

COLLEGE AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Community Plan Update Report 2020

Acknowledgements

The College Area Community Council wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following persons and organizations in the completion of this Report:

- The CACC's Beautification and Long Range Planning Committee, chaired by CACC Board member Michael D'Ambrosia
- Professor Michael Stepner and the students of his Urban Design class at the New School of Architecture and Design, who identified the design opportunities by focusing on the College Area transportation nodes
- Professor Chris McCampbell and the students of his Environmental Graphic Design class at San Diego State University's School of Art and Design, who presented College Area wayfinding, beautification, and signage concepts to the CACC.
- Professor Bruce Appleyard and the students of his Masters in City Planning Studio at San Diego State University's Department of City Planning in the School of Public Affairs. The students in this class applied current planning tools, including the Livability and Smart Growth Equity Calculator and the Handbook for Building Livable Transit Corridors.
- The CACC's Community Plan Update Steering Committee, chaired by CACC Board member Saul Amerling, and consisting of Bob Higdon, Howard Blackson, Jim Schneider, Jose Reynoso, Josh Mello, Julie Hamilton, Linda Godoy, Michael Jenkins, and Rachel Gregg.
- City Planning Studio students Daniell Shirazi and Richard Xie, who served as interns with the Steering Committee.

Executive Summary

With growth patterns defined by interlocking canyons and mesas, what is now the College Area developed starting in the early 1930s in spurts, primarily along roads that connected the growing City of San Diego to rural areas east of the city. The community began to grow steadily after the relocation of what is now San Diego State University (SDSU) and following the postwar trend for suburban living.

SDSU grew over the decades to its current enrollment of roughly 35,000 students on 215 acres. The University has had major impacts, both positive and negative, on the community, including employment, access to cultural and recreational resources, demands for both employee housing and local business services, increased traffic from both employees and students commuting to campus, parking, and off-campus student housing. Over time, the University has become a focal point of the College Community. In turn, this has created a divide between the interests of the University versus the interests of the largely single-family residential population.

The College Area community is poised for significant change. The community is projected to more than double in population over the next fifteen years. A large portion of this growth will include students, but high growth rates are projected among all age groups. The implications of this growth are broad. The community must accommodate a large increase in new housing units to meet this growth, amid existing conflicts between single family residents and more students moving into converted mini-dorms. It also implies increasing traffic and its carbon footprint, at a time when everyone must face up to climate change.

Despite these challenges, the College Area has several opportunities. First, the area is mostly well-served by transit, especially by the trolley and bus transit center on the south edge of the SDSU campus. Second is SDSU itself, as both a major employer and in its capacity to influence the community. A timely update to the community plan amid these pending changes provides a third opportunity, for the College Area community as a whole to define its future.

The community plan update must be consistent with the City of San Diego's General Plan. That includes the Housing Element, which mandates that our community provide our fair share of San Diego's housing needs across income levels; and the Climate Action Plan, which sets numerous goals for reducing our climate change impact.

This Community Plan Update Report presents seven specific visions for what the College Area can become in responding to the challenges we face, building on our opportunities, and doing so consistent with the City of San Diego's General Plan. The seven visions, as detailed in the Report, are:

1. To meet the community's future housing needs by adding residential and mixed-use density along the community's major corridors and at the three main intersections (nodes).
2. To reduce traffic congestion and improve local mobility.
3. To encourage development of a "campus town" on Montezuma Road on the southern edge of SDSU.

4. To convert Montezuma Road east of College Avenue into a linear park and an extension of the “campus town.”
5. To create a sense of identity and place.
6. To establish connections between the community and SDSU.
7. To protect the integrity of the community’s single-family neighborhoods.

Focusing new multi-family housing along with mixed use development along the major corridors and intersections takes advantage of existing transit infrastructure to minimize or even reduce traffic impacts while meeting our increased housing need. Increasing housing opportunities along an attractive campus town encourages competition for the market demand that is currently pushing the conversion of single family homes into mini-dorms, while also providing an attractive and walkable/bikeable destination for students and residents alike. And building bridges between the community and SDSU can help to improve the quality of life for students and residents alike.

Growth will happen with or without a plan. An updated plan can direct the market forces in a manner that improves - rather than degrades - the quality of life for the College Area community. It is proposed that this Report serve as a foundational document for the San Diego Planning Department to use in updating the Community Plan, with the understanding that there will be additional public input to the final Plan coordinated by the City.

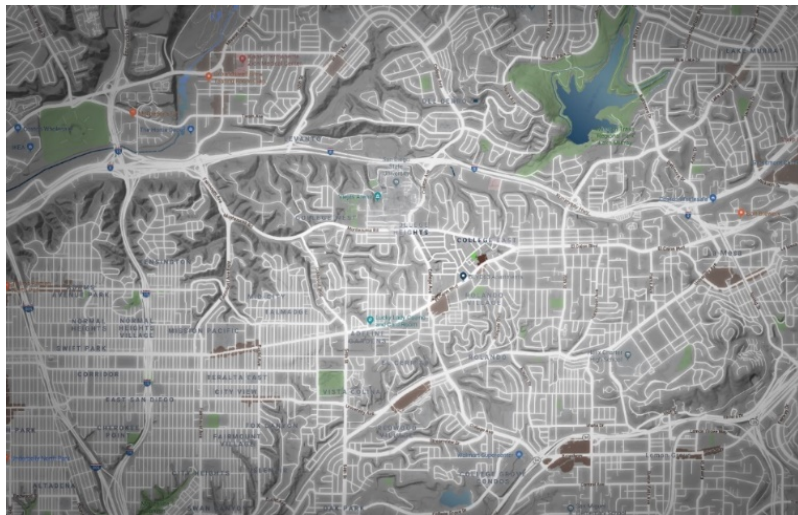
The College Area's Past, Present & Future

Physical Profile

Located in the central part of the City of San Diego, just south of the Interstate 8 and west of the City of La Mesa, the College Area is comprised of 1,987 acres. The community lies along the southern rim of Mission Valley and is approximately 8 miles northeast of the downtown area. The community shares boundaries with the designated community plan areas of Navajo and Mission Valley to the north, Kensington-Talmadge to the west, and Eastern Area to the south, as seen in [Figure 1](#).

College Area is a dynamic residential community that includes single-family residential neighborhoods as well as more dense areas of development closer to San Diego State University and along portions of the major corridors. As a result of the University's presence and the history of El Cajon Boulevard, the College Area has become a major east-west thoroughfare.

Physically, the community is made up of several mesas intersected by canyons, connected by two arterials (Fairmount Avenue/Montezuma Road and College Avenue), and adjacent to Interstate 8. Within the community, there are three major streets that provide internal connections and collect most of the community's circulation: El Cajon Boulevard, Montezuma Road, and College Avenue.



Geographically situated amongst canyons and mesas

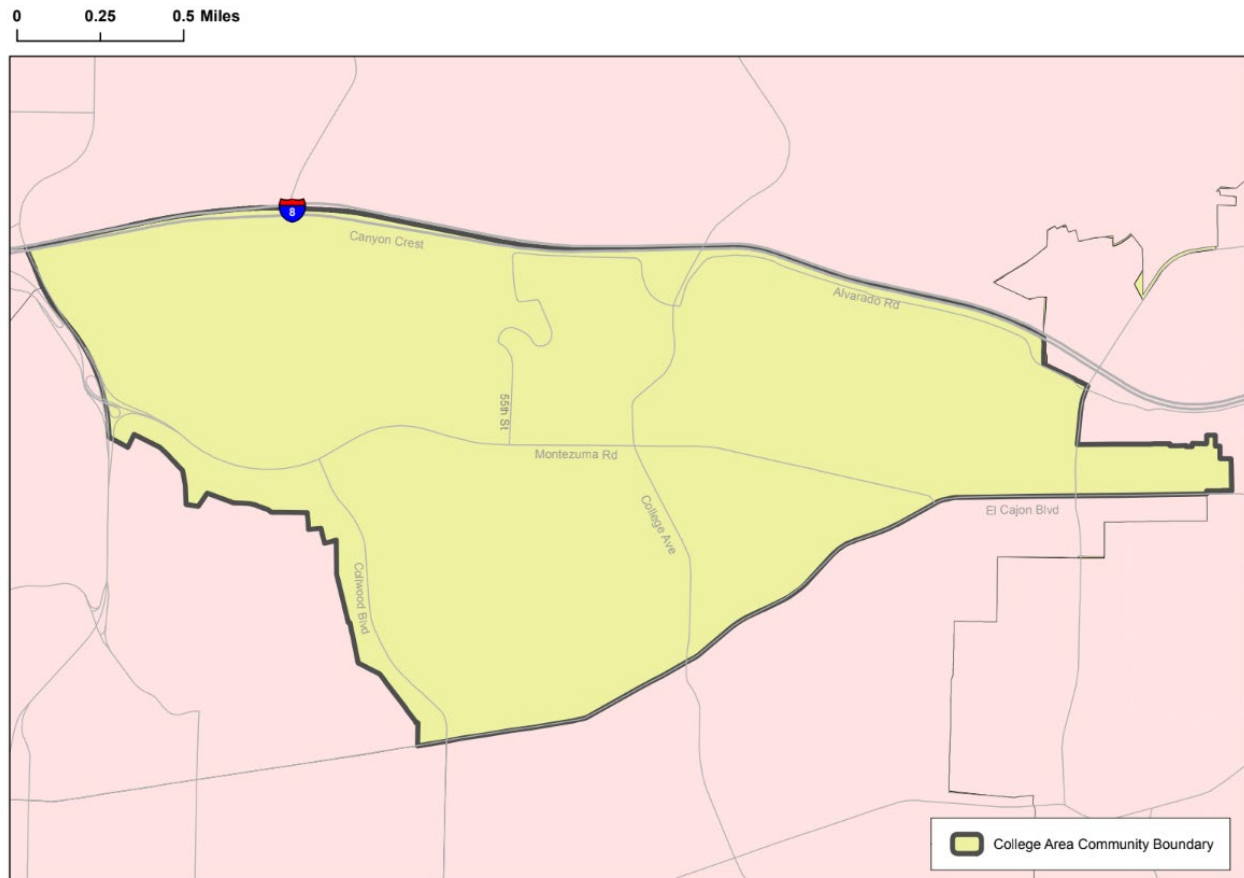


Figure 1 *College Area Boundary (SANDAG)*

The College Area's Past

Starting in the early 1930s, the community of College Area began to develop primarily along roads that connected the growing City of San Diego to rural areas east of the City, roads such as El Cajon Boulevard, Adams Avenue, 55th Street, and 63rd Street. Initial growth was relatively slow, and the community remained largely rural in character. However, the community began to steadily grow following the relocation of what is now San Diego State University (SDSU) coupled with the natural outward growth of San Diego. The postwar trend for suburban living further contributed to the gradual growth of the community, as seen in [Photograph 2-1](#).

This slow, steady suburban-style growth resulted in the primarily residential character of today's College Area. The slow growth also contributed to the variety of architectural styles that can be seen across College Area's diverse neighborhoods.

1957



2019



Photograph 2-1 *College Area then & now aerial*

Adjacent to the community, the University grew over the decades from its initial enrollment of 150 students on 125 acres to its current enrollment of roughly 35,000 students on 215 acres. As such, the University has had major impacts, both positive and negative, on the community, including employment, access to cultural and recreational resources, demands for both employee housing and local business services, increased traffic from both employees and students commuting to campus, parking, and off-campus student housing. Over time, the University has become a focal point of the College Community. In turn, this has created a divide between the needs and desires of the University versus the needs and desires of the largely single-family residential population.



The College Area community has grown in tandem with the expansion of SDSU.

Initial planning efforts to address the needs of the community began in 1965 with the adoption of the San Diego State College Area Community Plan. The plan recommended development of student housing adjacent to the university to minimize impacts to nearby neighborhoods. The plan was updated in 1974 and renamed the State University Area Plan to further address circulation problems. In 1983, the plan was amended to designate specific areas for fraternity and sorority houses. The amendment rezoned areas to allow for higher density, dormitory, and multi-family type housing.

Additional regulations and guidelines for the north side of El Cajon Boulevard were included as part of the 1986 Mid-City Planned District and Mid-City Design Plan, later updated and renamed the Central Urbanized Planned District in 1999.

The most recent community plan update for the College Area, in 1989, changed the name to the College Area Community Plan and expanded the community's boundaries to include neighborhoods east of Reservoir Drive and north of El Cajon Boulevard.

In 1993, the City of San Diego adopted a Redevelopment Plan for areas adjacent to SDSU. Despite community support, SDSU later withdrew support for the Redevelopment Plan.

The College Area's Present

The College Area is composed of a mix of land-uses, including residential, commercial, mixed-use, and open space/parks. The largest category of land use by acreage is as single-family residential. [Figure 2](#) shows the distribution of existing land uses.

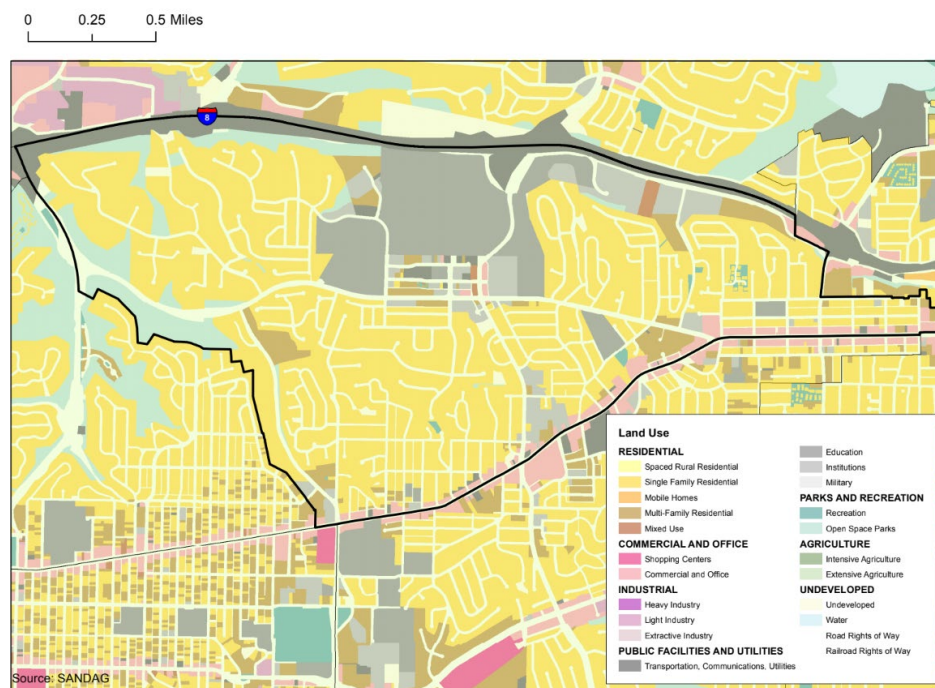


Figure 2 *Existing College Area Land Use (City of San Diego)*

Next to single-family housing, the University makes up the next largest portion of the community, at about 11%. Some multi-family housing is located near the University and along transit corridors. Commercial uses are primarily located along El Cajon Boulevard and, to a lesser degree, College Avenue and adjacent to the University.

The third largest segment of land uses, because of its unique topography, is open space/parks with roughly 8% of the community's acreage. This figure is misleading, however, because much of the open space is due to the canyon areas that are neither developable nor suitable for most recreational uses. The College Area in fact suffers from a lack of parks.

Table 1 Projected Land Uses by Acreage				
Developed Acres		2020	2035	2050
	Total Acres	1,987	1,987	1,987
	Single Family	987	960	955
	Multiple Family	88	152	157
	Other Residential	35	33	33
	Mixed Use	17	54	57
	Industrial	9	10	10
	Commercial/Services	95	25	23
	Office	3	2	2
	Schools	216	221	221
	Roads and Freeways	404	404	404
	Parks and Military Use	71	71	71
	Total Developed Acres	1,924	1,932	1,933
Vacant Developable Acres	Low Density Single Family	4	4	4
	Single Family	5	5	4
	Multiple Family	6	1	0
	Mixed Use	3	0	0
	Office	1	0	0
	Total Vacant Developable Acres	18	10	9

(SANDAG Series 13)

San Diego and most of California suffers from a lack of access to housing, especially at an affordable price. The College Area is no different. While the community has a broad range of housing values, reflecting the diversity in both demographics and income of the community, those housing values have continued to rise along with the rest of the city and the region so that most College Area housing is now unaffordable for persons of low and middle incomes.

The unaffordability problem is exacerbated by demand for housing by students. SDSU has recently added on-campus housing options for its students, currently providing about 8,000 beds on campus, but that supply does not meet the demand for a campus with approximately 35,000 students and 10,000 employees. Many students and employees live outside the College Area – the precise numbers are not known – and they commute to campus daily. While the campus is well-served by light rail and bus transit, most commuters – again, the precise numbers are not known – travel by automobile, which imposes high traffic demands on the major corridors leading to and from SDSU. A related issue is that SDSU is increasing the number of graduate students, who are likely to spend more time on campus than undergraduates, and who therefore are seeking more housing options near campus.

There are various planning assumptions regarding the value of single family neighborhoods. One assumption is that owner-occupied housing tends to be better maintained than investor owned property, and therefore municipal tax returns remain high. Another assumption is that the relationships built among neighborhood residents results in a cohesiveness that minimizes crime and other security risks that impose costs on local government.

There is an unquantified but clear unmet student demand for housing near campus. Some multifamily housing has been built along Montezuma adjacent to campus, but that has not kept pace with the increasing demand. While many residents offer single or multiple rooms for students within single family homes, many other homes have been converted to residential use targeted to students. These are described as “converted” because they include internal and external modifications to allow much higher densities than the houses were originally built for. Referred to locally as “mini-dorms,” the number in the College Area is currently estimated at about 900 of the 4,247 current single family residences, or 21%. While some mini-dorms provide housing for military tenants and other non-students, an unknown but large majority are students.

The problems that these converted residential uses impose include poor maintenance; lifestyle conflicts between students and permanent residents resulting in policing costs; and parking and other public services demands, including environmental services collection costs. A unique unquantified issue is that the high investment returns for investor-owned mini-dorms drives up the selling price of single-family homes, contributing to the overall housing affordability issue.



The large daily commuter ingress to and egress from the College Area results in long delays and significant pollution. The auto-centric design of the community also limits mobility within the community by any transportation mode other than by automobile. Resident-serving businesses are accessible largely only by automobile because of their strip-center design and suburban separation of residences from businesses.

The College Area is largely well-served by transit due to the location of trolley stops in and near the community, and bus rapid transit lines with stops located throughout the community. [Figure 3](#) shows that most of the community is within a half-mile of a station. In the City of San Diego, areas located within a half-mile of a major transit station are included in the City's Transportation Priority Area (TPA). Much of the College Area's commercial districts fall within a TPA. However, the intersection of Montezuma Road and El Cajon Boulevard are not served either by bus or trolley and are outside a TPA.



The College Area is served by various modes of transportation that are used by both residents and students.

Bus routes running through the commercial area along El Cajon Boulevard provide ample stops. However, access to stops in the single family neighborhoods is lacking. Only a limited number of existing bus stops feature transit amenities such as sheltered stops or benches. The College Area is served by the green trolley line, with two stations (one located at SDSU and one located at Alvarado Medical Center).

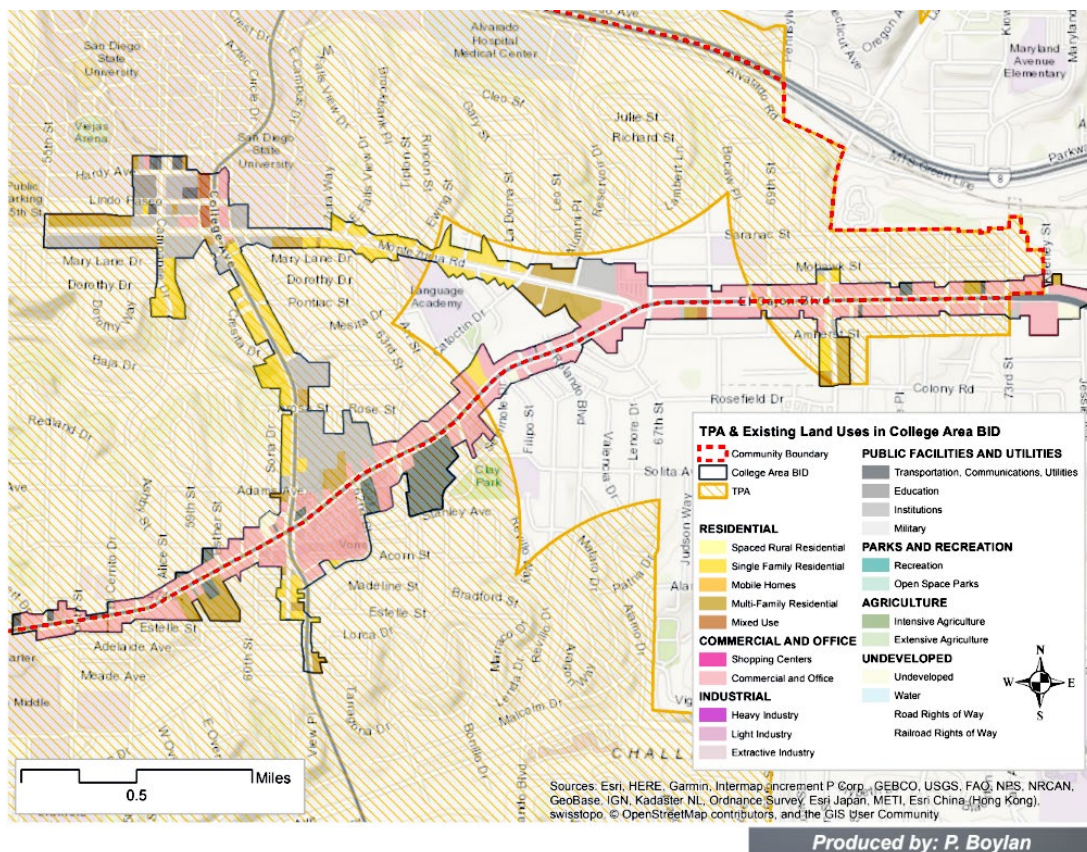


Figure 3 *Transit Priority Area (SANDAG)*

Three main corridors connect the College Area community to its surroundings: (1) Montezuma Road, (2) El Cajon Boulevard, and (3) College Avenue. As seen in Figure 3, both College Avenue and 70th Street act as North/South connections through the College Area community, and link to Interstate 8 (I-8). Additionally, College Avenue connects and runs through the center

of San Diego State University, which attracts people from throughout San Diego County every day. The combined destinations and use of these two corridors attract a high volume of cars. **Figure 4** identifies traffic volumes along the main corridors and highlights patterns of traffic flow. The map shows traffic flow concentrates on both College Avenue and 70th Street and is most constrained near and around freeway access. Interestingly, parts of Montezuma Road are identified as having lower traffic volumes, and thus present opportunities for other right-of-way uses.

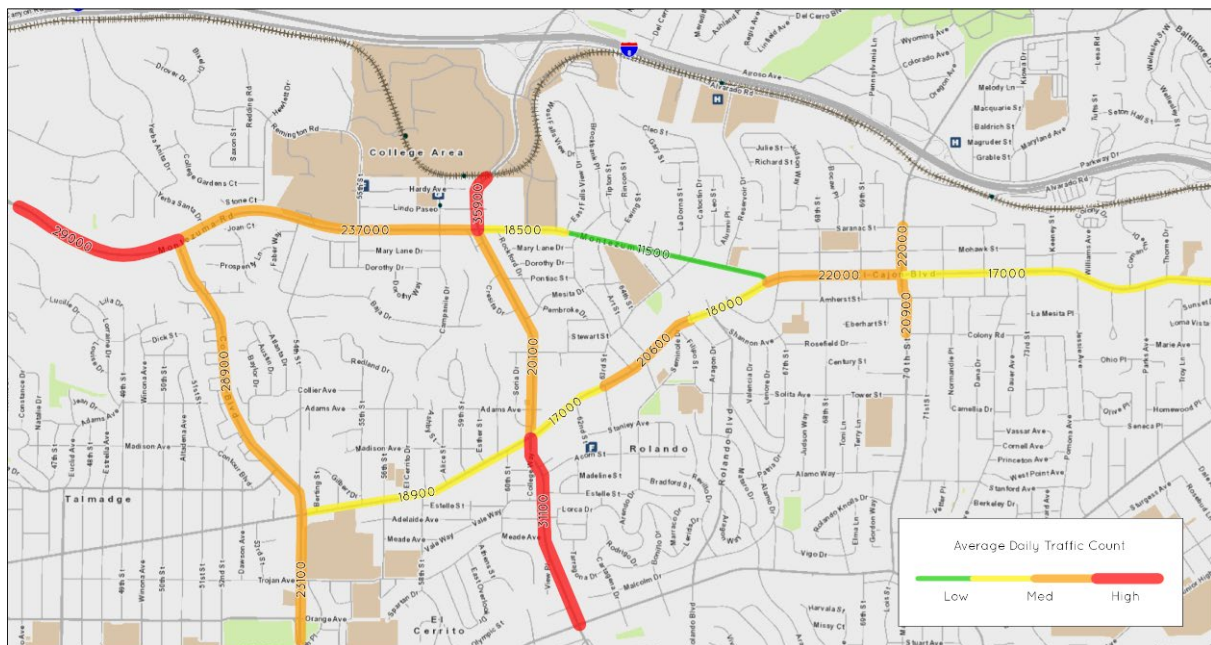
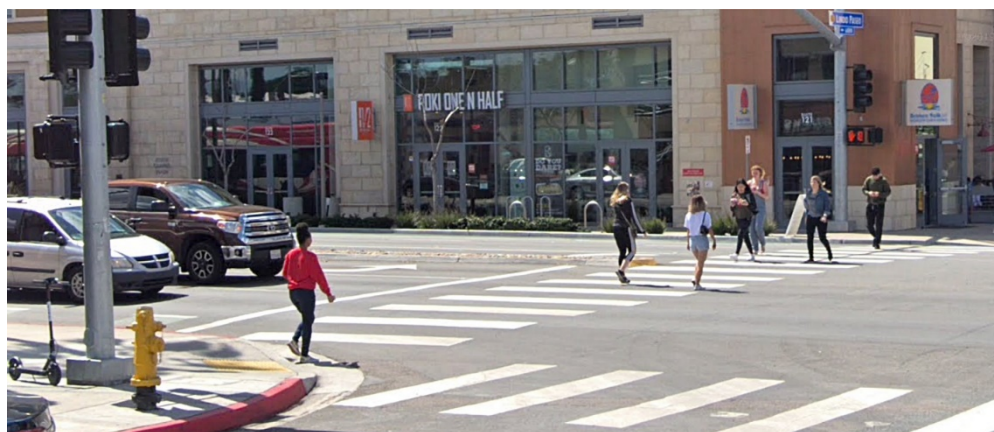


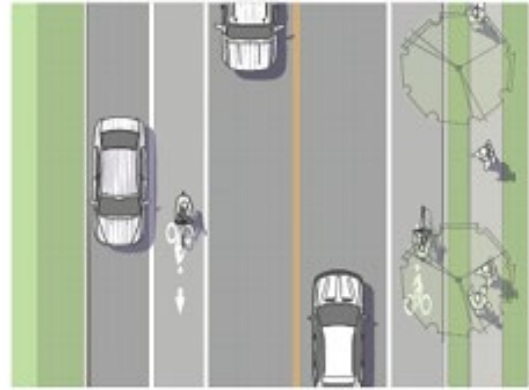
Figure 4 *Traffic Flow Map (SANDAG)*

The College Area is well served by sidewalks. However, many parts of the community suffer from a lack of pedestrian amenities, high vehicular speeds, and wide crossings, which tend to limit pedestrian usage.



Intersection of Lindo Paseo and College Avenue

Existing bicycle facilities in the community primarily consist of Class III- Bikes Routes and some Class II- Bike Lanes. Bicycle routes through the community lack connectivity, requiring bicyclists to ride on uncontrolled high volume traffic areas.



Major streets cut through the community following natural topography features. East-west traffic flows primarily along El Cajon Boulevard and Montezuma Road, while north-south traffic runs primarily on College Avenue and Collwood Boulevard, with College Avenue and 70th Street being the only north-south street that runs through the entirety of the community. Montezuma Road west of College Avenue has high levels of traffic, while east of College Avenue it has relatively low traffic.

The College Area's Future

Today, the community is once again looking to update the College Area Community Plan with the goal of addressing current challenges while considering the anticipated demographic changes that the College Area will face.

The College Area community is projected to grow substantially in the next fifteen years. According to the most recent San Diego Association of Government (SANDAG) growth projections, the College Area will grow from its 2020 estimated population of 25,437 to 48,089 by 2035. This is an increase of 89%. Interestingly, SANDAG's growth projections from 2035 to 2050 show an increase of only 2%. (Note: on average historically, the SANDAG regional growth forecast has been accurate within +/- 0.4 percent of actual counts for population, housing, and employment.)

SANDAG projects that, to accommodate this population growth, the total number of housing units in the College Area will grow from 8,402 to 17,494 from 2020 to 2035, an increase of 108%. With only 18 total vacant developable acres in the entire community, the College Area is largely built out. This raises the question of where these new housing units will be built, and what kinds of projects will be necessary to meet the projected demand.

An evaluation of projected population growth by age groups provides some ideas on how to answer this question. The rate of growth is high across all age categories, with the lowest growth

rate from 2020 to 2035 of 60% in the 55-64 age group, and the highest rate of 110% in both the 0-17 age group and the 35-44 age group. In terms of total numbers, however, the 18-24 group accounts for the largest total numbers, with a population of 11,037 (43% of the community's total population) rising to 20,370 (42% of total population). Thus, if a large but unknown portion of the 18-24 age group are students at SDSU, this means that plans should include a substantial increase in units targeted to students. It also means that currently unavailable information about future student enrollment is necessary for more detailed planning.

Another consideration is that the two largest age group growth rates are 0-17, or children likely to be residing with parents, and 35-44, parent-age adults. Thus, family housing is a necessary component to meet the College Area's future housing demand. Some of that may become available in the single-family residential neighborhoods, but much more must be made available through new multifamily housing development

A third consideration is the fact that growth rates are high across all age group categories, including young adults (age group 25-34, 78%) and seniors (75+, 107%). Thus, a range of housing design options must be considered to meet these various housing needs.

Finally, SANDAG's 2020 projection of housing unit density is at a modest 3.03 residents per unit, and for 2035, projects only 2.75 residents per unit. This leaves open the possibility that there may be alternative housing designs that can accommodate increased per-unit density while still providing residents with the privacy and other amenities for quality housing.

All these projections must be tempered by a consideration of anticipated and recently approved projects that may meet some of the demand projected for the College Area. These include housing projects in the Grantville community to the north and the City of La Mesa to the east, dormitories on the main SDSU campus, planned housing at the planned SDSU-West campus, and currently planned projects in the College Area,

Data projections relevant to these observations follow. The source is SANDAG Series 13 Projections.

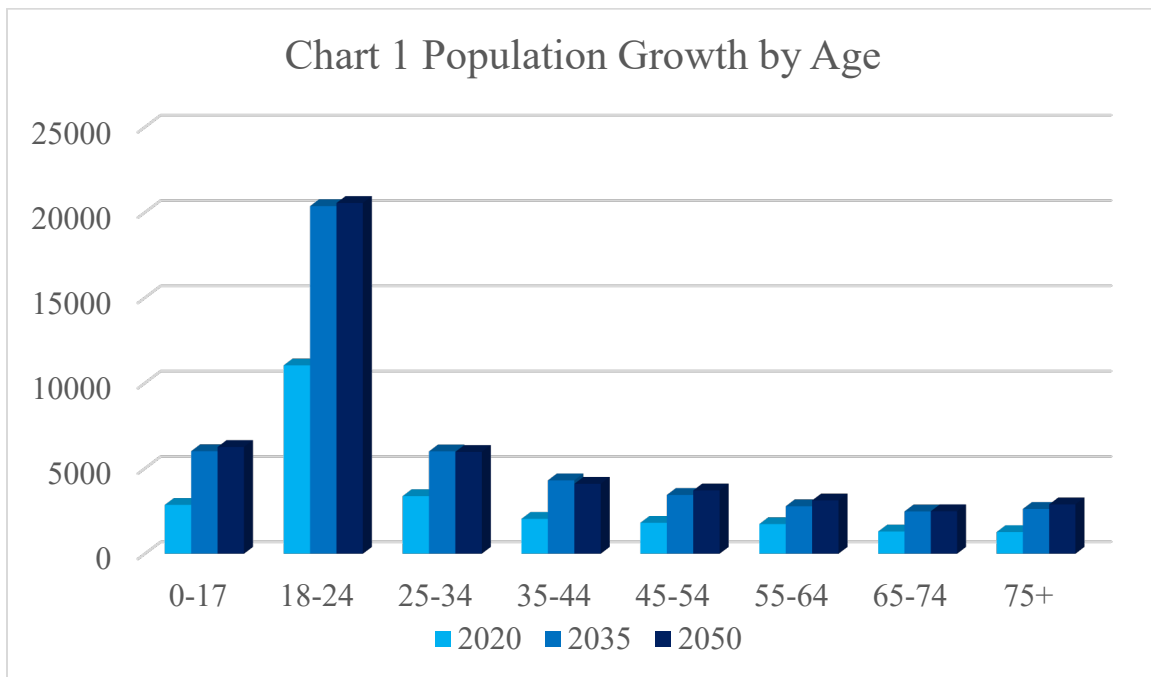
Population Data

Table 2
Projected Population Growth — Numerical Increase

	2020	Numerical Increase	2035	Numerical Increase	2050	Total Increase
Total Population	25,437	+22,575	48,012	+1,077	49,089	+23,652
0-17	2,861	+3,150	6,011	+245	6,256	+3,395
18-24	11,037	+9,333	20,370	+184	20,554	+9,517
25-34	3,375	+2,624	5,999	-34	5,965	+2,590
35-44	2,044	+2,255	4,299	-202	4,097	+2,053
45-54	1,812	+1,633	3,445	+265	3,710	+1,898
55-64	1,737	+1,047	2,784	+341	3,125	+1,388
65-74	1,302	+1,177	2,479	+11	2,490	+1,188
75+	1,269	+1,356	2,625	+240	2,892	+1,623

Table 3
Projected Population Growth — Percentage Increase

	2020	Percentage Increase	2035	Percentage Increase	2050	Total Percent Increase
Total Population	25,437	+89%	48,012	+2%	49,089	+93%
0-17	2,861	+110%	6,011	4%	6,256	+119%
18-24	11,037	+85%	20,370	+1%	20,554	+86%
25-34	3,375	+78%	5,999	-1%	5,965	+77%
35-44	2,044	+110%	4,299	-5%	4,097	+100%
45-54	1,812	+90%	3,445	+8%	3,710	+105%
55-64	1,737	+60%	2,784	+12%	3,125	+80%
65-74	1,302	+90%	2,479	+1%	2,490	+91%
75+	1,269	+107%	2,625	+10%	2,892	+128%



Population by Race & Ethnicity Data

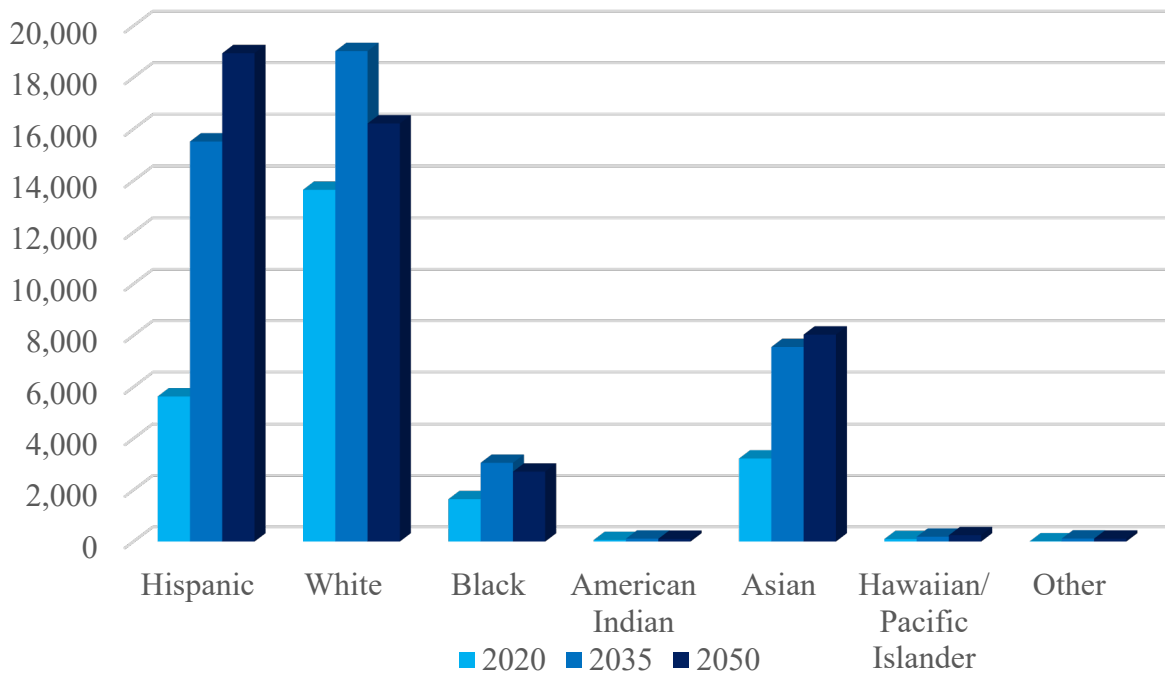
Table 4
Projected Population Growth by Race & Ethnicity

Race & Ethnicity	2020	Numerical Increase	2035	Numerical Increase	2050	Total Increase
Total Population	25,437	+22,575	48,012	+1,077	49,089	+23,652
Hispanic	5,632	+9,887	15,519	+3,422	18,941	+13,309
White	13,648	+5,374	19,022	-2,805	16,217	+2,569
Black	1,644	+1,412	3,056	-343	2,713	+1,069
American Indian	60	+52	112	-6	106	+46
Asian	3,223	+4,328	7,551	+482	8,033	+4,810
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	98	+90	188	+59	247	+149
Other	5	+112	117	-5	112	+107

Table 5
Projected Population Growth by Race & Ethnicity — Percentage Increase

Race & Ethnicity	2020	Percentage Increase	2035	Percentage Increase	2050	Total Percent Increase
Total Population	25,437	+89%	48,012	+2%	49,089	+93%
Hispanic	5,632	+176%	15,519	+22%	18,941	+236%
White	13,648	+39%	19,022	-15%	16,217	+19%
Black	1,644	+86%	3,056	-11%	2,713	+65%
American Indian	60	+87%	112	-5%	106	+77%
Asian	3,223	+134%	7,551	+6%	8,033	+149%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	98	+92%	188	+31%	247	+152%
Other	5	+2,240%	117	-4%	112	+2,240%

Chart 2 Population Growth by Race & Ethnicity



Housing Data

Table 6
Projected Total Housing Units

	2020	2035	2050
Household Population	20,395	42,881	43,890
Single Family	4,247	3,989	3,958
Multiple Family	4,155	13,505	14,070
Total Housing Units	8,402	17,494	18,028

Table 7
Projected Total Housing Units — Numerical Increase

	2020	2035	2050	Total Increase
Household Population	20,395	+22,486	+1009	+23,495
Single Family	4,247	-258	-31	-289
Multiple Family	4,155	+9,350	+565	+9,915
Total Housing Units	8,402	+9,092	+534	+9,626

Table 8
Projected Total Housing Units — Percentage Increase

	2020	2035	2050	Total Percentage Increase
Household Population	20,395	+110%	+2%	+112%
Single Family	4,247	-6%	-1%	-7%
Multiple Family	4,155	+225%	+4%	+23%
Total Housing Units	8,402	+108%	+3%	+115%

Jobs Data

Table 9
Projected Total Jobs

	2020	2035	2050	Total Increase
Total Jobs	15,487	16,969	17,363	+1,876
Numerical Increase	15,487	+1,482	+394	+1,876
% Increase	15,487	+10%	+2%	+12%

A Community-Initiated Plan Update

The Plan Update Process - Public Outreach and Input

The College Area Community Council/College Area Community Planning Board (CACC/PB) first sought to review the College Area Community Plan, last updated in 1989, beginning in early 2016. The Board initially explored adoption of a specific plan covering the area adjacent to the trolley and transit center on the southern edge of the San Diego State University (SDSU) campus to encourage transit oriented development. The San Diego Planning Department did not support this approach, noting that a specific plan would require an environmental review of the entire community plan area, and therefore the community plan should itself be updated. Following that guidance, the CACC/PB initiated a process to update the community plan.

In late 2016, the CACC/PB referred the plan update to its standing Beautification and Long Range Planning Committee. That Committee met nearly every month for two years. The Committee consisted of seven CACC/PB Board members and was chaired by architect Michael D'Ambrosia. The committee meetings were open to the public and attracted extensive community interest. The Committee regularly reported its progress to the full CACC/PB. During this time, *The College Area News*, a private publication mailed monthly to 3,000 addresses in the College Area, had a regular column entitled "College Area Happenings" that reported on the Committee's and Board's meetings, including invitations to attend and participate. *The College Area News* articles were published in fourteen monthly editions, January through April 2017; June through November 2018; and January through April 2019.

As this process was underway, the CACC/PB contacted the New School of Architecture and requested that the College Area plan update be made a topic of study in the School's Urban Design class. The class, under the direction of Professor Michael Stepner, conducted an overview of the community and identified unique and interesting development opportunities at the three intersections of the community's three main thoroughfares. This led to the concept of focusing future growth at those three nodes, a major concept in the proposed plan update.

In August 2018, the Committee hosted a community meeting at the Ugly Dog Pub on El Cajon Boulevard, with more than ninety people in attendance, to present its ideas and get community feedback. The Committee received both oral and written comments from those in attendance. The written comments were transcribed and are reproduced in the Appendix.

In fall, 2018, the CACC/PB made the community plan update a formal project and established a Steering Committee to guide the process on behalf of the Board. The Steering Committee members, appointed by the CACC/PB President, include five CACC/PB members plus four additional members with planning backgrounds. The Planning Board directed the Steering Committee to proceed with a plan update with these goals: to strengthen the single family neighborhoods, encourage multi-unit housing near existing transit and along major traffic corridors, promote local-serving businesses, and build the community's relationship to SDSU.

The Beautification and Long Range Planning Committee's work products were transferred to the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee asked the SDSU School of Public Affairs to assist in its plan update efforts, and Professor Bruce Appleyard agreed to make the plan update the class project for his Masters in City Planning Studio in Spring 2019. This resulted in three alternative student reports that provided additional – and creative – sources of community input into the plan update process.

Jose Reynoso has served as president of the CACC/PB during most of this process and is a member of the Steering Committee. He has provided regular updates on the plan update process to the CACC Board of Directors and to the neighborhood organizations noted below and provided occasional updates to the community plan area boards adjacent to the College Area. Steering Committee Chair Saul Amerling and Steering Committee member Julie Hamilton have helped to organize the College Triangle neighborhood group. Steering Committee members Howard Blackson and Michael Jenkins have also spoken before neighborhood groups.

The College Area consists of five separate neighborhood areas, each with their own association. These include: 1) Alvarado Estates—meets monthly, provided a letter of support for the initial specific plan proposal, currently has a regular CACC/PB Update item on its agenda; 2) College View Estates—meets quarterly, provided a letter of support for the initial specific plan proposal, and receives a regular update; 3) College Triangle—new group that meets semi-monthly, received a full report on the plan update project at its initial meeting; 4) El Cerrito—meets monthly, has been provided updates and information at every meeting; the El Cerrito neighborhood is divided in two, with the northern half in the College Area and the southern half in the Eastern Area Planning Area; Eastern Area is represented by a member on the Steering Committee; 5) Mesa Colony—meets monthly, with two Steering Committee members among its leadership.



In this photo, members of the Community Plan Update Steering Committee meet with students in the SDSU Masters in City Planning Studio.

Other community organizations that have participated in the Plan Update process and have received regular briefings include the College Area Business Association, which administers the City-designated Business Improvement District, and the Hardy Elementary Parent Teacher Association board.

Planning for the College Area's Future

Visions and Guiding Principles

Note: This section contains numerous graphics. These are intended for illustration purposes only and are neither project proposals nor intended to convey support for or approval of any projects appearing similar to the illustrations.

VISION I.

MEET THE COMMUNITY'S FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS BY ADDING RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE DENSITY ALONG THE COMMUNITY'S MAJOR CORRIDORS AND AT THE THREE MAIN INTERSECTIONS (NODES).

1. The College Area is largely built out with respect to the single family neighborhoods. To meet the community's future housing needs, what is needed is sensitive multi-unit housing developed along the commercial corridors. Doing so would also grow the customer base for existing and new businesses, and thereby expand employment opportunities.



2. New mixed-use development should be varied, include housing for seniors, families, professionals, and students, in buildings as tall as 8 stories at the nodes (intersections of the community's major traffic corridors), and designed to be pedestrian-friendly. Mixed-use development would ensure availability of space for local serving businesses, start-ups, tech businesses, and professionals.
3. The El Cajon Boulevard/Montezuma Road intersection presents a particularly attractive opportunity for a cluster of 6-8 story mixed-use buildings. Projects at this node might be designed for the post-bricks-and-mortar retail business environment, e.g., live-work spaces, co-working facilities, and other concepts that support the innovative economy. These could provide opportunities for student internships and quality jobs for recent graduates and local residents. A new hotel project has recently been approved at this node, and with new residences and businesses at this node, restaurants and other businesses catering to their

needs should follow. This node should feature an abundance of trees and green areas to encourage foot traffic.



4. The College Avenue/El Cajon Boulevard node should be family-centric, with new housing for middle income and working families, faculty and staff from SDSU, and seniors. The large businesses already there are geared to serve family needs. With careful design, the area could fit a one acre park with children's play areas.
5. The community's zoning should be reviewed and revised as necessary to allow multistory and mixed-use development in appropriate areas, as described. New zoning categories might also be considered to allow unique designs for student dormitory-style housing, co-living arrangements, live-work spaces, transitional housing for recent graduates, and commercial requirements that meet the needs of a digital business future.

6. The need for affordable housing and/or mixed-income housing may be met in part by the various religious institutions in the community developing on their expansive parking lots. The design could retain ground-level parking for the churches with housing built above.
7. A housing demand analysis and economic impact analysis should be prepared to project the levels and types of new development that the community can accommodate.
8. Enforceable design guidelines should be adopted to require that multi-story buildings step down in height away from the street frontage, and use sound walls, berms, vegetation, and other mitigating measures, to minimize the impact on the single family neighborhoods behind them.
9. Alvarado Road is an important traffic corridor in the College Area and is a candidate for increased density depending on SDSU's future plans for this area.



VISION II.

REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND IMPROVE LOCAL MOBILITY.

1. Traffic flow must be improved, and pedestrian/bike friendliness must start to encourage the type of development and the enhancements envisioned for the College Area Community. A comprehensive traffic and mobility study should be undertaken for the College Area. The following ideas should be considered in the analysis.
2. Traffic needs to flow effectively. Construction of a second off-ramp lane from Montezuma to northbound Fairmount would improve traffic flow and reduce congestion on Montezuma itself, plus on College Avenue and 70th Street. A consideration in studying this issue is whether increased residential density in the College Area would reduce the rush-hour demand on Montezuma Road.
3. A traffic circle at 63rd and Montezuma would reduce the speedway that that sector currently is and would make it more amenable to the type of park-like environment described later. The round-about itself could be the site of physical amenities that contribute to creating a sense of place.



4. Montezuma Road east of College Avenue to El Cajon Boulevard should be reduced to one lane of traffic in each direction. The street should also include generous bike lanes (with painted islands) on both sides of the street, widened sidewalks on each side, and the two separated from each other by a parkway with trees, benches, and other pedestrian amenities.



5. The traffic and mobility study should also evaluate whether a stop-and-turn light at Zura Way on College Avenue, with an automated, synchronized traffic light timing system, would make it easier for SDSU students to enter and leave SDSU parking structures and possibly provide traffic relief on other corridors.
6. El Cajon Boulevard needs to be reduced to a single lane for automobiles in each direction along with micro-mobility lanes, and with other amenities such as wide sidewalks, bike racks, scooter stables, benches, trees, ample street lighting, etc. to encourage pedestrians and boost economic vitality.



7. The traffic and mobility study should consider whether College Area streets can be more pedestrian-friendly with pedestrian crossings using push button-activated flashing yellow lights on each side of a designated crosswalk.
8. Dedicated bus lanes would improve public transit.
9. A shuttle system should be implemented to link the residential areas with the campus. This could be an expansion of the private shuttle services that some of the larger housing

complexes currently provide for their tenants, a public-private partnership between them and SDSU's on-campus shuttle system, or a SANDAG-initiated system.

10. Despite the trend toward non-automotive mobility, the reality is that many people will continue to use their cars to shop or visit the College Area. Adaptable parking structures that can be readily modified for other uses could make sense as parking demands shift. Also, SDSU should consider opening portions of its campus parking structures to the public.
11. Closed streets in a master-planned area, as described later, could be an opportunity to develop parks or hardscaped plazas for gathering or walking.
12. The heavy Montezuma traffic west of College Avenue walls off the community south of Montezuma from Hardy Elementary School and the SDSU campus on the north. The community for many years has requested a pedestrian bridge over Montezuma at or near 54th Street.



VISION III.

ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT OF A “CAMPUS TOWN” ON MONTEZUMA ROAD ON THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY (SDSU).

1. The westernmost section of Montezuma Road from Collwood Boulevard should have sidewalks on both north and south sides, plus lighting, signage, art installations, or other place identifiers that foretell entry into the campus town. Other entry points, from the north, south, and east should also have place identifiers.



2. Montezuma Road is already a pedestrian and bicycle/scooter/skateboard corridor for students traveling to campus east from Collwood Boulevard or 54th Street and west from El Cajon Boulevard. It can be substantially improved with more trees and other landscaping, and with redesigned and protected bicycle/scooter/skateboard lanes along the entire length. It also continues the entry into the College Area, and thus its physical appearance affects the College Area’s identity.
3. Much of the north side of Montezuma from 55th Street east to College has been recently redeveloped or is pending new development. The south side, however, consists of several older low-density apartment buildings and large parking lots. This stretch should be rezoned to allow mixed-use development up to 4-6 stories, with the ground floors containing businesses that serve the expanded student population.



4. The node at College Avenue and Montezuma Road is a further opportunity to be redeveloped with mixed-use buildings containing housing, with ground floor commercial spaces that support residents, such as print shops, coffee shops, restaurants, bars, shoe repair, retail sales, clothing, yoga studios, professional offices, etc. This new development should be designed to contrast or reflect the designs of the area's existing higher density residences. Buildings can be 4 to 6 stories, stepping back in height where facing single family neighborhoods.



5. Further east, existing single family residences could be redeveloped as mixed use or residential projects with buildings up to 5 stories. Zoning and design guidelines should be adopted to also allow the conversion of existing single family residences to office or commercial uses. These permitted uses could either be temporary or long-term if they are consistent with supporting a linear park across the corridor.

VISION IV.

CONVERT MONTEZUMA ROAD EAST OF COLLEGE AVENUE INTO A LINEAR PARK AND AN EXTENSION OF THE “CAMPUS TOWN”.

1. A Linear Park would provide a pleasant green stretch conducive to strolling, jogging, or other leisurely mobility down a vibrant area of commercial activity. As previously described, it should feature separate lanes for cyclists/skateboarders/scooters, widened sidewalks, and landscaped parkways separating the two.



2. Buildings along the east-of-College section should be high-rise mixed-use developments, with taller buildings close to the major nodes, and in the mid-section an eclectic mix of new mixed-use structures interspersed with older apartment buildings, and single family homes converted to coffee shops, specialty shops, specialized restaurants, and professional and institutional offices. Some of these new businesses could provide dining options beyond the existing fast-food offerings in the area, plus entertainment venues, both contributing to making the area a destination for local residents and outside visitors as well.



3. Social centers with commercial or residential activities would give focus and variety to the area. These social centers may have themes of use or interest, such as student performances, art shows, lectures, concerts; or a focus on co-sharing spaces, entrepreneurial enterprises, and think tank offices; or boutique shopping, restaurants, bars, coffee shops, and other social gathering places.
4. Design guidelines should be adopted to encourage development of small open spaces disbursed throughout the area with an abundance of trees, seating areas, and designated spaces for community art.
5. The City should encourage a design competition to best integrate mobility and park designs and should seek appropriate grants to pay for the public improvements that would stimulate new private investment.
6. New construction should aim for LEED Eco-Community certification. Design guidelines should require community-oriented features such as display space, gathering areas, reverse bay fronts, garage door and other open front designs, benches, and gathering spaces.
7. The College Area's most prominent gateway, where the two largest traffic flows into the community intersect, is the Montezuma Road/College Avenue intersection. A gateway feature should be designed for this intersection. Similar, but perhaps less prominent gateways should be considered at the Montezuma Road/El Cajon Boulevard intersection, the El Cajon Boulevard/70th Street intersection, and on College Avenue north of Montezuma Road.



VISION V.

CREATE A SENSE OF IDENTITY AND PLACE.

1. For new development, architecture should be varied, with the largest buildings developed at main corridor intersections (nodes) and designed to not intrude on adjacent residential, office, or commercial sites.



2. Surveys should be carried out to identify and enforce design guidelines adopted to identify and protect unique or historic structures or areas.
3. At each main entry point to the campus town from the freeway or major crossroads should be a gateway. The gateways can be varied in design (e.g., landscaping with lighting, monuments, overhead features, street art, wind features, banners, etc.), but should carry through a common theme. Wayfaring signage should incorporate this consistent theme.



4. Public spaces should be incorporated in new development to encourage destination restaurants, entertainment centers, and specialty shops, adjacent to wide setbacks. These spaces should be activated through programming to encourage gatherings such as concerts, recitals by SDSU students, food trucks, a farmers' market, and community events.



5. Consider adopting a Maintenance Assessment District (MAD) to populate the community with an overabundance of trees in appropriate places.
6. As noted, traffic on El Cajon Boulevard should be slowed down so that auto travelers can view and take part of what our community has to offer. This will begin to be realized when El Cajon Boulevard is converted to a single traffic lane with a dedicated bus lane, widened sidewalks, protected bike lanes, angled parking, pocket parks, pop-up parklets, and other features appropriate to specific locations.
7. SDSU faculty and staff and other young professionals are not opting to live in the College Area, as there are really no tracts of land conducive to developing new single family homes. There may be an opportunity to develop master planned neighborhoods of three- to four-story townhomes on Mary Lane Drive and Dorothy Drive (between Campanile Drive and Debby Drive), and down the hill on 54th Street (between Montezuma Road and Baja Drive). This approach would require all affected property owners to agree. These should be of quality design and aimed at professional families. The Mary Lane Drive/Dorothy Drive project could include closure of some internal streets to provide park-like common areas for residents.
8. A further sense of place could be established by painting place identifiers on the streets at selected intersections, using themes, signs, lighting, and other “place” identifiers.

VISION VI.

ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND SDSU.

1. A student housing cooperative effort including SDSU, business leaders, developers, students, and the community could convene to develop zoning, design guidelines, and development incentives to encourage eco-friendly, affordable student housing based on unique dormitory and co-living designs.
2. SANDAG could establish a tram or shuttle service, or cooperate with existing private shuttle services, to provide transit to and from the university on an established schedule along a regular route for students and residents as well.
3. SDSU should make parking permits available to College Area residents, perhaps at defined hours. Offering discounted parking rates for residents would encourage attendance at University performances and other events, including use of the grounds as a park during weekends.
4. SDSU could consider scheduling recitals, performances, lectures, and other public events at times that are more favorable to local residents.
5. SDSU should consider relocating its farmers' market to the open space between the transit center and South Campus Plaza, thereby opening it up to the general public.



6. SDSU could consider leasing private spaces in various parts of the College Area to engage both residents and students in public art.
7. SDSU should consider providing more educational opportunities for residents, along with the existing OSHER programs.

8. SDSU and local businesses should jointly explore entrepreneurial opportunities for students.
9. Consider changing the name of the College Area to something less generic and more descriptive (i.e. College Towne).



VISION VII.

PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS.

1. Many neighborhood streets are poorly lit or, in a few locations, are overly lit. Urban neighborhood lighting needs to be improved but should allow individual neighborhoods to adopt their own lighting themes.
2. Urban design guidelines should be adopted for each College Area neighborhood.
3. Mini-dorms no longer being used as student residences can be re-purposed as senior housing.
4. Adopt design guidelines, as previously discussed, to buffer the impact of taller development from adjacent single-family homes.



Beautification and Long Range Planning Committee “Ugly Dog Pub” Visioning Session, August 8, 2018 Participant Written Comments

- Develop shuttle system from SDSU to El Cajon Blvd. businesses.
- Tree-lined streets (shade and eco/green-friendly).
- Traffic circles.
- No hookah lounges, tobacco retailers or alcohol-related businesses.
- Public art, open spaces, green space, water features.
- Bike parking.
- Better lighting, safety features.
- More places like Trader Joe’s and Eureka.
- Reduced outdoor advertising, billboards, cleaner streets.
- Utility undergrounding.
- Multi-use fields for recreation.
- Highlight the three nodes: College/Montezuma, College/El Cajon, Montezuma/El Cajon.
- Landscape the boulevards.
- Create Village atmosphere - focus on larger sites to minimize 1950s strip developments.
- Public art strategy/mission - get developers to commit minor funding for public/environmental art with each project - that must be done in phase one of any project.
- Start public art initiative now by getting empty buildings or cheap ones on ECB to allow space for artists (w/legal & insurance to be addressed)
- Get SDSU students to have studio space in the community (SDSU could pay prop. Rent).
- 1st floor art studio space in apts. like Electra bldg. downtown.
- Start a “water a tree” BID program where restaurants/stores/liquor/etc. dump their ice /water on tree bases /spaces to help them grow.
- Major corridors should be narrowed to one lane in each direction. This would make room for broad sidewalks, landscaped center medians and most importantly, dedicated bike paths separated from vehicular traffic. A network of bike paths would help create a village atmosphere. I suggest you bring Andy Hanshaw of the SD Bicycle Coalition into the planning process. He has studied bicycle transit plans in other countries which are very successful.
- We may not have the ocean, but we have SDSU, a major element and jewel for the community to fully recognize and embrace.
- Ultimately, streets become smaller while landscaping and pedestrian corridors become larger.
- Further enhance student and youth entrepreneurial areas, zones, spaces.
- Integrative tram system that transports students & residents of College Area. Funding through SANDAG/state transportation grants.
- Housing for couples and families.
- Wide sidewalks w/ trees

- Parks.
- Buildings set back.
- Assess housing demand and make data available to all.
- Preserve single-family neighborhoods and provide adequate transitions.
- Make all materials publicly available, such as BID presentation and materials developed, to date.
- North Park, East Village & Hillcrest good for business—bad for residents.
- Provide for bikes.
- Dog parks.
- Farmer's market on plaza @ SDSU (transit center).
- Maker's Square - scary lot behind Keg & Bottle.
- Senior housing.
- Welcome university to community and community to university and consider it part of community.
- Roundabout at 63rd and Montezuma.
- Trees and park areas. Young families need these spaces. Can we buy land to accomplish more than a pocket park—PLEASE?!
- Preserve mid-century modern and other historic facades & signage.
- Shade tree lined streets w/ parkways (between sidewalks and roads).
- Free shuttles to key nodes—SDSU, trolley stations, rapid bus stops.
- Hardware stores, cleaners, shoe and appliance repair shops, resale clothes/maternity.
- Senior independent living facilities
- Arts.
- Plazas and fountains and streetlights on major streets.
- Traffic circles and bump-outs to slow traffic.
- Proper setbacks for increased density developments.
- We need a study—why do students live in mini-dorms?
- Bring public art space on El Cajon Blvd. for SDSU arts uses.
- We need a study—validate housing demand for students and others in College Area.
- Affordable senior housing.
- Keeping the older style of buildings.
- Address poor street lighting.
- SDSU leased space downtown for art galleries. Why not here to draw people to us?
- Encompass and embrace SDSU Aztecs. We all probably went there and have fabulous memories of all the energy of games, arts, music concerts. Let's open and bring it out to the community and invigorate its surrounding neighborhoods
- Ugly Dog needs to offer cheap Mexican eats, like in PB—paper plates-refried beans, beef taco, basic enchilada would be terrific.
- Affordable student housing that combines opportunity and livability many students are looking to have.
- Focus that encourages innovation and advancing their professional career. While at the same time, getting away from the college scene and being more relaxed to encourage healthy living.

- A “symbiotic relationship” between the students that are looking for opportunity to supplement their studies and the community that has the experience and the means to foment the students’ desire to learn and advance into productivity in the College Area.
- Support beautification efforts at Hardy Elementary School - landscape along Montezuma entrance to Hardy.
- Support upkeep and beautification of city-owned field at Hardy.
- Support PTA and community efforts through fundraising and contributing through volunteering and financial contributions.
- Identify and address the needs of our low-income neighbors.
- Enhance area identity—State, great food, parks???
- Green Streets-demonstration area—trees, rainwater catchment.
- More college-town feel-adjacent to SDSU.
- Make sure there is public gathering space (multi-generation), especially for every high density project.
- Need dog parks.
- How about changing the name “College Area”? Could be College Heights, College Mesa, University Village???Any other ideas?
- Study of why students live in SFR.
- SDSU on the Blvd.
- If you want people’s input, let those that aren’t part of the planning group spread or make a presentation of what has been discussed.
- Would love to see a copy of “Piazza della Famiglia,” as in Little Italy.

Advisory Board Members' Written Comments

Note: The Steering Committee sought out advice from various expert sources in the course of preparing this Report. The following two comments were submitted in writing.

FROM SAN DIEGO 350:

Hello Michael,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the College Area Community Plan Update. The plan contains many exciting concepts and necessary changes to the land use in the College area and also addresses important actions that must be taken to address climate change such as increased density, reductions in driving and increases in walking and biking in the area. I applaud the work that has been done on this plan. I do have some specific comments and recommendations for your consideration. These are listed below.

1. Community Plans should adhere to the goals set out in the city's Climate Action Plan (CAP). While climate change is mentioned in the update and the items that need to change are mentioned, I think it would be useful to set out the goals in the background information and to discuss the targets you plan to achieve with the update. In the CAP there is a goal to reach 50 percent of commute trips through bicycling, walking or mass transit by 2035 in high-quality transit areas. More specifically there are 3 goals: 7% of commutes should be by walking, 18% by biking and 25% by transit. These choices must also be safe, convenient and accessible. The planned update will help to achieve these goals. Specific mode share targets should be identified if possible.

Another goal in the CAP is to have 35% tree canopy coverage. The average in the city now is 13%. This is another target that the update should try to address. While there are various references in the plan to developing more parks and green spaces, there is no apparent target in mind. While the College Area may not be the worst heat island, it is definitely lacking in tree canopy.

2. Page 28 of the report suggests the construction of a second off ramp from Montezuma to northbound Fairmount. I would argue against this suggestion. Our goal should be to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) whenever possible. Adding another ramp will make driving more convenient and will thus encourage driving and the area will become quickly congested again. The goal must be to make it easier to walk, bike and use transit.

3. Page 30 of the report discusses making parking structures adaptable. It was not clear if these would be existing parking structures or new ones. I would suggest not adding new parking

structures. Efforts to address parking should also include managing curb space and pricing parking

4. I was pleased to see the proposed changes to encourage biking and walking on El Cajon Blvd. as well as Montezuma Rd. to the east of College Ave. Since it is important to provide a connected system, it seems that some provisions should also be made to address traffic along College Avenue as well as to provide protected bike lanes.

Thanks,

Joyce Lane
Co-Chair, Public Policy Team
SanDiego350
619-277-1675

FROM THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BICYCLE COALITION:

November 13, 2019

Mike Jenkins
College Area Community Plan Update- Advisory Board

Re: Comments for College Area Community Plan Update- Advisory Board (2019)

Dear Mr. Jenkins:

The College area is unique in the City of San Diego because of the presence of San Diego State University. The school generates a great deal of commuter traffic, but also a great deal of student foot, scooter and bike traffic. Another important characteristic of the area is the limited number of through streets, which puts a large burden on Fairmont/Montezuma, College Ave., El Cajon Blvd., and 70th St. Responding to these challenges in a way that is mindful of the city's Climate Action Plan and Vision Zero goals requires an approach that is different than the auto-centric designs that currently dominate these roads.

The Bike Coalition supports the community input that calls for wider sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian-oriented building design, and improved bike infrastructure. On the major roads, this means shortening crossing distances for pedestrians, slowing traffic by narrowing travel lanes and reducing turning speeds with curb extensions that have smaller turning radii. Bike infrastructure should be designed to create a low stress environment that that will attract more people riding bikes. It should be an environment that makes doing the safe and legal thing on a bike the easy thing to do. Creating greater balance in the transportation network may well mean reallocating space in the public right of way to create more room for people walking and biking.

Access to and from the University by foot and by bike should be facilitated to the maximum extent possible. This also will support access to the San Diego Trolley. Well-designed bike parking should be required in every commercial area, and multifamily developments should provide secure bike parking for every unit.

Andy Hanshaw
Executive Director
San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

Appendix 3

Public Comments Submitted Regarding the College Area Community Plan Update Report

Note: On November 13, 2019, the College Area Community Plan Update Report was submitted to the College Area Community Council. The Council accepted the Report by unanimous vote, with the proviso that the Report be posted on the CACC website and comments solicited for no less than 30 days, and that the Report will be transmitted to the City of San Diego with those comments included as an Appendix to the Report.

From: **James Ballantine**

Date: Thu, Dec 12, 2019 at 11:01 AM

Subject: Re: Comments

To: Saul Amerling

Hi Saul,

Thank you for encouraging me to read carefully the updated Community Plan for the College Area. I just read the entire document and was quite impressed with it. Apparently, previously I had only read a summary or an abbreviated version of the document.

I was quite amazed at the anticipated growth in population anticipated in the College Area from 2020- 2035 (25,000 + to 48,000 +). Hopefully, I will be alive to witness this growth in density.

At the College Area Community College meeting or Mesa Colony meeting there was a student who was involved with the environmental design on the SDSU campus. She was a sophomore. She stated that the dorm room with no roommate and no meal plan and no kitchen facilities was \$1,600.00/ month! Obviously, a mini-dorm room is cheaper than this. Typically, I think rooms rent out for \$1,000/ month or a little less. Obviously, with this price differential, the pressure to convert homes to student rentals and mini-dorms will continue. I think that the charge per month of \$1,600.00 is outrageous and not competitive. I wonder if there is some way to encourage SDSU to provide for more affordable housing for students which are competitive to the rents for rooms in the community? Allowing sometime of group kitchen in the dorms would also be good and it would allow students to have a more affordable opportunity for a SDSU education.

Without, a competitive rent structure for SDSU housing, I can't see how there won't continue to be economic incentives for students to live in homes and mini-dorms.

I have almost been hit on Montezuma Avenue more than once, both as a pedestrian and as a bicycle rider. I walk or ride to SDSU frequently. There is another safety issue. Many students ride bicycles and scooters on the wrong side of the street. The students don't realize that this is a very dangerous activity. This is because when cars are turning right from a side street onto Montezuma Road they often aren't expecting a vehicle (bicycle or scooter) to be coming from the wrong direction. Therefore, here is what I propose. There should be a bicycle path with two

lanes (a lane for each direction) for bicycles and scooters. The bicycles path or lane should be separated from auto traffic by having a curb or barrier separating it from the traffic on Montezuma Road. Maybe it could be something similar to what cities throughout the Netherlands have or like the bicycle path along the Coronado Strand.

Currently, traffic is moving often at 50 mph or faster on Montezuma Avenue. The traffic needs to be slowed down. Perhaps the round-about is a good idea. I think that making Montezuma a two-lane road also would be a good idea. I have noticed over the years that there has been quite a few bad traffic accidents on Montezuma Road at the corner of Catocin Dr. and Montezuma Road. Slowing the traffic down would certainly make it safer for pedestrian crossings, scooters, and bicyclists.

I like the new traffic lights on Adams Avenue a lot that warns oncoming cars with bright blinking lights when someone is in a cross-walk. We need those on Montezuma Avenue.

Beautification along Montezuma is a good idea. A linear park I like. Mixed use housing and cafes and businesses on Montezuma Rd I think is a good idea. The run-down mini-dorm single family homes on the north-side of Montezuma are poorly maintained. I would rather have increased density of student housing be built there. or even better, the homes could be removed and that would provide land for the "linear park."

I haven't submitted anything to the Community Council Website yet. I enjoy communicating with you about neighborhood issues and redevelopment ideas.

Jim

James F. Ballantine

JJ

There seems to be this fantasy about cramming more people in and creating traffic choke points while tossing taxpayer expense dollars for pedestrian bridges as some sort of Utopian fix . There's 300+ homes behind SDSU with 2 ways in and out. SDSU creates its own traffic issues with sports, concerts, and graduation events in addition to school. They have simply outgrown the area. Online courses are a great idea since traffic choke points would even alienate students that need to commute outside of public transportation.

RK

Higher housing density immediately around the SDSU trolley stop to create a more vibrant commercial district.

SDSU is and should be the focal point of the College area and things should be designed where there are ways to easily and safely bike ride and walk to campus from all directions. This should be accomplished by removing pedestrian from major intersections via walking bridges. There should be a bridge over I-8 and one over Montezuma Rd between 55th and Campanile. This would help keep traffic moving and allow pedestrians to get away from busy intersections.

Discourage paving over front yards for cars, which cheapen neighborhoods. The City and SDSU should collaborate to beautify and slow down traffic entering and exiting the campus. For example, Remington Rd. which passes through campus and feeds into College View Estates should have sidewalks widened, guarded bike lanes, which would narrow the street, and trees planted to make it more ped.

Chris Schultz

It seems this is more about SDSU than the area as a whole. Take three major roads, add 4 to 6 story housing, downsize some of the roads, and expect it to work better with buses, bikes, skateboards, and scooters? I would be forced to do my local business elsewhere under this plan. Want less traffic? Relocate Viejas arena. Want more dorms? Remove the student soccer field and put a high rise dorm there adjacent to a parking structure. Traffic out of SDSU to College and Alvarado needs improvement. A parking structure could be built into the slope along canyon crest dr. where the best parking would be at the top closer to campus buildings. Things can be done without sprawling further into the community.

CVE owner

FYI - here's the guidance that we all received before posting

... The CVEA Board believes it is important that CVEA members be informed about the Community Plan Update and given the opportunity to give feedback to CACC on its vision for our future. At least an overall comment as to whether or not YOU think the Plan is headed in the right direction would be helpful, or COMMENT ON SPECIFIC ELEMENTS in the plan if you like ...

CVE owner

FYI - these are the specific 2019 laws that I'd like to see incorporated into planning before we push much further with a plan. if these make ADUs so much easier that we get 20% saturation, for example, then we should adjust our moving forward vision as well.

Both Senate Bill 13 and Assembly Bill 68 would, among other things, eliminate parking rules, according to their analyses by the state Legislature.

http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB13&search_keywords=accessory+dwelling+unit

http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB68&search_keywords=accessory+dwelling+unit

Guest

Please note that any users with names such as "CVE Owner" may or may not be a resident of College View Estates, and certainly do not represent the opinions of College View Estates residents.

CVE owner

SDSU FAILURE TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

It's foolish for SDSU to be wasting money on brick and mortar, when online classes, work, etc. are the future. The area needs to vigorously oppose SDSU plans to temporarily load of the campus with buildings and mandated students on campus when it's clear, in 20 years college delivery via in-person will fall.

CVE owner

ADUs

With the new state law on ADUs, we need some clarity on what college parking overlays are no longer legal when combined with ADUs. Between the red line station and the bus route on Montezuma, the entire area now seems to be within the state mandated "no parking spots required for ADUs" As a result, ADUs should get their own parking permits now. ADUs also allow for parking anywhere, including setbacks, so the city needs to revise the front yard unpaved fraction requirements. There's clean up that needs to be done.

NEW DORM LOCATION

SDSU needs to be FORCED to move future dorm housing to the Mission Valley campus, OR, they need to doze and replace existing campus housing. No more greenfield development and surely no more attempts to destroy Aztec Canyon on the west side of campus next to old, moldy, Chappy.

CVE owner

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Need to do something to get SDSU traffic under control. Their EIR said they have PLENTY of parking for all freshman and sophomores for 2400 beds, and then when they only built 800, they had to curtail freshman cars since they were out of parking. Obviously they lied. Traffic and parking both need to be vigilantly guarded. Perhaps a resident only carded gate where the manned stop point is now should be required, along with a sign at Montezuma that says "No Exit, Road Closed before SDSU"

Guest

Please consider Re-Zoning the land on both sides of Montezuma RD between El Cajon and College to higher density housing. It is already high density at both ends. Montezuma is a major 4 lane road, it could handle the higher density and be a buffer for the residential areas behind it. It is also close to two trolley stops. Lets design higher density around our major transportation stops. The europeans have been doing this for hundreds of years. Let's try to catch up. I'm embarrassed.

June Park Elliott

Great article and plan of action

Christina Conaway

I think it's a great idea to look at how additional housing and businesses can be built with a focus on retaining the communities as well. I hope they also consider how to manage gridlock that occurs on Montezuma and Fairmount

John J McGowan

I'm not one for city planning, but at a glance this looks encouraging

CACC Update Statement:

I have read the CACPU several times and like it more each time I read it as it relates to the overall vision for our community. Hopefully I can be surprised, but I feel the node area developments may be a little more long term than perhaps more currently attainable designing and building a pedestrian scale and pace to the neighborhoods. Getting this pedestrian infrastructure in place prior to the coming development density is an important step. Infrastructure such as widened sidewalks, narrower streets, one way streets or street abandonment, strip or pocket parks, round-a- bouts, different levels of street development density is an important step. Infrastructure such as widened sidewalks, narrower streets, one way streets or street abandonment, strip or pocket parks, round-a- bouts, different levels of street and sidewalk lighting. Small paved plazas with a focal point and green & shaded pocket parks can help create community interaction areas ready for an influx of new neighbors mingling with old.

I also feel that the commercial growth in quality shops and uses can be helped through creative reuse or rehab of existing stand-alone commercial buildings and strip centers. Commercial uses that no longer fit the communities vision such as auto-oriented businesses can through attrition be transformed into boutique shops, store front service shops, unique restaurants, bakeries, fun theme bars etc. El Cajon Blvd. is the obvious first focal area to begin the work but Montezuma Rd. and 63rd St. also have potential for mixed use commercial and housing.

I am confident that the College Area or what we may want to call it can begin to interface with city, the university and the community to begin the arduous task of planning, re-zoning, finding funding, getting the necessary infrastructure to begin building the community that we have always wanted.

December 18, 2019

I don't see any mention in the document of ADUs and the change in state law. I realize that there's very little regulation of ADUs allowed, and the lawsuits have already been filed up north for cities that tried to squash ADUs through Draconian regulations. In fact, that's largely what drove the state needing to override the cities- the cities did not play ball.

ADUs are not required to have their own parking, and in fact, they cannot be required to even replace parking (aka garages) that they consume. Parking is allowed virtually anywhere on the lot for ADUs including setbacks. I think we should push the City of S.D. To modify the front yard parking rules proactively so that we don't wind up with all sorts of odd outcomes where the state law overrides the city ordinance. Perhaps allow 100% permeable surface for parking? That gets the cars off the streets at least and it would only apply to ADUs.

I'd also like to see just how much of the future housing need can be filled by ADUs so that we could better understand the rest of the housing need.

I agree completely with creating a campus town or other identity area. The reality is that most campus towns, or “dogtowns” as they are known coalesced around drinking (most states were 18 or 19 legal age) and were predominantly bars and restaurants and maybe a single screen movie theater or 2. California didn't have the economic viability of campus towns- the customers leave at night and aren't “captive” on the weekends. I love the idea, and I’d love to hear more, but I “feel” like it’s an economic failure waiting to happen due to the commuter nature of colleges, including SDSU to a large part. Despite many large, new apartment buildings on El Cajon east of College, I don’t see that as much of a destination area with an identity of its own. Granted, it likely hasn't had any focused effort yet either.

I also like the idea of lining College and Montezuma with high density housing and having a shuttle service that runs 6 AM-midnight to shuttle kids to the campus. Someone should take 55th street away from SDSU to develop it appropriately also. It’s just a slum right now even with SDSU ownership and operation.

Sorry for the scattered ideas, but I'm pressed for time. Take care and Happy holidays

Ann Cottrell

Informal Reflections on Community Plan Update Report

By the College View Estates Association Board of Directors

General Comments

-overall I like the direction the plan is going.

-I like the direction the plan is heading. Organizing into “visions” with high-level supporting objectives makes the ideas accessible and well-organized.

- the updated plan should contain more trees, more landscaped parkway, an urban center at College Montezuma, or College and El Cajon.
- favor the overall view and direction, increasing density and commercial along 3 designated areas.
- lack of park space my #1 concern

Vision I

- having 4-6 story housing along the corridors seems reasonable. The corridors currently have single family homes serving as mini-dorms in various stages of repair.
- having senior housing is a good idea, some college campuses are purposely building senior housing nearby.

Vision II

- Montezuma needed a second ramp before the first one was opened. Consistent major delays.
- like the idea of pedestrian bridge over Montezuma and the creation of bicycle lanes , wider sidewalks, etc.
- support traffic circles to slow down traffic
- question turning El Cajon Blvd. into two lanes

Vision III

- strongly support a “campus town” which would add interest and a gathering place for the local community as well as the students.
- there should be a Vision VIII regarding open space. I do not see any emphasis on maintaining our canyons free from development, for example (looking at you SDSU).
- I do not see anything specific about 55th St North of Remington (cul de sac). Should it be higher and denser? my personal view is yes. 55th and Remington is a public-street intersection, not a private campus intersection.

Vision IV

- support the idea of a linear park East of College. Currently that stretch to El Cajon is a strip of mostly unattractive mini-dorms.

Vision V

- open spaces are definitely needed in the community.
- not real knowledgeable about the Mary Lane, Dorothy Drive area other than the neighborhood has been taken over by mini dorms. A town house community sounds like a good idea.
- preserving our canyons is essential
- support town houses on Mary Lane

Vision VI

- the concept of establishing connections between the University and surrounding communities is extremely important. This relationship needs to be much more than offering discounts to the various athletic facilities.

- it will take a major cultural change for the University to reach outward. The physical structure of universities is built to face inward.
- past experience is that the University does not enter into serious dialogue with the surrounding community in its decision making that affects the surrounding community.
- for many there is a basic lack of trust in the University.
- wide sidewalks
- the potential is great to enrich both entities.
- the University's engaging in the community is a critical point
- there should be a community dog park. It could fit under Vision V or VI. Dog parks are a community gathering place where you can meet people you otherwise would never know. Students who like dogs would also enjoy visiting and it could be a catalyst for building bridges between the student population and community.
- must protect canyons from SDSU development
- hiking trails in the canyons

Vision VII

- requirements about frontage, etc. applies not only to developers but also to the University. The University builds as close as possible to street ending up with a narrow sidewalk that looks like an afterthought.
- strongly support turning mini-dorms into senior housing. There is a great need and it can be profitable.