



CHAPTER 9

COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

Promoting quality and compatible design is valued by the City Costa Mesa. The visual quality of the physical elements and spaces that shape Costa Mesa is what the Community Design Element is all about. For purposes of this element, community design is the "art" of enhancing the vitality, meaning, form and function of the public and private realms.

In Costa Mesa, the public realm is most often comprised of streetscapes (trees, medians, parkways, benches, lights, banners, etc.), parks and plazas, pedestrian ways, public art, and public directional signage. The private realm typically involves building architecture, site planning, landscaping, and business signage. Weaving together the public and private realms through community design optimizes the positive identity and strong visual environment of Costa Mesa.

9.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Design Element is to promote quality design for buildings, structures, paths, districts, nodes, landmarks, natural features, and significant landscaping. The Community Design Element is an optional element of the 2000 General Plan. Through Section 65303 of the California Government Code, cities and counties are allowed to include optional elements in addition to those that are mandated.

The Community Design Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies aimed at expressing the City's general parameters for quality design and development. While the nature of this element does not entail specific design guidelines, it does provide policies of sufficient detail to enable its use during the design review process for determining whether or not a project meets the community's expectations for design and development quality.

9.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

The Community Design Element is one of ten elements included in the Costa Mesa 2000 General Plan. The policies of the Community Design Element are related to the policies within the Land Use, Historic and Cultural Resources, and Open Space Elements. The goals, objectives, and policies within the Community Design Element are consistent with all other elements of the 2000 General Plan.

In addition to the 2000 General Plan, the City of Costa Mesa guides quality development through a number of policy documents and specific plans. The Community Design Element takes into consideration each of the following:

- ◆ Streetscape and Median Development Standards;
- ◆ Downtown Redevelopment Design Guidelines;
- ◆ Avocado Street Specific Plan;
- ◆ Harbor/Bernard/Parsons/Ford Specific Plan;
- ◆ East 17th Street Specific Plan;
- ◆ Placentia/Hamilton/Pomona/19th Specific Plan;
- ◆ Baker Street and Paularino Avenue Specific Plan;
- ◆ Newport Boulevard Specific Plan;
- ◆ Newport Boulevard Streetscape and Landscape Study and Sign Guidelines; and
- ◆ North Costa Mesa Specific Plan.

9.3 SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

To help understand existing conditions in Costa Mesa, it is necessary to first understand the components of the City's urban design framework. The following is a discussion of the elements that contribute to the City of Costa Mesa's urban form and character. These elements are: paths, districts, nodes, landmarks, and edges.

PATHS

A path can be defined as those corridors (streets, sidewalks, etc.) along which people move to get from one place to another. A "path" provides the means of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the community. There are two types of paths: "Primary corridors" are the principal corridors carrying larger volumes of traffic and typically crossing through community boundaries, and "Secondary corridors" carrying less traffic and often originating or terminating within the City's boundaries.



Primary Corridors

Harbor Boulevard
Newport Boulevard
Fairview Street
Bristol Street

Secondary Corridors

Victoria Street
Adams Avenue
Placentia Avenue
Sunflower Avenue
Santa Ana/Red Hill Avenue
Baker Street
19th Street
17th Street
Class 1 Bikeways

DISTRICTS

Districts are those sections of the City that have a certain identifiable character due to building architecture, neighborhood design, streetscape, land use, etc. A “district” is defined as an integral part of a larger urban area, with common characteristics that make it unique from other areas of the community. Distinguishing features may include building type, use, activity, inhabitants, and/or topography. The City’s principal districts include commercial, industrial, open space/recreation, and residential districts.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

The following describes the primary residential districts within Costa Mesa:

Eastside Residential District. This district contains a mix of single-family and multi-family homes on large lots. In recent years, many of the older, smaller homes have been replaced by larger Mediterranean style homes and town homes. The Land Use Element discusses issues associated with this district related to narrow deep lots and lot consolidation.

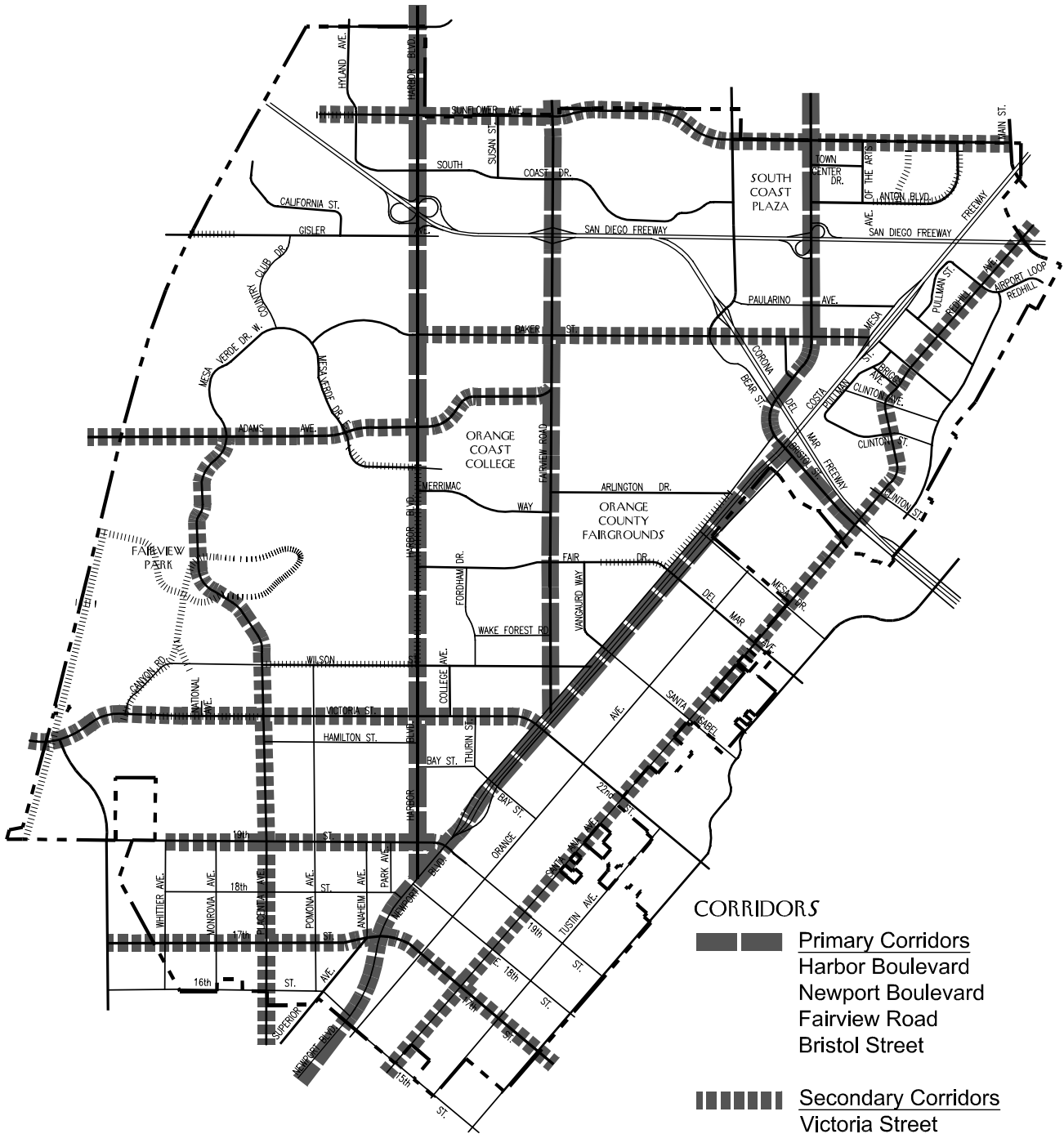
Westside Residential District. The area is characterized by a mix of residential densities and architectural types that include, single family homes, townhomes, and apartments. In addition, this district encompasses the Costa Mesa Golf Course.








Mesa Verde Residential District. This district is made up of a mix of various residential densities. Homes closer to the Mesa Verde Golf Course are much larger and at lower residential densities compared to those closer to Harbor Boulevard and the I-405.











College Park Residential District. The homes within this district are characterized as a mix of residential densities and architectural types. The majority of the units are higher residential density homes located along Newport Boulevard, Wilson Street, and Victoria Street. This district also includes College Park, a major, older single-family residential tract.

URBAN PATHS



CORRIDORS

-  Primary Corridors
-  Harbor Boulevard
-  Newport Boulevard
-  Fairview Road
-  Bristol Street

-  Secondary Corridors
-  Victoria Street
-  Adams Avenue
-  Placentia Avenue
-  Sunflower Avenue
-  Santa Ana/Redhill Avenue
-  Baker Street
-  19th Street
-  17th Street
-  Class 1 Bikeway



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EXHIBIT CD-1

North Costa Mesa/Mesa del Mar/Halecrest Hall of Fame Residential District.

This district contains mostly single-family residential tracts with higher residential densities near arterials. This district also contains pockets of commercial uses along Baker Street.

Bristol/Paularino Residential District . This district is bordered between the San Diego Freeway (I-405), Corona Del Mar Freeway (SR-73), and the Costa Mesa Freeway (SR-55). The homes are comprised of higher residential densities mixed with commercial uses along Bristol Street.

South Coast/Wimbledon Village Residential District. This district contains mostly single-family residential tracts with some town homes and apartments.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Costa Mesa’s main commercial districts include:

South Coast Metro District. This district is the economic heart of the City where South Coast Plaza and other vital commercial and office establishments are located. The district is characterized by commercial centers, entertainment, hotel, and high rise office buildings, which include Plaza Tower, Center Tower, South Coast Metro Center, and the Orange County Performing Arts Center. This district is the primary commercial and cultural center of the City.

Harbor Boulevard Corridor. Harbor Boulevard begins in the City at Newport Boulevard. The corridor represents the primary commercial corridor of the City, with a mix of vehicle-oriented uses, auto dealerships, neighborhood commercial centers, entertainment uses, and residential uses.

Downtown/Triangle Square. Triangle Square is located at one of the busiest intersections in Costa Mesa where the Costa Mesa Freeway (Newport Boulevard), and Harbor Boulevard intersect. The area within and surrounding Triangle Square is one of the busiest activity hubs of the community. Across the street from Triangle Square is the Costa Mesa Courtyards, a busy commercial center.



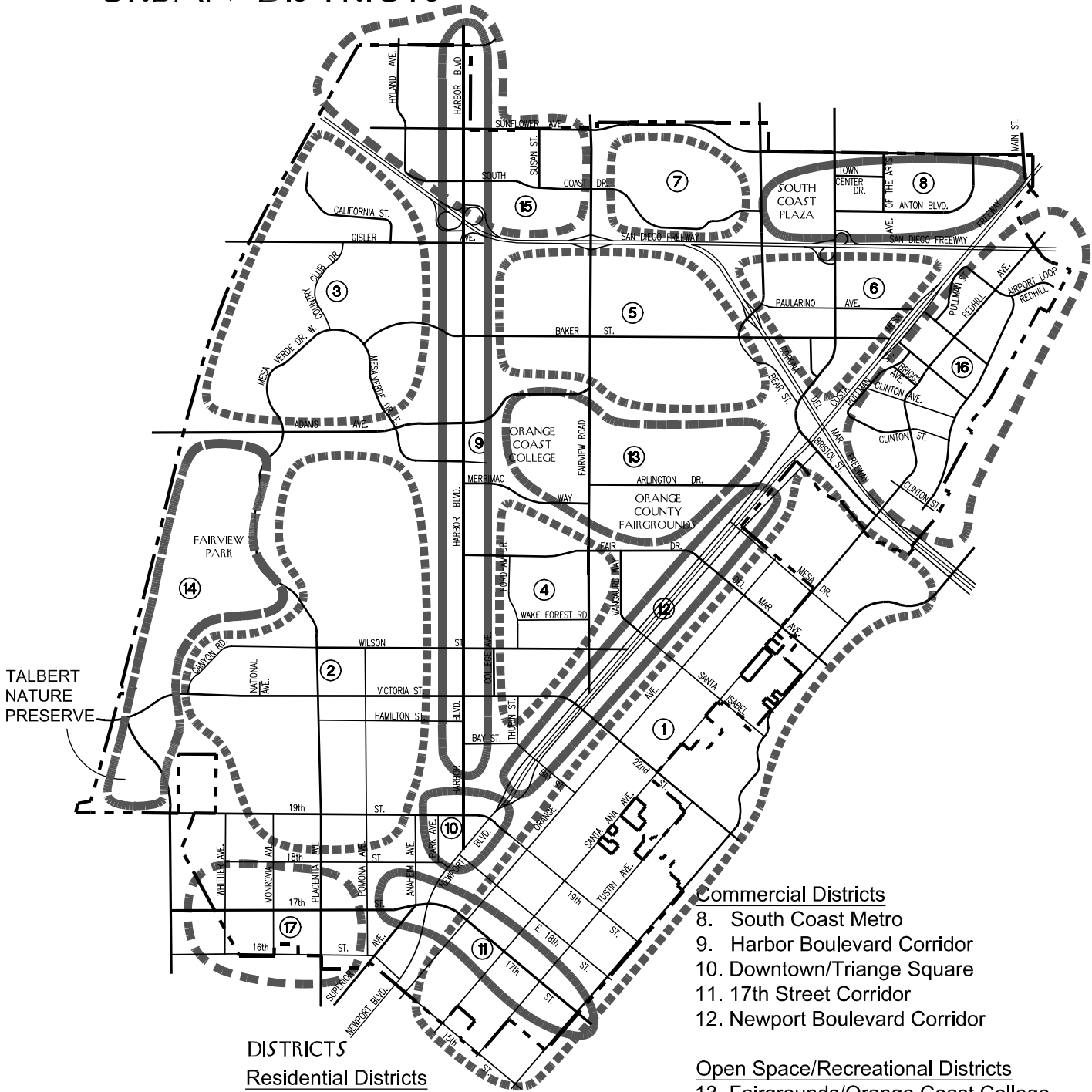
East 17th Street Corridor. This corridor is characterized by multi-tenant retail centers, restaurants, and offices. A wide variety of goods and services are available along this vital retail corridor.

Newport Boulevard Corridor. Newport Boulevard parallels the Costa Mesa (SR-55) freeway from the San Diego Freeway south to where the SR-55 freeway ends at 19th Street. Newport Boulevard then continues south to 15th Street and into the City of Newport Beach. The corridor is characterized with a mix of uses that include neighborhood commercial uses, hotels, and restaurants.

INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK DISTRICTS

The City of Costa Mesa contains three distinct industrial districts, as described below:

URBAN DISTRICTS



DISTRICTS

Residential Districts

1. Eastside
2. Westside
3. Mesa Verde
4. College Park
5. North Costa Mesa/ Mesa del Mar/Halecrest Hall of Fame
6. Bristol/Paularino
7. South Coast/ Wimbledon Village

Commercial Districts

8. South Coast Metro
9. Harbor Boulevard Corridor
10. Downtown/Triangle Square
11. 17th Street Corridor
12. Newport Boulevard Corridor

Open Space/Recreational Districts

13. Fairgrounds/Orange Coast College
14. Fairview Regional Park/Talbert Nature Preserve

Industrial/Business Park Districts

15. North Industrial/Business Park
16. Airport/Business Park
17. Southwest Industrial/Business Park



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EXHIBIT CD-2

North Industrial/Business Park District. This district is characterized by large-sized industrial and office buildings, including the Automobile Club, Times Orange County, and Whittier Law School. This district includes a number of vacant parcels located between South Coast Drive and the San Diego Freeway.

Airport Industrial/Business Park District. This area is bordered by John Wayne Airport to the east, the Corona Del Mar Freeway to the south, the Costa Mesa Freeway to the west, and the San Diego Freeway to the north. The area contains a concentration of industrial, office, and commercial uses found in one- to two-story buildings.



Southwest Industrial/Business Park District. This district is characterized by industrial plant facilities, but also includes auto-related uses, manufacturing, and public storage.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATIONAL DISTRICTS

Major open space districts in the City include the following:

Fairgrounds/Orange Coast College District. This area is the primary cultural, educational and civic center district of the city. The Orange County Fairgrounds, Orange Coast College, Vanguard University and Civic Center make up this district.



Fairview Park/Talbert Nature Preserve District. The Fairview Park/Talbert Nature Preserve District is bounded by the Santa Ana River to the west, Adams Avenue to the north, 19th Street to the south, and the Victoria-Placentia Quadrant residential district to the east. The District provides a regional park and a wildlife refuge for all residents to enjoy. Additionally the proposed Orange Coast River Park will strengthen the linkage between Costa Mesa and the Coast.

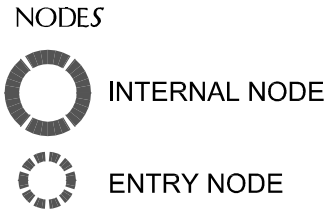
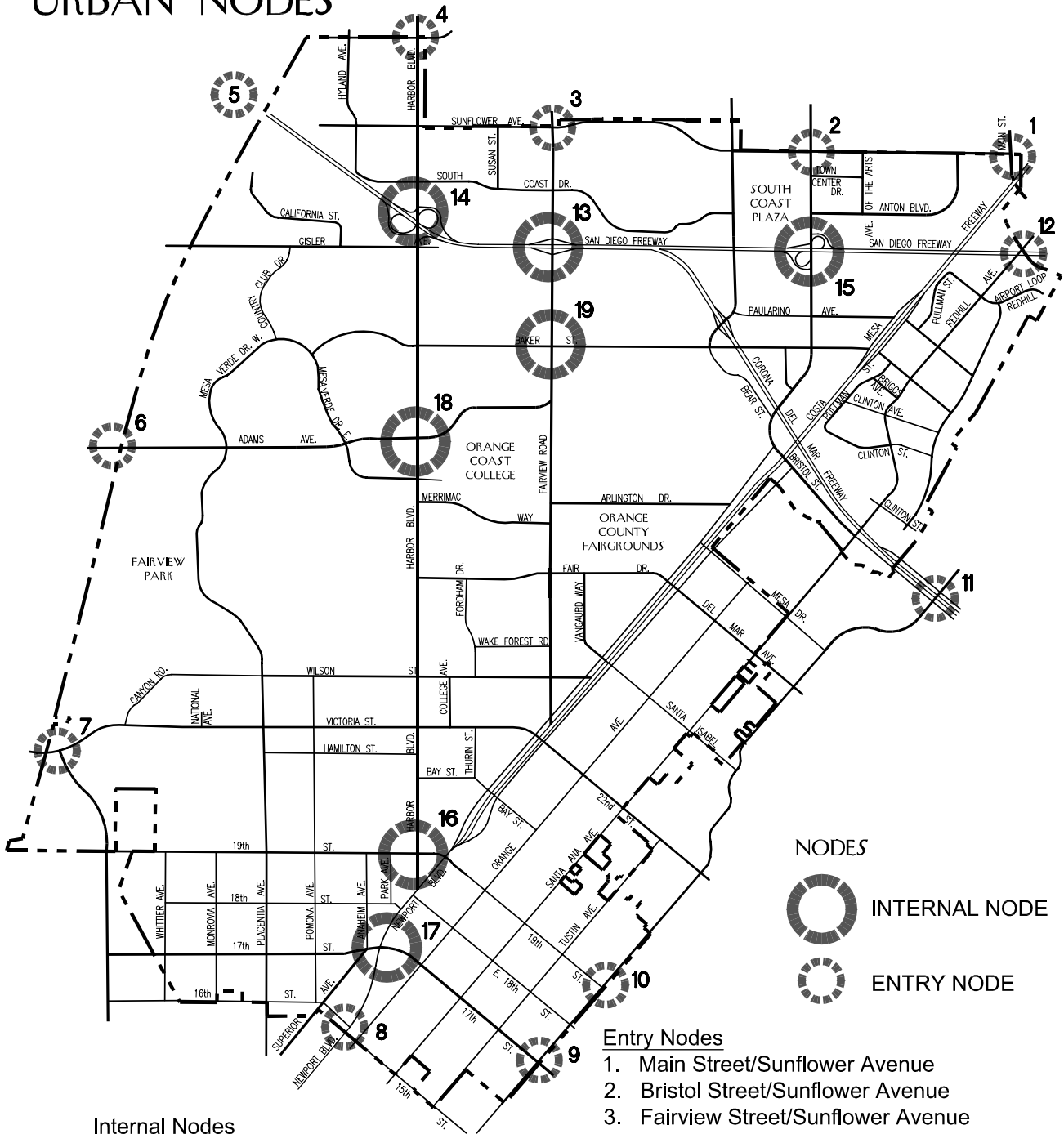
NODES

A “node” is defined as an important point where people gather or where paths converge, thus providing higher-than-typical levels of activity. There are two classifications of nodes: “entry nodes” function as focal points of identity between Costa Mesa and adjacent cities; and “internal nodes” which function as focal points of high activity within the community. Key nodes within the City of Costa Mesa include the following:

- Entry Nodes
- Main Street/Sunflower Avenue
- Bristol Street/Sunflower Avenue
- Fairview Street/Sunflower Avenue
- Harbor Boulevard/MacArthur Boulevard
- Adams Avenue/Santa Ana River
- Victoria Street/Santa Ana River
- San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Santa Ana River



URBAN NODES



Entry Nodes

1. Main Street/Sunflower Avenue
2. Bristol Street/Sunflower Avenue
3. Fairview Street/Sunflower Avenue
4. Harbor Boulevard/MacArthur Boulevard
5. San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Santa Ana River
6. Adams Avenue/Santa Ana River
7. Victoria Street/Santa Ana River
8. Newport Boulevard/E15th Street
9. Irvine Avenue/E17th Street
10. Irvine Avenue/E19th Street
11. Corona Del Mar Freeway (I-73)/Bristol Street
12. San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Redhill Avenue

Internal Nodes

13. San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Fairview Street
14. San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Harbor Boulevard
15. San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Bristol Street
16. Newport Boulevard/Harbor Boulevard/19th Street intersection
17. Newport Boulevard/17th Street
18. Harbor Boulevard/Adams Avenue
19. Fairview Street/Baker Street



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EXHIBIT CD-3

Newport Boulevard/15th Street
Irvine Avenue/17th Street
Irvine Avenue/19th Street
Corona Del Mar Freeway (SR-73)/Bristol Street
San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Red Hill Avenue

Internal Nodes

San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Fairview Street
San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Harbor Boulevard
San Diego Freeway (I-405)/Bristol Street
Newport Boulevard/Harbor Boulevard/19th Street intersection
Newport Boulevard/17th Street
Harbor Boulevard/Adams Avenue
Fairview Street/Baker Street

LANDMARKS

A “landmark” is defined as those physical elements that provide a point of reference or serve as a community identity marker. A landmark can be either a structure, space, or a natural feature, which helps identify a particular area in the City. Important landmarks in Costa Mesa include:

- ◆ South Coast Plaza;
- ◆ Orange County Performing Arts Center;
- ◆ South Coast Repertory Theater;
- ◆ Orange County Fairgrounds;
- ◆ Orange Coast College;
- ◆ Civic Center;
- ◆ Mesa Verde Golf Course;
- ◆ Costa Mesa Golf Course;
- ◆ Fairview Park;
- ◆ Triangle Square;
- ◆ Times Orange County;
- ◆ Vanguard University;
- ◆ Plaza Tower;
- ◆ Center Tower;
- ◆ Methodist Church;
- ◆ Estancia Adobe; and
- ◆ California Scenario Garden.

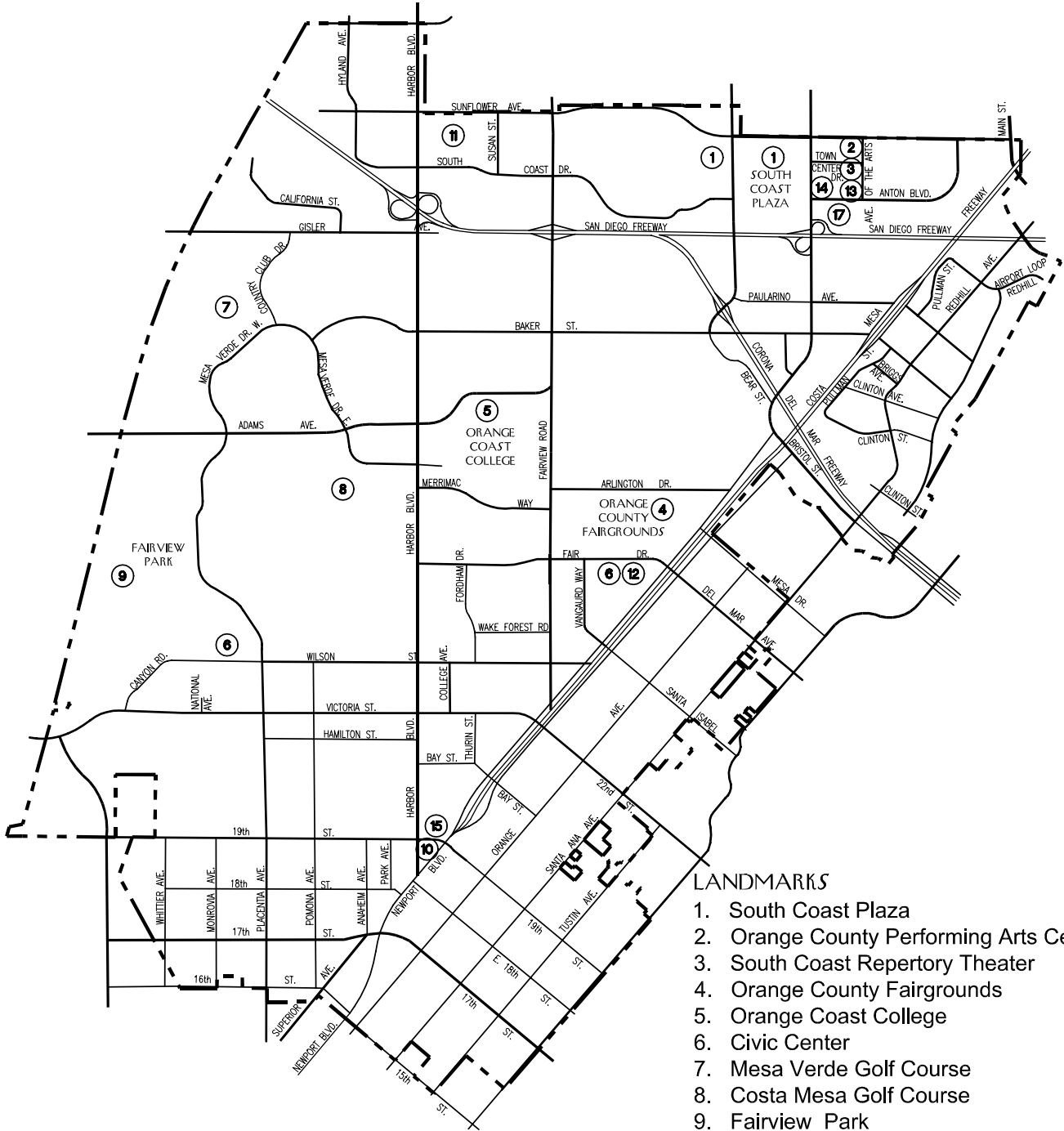


EDGES

Edges are linear elements that serve as a visual or physical boundary, barrier, or transition between districts defining the boundaries of a place. Elements such as freeways, flood channels, and natural features may be considered edges. Edges within Costa Mesa include the following.

- ◆ Santa Ana River;
- ◆ San Diego Freeway (I-405);
- ◆ Corona Del Mar Freeway (SR-73);
- ◆ Costa Mesa Freeway (SR-55);
- ◆ Upper Newport Bay Ecological Preserve; and
- ◆ John Wayne Airport.

URBAN LANDMARKS



LANDMARKS

1. South Coast Plaza
2. Orange County Performing Arts Center
3. South Coast Repertory Theater
4. Orange County Fairgrounds
5. Orange Coast College
6. Civic Center
7. Mesa Verde Golf Course
8. Costa Mesa Golf Course
9. Fairview Park
10. Triangle Square
11. Times Orange County
12. Vanguard University
13. Plaza Tower
14. Center Tower
15. Methodist Church
16. Estancia
17. California Scenario Garden



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EXHIBIT CD-4

9.4 KEY ISSUES

Key Community Design Issues are outlined by strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ Along the western boundary of the Costa Mesa, the coast is a visual strength. View of the Pacific Coast enhances the visual quality of areas within the City.
- ◆ The Talbert Nature Preserve provides an important viewshed for citizens of Costa Mesa. The wetland marshes and natural wildlife create a visual strength.
- ◆ The Fairview Park also provides an important viewshed. The park's trails and recreational facilities are a strength to the community.
- ◆ Neighborhood parks and the golf courses are strengths by providing open spaces and recreational opportunities.
- ◆ South Coast Plaza, Triangle Square, and the Orange County Fairgrounds, major landmarks of the City, are strengths by providing commercial and recreational opportunities both locally and regionally.
- ◆ Orange County Performing Arts Center and South Coast Repertory provide a performing arts focal point in the Costa Mesa community and serve as a major culture and arts hub for all of Orange County.
- ◆ Santa Ana River is a strength because it provides recreational opportunities to citizens by offering a multi-use trail that extends along the western edge of the City.



WEAKNESSES

- ◆ Costa Mesa lacks a strong image, both in terms of its districts and along its paths. Some of the districts lack clear identity that distinguishes them from other areas in the City. Districts should be unified through design to achieve a distinct image. Paths are challenged by sign clutter, commercial strip development, blank walls, and absence of streetscape amenities. Commercial paths should have a unified identity that promotes a positive image of the City.
- ◆ The Eastside Residential District is going through changes in housing stock. The district is characterized by older homes on large lots. In recent years, many of the older, smaller homes have been replaced by larger

Mediterranean style single-family and town homes on smaller lots. The change in residential densities, building architecture, and massing affect the overall character of the district.

- ◆ Harbor Boulevard lacks continuity of visual quality and has multiple identities. The commercial path is fragmented and contains a mix of land uses with no identifiable character. Landscaping is inadequate in certain locations.



- ◆ Inconsistent sign styles, colors, and sizes along commercial corridors create visual obstructions and visual clutter.

- ◆ Entry nodes in Costa Mesa do not effectively announce arrival into the City. Entry nodes with opportunity for enhancement include: Newport Boulevard and 15th Street; Bristol Street and Sunflower Avenue; Harbor Boulevard and MacArthur Boulevard; Santa Ana River and Adams; and Santa Ana River and Victoria.

- ◆ Natural viewsheds are not optimized. Currently, industrial uses occupy prominent locations with views of the coast. Future development should be sited and designed to preserve public views.

- ◆ Some industrial uses are not adequately maintained and contribute to visual blight. Screening and rehabilitation should be implemented and maintained.



- ◆ In general, many individual projects and community design features lack sufficient visual interest in plane, massing, landscaping, and lighting.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ◆ There is an opportunity to improve and maintain the visual quality of existing major arterial and secondary arterial streets (i.e., paths) by implementing the City's adopted Streetscape and Median Development Guidelines. The Guidelines include a comprehensive street tree palette and development standards.
- ◆ Improve the design of signs throughout the City through the preparation of sign design guidelines and incentives for the removal of nonconforming signs.
- ◆ Continue to add new locations for identification of City entry nodes.
- ◆ Continue to implement adopted specific plans, design guidelines, and other policy documents that contribute to the design quality of new development.
- ◆ Prepare citywide design guidelines for new development to ensure that such

development contributes to the overall enhancement of Costa Mesa's image.

9.5 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Physical elements such as landscaping, architecture, signs, streets, open space, etc., collectively form Costa Mesa's visual environment and character. Through the implementation of the Goals, Objectives, and Policies, the visual environment and character of Costa Mesa will obtain the high level of quality desired by the City.

PUBLIC REALM FOCUS

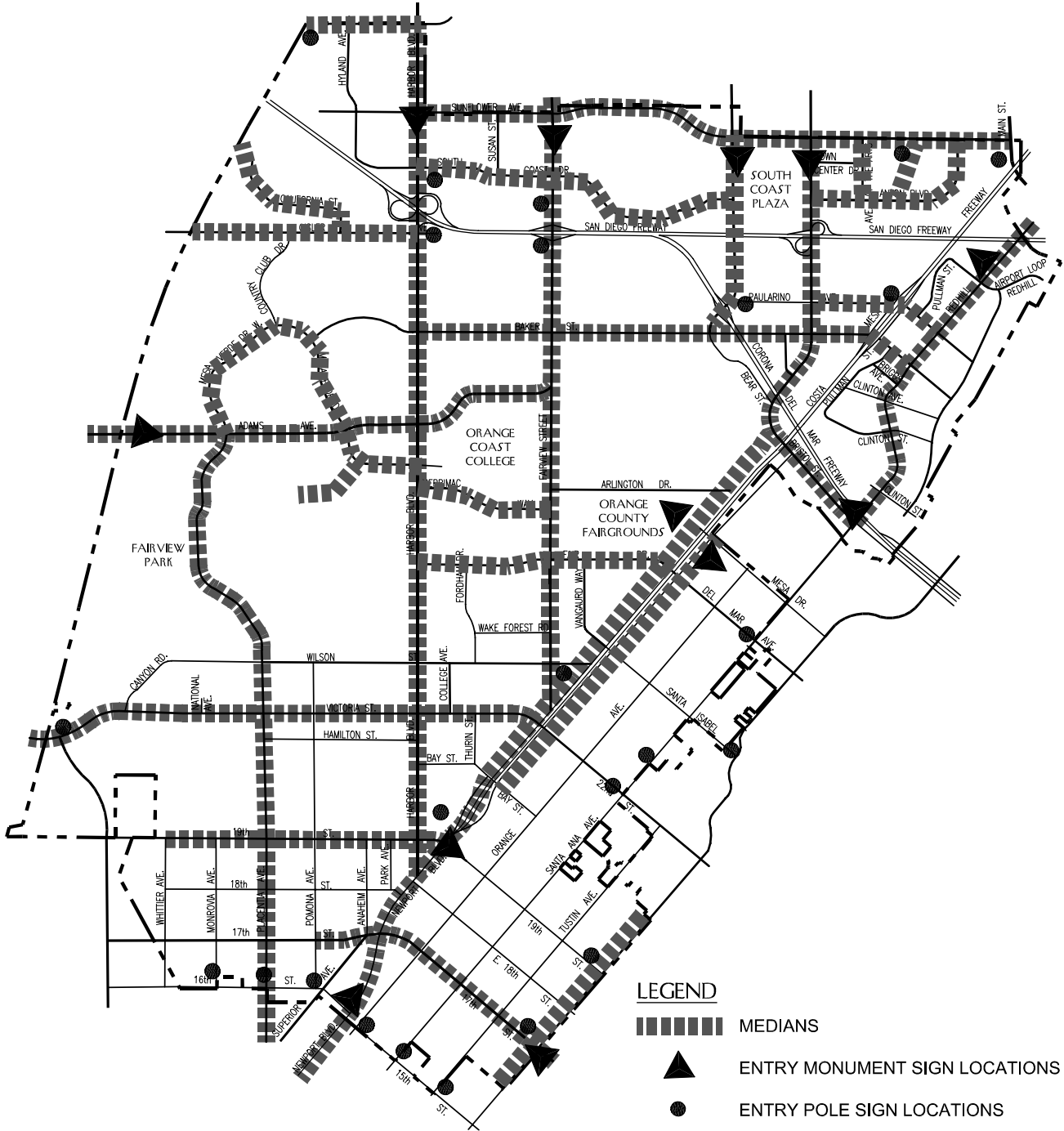
GOAL CD-1: VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN CORRIDORS

Strengthen the image of the City as experienced from sidewalks and roadways.




Objective CD-1A. Contribute to City beautification by enhancing the visual environment of Costa Mesa's vehicular and pedestrian corridors.

- CD-1A.1 Implement the City of Costa Mesa Streetscape and Median Development Standards in all new streetscape corridor and parkway projects. Coordinate with new development adjacent to applicable public rights-of-way to integrate landscape features and design elements consistent with the streetscape standards and recommendations.
- CD-1A.2 Encourage the consolidation of compatible street furniture elements (benches, bus shelters, newspaper racks, trash receptacles, kiosks, etc.) whenever possible. Develop design standards and guidelines for the placement of street furniture elements within and adjacent to public rights-of-way to complement the specific recommendations provided for streets in the City of Costa Mesa Streetscape and Median Development Standards.
- CD-1A.3 Walls and fences should contribute to an attractive street and sidewalk environment and compliment the style and character of the local district and adjacent buildings. Newly constructed or reconstructed walls and fences adjacent to sidewalks and roadways should not run in a continuous plane, should incorporate architectural treatments, such as masonry or wrought iron, and integrate tiered plantings to soften their appearance.
- CD-1A.4 Require a consistent landscape character along City streets to reinforce the unique qualities of each corridor and district, including the development of landscaped medians identified in Exhibit CD-5. Support the implementation of the recommended street tree palette for each City street, as identified in the City of Costa Mesa Streetscape and Median Development Standards.

RECOMMENDED CITY MEDIANS ENTRY MONUMENT AND POLE SIGN LOCATIONS



LEGEND

-  MEDIANS
-  ENTRY MONUMENT SIGN LOCATIONS
-  ENTRY POLE SIGN LOCATIONS



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EXHIBIT CD-5

- CD-1A.5 Electric and communication lines should be placed underground, and electrical substations and telephone facilities should be screened to minimize visual impacts from sidewalks, streets, and adjacent properties. Support utility undergrounding through conditions of project approval, preparation of undergrounding plans, and the formation of assessment districts.

Objective CD-1B. Encourage clear connections between districts within the City.

- CD-1B.1 Promote linkages between separate districts through bike trails, pedestrian paths, common medians or parkway landscaping in connecting streets, and other physical improvements as necessary. Through conditions of project approval, public improvement projects, and other measures, support the development of new connections and the enhancement of existing connections between districts.

**GOAL CD-2:
DISTRICTS**

Enhance the existing character and strengthen the identity of Costa Mesa's districts.

Objective CD-2. Encourage future development and redevelopment to reinforce district scale, identity, and urban form.

- CD-2.1 Future development and redevelopment should improve the environment for the public; it should support the distinctiveness of each district as well as the special characteristics of the existing fabric of its local context. Adopt urban design guidelines for each identified district in Costa Mesa that recognizes, maintains, and enhances the character and identity of each district; integrate existing specific plans' policies and design guidelines as applicable.

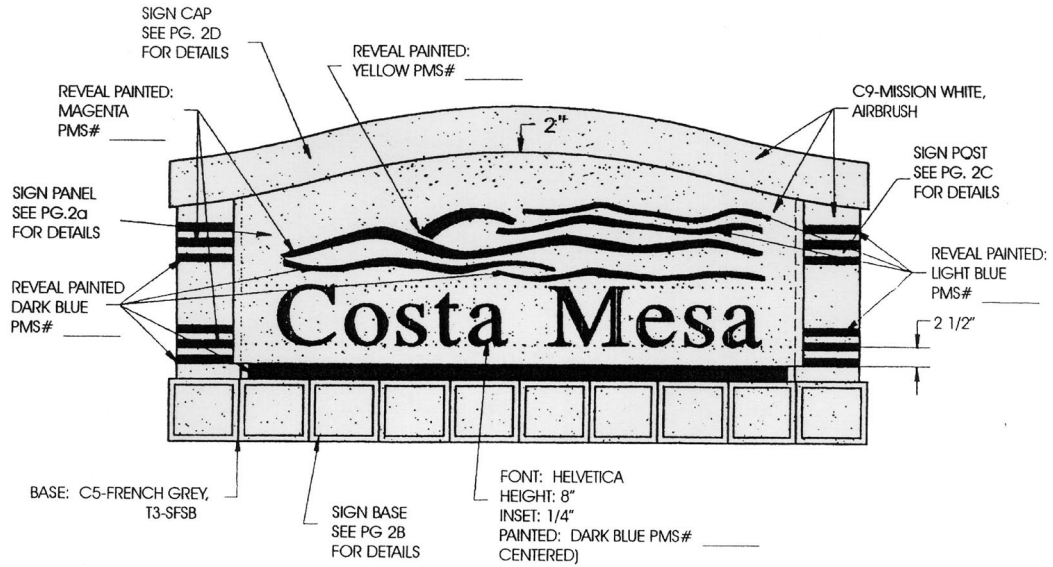
**GOAL CD-3:
NODES**

Heighten the design quality and visual interest of nodes within Costa Mesa.

Objective CD-3. Create a sense of arrival to Costa Mesa and develop prominent community focal points at key nodes within the City.

- CD-3.1 Introduce entry monument signs and entry pole signs at key gateway locations (*i.e.* nodes) in the City, as identified in Exhibit CD-3. Utilize the standard design specifications for entry signs included in the City of Costa Mesa Streetscape and Median Development Standards and as illustrated in Exhibit CD-6.
- CD-3.2 Reinforce a sense of arrival into the City by promoting architecturally significant development and significant landscape plantings at key nodes. Undertake a visioning process to develop specific design guidelines that articulate the desired character for each key node within Costa Mesa.

CITY ENTRY SIGN



PRIMARY CITY ENTRY SIGN



SECONDARY CITY ENTRY SIGN

**GOAL CD-4:
LANDMARKS**

Protect City landmarks.

Objective CD-4. Promote the maintenance, use, and improvement of landmarks to enhance the visual image and identity of Costa Mesa.

- CD-4.1 Support efforts to preserve, maintain, and improve the condition of Costa Mesa landmarks.

**GOAL CD-5:
EDGES**

Utilize Costa Mesa's edges as opportunities for enhancing the image of the City along its boundaries.

Objective CD-5. Develop and implement programs that preserve and enhance the edges of Costa Mesa's.

- CD-5.1 Preserve and optimize natural views and open spaces in Costa Mesa.
- CD-5.2 Control the visual impacts of new development on natural views of the coast and the wetlands.
- CD-5.3 Develop open space corridors and trails along the edges of Costa Mesa where feasible.
- CD-5.4 Continue to preserve natural open space, including restoration of the natural area of Talbert Nature Reserve.
- CD-5.5 Continue protection of Fairview Park as an open space and recreation area.
- CD-5.6 Work with Caltrans to improve the design quality of freeways.

PRIVATE PROPERTY FOCUS

**GOAL CD-6:
IMAGE**

Enhance opportunities for new development and redevelopment to contribute to a positive visual image for the City of Costa Mesa.

Objective CD-6. Establish development policies and design guidelines, which contribute to an aesthetically pleasing and functional environment.

- CD-6.1 Encourage the inclusion of art and aesthetically pleasing architecture into new development and redevelopment that will have the effect of perpetuating the image of the "City of the Arts". Adopt an incentive-based design assistance program which allows business and property owners to enhance the design quality of their property while satisfying City image objectives.

CD-6.2 Encourage the use of creative and well-designed signs, which establish a distinctive image for the City. Consider amending existing sign regulations to include an incentive-based program to encourage quality signage.

CD-6.3 Continue to work with Code Enforcement to ensure continued maintenance of properties and compliance with adopted development standards.

**GOAL CD-7:
RESIDENTIAL**

Promote and protect the unique identity of residential neighborhoods within Costa Mesa.

Objective CD-7A. Encourage excellence in architectural design.

CD-7A.1 Ensure that new and remodeled structures are designed in architectural styles which reflect the City's diversity, yet are compatible in scale and character with existing buildings and the natural surroundings within residential neighborhoods. Develop and adopt design guidelines for residential development.

CD-7A.2 Preserve the character and scale of Costa Mesa's established residential neighborhoods; where residential development or redevelopment is proposed, require as a condition of approval that it is consistent with the prevailing character of existing development in the immediate vicinity, and that it does not have a substantial adverse impact on adjacent areas.

**GOAL CD-8:
COMMERCIAL**

Achieve a high level of quality design for commercial uses.

Objective CD-8A. Encourage high level of architectural and site design quality.

CD-8A.1 New and remodeled commercial structures and properties in Costa Mesa should be designed to reflect the City's architectural diversity, yet be compatible with nearby existing buildings' scale and character. As a condition of approval, commercial uses should be required to include interesting roof lines, building shapes, and patterns of shade and shadow while demonstrating sensitivity to the contextual influences of the surrounding area and compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.



CD-8A.2 High quality commercial architectural style in Costa Mesa is meant to reinforce a positive sense of place and to respond to the geographical location and climate of the area. Commercial architectural design elements and materials that establish high

quality style, and should be integrated in new commercial development, include the following:

Design Elements

- ◆ Simple, multi-planed pitched roofs
- ◆ Open rafters/tails with large overhangs
- ◆ The appearance of “thick” walls
- ◆ Courtyards, arcades, intimate spaces
- ◆ Tile details
- ◆ Deep-set window and door openings
- ◆ Offset wall planes
- ◆ Fountains and other unique details
- ◆ Building masses with the incorporation of one and two story architecture
- ◆ Sequencing of enclosed space/arches

Design Materials

- ◆ Stucco, smooth, sand or light lace finish
- ◆ Wood, as an exposed structural material
- ◆ Clay or concrete roof tiles
- ◆ Native fieldstone
- ◆ Wood window casements
- ◆ Wood, as an accent material
- ◆ Brick, as an accent material
- ◆ Wrought iron (rust proof; anodized aluminum)
- ◆ Tile, as an accent material
- ◆ Slumpstone garden walls

CD-8A.3 Encourage the use of entrance patios, courtyards, plazas, arcades, fountains, porches, tower elements, covered walks, and other features in commercial areas. Pursue incentives for promoting pedestrian amenities and significant design features in new and redevelopment projects.

CD-8A.4 All areas not covered by structures, service yards, walkways, driveways, and parking spaces shall be landscaped consistent with the City’s Landscaping Standards contained in the zoning code. Utilize landscaping to provide project amenities for new and remodeled commercial uses, and to screen parking and equipment areas. Landscaped areas should generally incorporate planting utilizing a three tiered system: 1) grasses and ground covers, 2) shrubs and vines, and 3) trees.

CD-8A.5 Arrange site access, parking, and circulation for commercial uses in a logical, safe manner. Parking should not dominate the site in areas adjacent to any street; should be concentrated in areas away from the street, behind buildings and well landscaped; and, should be designed with a clear hierarchy of circulation. Wherever possible, parking lots should be divided into a series of connected smaller lots utilizing raised landscape strips and raised walkways. Parking lots should also include landscaping that accents the importance of driveways from the

street, frames the major circulation aisles, and highlights pedestrian pathways.

- CD-8A.6 Locate areas for outside equipment, trash receptacles, storage, and loading areas in the least conspicuous part of the site. Utility and mechanical equipment (e.g. electric and gas meters, electrical panels, and junction boxes) should be concealed from view of public streets, neighborhood properties, and nearby higher buildings. Trash enclosures should be architecturally compatible with the project; landscaping should be incorporated into the design of trash enclosures to deter graffiti.
- CD-8A.7 Decorative paving treatments are encouraged to be incorporated throughout commercial developments, including driveway entries, pedestrian walkways, plazas, and other areas. The design, materials, and colors of decorative paving treatments (e.g. stamped concrete, stone, brick or granite pavers, exposed aggregate, or colored concrete) should compliment the architectural style of the primary buildings and should make a positive contribution to the aesthetic and function of the site.
- CD-8A.8 All exterior lighting on commercial properties should be consistent with the architectural style of the commercial building. On each commercial site, all lighting fixtures should be from the same family of fixtures with respect to design, materials, color, fixture, and color of light. Lighting sources should be shielded, diffused or indirect to avoid spillover on adjacent properties, nighttime sky light pollution, and glare to pedestrians and motorists. To minimize the total number of freestanding light standards, wall mounted lights should be utilized to the greatest extent possible.

Objective CD-8B. Preserve the scale and character of established neighborhoods near commercial uses.

- CD-8B.1 New commercial development or redevelopment should integrate adequate site planning and design features to optimize compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods. The following guidance should be considered:
- ◆ When adjacent residential and non-residential uses can mutually benefit from connection, appropriate linkages (e.g. walkways, common landscape areas, building orientation, and unfenced property lines) are encouraged. Successful interaction between commercial and residential uses may be achieved through adequate setbacks, landscape buffers, screening, decorative masonry walls, berms, building orientation, and limitations of commercial activities.
 - ◆ Loading areas, access and circulation driveways, trash and storage areas, and rooftop equipment should be located as far as possible from adjacent residences.
 - ◆ Building orientation and landscaping of commercial buildings should minimize a direct line of sight into adjacent residential private open space.

**GOAL CD-9:
MIXED-USE**

Provide opportunities to live, work, shop, and play in proximity to each other.

Objective CD-9A. Design mixed use development projects to achieve a high quality character.

- CD-9A.1 Require that mixed-use development projects be designed to mitigate potential conflicts between uses. Consider noise, lighting, and security.
- CD-9A.2 Provide adequate parking, open space and recreational facilities to serve residents in mixed-use development projects. Site and design parking and other areas to acknowledge different users (i.e. residents versus shoppers) and to be compatible with the architectural character of the building(s).

Objective CD-9B. Provide for the development of projects that integrate housing with commercial uses and other compatible uses.

- CD-9B.1 Encourage mixed use development along the east side of Newport Boulevard between Mesa Drive and Walnut Street. Establish incentives for the development of projects in planned development zones that integrate housing with retail and office uses.
- CD-9B.2 Support efforts to mix compatible uses and activities. Encourage the siting of community-oriented services, businesses, and amenities in and near mixed use neighborhoods, including schools, branch libraries, open space and parks including "tot lots," and commercial uses.

**GOAL CD-10:
INDUSTRIAL**

Encourage the continuation of existing industrial uses and capitalize upon emerging types of industries.

Objective CD-10A. Require that industrial and business park projects be of high quality design standards.

CD-10A.1 Require that industrial projects be designed to convey visual interest and a positive image. Architectural qualities and design elements for industrial uses that are encouraged in Costa Mesa are:

- ◆ Building modulation indentations and architectural details;
- ◆ Building entry accentuation;
- ◆ Screening of equipment and storage areas; and
- ◆ Landscaping to soften building exteriors and to serve as a buffer between uses.



- CD-10A.2 The design of industrial buildings should consider the visual and physical relationship to adjacent uses. An industrial structure which dominates its surrounding environment by its relative size shall generally be discouraged.
- CD-10A.3 Materials and colors should be used to produce diversity and visual interest in industrial buildings. The use of various siding materials (i.e. masonry, concrete texturing, cement or plaster) can produce effects of texture and relief that provide architectural interest.
- CD-10A.4 Consistent with the Zoning Code, landscaping should be used to define areas such as entrances to industrial buildings and parking lots, define the edges of developments, provide transition between neighboring properties, and provide screening for outdoor storage, loading and equipment areas. Landscaping should be in scale with adjacent buildings and be of an appropriate size at maturity to accomplish its intended purpose.
- CD-10A.5 The design of lighting fixtures and their structural support should be of a scale and architectural design compatible with on-site industrial buildings. Large areas should be illuminated to minimize the visual impact and amount of spillover light onto surrounding projects.

Objective CD-10B. Control the development of industrial projects to ensure they are a positive addition to the City's community setting, and that they do not result in adverse impacts with adjacent uses.

- CD-10.B1 Require industrial projects to incorporate landscape setbacks, screening walls and/or other elements that mitigate negative impacts with adjacent uses.
- CD-10.B2 Protect transitional areas between industrial and other uses. Storage yards, parking areas, and service areas should be screened from public view.

**GOAL CD-11:
HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Promote preservation of the City's historically and architecturally significant buildings and revitalization of traditional neighborhoods and commercial areas.

Objective CD-11. Integrate historic preservation design practices into planning for areas with historic significance.

- CD-11.1 Enforce existing policies that protect historic and cultural resources to deter the demolition of historically, architecturally and culturally significant structures.
- CD-11.2 Encourage the restoration and adaptive re-use of older commercial structures which contribute to the sense of historic and cultural identity of Costa Mesa. Support financial incentives, tax relief programs, and flexibility in zoning regulations to promote historic preservation and adaptive re-use of older commercial buildings.

- CD-11.3 As a condition of project approval, ensure that new development respects Costa Mesa's heritage by requiring compatibility with historic traditions and character, where applicable, of the local context.

**GOAL CD-12:
PUBLIC ART**

Promote understanding and awareness of the visual arts by providing art in the public environment.

Objective CD-12. Generate appreciation for public art and promote involvement in the community through public art programs.



- CD-12.1 Develop a diverse public arts program that involves the entire community and benefits the image of Costa Mesa. Adopt guidelines to encourage the placement of public art within and adjacent to public rights-of-way.

**GOAL CD-13:
SIGNS**

Ensure that signs contribute positively to Costa Mesa's image and overall economic development.

Objective CD-13. Facilitate the installation of signs that contribute to a positive image of the public realm, consistent with the Costa Mesa Zoning Code.

- CD-13.1 Encourage homeowners' associations and neighborhoods to maintain existing housing tract entrance signs in an attractive manner and encourage the placement of such signs at the entrance of major developments which do not have such identification.

- CD-13.2 Encourage the use of common design elements in signs for commercial and industrial centers through the development of planned sign programs to improve center identity by publicizing the benefits of such programs to developers and local business operators.



- CD-13.3 Consider developing citywide sign design guidelines that promote creativity and flexibility while upholding design quality. Design guidelines could include the design and placement of business signs, public street graphics, street signs, locational and directional signs, traffic signs, etc.

- CD-13.4 Introduce distinctive signage, including the entry signage system contained within the Costa Mesa Streetscape and Median Development Standards, which effectively announces arrival to the City, unique districts, neighborhoods, and public buildings and parks.

**GOAL CD-14:
PUBLIC SAFETY THROUGH DESIGN**

Create a safe place to live, work, and play for Costa Mesa residents.

Objective CD-14. Incorporate public safety considerations into community design.

- CD-14.1 Decrease the opportunity for criminal activity by addressing high risk circumstances (i.e., a dark alley, an enclosed stairwell, and dark entrances). Involve the Police and Fire Department in reviewing and making design recommendations during the project review period.
- CD-14.2 Continue to implement and refine development standards and/or guidelines based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) for new development and redevelopment with emphasis on site and building design to minimize vulnerability to criminal activity.
- CD-14.3 Continue to provide CPTED training to City staff and local planning and design professionals to optimize public safety through community design.