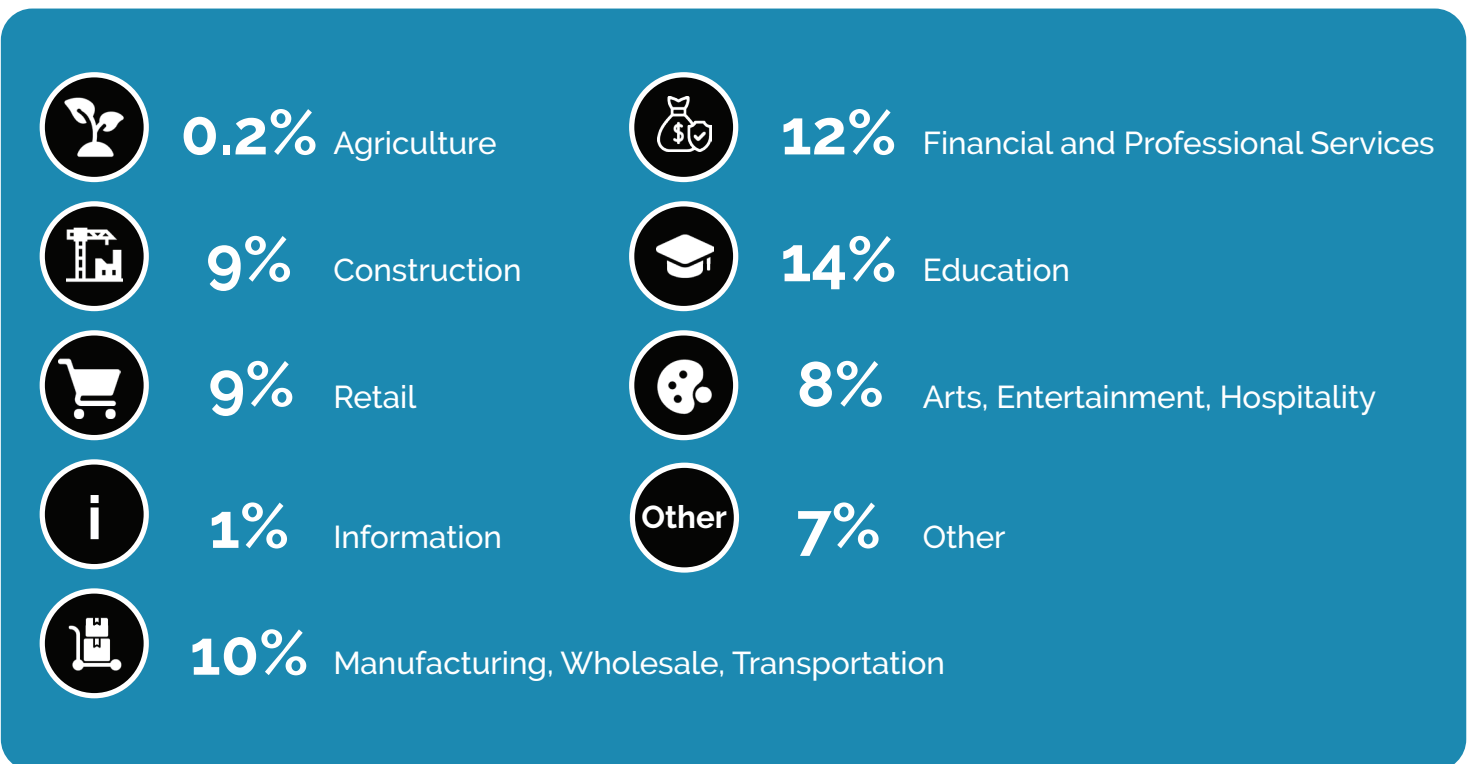


Figure 3-4. Socio-Economic Characteristics

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Data 2022

Employment Centers

There are four major employment centers classified by SANDAG with 2 miles of the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station. The northern portion of the San Marcos Civic Center extends into the southern portion of the study area along the SPRINTER rail line. This portion of the San Marcos Civic Center is largely an industrial park with businesses including automotive repair, personal storage, and fabrication shops and provides just under 40,000 jobs. The Vista Sycamore employment center is also located within one mile of the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station along Sycamore Ave. While the Vista Sycamore employment center is located within the City of Vista and not within the Buena Creek MOVES study area, it is still a major attractor and should be considered, specifically for those utilizing the SPRINTER station. This employment center consists of several national retailers (i.e. Walmart and Target) and provides approximately 2,400 jobs.

Figure 3-4 displays the employment share by industry for residents that live within the Buena Creek study area boundary. Education and Financial and Professional Service sectors have the largest percentage of workers employed at 14% and 12% respectively. As shown by the largest employment sectors and nearby employment centers, a majority of the jobs are not located within the Buena Creek study area and therefore it can be presumed that residents either commute or work remote.

Health Profile

The California Healthy Places Index and the CalEnviroScreen (CES) 4.0 are two tools used to analyze the health of a community at the Census Tract level using a variety of indexes and factors. Overall, the Buena Creek community scores reflect a moderately healthy community, and the results are detailed below.

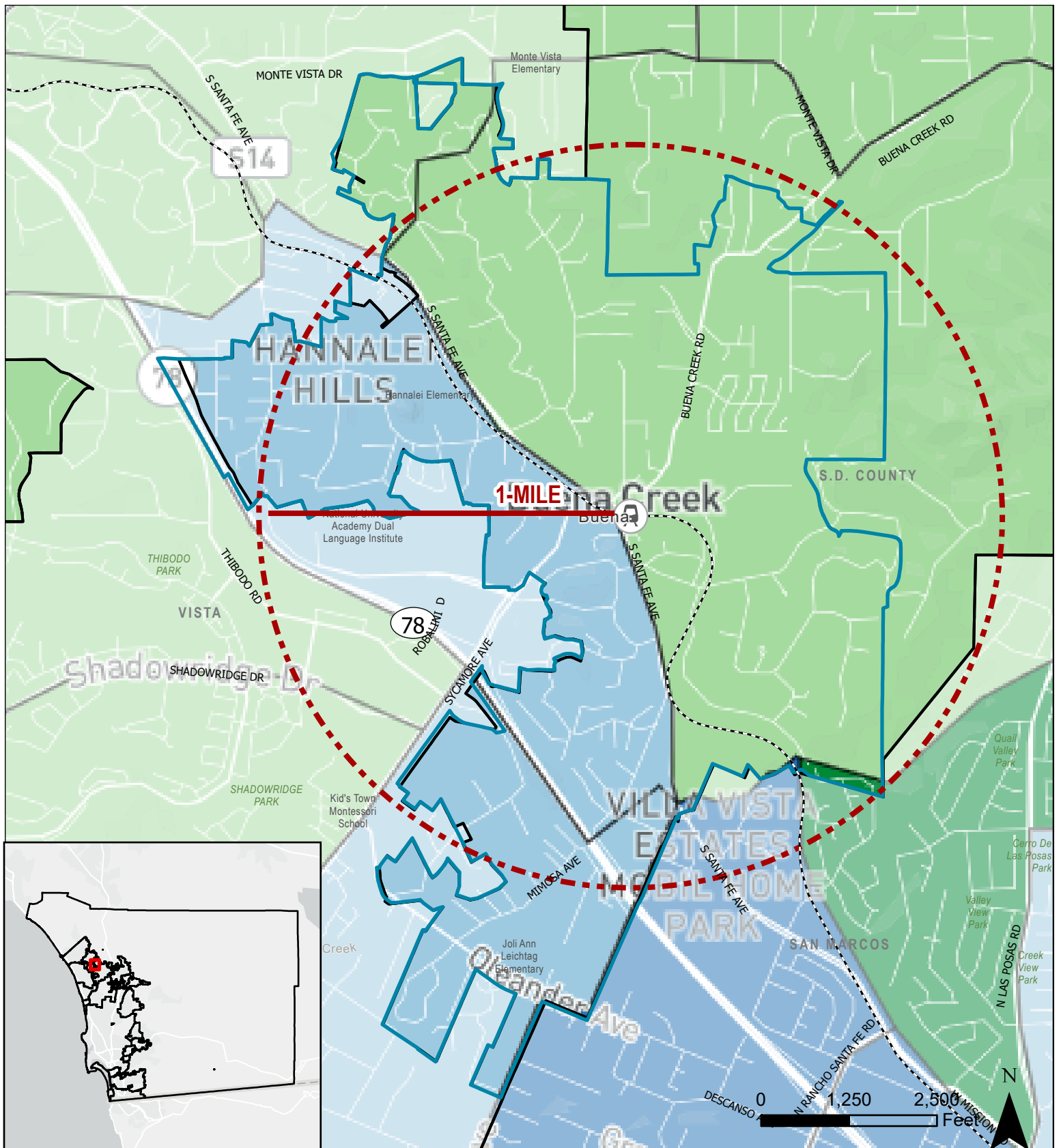
The California Healthy Places Index (HPI), developed by the Public Health Alliance of Southern California is a tool to explore the community conditions that impact life expectancy. The HPI helps prioritize public and private investments, resources, and programs in neighborhoods where they are needed most. The HPI combines 25 community characteristics, like access to healthcare, housing, education, and more, into a single indexed HPI score. The healthier a community, the higher the HPI score. The tool further breaks down the scores into eight Policy Action Areas (Economic, Education, Social, Transportation, Neighborhood, Housing, Clean Environment, and Healthcare Access), these indicators reflect widely recognized thematic areas of the social determinants of health and are consistent with those described by the Centers for Disease Control. As seen in **Figure 3-5**, the HPI scores for the tracts in the Buena Creek community vary from the 25-50 percentile (38.9, Census Tract 200.17 and 43.6, Census Tract 199.02) to 50-75 percentile (51.1, Census Tract 199.03).

Each census tract within the Buena Creek community has a HPI score that is less than the County average of 67.9. Across all tracts, the Neighborhood Policy Action Areas scored the lowest which includes access to parks, retail density, and tree canopy. Inversely the Clean Environment index aggregately scored the highest amongst all tracts, this index includes exposure to diesel particulate matter, drinking water contaminants, ozone, and particulate matter 2.5.

CES 4.0 is a tool that identifies communities in California that are disproportionately burdened by pollutants. Factors used to identify communities include ozone, particulate matter, drinking water contaminants, pesticide use, lead, diesel particulates, asthma rates, and linguistic isolation. A higher score indicates a higher effect of pollutants for the area. The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) compiles data to help identify California communities that are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution. In addition to environmental factors (pollutant exposures, groundwater threats, toxic sites, and hazardous materials exposure) and sensitive receptors (seniors, children, persons with asthma and low birth weight infants), CalEnviroScreen also takes into consideration socioeconomic factors. These factors include education attainment, linguistic isolation, poverty, and unemployment. The CES scores for the Buena Creek community are illustrated in **Figure 3-6** and show lower scores for the study area as a whole, between 10 – 50 percentile, with Census Tract 200.17 having

the highest score (>40-50 percentile) and Census Tract 199.03 having the lowest score (>10-20 percentile). Diesel particulate matter, pesticides, toxic releases, and traffic are amongst the highest scoring pollutants in tract 200.17. For tract 199.02 (>30-40 percentile), traffic, diesel particulate matter, and lead from housing are the highest scoring pollutants.

The diesel particulate matter and traffic pollutants emphasize the community's reliance on single-occupancy vehicles which contribute to localized air pollution along heavily trafficked roadways such as South Santa Fe. This, along with limited pedestrian infrastructure may make active transportation modes less desirable, impacting the overall community health profile.



Legend

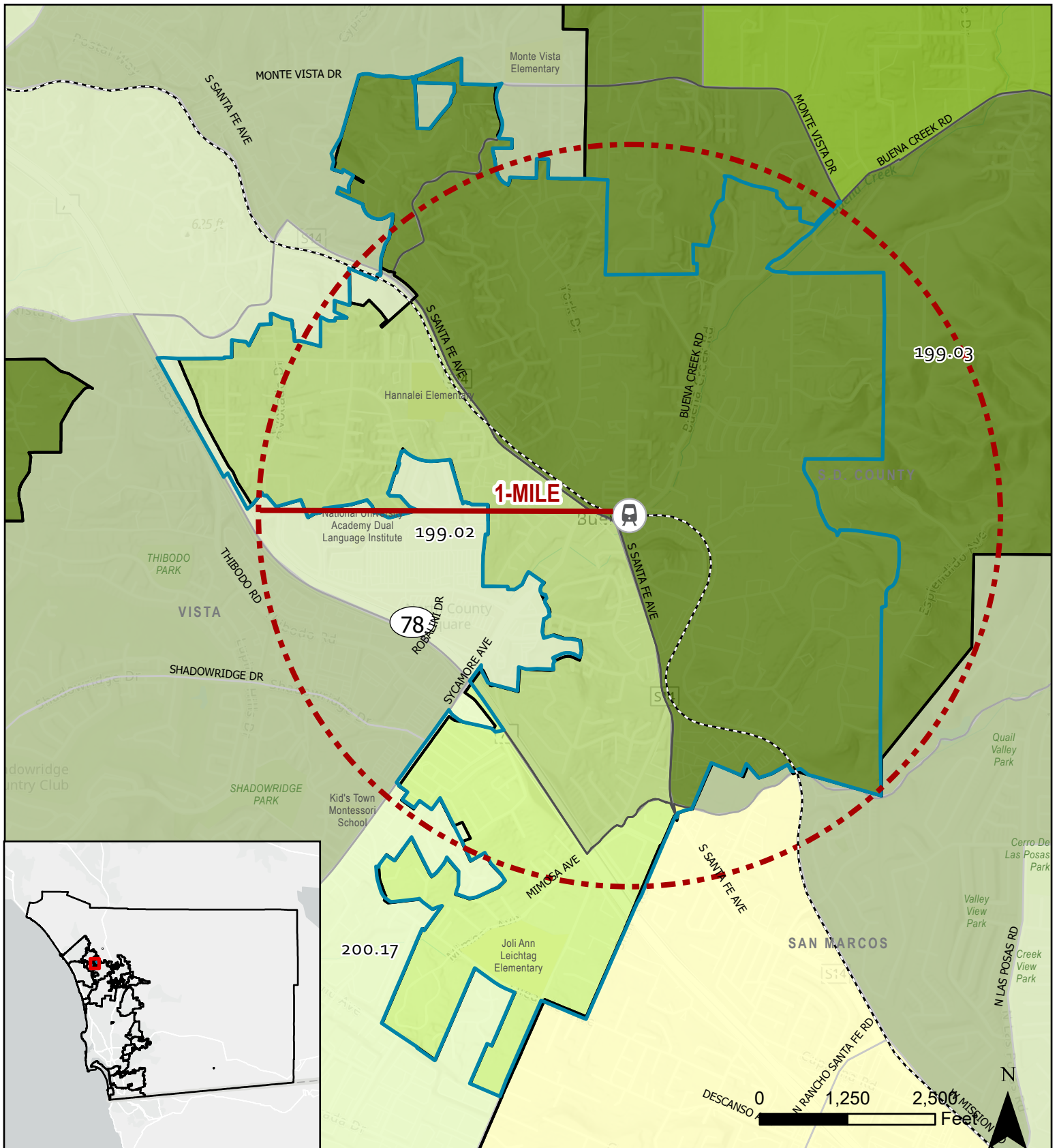
HPI Score (v3.0)
 Percentile Ranking
 Less to More healthy community conditions

- 0 - 25%
- 25 - 50%
- 50 - 75%
- 75 - 100%













- NMP Study Area
- Development Feasibility Area
- Buena Creek SPRINTER Station
- SPRINTER Transit Route

Buena Creek

Figure 3-5. California Healthy Places Index Score



Legend

CalEnviroScreen 4.0 - Percentile Score	 >60 - 70
 0 - 10 (Lowest Scores)	 >70 - 80
 >10 - 20	 >80 - 90
 >20 - 30	 >90 - 100 (Highest Scores)
 >30 - 40	 NMP Study Area
 >40 - 50	 Development Feasibility Area
 >50 - 60	

Buena Creek

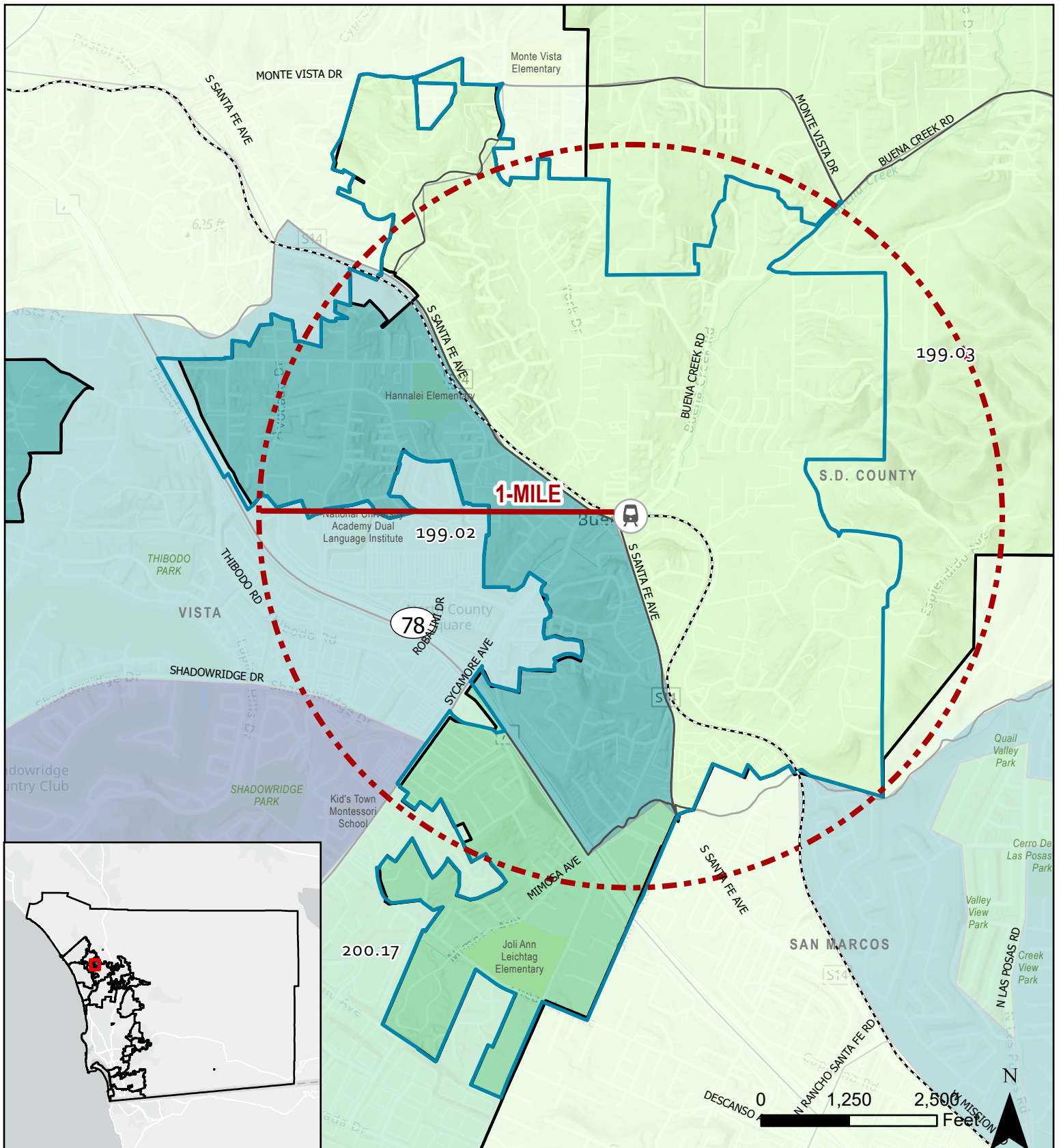
Figure 3-6. CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Percentile Score

Access to Service and Resources

In order to analyze disparities in access to opportunities, the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee's (TCAC) and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) created a task force to identify areas statewide whose economic, educational, and environmental characteristics support positive outcomes for low-income families. These maps, which are updated annually, provide an overall Opportunity Area score by census tract. Opportunity maps are made for three domains: economic, environmental, and education. Each map uses categorical indicators to determine its individual score. A composite score and resource designation combining all three designations is then assigned to each block group. To determine the final resource category, the top 20% of overall scores in a county are labeled as "Highest Resource" and the next 20% of scores are labeled as "High Resource". Any remaining uncategorized areas in the County are evenly divided between "Moderate Resource" and "Low Resource" areas. The rationale and metric for each indicator is described in more detail in current guidance documents for the California TCAC program.

In Buena Creek, the scoring varies between each of the tracts from "High" to "Low Resource" areas with Tract 199.02 identified as a "High Resource" area, Tract 200.17 a "Moderate Resource" area, and Tract 199.03 scored as a "Low Resource" area (see [Figure 3-7](#)).

A review of the Opportunity Maps for the Buena Creek community shows there are limited services and amenities within the study area which could be interpreted as a disparity in accessing these basic services and amenities that affect residents. For example, if a resident needs childcare, groceries, retail centers, or healthcare services they need to look outside of the Buena Creek community and if they do not have access to a vehicle, they need walk or rely on public transit. Similarly, there are few recreational opportunities within the study area, including trails and parks. Within the study area there are several places of worship and one elementary school, most of which fall within Tract 199.02 contributing to the High Resource score. Just beyond the study area there are two elementary schools, two parks, and one regional shopping center which includes a grocery store.



Legend

CTCAC/HCD Opportunity Map 2024

- Highest Resource
- High Resource
- Moderate Resource
- Low Resource

- NMP Study Area
- Development Feasibility Area
- Buena Creek SPRINTER Station
- SPRINTER Transit Route

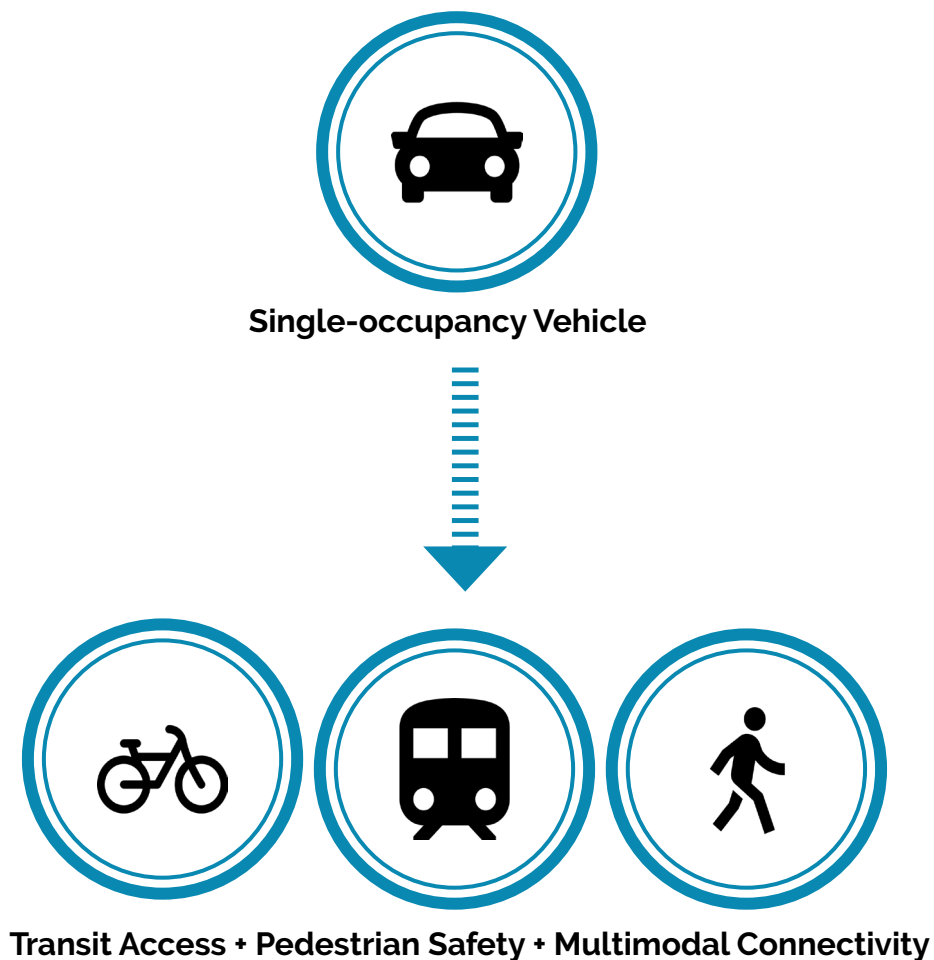
Buena Creek

Figure 3-7. TCAC/HCD Opportunity Area

3.3 Key Takeaways

A review of the Buena Creek community profile shows that residents are generally reliant on single-occupancy vehicles to commute outside of the area. While the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station is the only light rail service in unincorporated San Diego County, less than 1% of commuters choose to use public transportation.

With limited local services, Buena Creek residents must travel to nearby cities for daily needs, underscoring the importance of improved transit access, pedestrian safety, and multimodal connectivity. These demographic and socio-economic factors drive mobility needs, which are topics explored further in the Community Needs Assessment (Chapter 4).





“

Lack of connection to rail trail at North of Buena Creek SPRINTER Station.

”

- Buena Creek Resident
October Community Workshop

4. COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The first step toward assessing the community needs in the Buena Creek community was to examine the existing conditions identified in Chapter 3. As discussed previously, with a largely auto-dependent land use pattern, limited local services, and varying levels of transit accessibility, the Buena Creek community faces mobility challenges that impact equity and transportation choices. The Community Needs Assessment chapter evaluates existing conditions, and infrastructure gaps to help inform targeted mobility improvements.

The next step is assessing the community needs to evaluate the existing transportation infrastructure and mobility options and assess the future transportation needs of the community. The Community Needs Assessment (CNA) considers the Buena Creeks community's capacity for growth based on these following factors:

- Travel behavior & traffic forecast projections
- Mobility demand (pedestrian, bicycle, and transit ridership)
- Mobility barriers (physical barriers, economic barriers, social barriers), options and opportunities
- Infrastructure gaps in mobility and connections
- Land use capacities within the community

A full review of the existing transportation infrastructure was conducted as part of the Existing Conditions Assessment and is contained in [Appendix A](#).

4.1 Current Travel Patterns

Current biking and walking patterns were analyzed using data from the US Census Bureau and the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS).

According to [Table 4-1](#), most commuters within the Buena Creek community (by census tract) drive alone to work followed by those that work from home. Following the COVID pandemic, more residents are now falling in to the “work from home” category. This increase in “work from home” may indicate a new trend

Table 4-1. Transportation to Work Percentages

	Average
Drove Alone	76%
Carpooled	9%
Public Transportation (i.e. SPRINTER)	1%
Bicycle	0.3%
Walked	1%
Other Means	1%
Worked From Home	11%
Mean Travel time to Work	25.20 min

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Data 2022

enabled by evolving workplace culture. This shift towards remote work may reduce peak-hour congestion but could also influence transit demand patterns, requiring more flexible mobility options. It is important to note that bicycle ridership and walking rates may be higher than the census data indicates, as ACS estimates do not account for recreational trips or trips where commuters use more than one mode of transportation when traveling to work. As highlighted in Chapter 3, with only 1% of residents using public transportation, despite proximity to the SPRINTER, it is critical to assess barriers such as limited bus frequency, first-mile/last-mile connectivity, and pedestrian safety concerns around transit stops.

Table 4-2 shows the percentage of household who do not have regular access to a vehicle by census tract. Within the Buena Creek census tract, most residents within the Buena Creek community have access to at least two vehicles. Residents who do not have regular access to a vehicle rely on taking public transit, walking, bicycling, or carpooling to get

to their everyday destinations, therefore future infrastructure improvements should provide access for all modes of transportation.

In addition to the local travel patterns in and around the Buena Creek community, it is also important to recognize the regional movement of people through the community. South Santa Fe Avenue serves as commercial corridor for those commuting between the neighboring City's of Vista and San Marcos. Similarly, Buena Creek Road connects SR-78 to the I-15 (via Robelini Drive and Deer Springs Road). While these commuters origin and destination are not located with the Buena Creek community, the transportation network is heavily impacted by these vehicular trips through the area.

Table 4-2. Vehicle Aceso by Household

	Average
No Access to a Vehicle	3.5%
1 Vehicle Available	29.1%
2 Vehicles Available	45.7%
3 Vehicles Available	14.7%
4 or More Vehicles Available	6.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Data 2022



Highly auto-dependent community lacking pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure

4.2 Existing Transportation Infrastructure

As discussed previously in the Access to Services and Resources in Section 3.2, it is important to note that basic services and resources are primarily located outside of the study area boundary and residents must travel outside of the area to reach things like childcare, groceries, healthcare centers, and retail centers as well as recreational destinations such as parks and hiking trails. San Diego County is currently built on a foundation of auto-central infrastructure but is actively working on integrating active transportation infrastructure into the roadway network to encourage walking and biking. Identifying the existing active transportation network and analyzing the current roadway conditions can provide additional insight on the overall transportation needs of the community.

Existing Roadway Conditions

This review of the existing roadway network in Buena Creek community focuses on higher classifications of Circulation Element roadways (Boulevards, Major Roads, Prime Arterials, and Expressways) including Santa Fe Avenue. While Buena Creek Road and Robelini Drive are two-lane facilities, they provide important regional connections outside of the Buena Creek community. **Figure 4-1** shows the existing roadway classification.

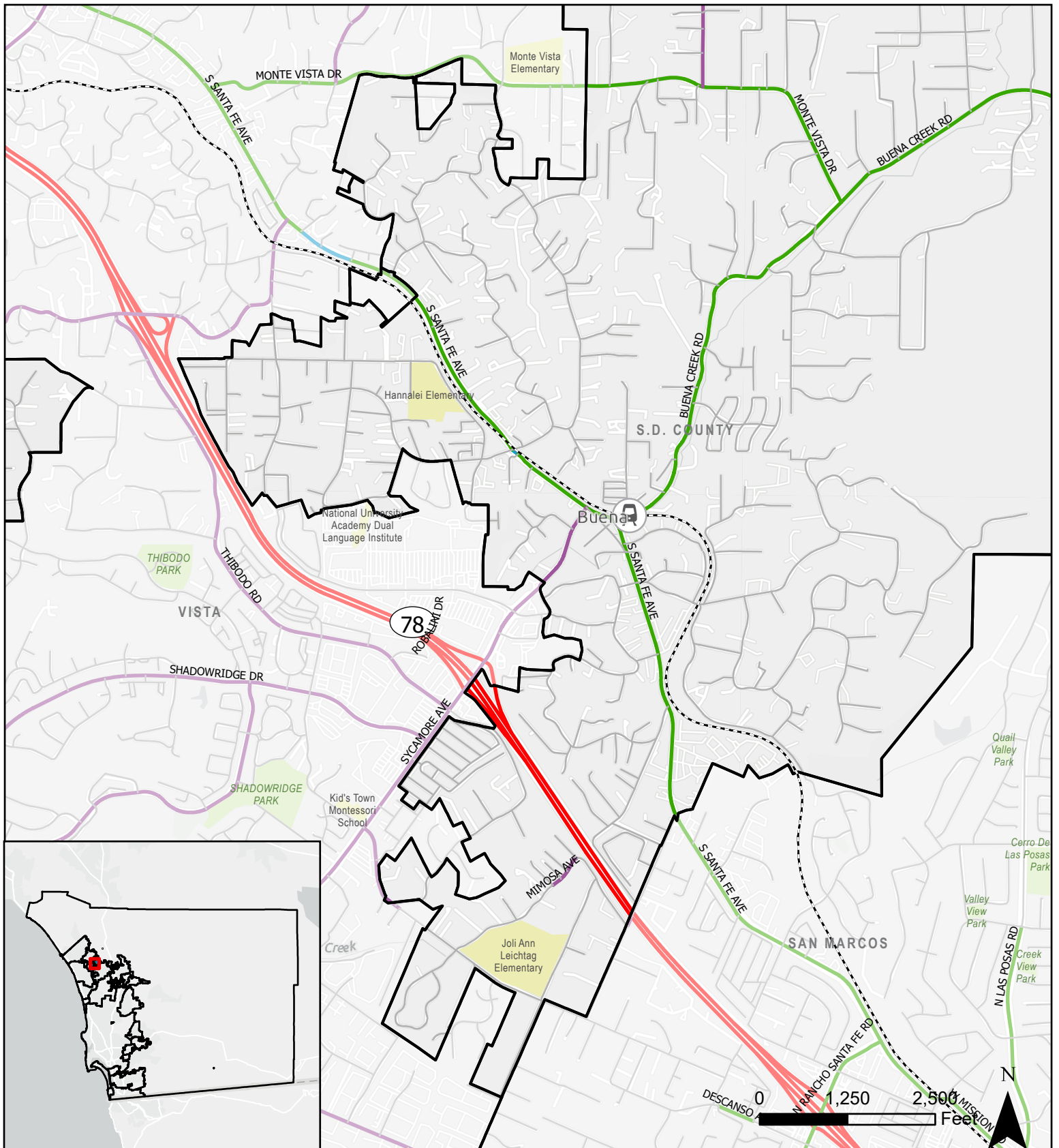
A parallel effort led by the County's Department of Public Works (DPW) evaluated roadways near various opportunity sites identified in the Development Feasibility Assessment (DFA). This assessment looked at the existing cross-section of these roadways including presence of sidewalks, bike lanes, on-street parking, and travel land widths. The existing cross sections were then compared to the ultimate built-out conditions based on the ultimate classifications of the roadways. This assessment is included as **Appendix B**.

As discussed in the following sections, many

key roadways lack sufficient pedestrian and bicycle facilities, increasing the risk of conflicts between vehicles and non-motorized users. These gaps in multimodal connectivity present a barrier for non-vehicle owners in navigating in and around the area.



Southeast corner of Santa Fe Avenue and Buena Creek Road



Legend

- Freeway/Expressway
- Highway/State Routes
- Minor Highway/Major Road
- Arterial or Collector
- Local Street
- Buena Creek SPRINTER Station
- SPRINTER Transit Route
- School
- Park
- City Boundary

Buena Creek

Figure 4-1. Existing Roadway Classification

Bicycle Facilities

Figure 4-2 show the existing bicycle facilities within the Buena Creek community. As shown, the Inland Rail Trail runs through the Buena Creek community connecting southern Vista and northern Escondido. While the Inland Rail Trail is a Class I multi-use trail, there are limited bicycle facilities connecting residents to key destinations like the shopping centers along Sycamore Avenue and Hannalei Elementary School. Currently, a Class II bike lane runs along Santa Fe Avenue north of York Drive and a Class III bike route running along Buena Creek Road.



Bicyclist crossing street

Pedestrian Facilities

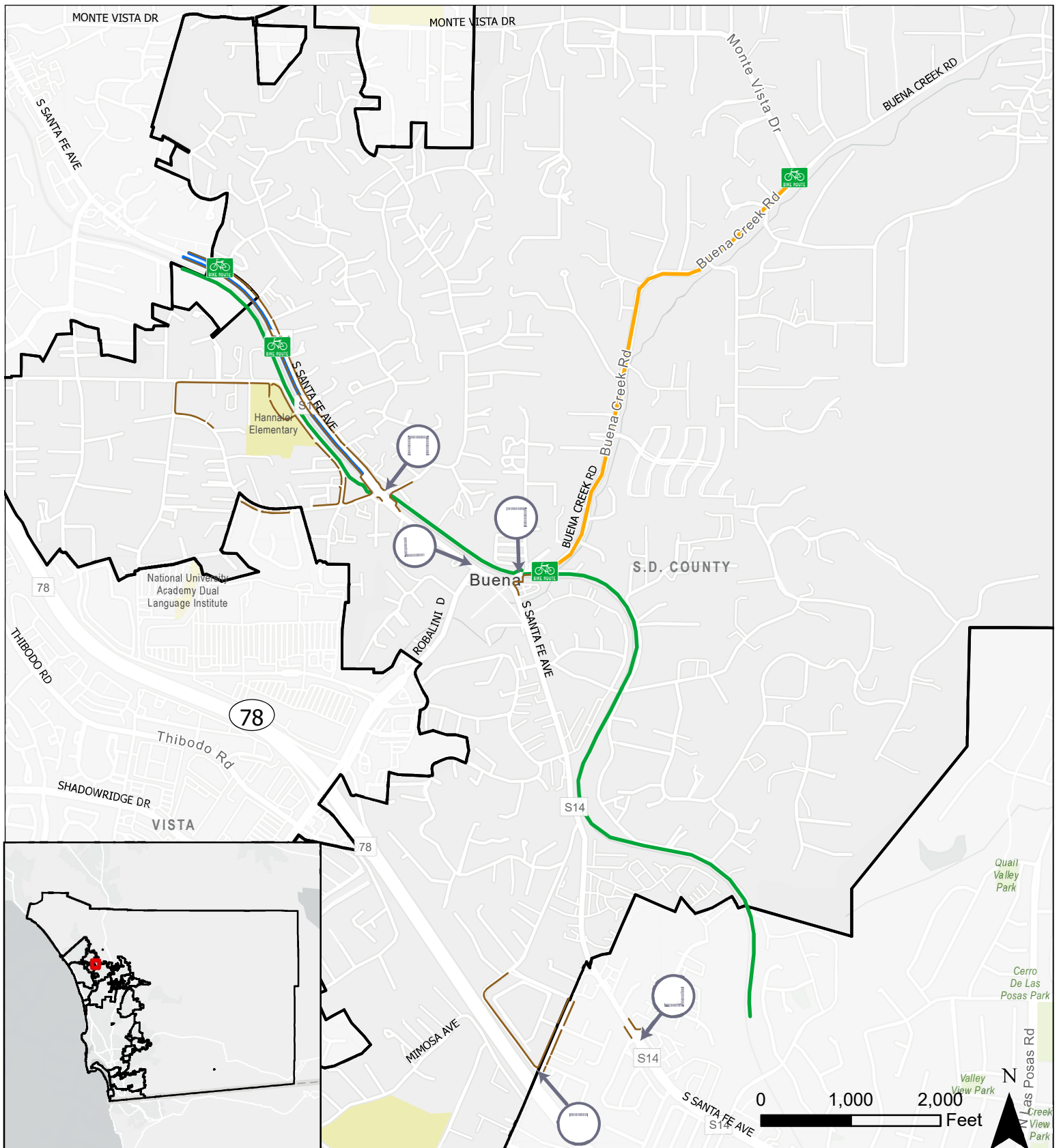
Figure 4-2 also shows the existing pedestrian facilities within Buena Creek. There are currently sidewalks on both sides of Santa Fe Avenue north of Woodland Drive but become intermittent with more frequent gaps as you get closer to the SPRINTER Station. There are no sidewalks provided along either side of Sycamore Drive south of Buena Creek Road. Robelini Drive currently does not have any sidewalks, however as you enter the City of Vista and the roadway transitions to Sycamore Avenue, there are sidewalks on both sides of the street. Marked crosswalks identified in **Figure 4-2** are currently not ADA compliant (i.e. missing truncated domes and a detectable

warning surface) and are also not high-visibility crosswalks.










Sidewalk availability is currently very limited within the Buena Creek community and the lack of sidewalk access to key destinations like the SPRINTER Station, bus stop and shopping centers is an apparent in the existing transportation infrastructure the residents living in the Buena Creek community are currently facing. The lack of continuous sidewalks and formal pedestrian crossings disproportionately impacts transit-dependent populations and households with limited vehicle access, making it more difficult to access jobs, schools, and essential services.



Missing pedestrian facility - signalized intersection has no connection with sidewalks



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------|
|  | Existing Bike Route Sign |  | Existing Crosswalk |
|  | Multi Use Path -Inland Rail Trail |  | Park |
|  | Class II Bike Lane |  | School |
|  | Class III Bike Routes |  | City Boundary |
|  | Sidewalk | | |

Buena Creek

Figure 4-2. Existing Bike and Pedestrian Facilities

Existing Transit Network

The Buena Creek community is currently served by North County Transportation District (NCTD) BREEZE Bus System, the primary transit operator in Unincorporated San Diego. Currently, Bus Route 305 runs through Buena Creek connecting to Vista in the north and San Marcos to the south and Bus Route 332 connecting to Carlsbad via Sycamore Drive.

The SPRINTER line also runs through Buena Creek, connecting the community to Oceanside to the west and Escondido to the east. The Buena Creek SPRINTER Station is currently the only light rail station in San Diego County and can be accessed by the Inland Rail Trail.

Table 4-3 shows the average daily boardings in 2023 at all BREEZE and SPRINTER stops.

Table 4-4 shows the people getting on (boarding) and people getting off (alighting) the SPRINTER at the Buena Creek Transit Station on an average weekday in 2022 as well as the boarding and alighting at the BREEZE stops within the study area only, including the BREEZE stop at the Buena Creek Transit Station.

Table 4-3. Total Average Daily Transit Boardings

Day Type	Average Daily Boardings (2023)	
	BREEZE	SPRINTER
Weekday	14,418	5,257
Saturday	8,108	3,416
Sunday	6,634	2,749

Source: NCTD Annual Transit Operations Performance Report FY 2023



Almost all bus stops in Buena Creek are provided with benches, signage, and trash cans while only select bus stops have shelters. Only 3 out of the 13 bus stops have adequate lighting (source within approximately 50-feet). **Table 4-5** shows the location of the existing transit stops as well as the existing amenities at each stop. **Figure 4-3** breaks down the available amenities at each bus stop. It is important that all transit stops are ADA compliant and have shelters and benches. Almost all bus stops within Buena Creek are not ADA compliant with missing or narrow sidewalks and may hinder users to use public transportation.

NCTD also provides its FLEX On Demand Transit Service which will deviate from its fixed route to pick up passengers at their location with a reservation within the FLEX zone or nearest transit connection point.

For individuals whose disability prevents independent access and use of NCTD's bus and light rail services, paratransit services are also offered through NCTD's LIFT Paratransit service. LIFT is provided through its contractors, ADARide and MV Transportation who support NCTD by providing reservations and determining customer eligibility. LIFT provides curb-to-curb service for customers and are provided to areas that are within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of an NCTD BREEZE bus route and/or rail station.

Table 4-4. Average Weekday Transit Ridership (2022)

	Boarding	Alighting	Total	Boarding	Alighting	Total	Boarding	Alighting	Total
SPRINTER	Eastbound			Westbound			Bi-Directional		
Buena Creek Station	106	139	245	136	99	235	242	238	480

BREEZE Bus Stop	Stop ID	Northbound			Southbound			Bi-Directional		
01 S Santa Fe Av & Bosstick Blvd (NB)	20717	3	15	18	N/A	N/A	0	3	15	18
02 S Santa Fe Av & 2511 (SB)	21816	N/A	N/A	0	9	7	16	9	7	16
03 S Santa Fe Av & Poinsettia Av (NB)	21966	4	3	7	N/A	N/A	0	4	3	7
04 S Santa Fe Av & Azalea Dr (NB)	21965	1	10	11	N/A	N/A	0	1	10	11
05 S Santa Fe Av & Azalea Dr (SB)	20309	N/A	N/A	0	6	4	10	6	4	10
06 S Santa Fe Av & Palmyra Dr (NB)-Route 305	20716	2	6	8	N/A	N/A	0	2	6	8
06 S Santa Fe Av & Palmyra Dr (NB)-Route 332	20716	0	1	1	N/A	N/A	0	0	1	1
07 S Santa Fe Av & Buena Creek Rd (NB)	24352	37	46	83	N/A	N/A	0	37	46	83
08 S Santa Fe Av & Robelini Dr (SB)	20307	N/A	N/A	0	90	48	138	90	48	138
09 S Santa Fe Av & York Dr (NB)	20495	6	3	9	N/A	N/A	0	6	3	9
10 S Santa Fe Av & Woodland Dr (SB)	20305	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11 S Santa Fe & Montgomery Dr (NB)	20494	3	2	5	N/A	N/A	0	3	2	5
12 Robelini Dr & El Valle Opuento (SB)	24178	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13 Buena Creek Station	24846	113	0	113	0	141	141	113	141	254
Total Breeze Transit		169	86	255	105	200	305	274	286	560

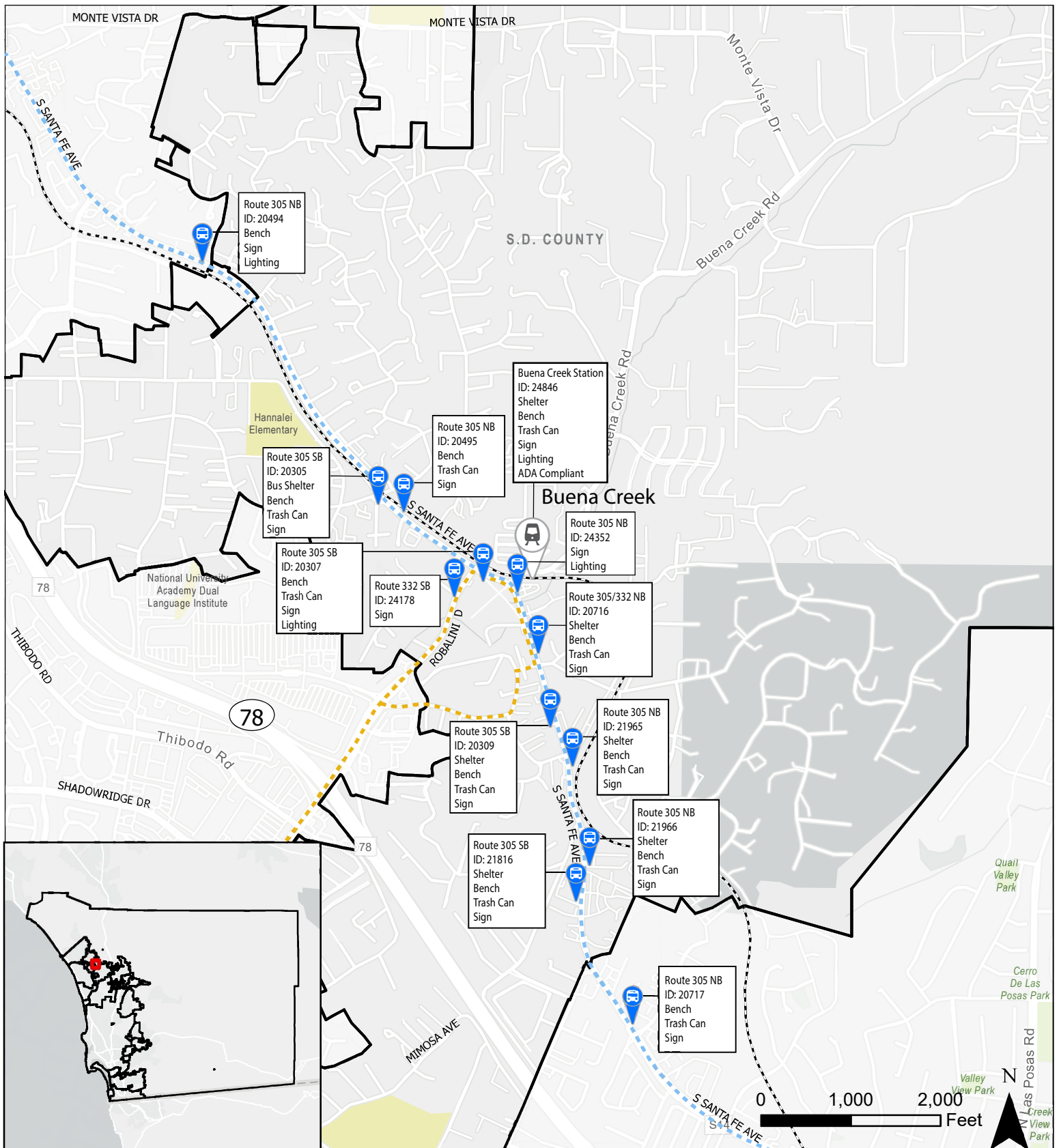
Source: SANDAG Open Data Portal - Average Weekday Transit Ridership by Route/Stop (SANDAG) 2023

Table 4-5. Bus Stop Amenities

BREEZE Bus Stop	Stop ID	Available Amenities						
		Shelter	Bench	Transh Receptacle	Sign	Map	Lighting	ADA Compliant
01 S Santa Fe Av & Bosstick Blvd (NB)	20717		●	●	●			
02 S Santa Fe Av & 2511 (SB)	21816	●	●	●	●			
03 S Santa Fe Av & Poinsettia Av (NB)	21966	●	●	●	●			
04 S Santa Fe Av & Azalea Dr (NB)	21965	●	●	●	●			
05 S Santa Fe Av & Azalea Dr (SB)	20309	●	●	●	●			
06 S Santa Fe Av & Palmyra Dr (NB)-Route 332	20716	●	●	●	●			
07 S Santa Fe Av & Buena Creek Rd (NB)	24352				●		●	
08 S Santa Fe Av & Robelini Dr (SB)	20307		●	●	●		●	
09 S Santa Fe Av & York Dr (NB)	20495		●	●	●			
10 S Santa Fe Av & Woodland Dr (SB)	20305	●	●	●	●			
11 S Santa Fe & Montgomery Dr (NB)	20494		●	*	●		●	
12 Robelini Dr & El Valle Opuento (SB)	24178				●			
13 Buena Creek Station	24846	●	●	●	●		●	●

Note: Bus stop locations are illustrated in Figure 14 and illustrated northbound, counterclockwise

* Facilities exist but has indications of damage/disrepair.



Legend **Buena Creek**

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Buena Creek SPRINTER Station | School |
| Bus Stop | Park |
| SPRINTER Transit Route | City Boundary |
| Route 305 | |
| Route 332 | |

Figure 4-3. Existing Public Transit Facilities

4.3 Key Takeaways

A review of the existing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities within the Buena Creek MOVES study area shows an auto-dependent infrastructure with several gaps in sidewalk and bicycle connectivity. In addition, commuters that rely on transit may experience challenges in aligning transfer schedules between the BREEZE bus and the SPRINTER system.

These apparent challenges to access alternative modes of transportation highlight the need to improve connectivity for all modes of transportation options. These findings are further supported by the feedback received from the community and discussed further in Chapter 5.

Enhance Accessibility



Improve Connectivity

“

Heading east on Santa Fe Ave as a pedestrian to turn left on Robelini Dr - You have to squeeze by stopped traffic, and dodge moving traffic.

”

- Buena Creek Resident
October Community Workshop



Group discussion at Public Workshop #1

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Involving the Buena Creek community was crucial to ensure the findings of the CNA and Community Profile is reflective of the conditions that the residents experience every day. This section summarizes the community-centered outreach strategy, engagement activities, and key community takeaways which helped inform this plan's recommendations and was essential to ensuring this plan reflects the actual needs, and priorities of the community. Throughout the duration of the outreach, specific feedback was evaluated to ensure it aligns with the Policy and Planning context discussed in Chapter 2.

5.1 Engagement Strategy

Prior to initiating engagement with various stakeholders and outreach with the community, a comprehensive *Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (SEP)* was developed that outlined a detailed approach and methodology for an integrated technical planning, community outreach, and engagement process. The SEP provided an overview of the community background and outlined the approach and goals for stakeholder engagement including overall objectives, a stakeholder and communication methods analysis, and phase-based objectives, communications and engagement activities. To ensure equitable participation, the outreach process prioritized engaging historically underrepresented groups, including non-English-speaking residents, transit users, and lower-income households.

INFORMATION

- What questions do you have about the project purpose and background?

INSIGHTS

- Which of the findings are most related to your mobility experiences in Buena Creek? Why?
- Do you have additional mobility experiences in Buena Creek to add to the assessment findings?
- Based on your mobility experiences and needs in Buena Creek, which potential mobility improvements or programs are most important to you?

INVOLVEMENT

- Are there additional ways that would help you to stay involved?

Figure 5-1. Key Questions for Stakeholders and Community Members

Overall, the goal of stakeholder engagement for Buena Creek MOVES is to facilitate inclusive community engagement through community-centered outreach. Following are engagement objectives that support this goal:

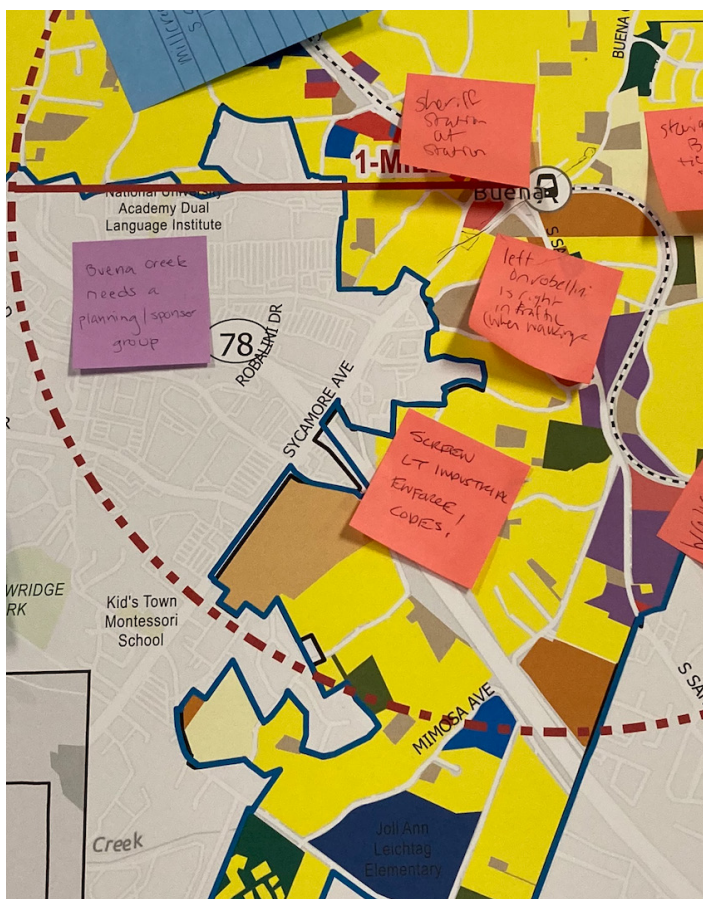
1. Identify and engage stakeholder groups and all community members in envisioning and designing a safe, connected, accessible, and multi-modal mobility system
2. Provide multiple and relevant communication methods to build community awareness of the project and how to get involved
3. Account for the communication and engagement needs of environmental justice communities and those community members who have limited mobility options, which may include but not be limited to those who are difficult to reach, have language barriers, and who do not normally participate in traditional community engagement activities (i.e., meet them where they are)
4. Design and conduct engagement activities that are accessible and relevant to their target audiences and that provide meaningful input and data to the project team
5. Record, summarize, and publish community input in accessible formats at key points in the process

5.2 Outreach Process

The outreach and engagement process collected community input on areas of concern that were their highest priorities for mobility improvements. It also sought to facilitate input about potential improvements for the areas of concern. This section summarizes the overall outreach process, and the feedback is provided in Section 5.3.

Stakeholder engagement is organized into two phases of the Buena Creek MOVES process:

- **Phase I: Community Needs Assessment and Opportunities**
- **Phase II: Draft and Final NMP.**



Community input collected from the in-person workshop

The various engagement activities conducted during Phase 1 included the following:

- **Launch of “Engage Buena Creek Mobility: Buena Creek MOVES” webpage** to serve as the public communications hub, with outreach efforts designed to attract stakeholders to the webpage for the latest project information and upcoming engagement activities.
- **An in-person community workshop** was hosted by the project team on October 15, 2024 at the (school) within the BC community. Project information was presented to community members about initial needs assessment findings, and input was solicited from

the perspective of the community members' priority issue areas, and potential mobility improvements and programs.

- **Tabling at the BC SPRINTER Station** in collaboration with NCTD was held on one weekday evening and one weekday morning to provide brief project information and input opportunities about mobility needs from the transit riders moving through the SPRINTER Station.
- **Communications with and feedback from the Twin Oaks Valley Community Sponsor Group**, a local advisory group that includes the Buena Creek community with members appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. The group provides advice on planning and land use matters. The Chair submitted project feedback on behalf of the group via email.
- **A web-based and map-based input form** included on the Engage webpage, which encouraged visitors to submit location/site-based comments on an interactive map.

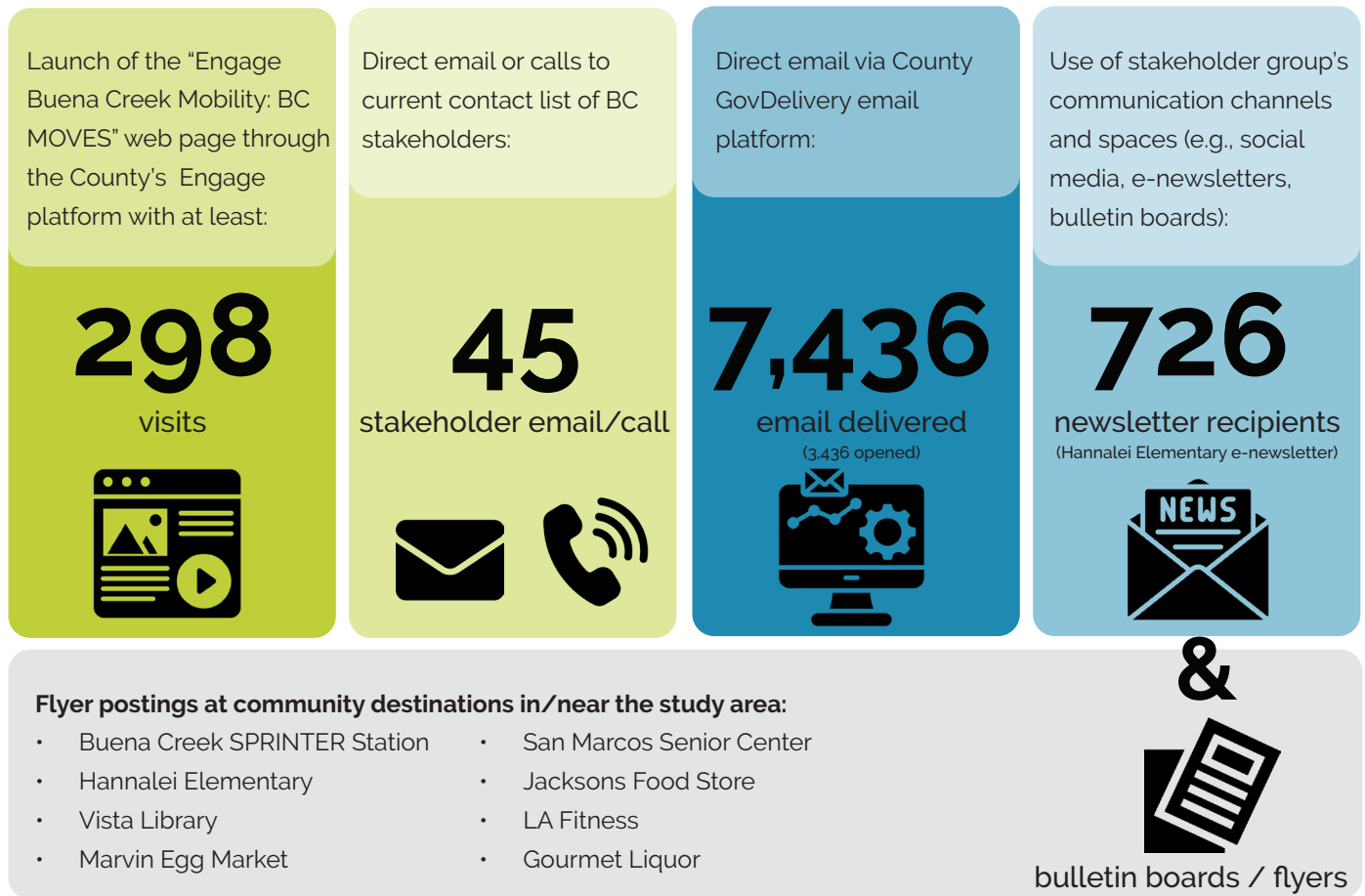


Figure 5-2. Phase I Outreach Strategies and Communication Methods

5.3 Outreach Summary

The stakeholder engagement activities during Phase I generated the following overall findings:

- Improve pedestrian safety on major roadways and connections to the BC SPRINTER Station through an expanded sidewalk network and lighting, as well as safer crossings at intersections
- Improve bicycle safety through expansion of the bike lane network, including separated facilities where possible.
- Calm traffic on major roadways to reduce collisions, improve ingress/egress safety from driveways, and improve safety for all roadway users, including people walking, biking and driving
- Improve bus service frequency, timeliness, and connections/transfers with the SPRINTER
- Consider past studies that explored improvements in the study area

Community Workshop

The Community Workshop for Phase I of Buena Creek MOVES occurred on October 15, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room of Hannalei Elementary School, located at 120 Hannalei Dr, in the City of Vista. Twelve (12) community members attended the workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to present project information and collect input from community members about initial needs assessment findings, community members' priority issue areas, and potential mobility improvements and programs.

The workshop included a brief slideshow presentation providing an overview of the project and its purpose as well as its relation to other ongoing County efforts, including the DFA. The project team shared the results of the existing conditions and broke out into small group discussions which focused on the

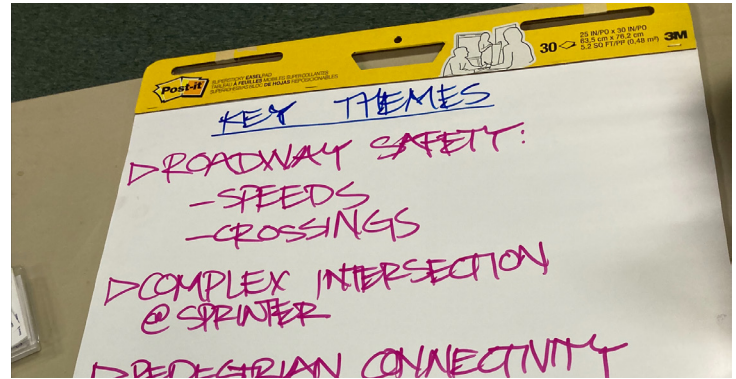
following questions:

- a. What sounds familiar (or not) based on your experience moving around Buena Creek?
- b. What other mobility experiences do you have?
- c. What, if anything, makes it difficult to access transit in this area? Including the BC SPRINTER station.



Slideshow presentation at the community workshop

The workshop then transitioned to a short presentation on potential improvement opportunities and sought the communities feedback on which improvements might fit within the community. Participants and project team members then reconvened around the maps arrayed on the tables to discuss and make notes on the following question:



Key theme of participant's input at the workshop

“Based on your mobility experiences and needs in Buena Creek, which potential mobility improvements or programs are most important to you?”



Improve roadway safety through speed controls and safer crossings

- o *“Lacking connections to the rail trail.” (north of station)*

Improve the design and flow of traffic at the intersection near the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station: Buena Creek Road and South Santa Fe Ave.

- o *“No crossing for bikes.” (across South Santa Fe Ave.)*
- o *“Too long wait times for rail barriers.”*

Strengthen pedestrian connectivity between the Station and key destinations and neighborhoods

- o *“Create a direct connection from Robelini by creating a cul de sac.”*

Enhance community safety and security to encourage walking, biking and transit use, including during night/dark hours

- o *“Add a sheriff’s station at the transit station.”*
- o *“Address drug dealing and people living in parking lots.” (south of station)*

Calm vehicle traffic along Buena Creek Road to improve safe access to/from homes and driveways

- o *“Lots of walkers, not many sidewalks. Very dangerous. Traffic calming needed.” (along South Santa Fe Ave.)*

Connect current planning efforts between North County Transit District and the County

Figure 5-3. Key Theme and Example Comments from Participants

Detailed transcripts from the public workshop are contained in [Appendix C](#).

Pop-Up Tabling

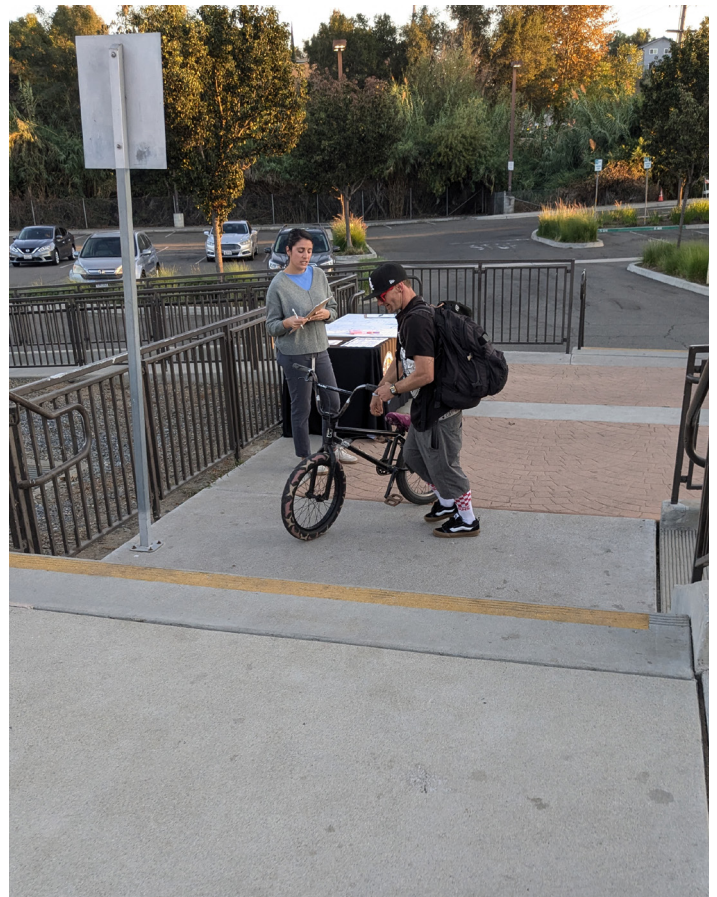
On the evening of Tuesday October 22, 2024 and the morning of Thursday October 24, 2024 project team members hosted a pop-up at the BC SPRINTER Station. The purpose of the tabling was to connect with transit users to provide brief project information and input opportunities about mobility needs.

Project team members set up a folding table, County-branded tablecloth, project area maps, and input forms. Team members interacted with approximately 25 interested transit users who were entering or exiting the station and took notes on their behalf about their mobility experiences and mobility needs in the study area.

Following are key themes of transit users' input:

- Install sidewalks and lighting on Buena Creek Road and South Santa Fe Avenue to improve pedestrian connections, safety, and access to the transit station and local destinations
- Expand the bike lane network on additional streets with separated facilities where possible
- Slow traffic speeds to improve safety for everyone
- Improve bus service frequency, timeliness, and connections/transfers with the SPRINTER

Detailed transcripts pop-up tabling comments are contained in [Appendix D](#).



Pop-up tabling at the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station

Twin Oaks Valley Community Sponsor Group

Members of the project team coordinated directly with the Twin Oaks Valley Community Sponsor Group, who reviewed project information and provided feedback. At their October 2024 meeting, the group passed a motion in response to the information available on the Engage website:

"Motion to support the County's process to increase movability in the Buena Creek Area by:

1. Finish South Santa Fe between Vista and San Marcos,
2. Provide sidewalks and multi-use paths for pedestrian and bicycles
3. Help prevent graffiti by requiring all vertical hardscape surfaces to be covered with low water use climbing vegetation such as Una de gato; Uncaria tomentosa or cat's claw,

4. Provide traffic calming on Buena Creek Road to prevent speeding and accidents,
5. Provide center median turn lane along Buena Creek so people can get in and out of their driveways safely,
6. Add adequate parking in the apartments near the SPRINTER so vehicles do not block pedestrian pathways to shopping on University Avenue, and public transportation
7. And for the SPRINTER Station:
 - a. Provide a way to make a left turn into the parking lot (from South Santa Fe)
 - b. Provide sufficient parking
 - c. Safe pedestrian access and security
 - d. Provide connectivity from the SPRINTER Station to other public transportation,
 - e. Elevate the tracks at Buena Creek so that emergency vehicles are not prevented from addressing emergencies on Buena Creek Road when the SPRINTER train is in the station and the crossing guards are down."



Figure 5-4. Letter from Citizens Advisory Group

Following Workshop #1, The Vice-Chair of the Group also provided a detailed comment letter on behalf of the group in December 2024, which can be found in **Appendix E**. Key takeaways from feedback provided in this letter include:



South Sante Fe Avenue through the community is a bottle-neck

- o *"Although both Vista and San Marcos have improved South Santa Fe from two lanes to four lanes, the County has left the road untouched since the 1930s, with only two lanes."*

Concerns surrounding the at-grade SPRINTER line crossing at Buena Creek

- o *"The at-grade crossing SPRINTER and Buena Creek Road currently hampers emergency vehicle access and evacuation of Twin Oaks community during a wildland fire. Widening Buena Creek Road won't address this problem until the at grade crossing problem is resolved."*

Safety Issues at the Buena Creek Transit Station

- o *"Currently the area around the SPRINTER Station contains homeless encampments as well as various criminal elements. This makes using the SPRINTER unsafe."*
- o *"We recommend adding a small Sheriff's substation in a modular unit in the parking lot of the SPRINTER so that riders would feel safe to use the SPRINTER at this location."*

Lack of safe pedestrian paths of travel in the community

- o *"There are no designated trails or sidewalks to allow people safe access via foot or bicycle from nearby homes or business to the SPRINTER or Bus services. Lack of adequate parking at nearby apartment buildings forces cars to park along side streets which leaves no safe place for pedestrians to walk along side streets that feed onto South Santa Fe Avenue and provide access to the bus and SPRINTER lines."*

Speeding and safety concerns along Buena Creek Road

- o *"Traffic calming measures need to be implemented so that people can safely exit from the many driveways that exit onto Buena Creek Road. We have been told by residents that Buena Creek Road is used as a raceway with frequent crashes occurring."*

Figure 5-5. Key Takeaways from Twin Oaks Valley Community Sponsor Group

Additional Community Input

The Project team engaged directly with members of the community via email. Full transcripts of these correspondence are available in Appendix E. Additional input included the following:

- Review design concepts for the Buena Creek SPRINTER Station from the 2016 Urban land Institute Healthy Places competition
- Review the 2004 Draft Environmental Impact Report for South Santa Fe
- Address whether the project will require a supplemental EIR related to meeting density requirements and road design standards

What's Next?

The community engagement process reinforced the key findings from the Community Needs Assessment and identified priority areas for mobility improvements. Chapter 6 translates these insights into specific goals, objectives, and strategies that will guide transportation investments in Buena Creek.



“

Bike lanes off street / separated is preferred.
(We) need more bike lanes.

”

- Buena Creek Resident
October NCTD SPRINTER Tabling

6. GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

This chapter provides an overall outline of the community’s goals, objectives, and strategies. This interwoven process should consider overall purpose as well as the “what, why, and how” of realizing what the NMP aims to accomplish.

Identifying goals help residents consider the long-term outcomes and ambitions that may be reasonable to achieve within their community. These goals were informed by the community as part of the engagement process and considered during the community needs assessment. Breaking down these goals into objectives will create actionable directives based on best practices in order to guide the potential improvements that have been recommended.



The goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in [Table 6-1](#) endeavor to create a built environment to create a more efficient and sustainable transportation system in support of the overall goals of the County's General Plan Circulation Element.

Table 6-1. Goals, Objectives & Strategies

	Goals	Objectives	Strategies
1	Promote mobility and accommodate multimodal travel options	Accommodate multimodal travel options (e.g. walking, biking, rolling, micro-mobility, and public transit).	Encourage bicycle ridership as a viable mobility option by providing accessible and secure bicycle lockers and end-of-trip facilities. Plan for multimodal mobility when designing future roadway improvements.
		Maximize pedestrian safety by improving pedestrian facilities	Improve existing sidewalks to meet ADA standards and ensure accessibility for all users of all abilities.
			Construct future sidewalks to prioritize pedestrian safety and comfort.
			Improve pedestrian crossing facilities to enhance visibility and safety and include enhanced crosswalk markings, lighting, and signage at intersections and midblock crossings.
			Improve pedestrian experience on corridors by providing key amenities (i.e. shade) and safety features (i.e. lighting).
			Prioritize pedestrian safety improvements at high-risk intersections and roadway segments identified in the LRSP.
			Maximize cyclist safety by improving bicycle facilities
		Maximize commuter safety by improving transit facilities	Improve Buena Creek Transit Station access points for pedestrians & bicyclists.
			Increase commuter visibility by improving lighting at transit stops and Buena Creek Transit Station parking lot and loading areas.
		Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through reduced reliance of single-occupancy vehicles.	Enhance existing Sprinter and Breeze services within Buena Creek and explore opportunities to develop new alternate transit services.
Encourage existing ride-on-demand and vanpool programs. Formalize new programs where they do not currently exist.			
2	Improve communication between regional stakeholders, community members, and organizations	Analyze opportunities to better connect unincorporated communities to SANDAG's 2021 Regional Plan (as well as the future 2025 Regional Plan) and further state planning priorities (e.g. infill development, job/housing balances, equity).	Increase communication between agencies, stakeholders, and local residents that enhances dialogue and collaboration.
		Establish and grow the active transportation networks in unincorporated communities consistent with the County's ATP as well as SANDAG's "Riding to 2050" Regional Bike Plan (2010).	Prioritize transportation projects that connect neighborhoods to places of interest, including Hannalei Elementary School, Vista Sycamore Commercial, Buena Creek Transit Station, and other transit stops.
		Identify future opportunities and resources from local, state, and federal agencies to further any future land use changes, policy changes, and investment to achieve community visions.	Track grant and funding opportunities to support transportation projects
3	Strengthen alignment of mobility and transportation with expanded community capacities/resources, and improved public health	Support opportunities for affordable, infill, and transit-oriented housing.	Coordinate with ongoing County efforts, include the DFA, to align transportation projects with future infrastructure needs.
		Support public health by promoting sustainable infrastructure.	Integrate sustainable infrastructure such as green streets, permeable pathways & parking areas, enhanced vegetation, shaded landscaping in future roadway projects.

	Goals	Objectives	Strategies
4	Collaborate directly with community	Facilitate the continuous refinement, pilot program development and project implementation concurrently with the County's Sustainable Land Use Framework (Framework) development and Integrated Planning Approach (IPA) as well as the DFA to engage communities, explore data, capacities and needs, and develop community "visions."	Establish a local Community Sponsor Group with a dedicated transportation focused subcommittee that routinely meets with community members as well as County representatives.
		Encourage and facilitate opportunities for all community members to participate in the vision development, prioritization, and decision-making.	Conduct community outreach workshops and events in a way that encourages public participation
		Utilize a consensus-based approach, to check in on the consensus of community recommendations at multiple points in the visioning and prioritization process.	Prioritize transportation projects that are championed by the community
5	Decrease Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Expand transportation options beyond reliance on fossil fuel-based vehicles.	Incentive personal electric and hybrid vehicles by providing enhanced EV infrastructure (i.e. charging stations).
			Incentivize electric and hybrid vehicles within the public transit fleet of vehicles.

The goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in **Table 6-1** provide a framework for improving transportation equity, safety, and sustainability in the Buena Creek community. These priorities, informed by community engagement and policy alignment, guide the selection of specific infrastructure improvements and programs detailed in the next section.



“

No sidewalks, has to walk on side of road everyday. Used to ride bike but it was too dangerous with no bikelanes or sidewalks.

”

- Buena Creek Resident
October NCTD SPRINTER Tabling

Typical roadway condition with no sidewalks or lighting

7. POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS & PROGRAMS

Within the CBT Framework Guidelines is a Transportation Toolbox with flexible design options oriented towards improving safety for all uses, calming vehicular speeds, and improving access to pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities. Also included in the toolbox are various policies and programs that, while not necessarily changing the built environment, could help improve the transportation environment. These treatment options are geared to improve the environment for all users, drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclist alike. This is a full comprehensive list of potential improvements, however not every single treatment is a fit for the Buena Creek community.

Based on the results of the existing conditions assessment, findings and feedback from the outreach process, and input from the community, the following sections summarize potential transportation investment opportunities for Buena Creek. These improvements have been categorized into short-term, medium-term, and long-term improvements depending on how complicated the projects are, ease of implementation, and availability of funding.

Short Term

Include quick wins, minor infrastructure upgrades, signage & safety enhancements, etc. (Could be implemented within the next 2 to 5 years)

Mid Term

Include projects with moderate investments requiring additional funding, planning, design, or policy modifications. (Could be implemented in the next 5 to 10 years)

Long Term

Include large capital projects with major infrastructure changes that require ongoing regional coordination as well as future funding sources. (Could be implemented in the next 10 to 20)

As further explored in Chapter 8: Next Steps, implementation of these potential projects will depend on available funding, coordination with regional agencies, and feasibility assessments. Potential funding sources include SANDAG's Active Transportation Grant Program, California's Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants, and TransNet local sales tax revenues. Where applicable, connection to the County's Capitol Improvements Project (CIP) list has been made.

7.1 Potential Multimodal Improvements

The following multimodal improvements would improve safety by changing the built environment, focusing on ways to influence cars and driver behavior with the intent to slow speeds and increase awareness. These potential future projects may or may not be implemented as described pending feasibility, funding, and other factors.

1. Realign Robelini Drive

One of the main areas of concern within the Buena Creek community revolve around the intersections of Robelini Drive and Buena Creek Road with South Santa Fe Drive. The proximity to these two heavily congested intersections with the NCTD SPRINTER tracks make navigating this area difficult. Many of the comments and feedback received as part of the Buena Creek MOVES outreach process discussed these two intersections.

According to the *Fiscal Year 2024/25 to 2028-29 Capital Improvements Project (CIP)* List, this has been identified for future funding and is broken into two phases:

- South Santa Fe Avenue Phase 1 at Buena Creek Road [Oracle Number 1010123] – this first phase would improve the intersection of South Santa Fe Drive and Buena Creek Road by shifting the center of the intersection away from the SPRINTER tracks to improve operations at the intersection. The estimated cost for this first phase is approximately \$9.1 million. As an alternative consideration, a grade-separated intersection improvement for the Buena Creek Road/S .Santa Fe Avenue intersection at the Sprinter line crossing is

-  **Potential Sponsor Agencies:**
County of San Diego
-  **Potential Funding Sources:**
TransNet, TIF
-  **Estimated Cost:** \$\$\$\$
-  **Timeframe:** Long Term

currently being considered and analyzed as one possible option for addressing the community's concern about existing and future traffic congestion caused by delays to traffic operation due to the Sprinter line service.

- South Santa Fe Avenue Phase 2 at Robelini Drive [Oracle Number TBD]– the second phase would close the existing Robelini Drive connection to South Santa Fe Avenue and realign Robelini Drive toward the southeast. This reconfiguration would remove the existing offset of the two intersections and provide a direct connection from Buena Creek Road to Robelini Drive, Sycamore Avenue and SR-78. The estimated cost for this second phase is approximately \$20 million.

In addition to improving vehicular flow through the area, the realignment of Robelini Drive and the construction of the new roadway should also include adequate pedestrian facilities and accommodations such as wide sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, enhanced crosswalks and other pedestrian-oriented improvements as well as appropriate bicycle facilities.

2. Widen South Santa Fe Avenue

In 2004, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was developed exploring the opportunity to reconstruct South Santa Fe Avenue and widen the current two-lane roadway (one-lane in each direction) to its ultimate designation as a four-lane Major Road (two-lanes in each direction) according to the General Plan Mobility Element Network classification. Future roadway improvements to South Santa Fe should work towards this end goal. While widening of South Santa Fe Avenue would improve the traffic flow and operations through this corridor, the reduced congestion and additional capacity could decrease emergency response times, improve bus transit operations, as well as facilitate evacuation through the area.

It should also be noted that the following three segments were identified on the LRSP's list of ranked roadway segments:

- #11 - South Santa Fe Avenue FROM Woodland Drive TO Robelini Drive

- #12 - South Santa Fe Avenue FROM Poinsettia Avenue TO Smilax Road
- #13 - South Santa Fe Avenue FROM Montgomery Drive TO Woodland Drive

In addition to increased vehicular capacity with additional travel lanes, roadway improvements should also prioritize safety and traffic calming measures since there were three segments and three intersections identified in the LRSP along this corridor. In addition, improvements should also provide sufficient sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, as well as enhanced crosswalks and other pedestrian-oriented improvements as well as buffered Class II bike lanes.

Potential Sponsor Agencies:



County of San Diego
City of Vista, City of San Marcos



Potential Funding Sources:

TransNet, TBD



Estimated Cost: \$\$\$\$




Timeframe: Long Term

3. Improve Vehicular Access to the Buena Creek Transit Station

Community feedback expressed concern accessing the Buena Creek Transit Station, specifically for vehicles making a southbound left-turn into the driveway. South Santa Fe adjacent to the transit station is a two-lane roadway (one-lane in each direction) with an approximately 9-foot striped median (double-double yellow striping). According to the California Vehicle Code two sets of double yellow lines are considered a barrier and drivers should not make a left-turn except at designated openings.

Future widening of South Santa Fe, consistent with its ultimate designation as a four-lane Major Road (two-lanes in each direction) according to the General Plan Mobility Element Network classification, should allow for full access at the Buena Creek Transit Station. This improvement would likely coincide with #1: Widen South Santa Fe Avenue.

 **Potential Sponsor Agencies:**
County of San Diego, NCTD


 **Potential Funding Sources:**
TBD

 **Estimated Cost:** \$\$

 **Timeframe:** Long Term

4. Intersection Improvements at Monte Vista Drive & Buena Creek Road

While near the edge of this NMP's study area, the intersection of Monte Vista Drive and Buena Creek was identified as a location of concern within the community. This location is also ranks #62 on the LRSP's list of ranked intersections and was included in the 2025-2029 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). While the CIP identifies a traffic signal, community input expressed interest in a potential roundabout at this location. A roundabout allows traffic to flow continuously and has fewer conflict points than a traditional traffic signal.

 **Potential Sponsor Agencies:**
County of San Diego

 **Potential Funding Sources:**
Road Fund Balance

 **Estimated Cost:** \$\$\$

 **Timeframe:** Mid Term

7.2 Potential Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility Improvements

Priority sidewalk and crossing improvements should focus on locations with the highest pedestrian safety risks. The following pedestrian focused improvements would improve safety for those walking and rolling withing the Buena Creek community. These potential future projects may or may not be implemented as described pending feasibility, funding, and other factors.

5. Fill in Sidewalk Gaps

As discussed in Chapter 3, the missing sidewalks along Robelini Drive create a significant barrier for pedestrians commuting to and from the Buena Creek Transit Station to the Vista Sycamore employment center (including Target and Walmart). This missing pedestrian connection would be rectified with the realignment of Robelini Drive (Potential Improvement #2 above). However, short term improvements should be considered to provide adequate facilities, especially near the transit stop on the west side of Robelini Drive near South Santa Fe (Stop ID 20307).

Similarly, sidewalk gaps along South Santa Fe Avenue should be addressed to improve pedestrian safety since there were three separate segments and three intersections along this corridor identified in the LRSP. With the future widening of South Santa Fe Avenue (Potential Improvement #1 above), these missing pedestrian connections would be rectified.



Potential Sponsor Agencies:

County of San Diego



Potential Funding Sources:

TBD



Estimated Cost:

\$\$



Timeframe: TBD

These future roadway improvement projects should also include adequate pedestrian facilities and accommodations such as wide sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, enhanced crosswalks and other pedestrian-oriented improvements.

7.3 Potential Bicycle Infrastructure Enhancements

The bicycle network within the Buena Creek community is anchored around the Inland Rail Trail – a class I multi-use trail; however, there are limited bicycle facilities connecting residents to other key destinations like the shopping centers along Sycamore Avenue and Hannalei Elementary School.

Currently, a Class II bike lane runs along Santa Fe Avenue north of York Drive and a Class III bike route running along Buena Creek Drive.


As discussed in Chapter 3, currently there is a Class II bike lane along Santa Fe Avenue north of York Drive and a Class III bike route along Buena Creek Road.

These potential future projects may or may not be implemented as described pending feasibility, funding, and other factors.

6. Inland Rail Trail Connection to Buena Creek Transit Station

During the pop-up tabling at the Buena Creek Transit Station in October 2024, project team members had the opportunity to observe users of the Inland Rail Trail near the SPRINTER Station. While utilized by recreational users and commuters alike, one glaring safety concern is the absence of a crossing facility connecting the two sides of the Inland Rail Trail to allow users to cross Buena Creek Road. There were several instances of both pedestrians and bicyclists crossing in between cars in an unsafe manner.

Potential improvements to address this issue could include a high visibility crosswalk with an enhanced multimodal crossing, such as a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB). Alternatively a full controlled crossing, such as a High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) Signal would both warn and control

-  **Potential Sponsor Agencies:**
County of San Diego
-  **Potential Funding Sources:**
TBD
-  **Estimated Cost:**
\$\$
-  **Timeframe:** Short Term

vehicle traffic at the marked crosswalk. A RRFB treatment improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety while increasing motorist yielding at crosswalks at a lower cost compared to pedestrian signals.

7. Buffered Bike Lanes on South Santa Fe

With the future widening of South Santa Fe Avenue (Potential Improvement #1 above), future buffered Class II bike lanes should also be included in the design to accommodate bicycle users on the roadway. A designated striped buffer allows for physical separation between cyclists and vehicles and increases the comfort level of the cyclists.



Potential Sponsor Agencies:

County of San Diego



Potential Funding Sources:

TBD



Estimated Cost:

\$



Timeframe: Short Term

7.4 Policies & Programs

Policies & Programs should be considered in addition to infrastructure improvements to support active transportation and multimodal commuting. While not necessarily changing the built environment, these could help improve the transportation environment.

8. Coordinate with NCTD on Bus Schedule

Based on feedback during the outreach process, many residents in the community and commuters utilizing the NCTD BREEZE transit system commented on the inconsistent bus services and timelines. Feedback also included aligning the bus schedule with the SPRINTER Schedule to ease connections and transfers. One commuter commented that because the bus was 2 minutes late, he had to watch the SPRINTER pull out of the station and wait another 30 minutes for the next arrival.

Potential improvements would be to optimize the BREEZE and SPRINTER schedules to better align; install digital count-down timers

at the station, and explore the feasibility of increasing the frequency of the SPRINTER service.

It should be noted that in 2024, NCTD was awarded approximately \$10 million to double track portions of the SPRINTER network between the Escondido Transit Center and the Palomar College Station, which is immediately east of the Buena Creek community. The improvements would include 3.6 miles of double track, three new bridges, a new station platform, and grade-separated crossing improvements. Ongoing coordination with NCTD will be required to better understand the implications this may have to Buena Creek.



Potential Sponsor Agencies:

NCTD



Potential Funding Sources:

RAISE Grant, TBD



Estimated Cost:

\$



Timeframe: TBD

9. Increase Security at Buena Creek Transit Station

Feedback from residents included a desire to see an increase in security within the community, especially at the Buena Creek Transit Station, with some residents commenting on the illegal activity near the station. NCTD currently partners with the San Diego Sheriff's Office to monitor rails and stations with officers often riding the SPRINTER to various stops throughout the day; however there is not a dedicated presence at the Buena Creek Station.

Potential recommendations would be to explore options to provide a greater security presence at the transit station with non-police security personnel, as well as increased video surveillance and enforcement. Furthermore,

install additional street lighting, especially around the transit station, bus stops as well as pedestrian-level lighting along sidewalks and the Inland Rail Trail.



Potential Sponsor Agencies:

NCTD, Sherriff,
County of San Diego



Potential Funding Sources:

TBD



Estimated Cost: \$



Timeframe: Short Term

10. Explore Formalizing Community Representation for this Area

The Buena Creek area does not have an established Community Planning Group and has historically been included within the Twin Oaks Valley CPG sphere of influence. Formalizing community representation for this area will allow local residents to take ownership of their community by getting involved in the local decision-making process. Formal CPG representation, either through an expansion of the Twin Oaks Valley CPG or creation of a new CPG or Sponsor Group, would allow the community to more regularly provide feedback to advise the County staff on development projects, land use modifications, public facilities and infrastructure improvements, as well as mobility and transportation improvements.



Potential Sponsor Agencies:

County of San Diego



Potential Funding Sources:

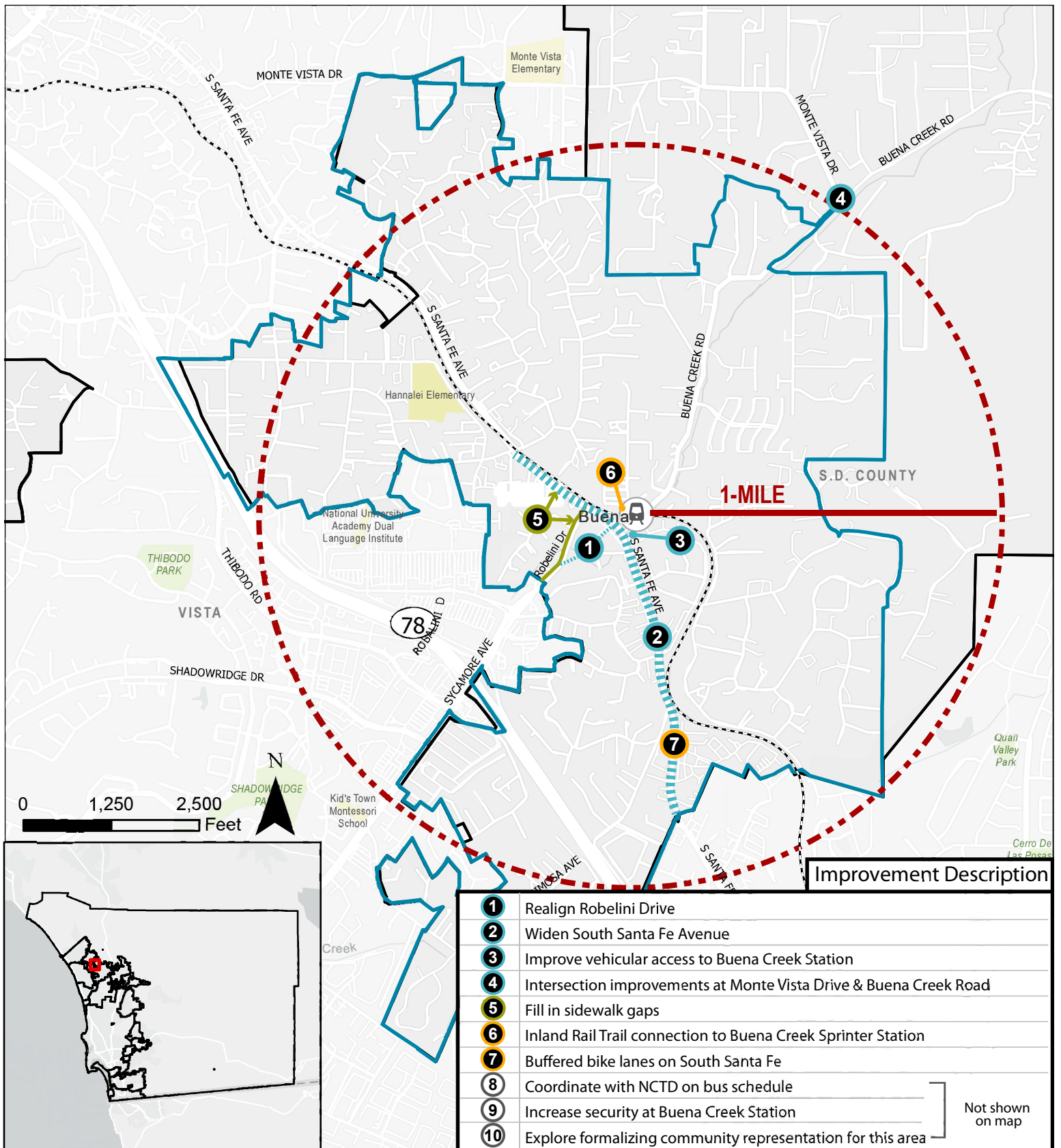
General Fund



Estimated Cost: \$



Timeframe: Short Term



Legend **Buena Creek**

- - - - NMP Study Area
- _ _ _ _ Development Feasibility Area
- Buena Creek SPRINTER Station
- - - - SPRINTER Transit Route
- School
- Park
- City Boundary

Figure 7-1. Potential Mobility Improvements



“

No cross for bikes at Buena Creek SPRINTER Station.

”

- Buena Creek Resident
October Community Workshop

8. NEXT STEPS

Prior to being implemented, each proposed recommendation would need further evaluation and considerations as there are various factors influencing the feasibility of a project as well as the ease of initiating, completing, and putting a project into action. While a project may align with community interests and priorities, engineering complexity, funding considerations, and cross jurisdictional coordination also contribute to the actual implementation of a project.

The following sections identify the steps and actions necessary to carry out the overall vision of Buena Creek MOVES. This implementation approach is intended to be a “living document” meant to reflect the changes in community priorities and available resources. As such it should be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure it remains effective and responsive to the community’s dynamic environment. As such, specific action from the Board of Supervisors is not needed or anticipated for future revisions and updates.

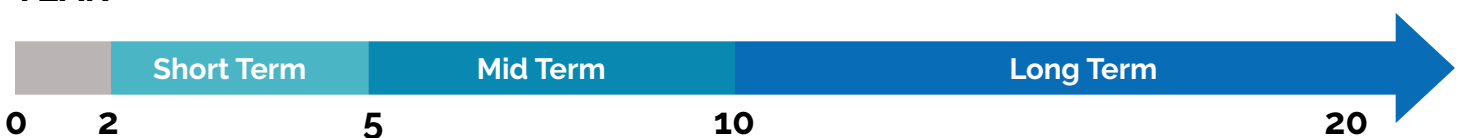
8.1 Phasing, Implementation & Funding

Phasing of Potential Improvements

Each recommended improvement is assigned a potential timeframe based on consideration of all the factors mentioned above. The timing of implementing various components of Buena Creek MOVES is intended to be flexible, to maximize implementation opportunities and resources as they become available.

1. Short Term (ST) - Could be implemented within the next 2 to 5 years.
2. Mid Term (MT) - Could be implemented in the next 5 to 10 years.
3. Long Term (LT) - Could be implemented in the next 10 to 20 years.

YEAR



Funding

Funding for various elements of the NMP identified in the Implementation Plan will require a comprehensive and Creative long-term funding approach. There are a great number of financing tools and funding sources available that can help minimize the County's financial responsibility in the final design, environmental, and Construction phases of the NMP including grant funding, private development Condition, and inclusion in the County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

The County's DPW CIP Five-Year Plan identifies public infrastructure projects that are expected to be designed and/or constructed with the five-year period. The 5-year plan includes County public infrastructure such as roads, active transportation facilities, bridges, sewer systems, stormwater and flood control systems, airports, and other facilities. The projects identified in the CIP are formed and prioritized based on the criteria shown in **Figure 8-1**.



Figure 8-1. CIP Project Criteria

Table 8-1. Potential Funding Sources

Federal Funding

Funding Source	Title	Description
U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S DOT)	Safe Streets and Roads for All	<p>The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds over five years, 2022-2026. The SS4A program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.</p> <p>The SS4A program supports the County of San Diego's goal to address safety issues along the corridor. Projects are eligible for funding if the project supports the development of bikeway networks with bicycle lanes that are safe for people of all ages and abilities, installing pedestrian safety enhancements, and transforming a roadway corridor with safety improvements.</p>
U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S DOT)	Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program	<p>The U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program provides grants for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact. The eligibility requirements of BUILD allow project sponsors, including state and local governments, counties, Tribal governments, transit agencies, and port authorities, to pursue multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional projects that are more difficult to fund through other grant programs.</p> <p>The BUILD program, previously known as the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grants, was established under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and operated under annual appropriations acts until authorized in November 2021.</p>
Federal Highway Administration (FHA)	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ)	CMAQ provides funding to state and local governments to fund transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act.
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Mobility, Access & Transportation Insecurity: Creating Links to Opportunity Research and Demonstration Program	Funds a research and demonstration effort to improve people's access to affordable transportation, especially in areas that currently lack efficient and convenient transit options and measure the effect of reducing transportation insecurity through improved mobility access on people and their communities.
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	All Stations Accessibility Program	The All Stations Accessibility Program makes competitive funding available to assist in the financing of capital projects to repair, improve, modify, retrofit, or relocate infrastructure of transit stations or facilities to make all public areas of the station accessible to people with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.
Federal Highway Administration (FHA)	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program	Provides funding that may be used by states and localities for a wide range of projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance of surface transportation, including highway, transit, intercity bus, bicycle and pedestrian projects.
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Formula Grants for Rural Areas	Provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations.

State Funding

Funding Source	Title	Description
California Transportation Commission	Local Streets and Roads (LSR) Program	<p>Back in 2017, SB1 was signed to address basic road maintenance, rehabilitation and critical safety needs on both state highways and local streets and road systems. Eligible projects under the LSRP include: road maintenance and rehabilitation, safety projects, and complete street components (i.e. active transportation, bicycle and pedestrian safety), and traffic control devices.</p> <p>The LSRP supports the County's goal to increase safety for all users, reduce vehicle speeds using complete street components, decreasing collisions, and providing safer access to local streets.</p>
California Transportation Commission	Solutions for Congested Corridors (SCCP)	<p>Issued by the State's Transportation Commission and as part of the SB 1 program, this grant program requires projects to be included in an adopted regional transportation plan or a comprehensive corridor plan. The projects through this program will focus on improvements to state highways, local streets and roads, rail facilities, public transit facilities, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and restoration or preservation work that protects critical local habitat or open space.</p> <p>SB1 requires preference to be given to comprehensive corridor plans that demonstrate collaboration between Caltrans and local or regional partners, reflecting a comprehensive planning approach. It may need to co-sponsored by local or regional agencies such as NCTD or SANDAG in order to be competitive.</p>

State Funding

Funding Source	Title	Description
Caltrans	Active Transportation Program (ATP)	<p>Issued by the State's Transportation Commission, the Active Transportation Program grant is cycled on an annual basis. The objective of the corridor plan is to increase the proportion of trips accomplished by walking and biking, increase the safety and mobility of non-motorized users, enhance public health, ensure that disadvantaged communities fully share the benefits of the plan, and provide projects that benefit many types of active transportation users.</p> <p>Pursuant to the statute, the purpose of the program is to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation such as walking and biking. Successful grant applications tend to focus on disadvantaged communities and intensive community outreach efforts. Bicycle facilities, sidewalk and curb ramp improvements, and proposed roundabout may be eligible.</p>
Caltrans	Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants (STP)	<p>The Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program was created to support Caltrans mission: Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. Successful grant applications address and articulate how the project relates to the Caltrans Mission, Objectives, and Considerations. Example projects eligible for the STP Grant as it relates to the CCP include: active transportation plans, comprehensive corridor plans, local or regional corridor plans, and complete street plans.</p> <p>Successful grant applications tend to focus on stakeholder and community collaboration, identifying and addressing deficiencies in the multimodal transportation system, and the needs of environmental justice and underserved communities.</p>
Caltrans	Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	<p>The HSIP is a core federal-aid program to States for the purpose of achieving a significant reduction in fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. California's Local HSIP focuses on infrastructure projects with nationally recognized crash reduction factors.</p> <p>HSIP project selection is data-driven based on crash data with improvements focused on the benefits associated with crash reductions. Lighting, access control, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements may be funded along the corridor at high crash locations or locations where fatalities or severe injury collisions have occurred. A Local Road Safety Plan (LSRP) is required to apply for the HSIP grants.</p>
California Transportation Commission	Local Partnership Program	<p>Created by SB 1, the Local Partnership program appropriates two hundred million dollars annually. The LPP focuses on projects that align with the state's climate and equity goals as well as those that identify and incorporate the installation of conduit or fiber, where appropriate.</p> <p>Successful grant applications focus on accessibility improvements, air quality and GHG improvements, Community Engagement, and Safety.</p>
Caltrans	Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program	<p>The purpose of the PROTECT program is to help local agencies improve the resiliency of their on-system transportation infrastructure. Specifically, the program provides federal funding to projects to help communities address vulnerabilities due to weather, natural disasters, and climate change. The program also provides funds to plan transportation improvements and emergency response strategies to address those vulnerabilities. Vulnerabilities the program addresses include, but are not limited to, current and future weather events, increasing frequency and magnitude of natural disasters, and changing climate conditions, including sea level rise. PROTECT grants include resilience improvement grants, community resilience and evacuation route grants, and at-risk coastal infrastructure grants.</p>
SANDAG	TransNet Program	<p>The program is intended to support improvements that will aid in reducing traffic congestion through highway, bus, and rail projects, as well as bike and pedestrian projects, local street repairs, habitat conservation efforts, smart growth measures, and grant programs.</p>
Caltrans	Low Carbon Transit Operations Program	<p>Operating and capital assistance for transit agencies to reduce GHG emissions and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities (California Climate Investments)</p>
Office of Traffic Safety (OTS)	Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety	<p>Office of Traffic Safety Grants (OTS) fund safety programs and equipment. Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety is a specifically identified priority. This category of grants includes enforcement and education programs, which can encompass a wide range of activities, including bicycle helmet distribution, design and printing of billboards and bus posters, other public information materials, development of safety components as part of physical education curriculum, or police safety demonstrations through school visitations.</p>

8.2 Monitoring & Evaluation

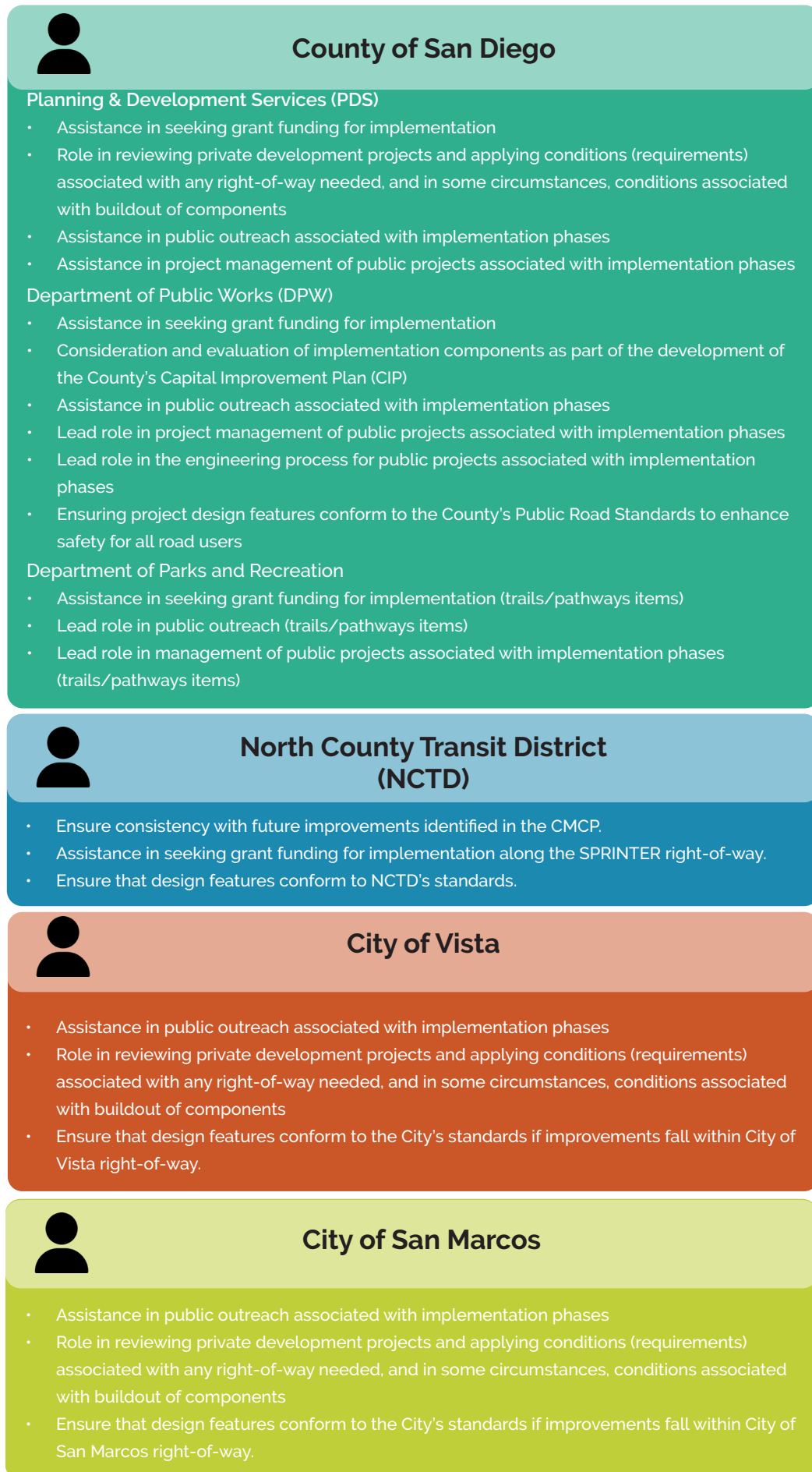
Transition from the existing conditions to buildout of the Buena Creek community will involve continued community engagement and coordination with property owners throughout the community. It is anticipated the County will continue to take the lead in public outreach when projects move into the implementation phase. During the construction phases of the project, a program of engagement and coordination with affected property owners and businesses will be conducted to inform local businesses and other property owners along the corridor of changes to access and circulation as well as convey the coordinated construction schedule.

Implementation of the recommendations from Buena Creek MOVES will require ongoing commitment by the local jurisdictions, stakeholders, and partner agencies. The Implementation Matrix identifies Responsible Teams for departments that could have a role in various applicable Buena Creek MOVES components and projects. The following page is a high-level summary of anticipated potential roles and responsibilities for these stakeholders

Table 8-2. Implementation Matrix

ID	Project / Improvement Description	Responsible Teams	Potential Funding Sources	Estimated Cost	Timeframe
1	Realign Robelini Drive	County of San Diego	TransNet TIF	\$\$\$\$	Long Term
2	Widen South Santa Fe Avenue	County of San Diego City of Vista City of San Marcos	TransNet TBD	\$\$\$\$	Long Term
3	Improve vehicular access to the Buena Creek Transit Station	County of San Diego NCTD	TBD	\$\$	Long Term
4	Intersection improvements at Monte Vista Dr & Buena Creek Rd	County of San Diego	Road Fund Balance	\$\$\$	Mid Term
5	Fill in sidewalk gaps	County of San Diego	TBD	\$\$	TBD
6	Inland Rail Trail connection to Buena Creek Transit Station	County of San Diego	TBD	\$\$	Short Term
7	Buffered bike lanes on South Santa Fe	County of San Diego	TBD	\$	Short Term
8	Coordinate with NCTD on bus schedule	NCTD	RAISE Grant, TBD	\$	TBD
9	Increase security at Buena Creek Transit Station	NCTD Sherriff County of San Diego	TBD	\$	Short Term
10	Explore formalizing community representation for this area	County of San Diego	General Fund	\$	Short Term

Figure 8-2. High-level Summary of Anticipated Roles and Responsibilities





NCTD BREEZE bus at Buena Creek transit stop

“

Buses come early but don't wait until their scheduled departure time. They have inconsistent arrival times. Poor crossing at Buena Creek/ Santa Fe.

”

- Buena Creek Resident
October NCTD SPRINTER Tabling

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APPENDICES