

City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

Section 1 Land Use Element

SECTION 1: LAND USE ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The City of Bell Gardens Land Use Element is a state-mandated general plan element and fulfills the requirements of Section 65302(a) of the California Government Code which states that:

"a land use element [shall designate] the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space...."

This Land Use Element is a long-range guide for development throughout the City. As with the other general plan elements, the Land Use Element indicates the City's goals and policies relative to the location, intensity and type of development.

The Land Use Element's scope is far greater than that of the other elements, although the Land Use Element is directly related to all of them. For example, the need to provide land to meet housing needs is an important issue that must also be addressed in the housing element. The capacity of the existing roadway network (the focus of the Transportation Element), open space and recreation areas (an issue discussed in the Open Space and Recreation Element), areas with earthquake and geologic hazards (discussed in the Public Safety Element) and land uses affected by major noise sources (the focus of the Noise Element) are other examples of the many issues affected by the land use policy.

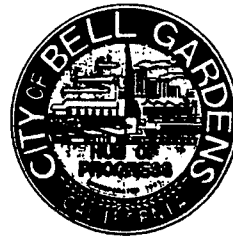
The Land Use Element of the Bell Gardens General Plan provides a strategy for the coordination and integration of all physical development in the City. The Land Use Element outlines policies and programs which promote orderly growth and minimize the potential for land use conflicts. The Element also provides the framework for land use regulations that govern

the location, type, and intensity of existing and future development in the City. The Land Use Element consists of the following sections:

■ **Land Use Element Policies and Programs.** This section indicates the issues, policies, and implementing programs that apply to both existing and future development in the City. The issues encompass a range of problems and opportunities, including: property rights; future residential, commercial and industrial development; existing conflicting land uses; existing blighted development; and, a lack of identity for commercial areas. The policies set forth corresponding "visions" for each issue area to help the City determine how best to solve those issues. The implementing programs set forth in this section constitute the City's first step toward addressing the issues and following the policies.

■ **Land Use Element Map.** By far the most important component of the Land Use Element is the Land Use Map and supporting standards. This section sets forth the land use designations that will be utilized throughout the entire City, the standards for those designations, and the Land Use Map itself which illustrates the land use designations assigned to individual properties.

■ **Land Use Element Background Report.** This section of the Land Use Element describes the existing in the City relative to land use.



LAND USE ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

A key function of the Land Use Element is to promote land use policies that address existing and future land use issues for the City of Bell Gardens. The following policies acknowledge important concerns of the Bell Gardens community while identifying opportunities for growth and development.

The Bell Gardens Land Use Element policies are arranged around five key issue areas. The policies provide the framework for the City's vision for the future: "Pride in the Community/Orgullo en la Comunidad."

Issue 1: Property Rights

Bell Gardens residents wish to make their City a vibrant, healthy, and economically strong community for the future generations that may choose to live and work in the City. At the same time, the rights of property owners, business people, and the residents are of paramount concern. Previous land use decision-making in the City had little regard for the community's opinions or rights. Through this General Plan, mechanisms have been incorporated into the General Plan to ensure the community is always heard in future land use planning.

Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens decision-makers shall maintain open communication with the community at all times and shall tirelessly seek input from the residents and property owners regarding the future of the City.

Issue 2: Residential Development

Development in the City of Bell Gardens is predominantly residential (refer to Exhibit 1-1) with much of this development constructed at

higher densities. These areas frequently include a mix of residential uses with commercial and industrial uses. This mix raises issues concerning safety and the environment.

There are only three areas in the City where cohesive, detached single-family neighborhoods are found. These areas are: (1) the northwest area from Specht Avenue and Agra Street; (2) Lynda Lane; and, (3) the Specht Street area, west of Jaboneria Road.

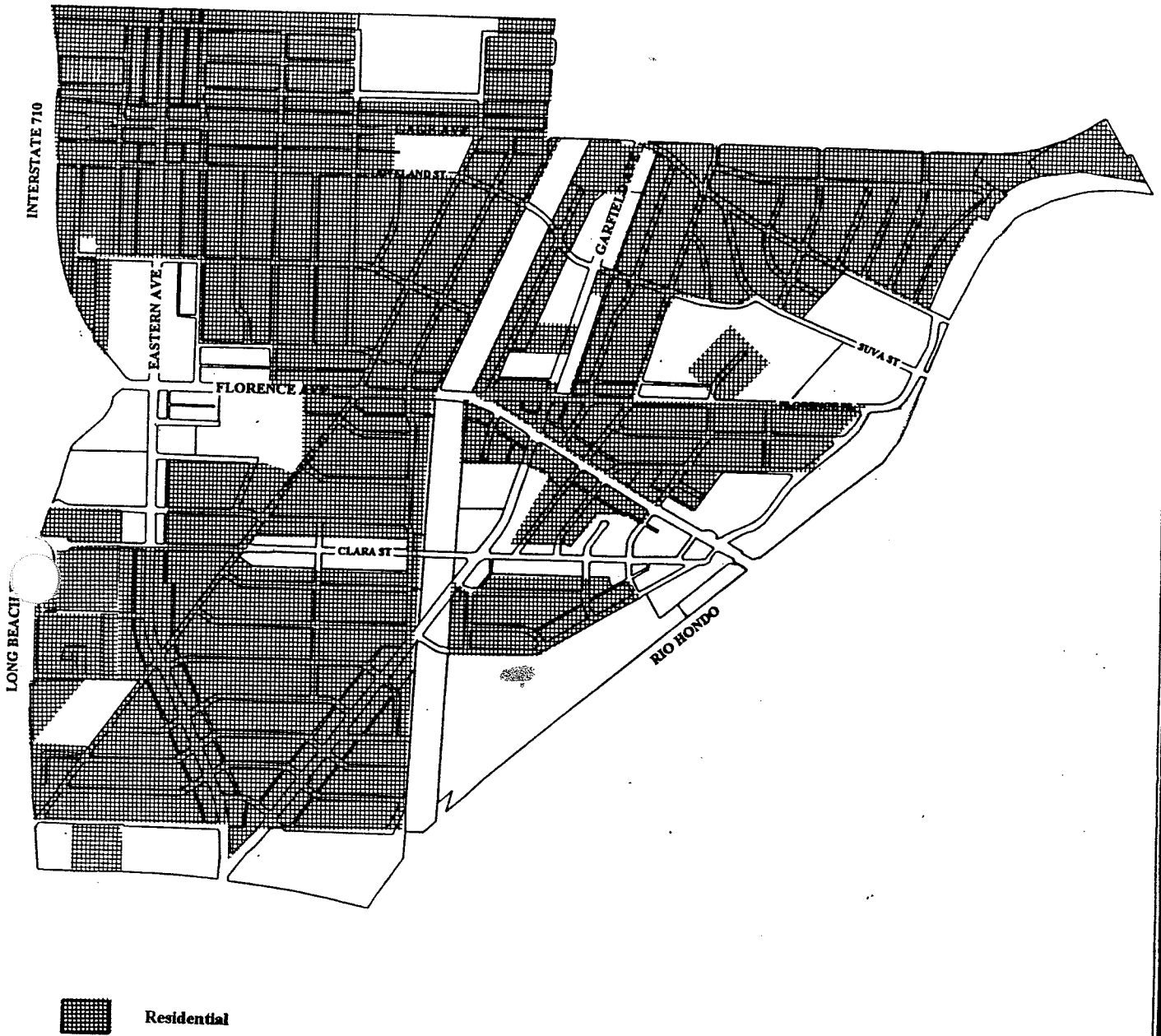
Much of the residential development in the City was developed prior to the standards and guidelines set forth in the City's current Zoning Code and Building Code. In certain instances, this has led to substandard construction which may eventually result in hazardous conditions to the residents or neighbors of the developments.

Policy 2: The City shall promote compatible residential development, ensure safe housing, emphasize neighborhood identity, and increase pride in neighborhoods.

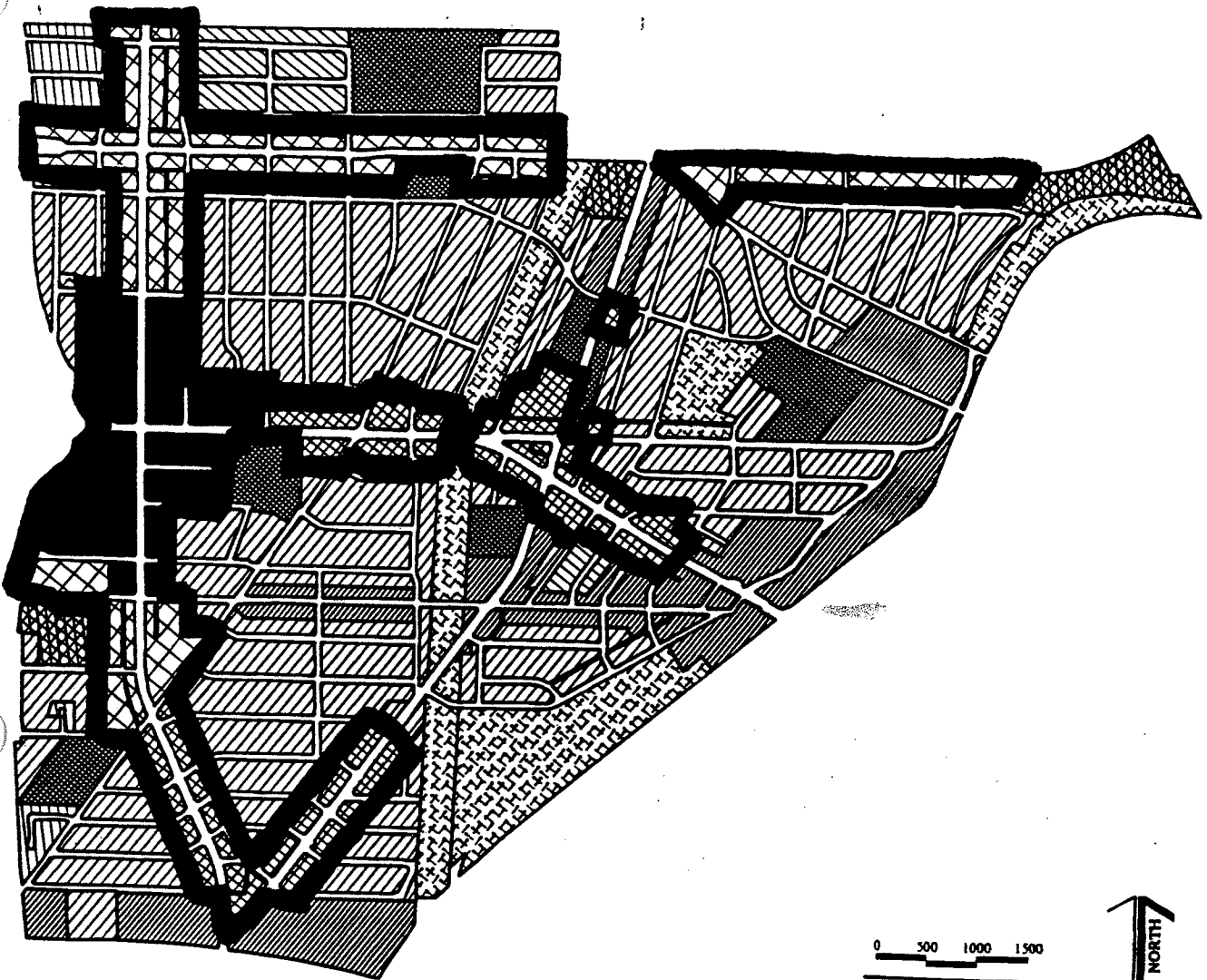
Issue 3: Commercial Development











The commercial areas in the City are concentrated along the major arterials and in community and neighborhood shopping centers scattered throughout the City (Exhibit 1-2). In some areas, commercial buildings have fallen into disrepair. In addition, residents must go to neighboring cities to obtain many of the goods and services they use. The proximity of Bell Gardens to the Long Beach Freeway needs to be further exploited by business in the City.

Policy 3: The City shall promote compatible commercial development to emphasize commercial identity and to enhance the appearance, potential economic



**EXHIBIT 1-1
RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN THE CITY**



-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  High Density Residential
-  Very High Density Residential
-  Mixed Use (Commercial/Residential)
-  General Commercial
-  Regional Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Open Space/Parks
-  Public/Institutional

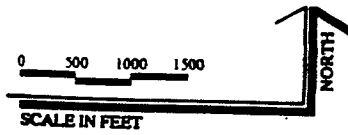


EXHIBIT 1-2 COMMERCIAL AREAS IN THE CITY

vitality, and revitalization of the commercial areas in the City.

Issue 4: Industrial and Manufacturing Development

The City intends to maintain the existing manufacturing uses that contribute to the City's economic and employment base. Some areas developed as industrial have physical constraints and limitations associated with manufacturing uses. For example, some established industrial developments are unable to expand due to physical limitations of lots. Work remains to make sure industrial properties are well-maintained and that they are good neighbors to the surrounding development that is sensitive to manufacturing activities.

Policy 4: *The City shall encourage property owners to maintain and rehabilitate their existing industrial uses and the City shall encourage private investment in the City's industrial economic base while ensuring compliance with necessary environmental requirements.*

Issue 5: Promotion of Local Businesses and Jobs

Gangs continue to be an ever-present problem in Bell Gardens. The City wants to reverse this trend by giving its youth the challenge and opportunity to do so. The City needs to bring in businesses that will not only create a stronger tax base for the City, but will also create and promote jobs for the youth and residents of Bell Gardens.

Policy 5: *The City shall provide an environment to stimulate local employment, property values, community stability, and the economic vitality of existing local businesses.*

The following programs implement the five land use policies discussed previously. These programs also support the City of Bell Gardens vision of "Pride in the Community/Orgullo en la Comunidad." The programs are identified with their corresponding policies in Table 1-1, following this section, because one program may support more than one policy.

"Bell Gardens Now" Surveys. The City will communicate and seek input from the residents and property owners of Bell Gardens through "Bell Gardens Now." A program will be developed to provide for important issues to be published in the newsletter with mail-back survey forms. The follow-up issues of "Bell Gardens Now" will report survey results back to the community. This will help the City decision-makers to get an overview of the community's needs from people that do not always have the time or means to attend the public meetings in person.

Timing: 1995
Agency: City Manager
Funding: General Fund

Building Facade Improvement Program. In addition to design guidelines and redevelopment efforts, the City shall adopt a separate Building Facade Improvement Program for the commercial and industrial structures in the City. This program shall provide for incentives and identify strategies for payment of those improvements (block grants and benefit assessment districts) for targeted areas of the City.

Timing: 1997
Agency: Community Development and Redevelopment Departments
Funding: General Fund

Capital Improvement Program. The City of Bell Gardens maintains a comprehensive infrastructure and public service system to serve its residents. The City's Capital Improvement Program outlines projects needed for public facilities and infrastructure. These improvements may include drainage facilities, roadway and traffic systems, water and sewer lines, and other infrastructure. The program provides a schedule of projects and their funding for a 5-year time period. It is reviewed annually and then is extended for an additional year. The City will continue to prioritize infrastructure and public service projects through the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Timing: Periodic
Agency: Public Works Department
Funding: General Fund

Code Enforcement. Code enforcement efforts (funding and staffing) will be maintained at current levels. The nuisance abatement policies will be reviewed and updated to ensure that property rights are balanced with health and safety issues. Maintenance efforts in existing residential neighborhoods will be assisted through the code enforcement program and by encouraging property maintenance through private as well as public assistance programs.

Timing: Immediate and ongoing
Agency: Community Development Department
Funding: General Fund

Council Meetings on Cable. The City Council meetings shall be broadcast on the local cable network to bring more of the residents into the information and decision-making process.

Timing: 1996
Agency: City Manager
Funding: General Fund

Development Monitoring Program. The City will implement a development monitoring system as part of its approval and environmental review process. The City will review potential impacts of future development.

Timing: 1995
Agency: Community Development Department
Funding: General Fund

Drainage and Sewer Master Plan Updates. The City shall, as part of the Capital Improvement Program's annual review, update the existing Drainage and Sewer Plans. This will ensure consistency with the Capital Improvement Program and will assist in the ranking of individual projects.

Timing: 1995-1996 Fiscal Year
Agency: Public Works
Funding: General Fund

Incentives to Create Larger Lots. Larger lots allow greater flexibility in site planning and building design, with less impact on adjacent lots. The City should develop standards which provide incentives, density bonuses, and lower requirements for the assembly of commercial lots. The City will revise the zoning ordinance to reflect these standards.

Timing: 1995
Agency: Community Development Department
Funding: General Fund

Mandatory Findings of Approval. The City will establish certain mandatory findings of approval that must be made prior to the approval of certain development projects. These findings shall be made at a public hearing before the Planning Commission or City Council and these meetings shall be noticed according to state law. Property owners adjacent to the development and within a 500-foot radius from the edge of the property line of the project area will be notified. Staff reports to

The decision-making body will outline the findings and analyses whether or not the findings can be made.

Timing: 1995
Agency: Community Development Department
Funding: General Fund

Nonconforming Ordinance. The City shall revise its Nonconforming Ordinance to ensure that it meets current objectives of the community.

Timing: Ongoing/1995
Agency: Community Development Department
Funding: General Fund

Pre-application Meetings. All new developments are subject to development review to evaluate their compliance with City standards and ordinances. Pre-application meetings provide the City and developer a chance to informally talk about a project before any commitment regarding future development is made. This process saves time and money by informing the developer of what the City expects and the process that must be followed. Also, it informs the City of proposed developments early in the process. Pre-application meetings provide an opportunity to develop cooperation and to bring about higher quality development. The City will continue to encourage pre-application "development review" meetings with developers. This will allow the City to learn about proposed projects and the developer to the requirements of the City.

Timing: Ongoing
Agency: Community Development and Redevelopment
Funding: General Fund

Redevelopment. The City will continue redevelopment efforts associated with the

implementation of the Redevelopment Project Area (Exhibit 1-3). The City will encourage the further development of industrial and commercial projects in suitable locations to strengthen the City's tax and employment bases. The City shall promote the economic vitality of the commercial districts with land use controls and land use incentives. The City will also provide incentives for the modernization of shopping centers and industrial centers.

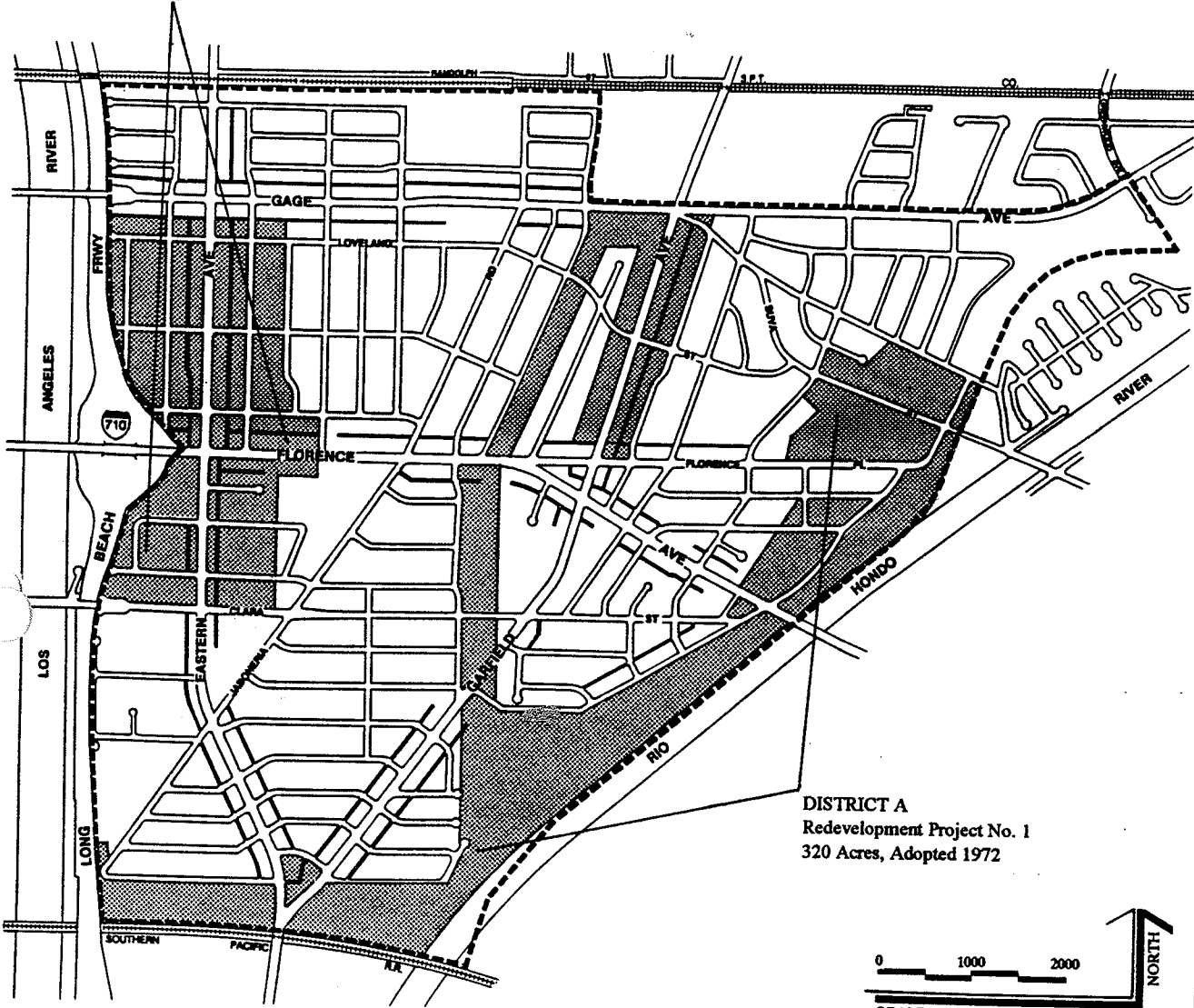
The City will encourage private market forces to consolidate and modernize industrial development without increasing, substantially, the proportion of land area designated for industrial use, encouraging compatible industrial developments in areas of primary accessibility which have minimal impact on adjacent residential areas. Through that same authority, the City shall encourage and provide for the orderly transition of existing downtown residential areas to commercial uses and accommodate the relocation needs (pursuant to requirements of State Law) of residents displaced by such transition.

The Redevelopment Agency, the Community Development Department, and the City Manager's Office will also identify and actively pursue the relocation of certain uses to industrial, commercial, and residential, as the case may be.

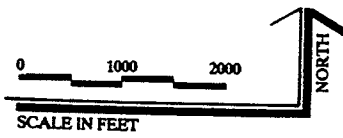
Timing: Ongoing
Agency: Community Development, Redevelopment
Funding: General Fund

Sidewalk and Parkway Development and Maintenance Program. Tree-lined streets are uniquely attractive and help create a sense of place. The City will continue to maintain existing sidewalks and parkways and encourage property owners abutting these areas to maintain parkway

DISTRICT B
 Central City Redevelopment Project
 140 Acres, Adopted 1979



DISTRICT A
 Redevelopment Project No. 1
 320 Acres, Adopted 1972



Redevelopment Project Areas

EXHIBIT 1-3
 REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREAS

ees through public information programs such as flyers, newsletter articles, and the like. By developing and maintaining a complete system of sidewalks, the City of Bell Gardens will be able to improve pedestrian safety and enhance the visual quality of streets. In addition to the continued implementation of the adopted Beautification Plan (Exhibit 1-4), the City will identify areas and lots where sidewalks and parkways need to be developed or enhanced and will encourage property owners to build the sidewalks, where possible. Otherwise, the City will explore other funding mechanisms, such as including the needed improvements into the City's Capital Improvement Program. Priority will be given to sidewalks that serve parks, schools, and other routes with high pedestrian traffic.

Timing: 1996
Agency: Public Works and Parks Department
Funding: General Fund, Special Revenue Fund

Sign Ordinance Review. The City's Sign Ordinance regulates the type, size, and number of signs in Bell Gardens. The sign ordinance protects the aesthetic qualities of neighborhoods and promotes driver safety and convenience. The City of Bell Gardens will identify signage problems in the City and will determine if they are allowed under current sign standards. Changes should be made to the ordinance to prevent the proliferation of unwanted signs. The sign design guidelines of the CBD Urban Design Plan will be taken into consideration when reviewing the City's Sign Ordinance.

Timing: As part of the Zoning revisions
Agency: Community Development and Code Enforcement
Funding: General Fund

Streamline Permit Process Program. Permit processing constitutes a large portion of the time and costs associated with development. By

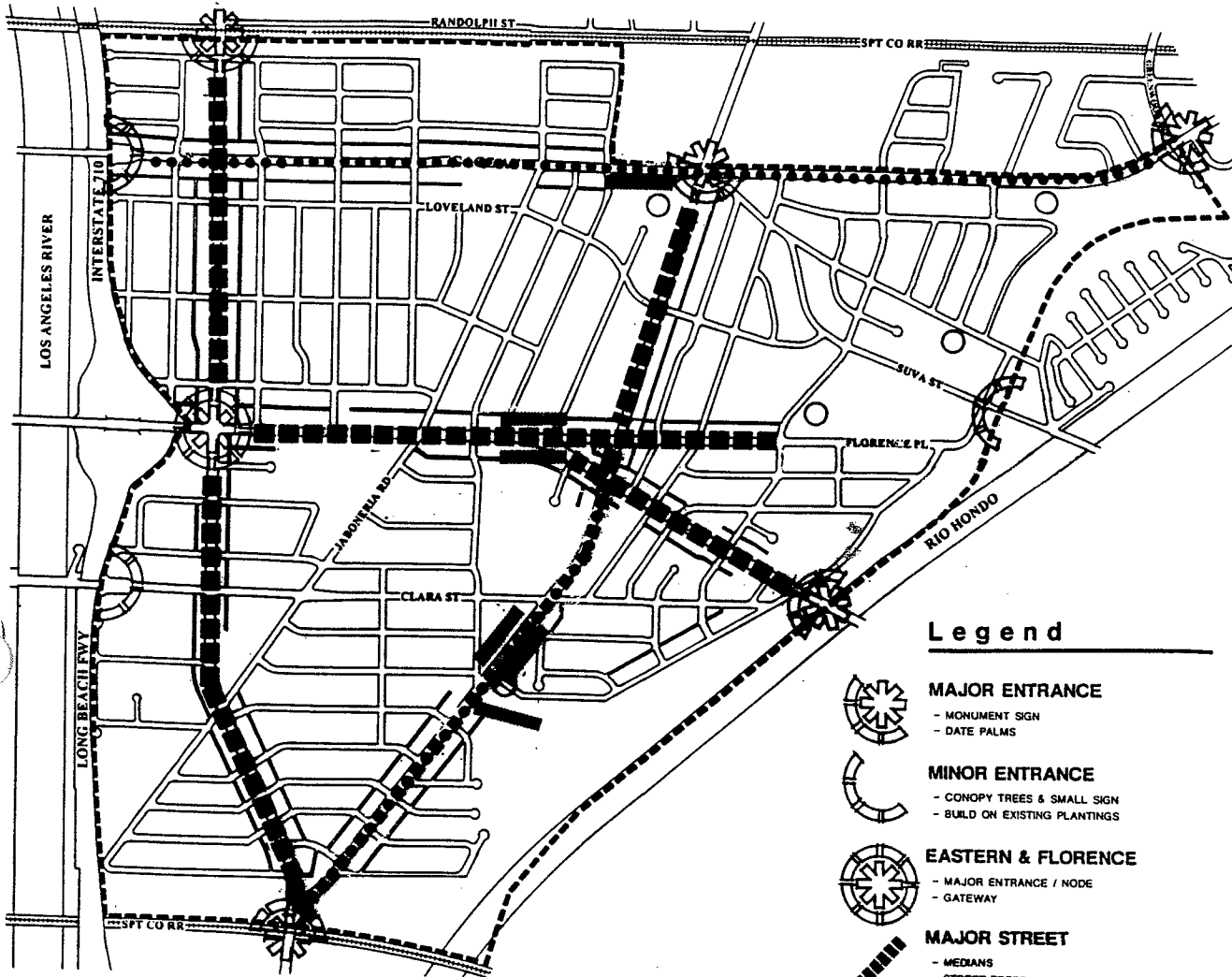
shortening the permit process, the City can lessen the cost of development. This can lead to a greater number of development projects and the construction of more affordable housing units. The City will continue to streamline permit processing to save time and lessen the costs associated with obtaining permits.

Timing: 1995
Agency: Community Development and Public Works
Funding: General Fund









Urban Design Program: City staff will continue to implement the adopted CBD Urban Design Plan and will examine the feasibility of extending the program to other areas of the City (Exhibit 1-5). City staff will also formulate design guidelines for commercial and industrial areas in other areas of the City. These design guidelines will promote economic vitality and at the same time preserve the rights of the property owners and protect residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible uses. Through these Design Guidelines, the City will promote and encourage commercial and industrial uses to be designed in centers or like groups for the convenience of the public and to avoid creating nuisances among adjacent land owners. The Design Guidelines will promote the development of a revitalized image for the City of Bell Gardens through the adoption of landscaping and architecture regulations which establish minimum standards and requirements for quality, design and appearance.

Timing: 1995
Agency: Public Works and Community Development
Funding: General Fund

Zoning Ordinance Revision: The City will undertake the necessary Zoning Ordinance revision to ensure implementation of the policies of the



Legend

- 
MAJOR ENTRANCE
 - MONUMENT SIGN
 - DATE PALMS
- 
MINOR ENTRANCE
 - CONOPY TREES & SMALL SIGN
 - BUILD ON EXISTING PLANTINGS
- 
EASTERN & FLORENCE
 - MAJOR ENTRANCE / NODE
 - GATEWAY
- 
MAJOR STREET
 - MEDIANS
 - STREET TREES
- 
SECONDARY STREET
 - STREET TREES
 - POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE MEDIANS
- 
SECONDARY STREET
 - STREET TREES
- 
SCE SCREEN PLANTING
 - VISUAL SCREENING
- 
COMMUNITY / HISTORIC SITE
 - MONUMENT SIGN
 - INFORMATION SIGNING

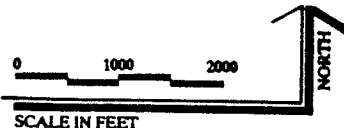
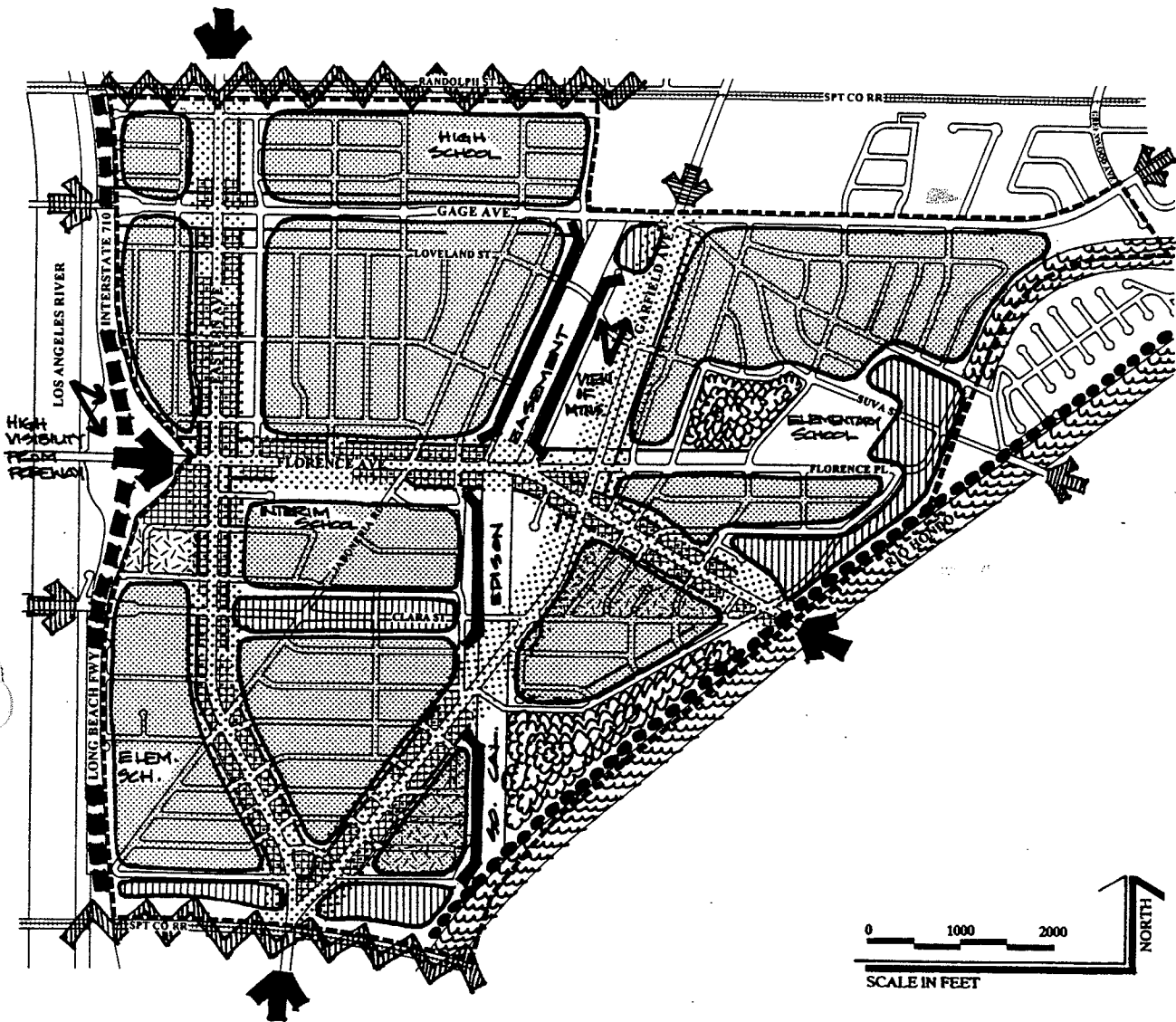
















EXHIBIT 1-4
 BEAUTIFICATION PLAN - MAJOR ELEMENTS



- | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
|  | Railroad Barrier |  | Minor Entry |  | Residential |
|  | Freeway Barrier |  | Views/Vistas |  | Industrial |
|  | River Barrier |  | Bike Path |  | Transitional |
|  | Edge |  | Regional/Intra-City Corridor |  | Recreational Open Space |
|  | Major Entry |  | Strip Commercial Development | | |

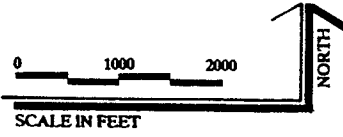


EXHIBIT 1-5
 CBD URBAN DESIGN PLAN -
"Pride in the Community" *"Orgullo en la Comunidad"*

Section 1: Land Use Element (continued)

General Plan. In particular, the City will: (1) adopt zoning regulations to retain predominantly single family neighborhoods in their lower density configuration; (2) prohibit tandem development residential design as well as development of higher densities on lots designed for single family uses; (3) zone higher density areas up to the R-3 designation which would allow up to 66 percent of the maximum land use density recommended by the Land Use Map; (4) permit a higher zoning category and greater density of up to 100 percent of the permitted Land Use Map density if the new development plans demonstrate acceptable benefits to the City;

(5) centralize new commercial development in the Regional Commercial area and in other areas where appropriate; (6) provide appropriately located areas for office uses, retail stores and service establishments which meet the needs of the community; and (7) restrict industrial building and uses to industrially zoned properties only and restrict industrial uses to lots of sufficient size (industrial areas should be restricted for light industrial and medium industrial purposes).

Timing: 1995 - 1996
Agency: Community Development Department
Funding: General Fund

**TABLE 1-1
 LAND USE ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX**

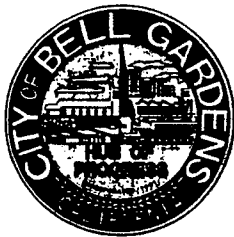
Policies	Programs
<p><i>Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens decision-makers shall maintain open communication with the community at all times and shall tirelessly seek input from the residents and property owners regarding the future of the City.</i></p>	<p>"Bell Gardens Now" Surveys Council Meetings on Cable Mandatory Findings of Approval</p>
<p><i>Policy 2: The City shall promote compatible residential development, ensure safe housing, emphasize neighborhood identity, and increase pride in neighborhoods.</i></p>	<p>Code Enforcement Design Review Development Monitoring Program Nonconforming Ordinance Redevelopment Urban Design Program Zoning Ordinance Revisions</p>
<p><i>Policy 3: The City shall promote compatible commercial development to emphasize commercial identity and to enhance the appearance, potential economic vitality, and revitalization of the commercial areas in the City.</i></p>	<p>Building Facade Improvement Program Code Enforcement Design Review Nonconforming Ordinance Redevelopment Sign Ordinance Review Urban Design Program Zoning Ordinance Revisions</p>

Section 1: Land Use Element (continued)

**TABLE I-1
LAND USE ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX (continued)**

Policies	Programs
<p><i>Policy 4: The City shall encourage property owners to maintain and rehabilitate their existing industrial uses and the City shall encourage private market forces to invest in the City's industrial economic base while ensuring compliance with necessary environmental requirements.</i></p>	<p>Building Facade Improvement Program Code Enforcement Design Review Incentives to Create Larger Lots Nonconforming Ordinance Redevelopment Sidewalk and Parkway Development and Maintenance Program Sign Ordinance Review Streamline Permit Process Program Urban Design Program Zoning Ordinance Revisions</p>
<p><i>Policy 5: The City shall provide an environment to stimulate local employment, property values, community stability, and the economic vitality of existing local businesses.</i></p>	<p>Building Facade Improvement Program Capital Improvement Program Economic Development Program Incentives to Create Larger Lots Master Plan of Streets and Highways Pre-Application Meetings Redevelopment Sidewalk and Parkway Development and Maintenance Program Streamline Permit Process Program Zoning Ordinance Revisions</p>

Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., March 1994



LAND USE ELEMENT MAP

The Land Use Map is the most important component of the City of Bell Gardens General Plan. The Land Use Map indicates the location and extent of permitted development in the City.

In Bell Gardens, the Land Use Map largely corresponds to the current development in the City since the focus of this General Plan is aimed at enhancing existing development and redevelopment.

The Land Use Map indicates the location and extent of permitted development throughout the City. Land use categories (or "designations") on the map indicate the type of development that is permitted in specific areas of the City. These land use categories also contain standards for development intensity. The reason for these standards is to ensure that citizens, staff, and decision-makers clearly understand the implications of the Land Use Element in terms of both existing and future development.

Section 1: Land Use Element (continued)

Development intensity refers to the size or degree of development possible within a land use category. For example, development intensity standards may use the ratio of a building's floor area to the total lot area (referred to as a floor area ratio), the number of dwelling units per acre, or traffic generation. The floor area ratio standards for Bell Gardens were derived from development standards included in the Zoning Ordinance.

The Land Use Map for the City of Bell Gardens (shown in Exhibit 1-6) consists of ten categories of land use. Four of the land use designations relate to residential development, two categories correspond to commercial development, a single category designates both commercial and residential development to be combined in mixed-use settings, one category is designated for industrial developments, and there are two categories each corresponding to open space or institutional uses. Table 1-2 below summarizes the land use designations on the City's General Plan Land Use Map.

TABLE 1-2
SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP DESIGNATIONS

Low Density Residential	Areas designated as Low Density on the land use map correspond to single family areas that include land surrounding Lanto and Agra Street and the land surrounding Specht Street and Lynda Lane. Up to 8.7 dwelling units per acre, can be constructed.
Medium Density Residential	This category applies to single family and multi-family units. Some of the areas designated as High Density Residential include parcels along Watcher, Lanto and Agra Streets. Density guidelines are 9 to 15 dwelling units per acre.
High Density Residential	This category applies to multi-family units. Most of the residential areas in the City are designated as Medium Density Residential . Density guidelines are 20 to 30 dwelling units per acre.
Very High Density Residential	This designation applies to multi-family units constructed as gross densities of over 30 units per acre. Most of the area designated as Very High Density Residential .
Mixed-use	Mixed-use refers to a combination of commercial and residential uses working in tandem to supply the community with much needed lower-income housing and commercial facilities. This designation has been concentrated on parts of Eastern Avenue and parts of Gage Avenue. Residential densities correspond to the High Density Residential designations and the commercial uses would use a guideline of a 4.0 floor area ratio.
General Commercial	General Commercial refers to a range of commercial uses located at throughout the City. Development density follows a guideline of a 4.0 floor area ratio.
Regional Commercial	The area at the hub of commercial activity in the City has been designated as Regional Commercial . This area is located at the intersection of Florence and Eastern Avenues. Development density follows a guideline of a 5.0 floor area ratio.
Industrial	The City contains a mix of Industrial uses, with these areas located throughout the City. Development density follows a guideline of a 2.0 floor area ratio.

Section 1: Land Use Element (continued)

**TABLE 1-2
SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP DESIGNATIONS (continued)**

Public/Institutional	The Public/Institutional category applies to a wide range of public uses including public schools, private schools, churches, City Hall, and other public and quasi-public uses.
Open Space/Parks	The Open Space/Parks category refers to public parks and private land reserved for open spaces.
Source: City of Bell Gardens General Plan Map, 1994.	

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation mechanism for the General Plan Land Use Policy. The zoning ordinance regulates all development in the City by designating areas where specific land uses are allowed. The zoning ordinance consists of two primary components: the development standards and the zoning map. The development standards

are detailed in the ordinance text and include lists of permitted uses and various standards governing setbacks, lot sizes, building height, etc. The zoning map is very specific in that every parcel of land in the City is assigned a zone district designation. Table 1-3 indicates the corresponding zone designations to the General Plan Land Use Map designations.

**TABLE 1-3
SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS
AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS**

General Plan Land Use Designation	Summary	Corresponding Zoning Designation	Area (in acres)
Low Density Residential	Single-family residential 8.7 du/acre maximum	R-1 R-PD	19.7
Medium Density Residential	Single and multi-family residential 9-15 du/acre maximum	R-2	35.2
High Density Residential	Multi-family residential 20-30 du/acre maximum	R-3	558.2
Very High Density Residential	Multi-family residential over 30 du/acre	No existing zoning designation	31.3
Mixed-use	Commercial and residential uses Floor Area Ratio of 4.0 and 20-30 du/acre for residential	R-3 R-4 CS	88.1

TABLE 1-3 SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS (continued)			
General Plan Land Use Designation	Summary	Corresponding Zoning Designation	Area (in acres)
General Commercial	A range of commercial uses throughout the City Floor Area Ratio of 4.0	C3 CS CM	60.8
Regional Commercial	High intensity commercial at Florence and Eastern Floor Area Ratio of 5.0	C3 C4	61.3
Industrial	Light industrial and limited heavy industrial activity Floor Area Ratio of 2.0	M-1 M-2 M-PD	157.8
Public/Institutional	To maintain and enhance the existing facilities	No existing zone designation	89.1
Open Space/Parks	Conservation purposes	No existing zone designation	139.6



LAND USE ELEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT

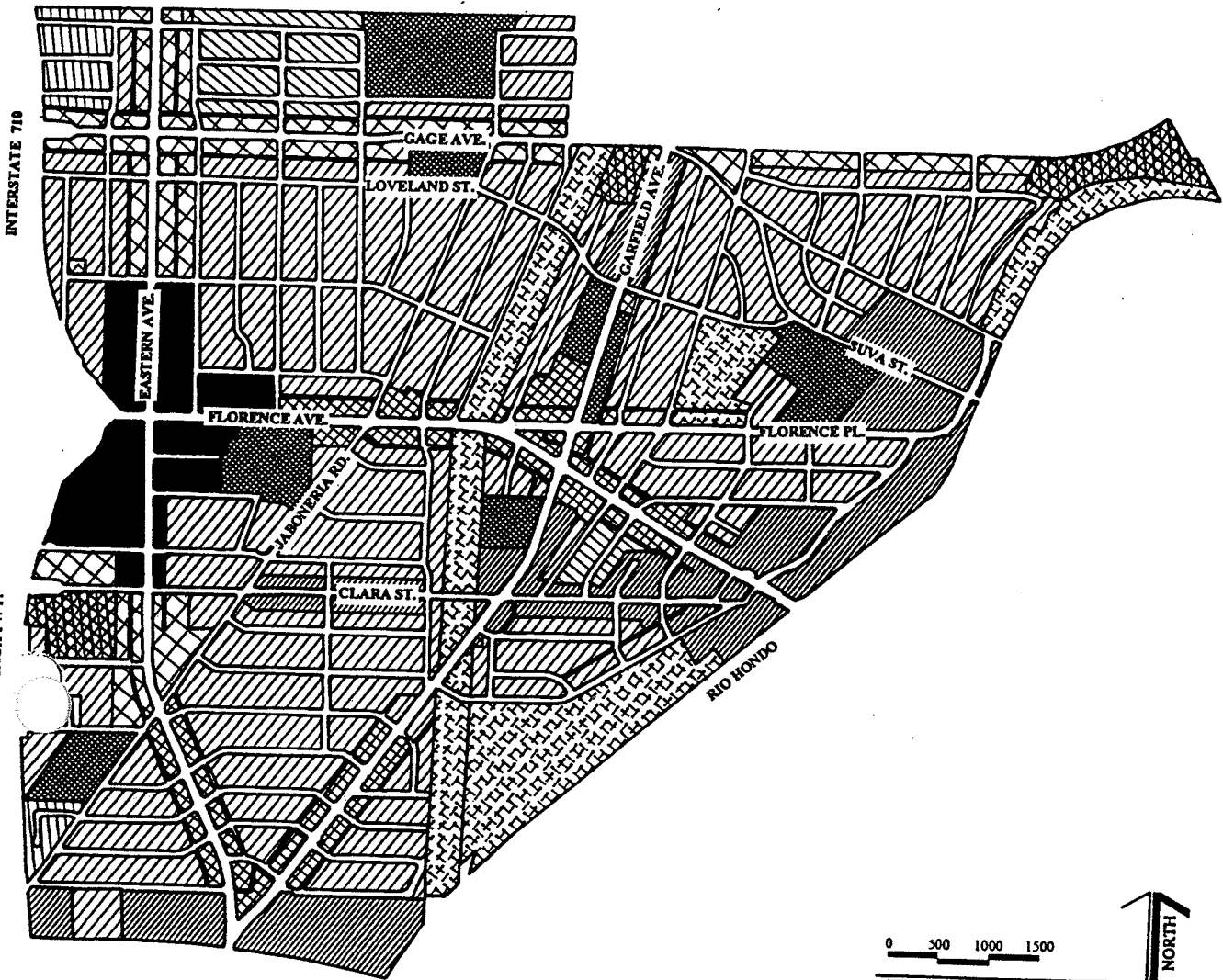
The Land Use Element Background Report provides an overview of the issues and opportunities that will affect land use planning in the City. This Background Report contains information concerning development trends,











existing development, the zoning ordinance, redevelopment, urban design, buildout projections, and infrastructure available to serve existing and future development.

Development Trends

The City of Bell Gardens is located in southeastern Los Angeles County (see Exhibits 1-7 and 1-8), one of the most densely developed areas in the western United States. The City is located in the midst of an industrial belt that begins just south of downtown Los Angeles and extends eastward through the Cities of Vernon, Commerce, Montebello, Bell Gardens, Pico Rivera, Bell Gardens, and Santa Fe Springs.

The history of Bell Gardens began with the Rancho San Antonio, a 29,500-acre land grant that



-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  High Density Residential
-  Very High Density Residential
-  Mixed Use (Commercial/Residential)
-  General Commercial
-  Regional Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Open Space/Parks
-  Public/Institutional

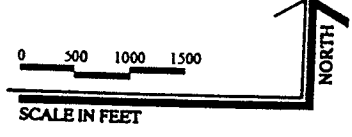


EXHIBIT 1-6
LAND USE MAP

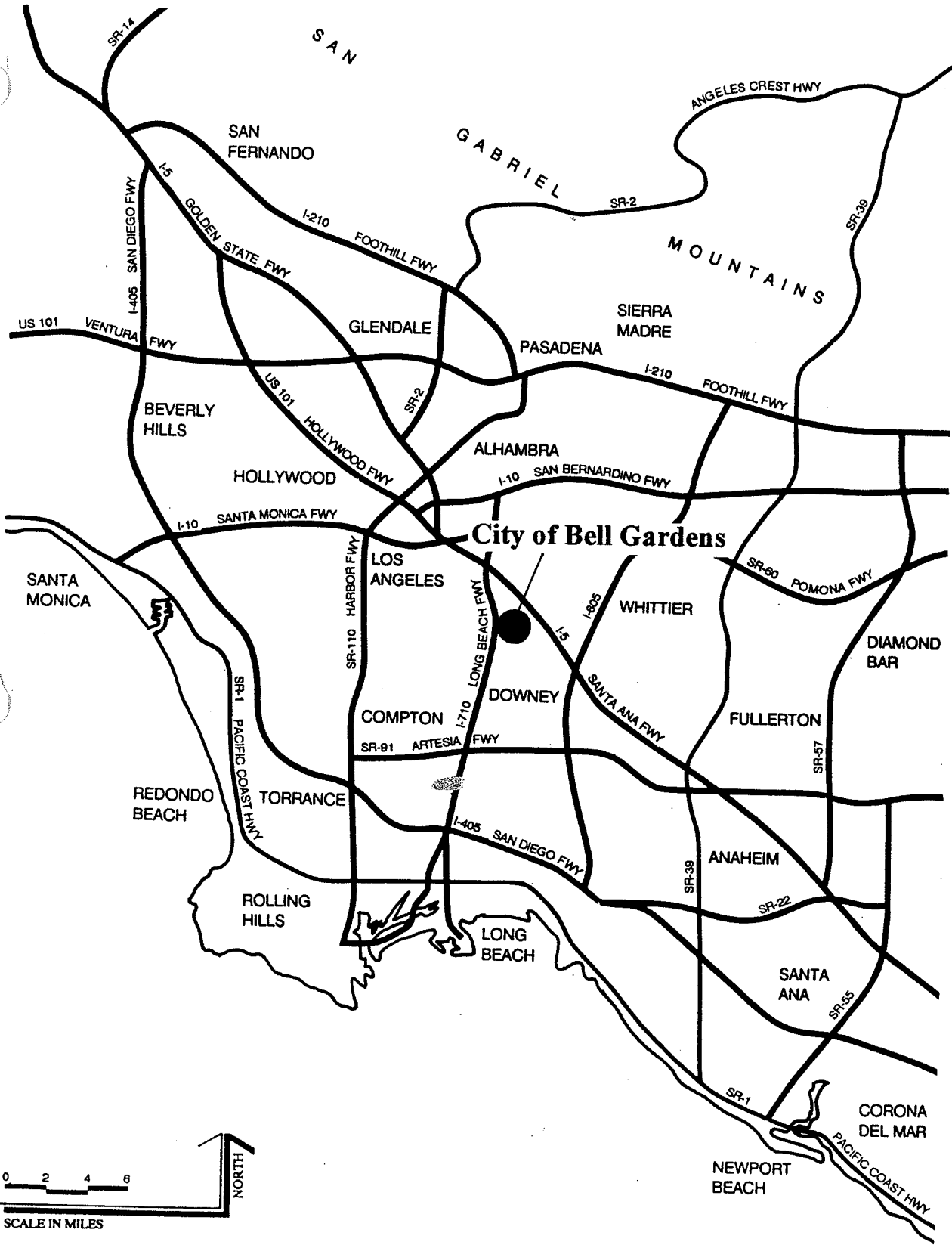


EXHIBIT 1-7
REGIONAL LOCATION

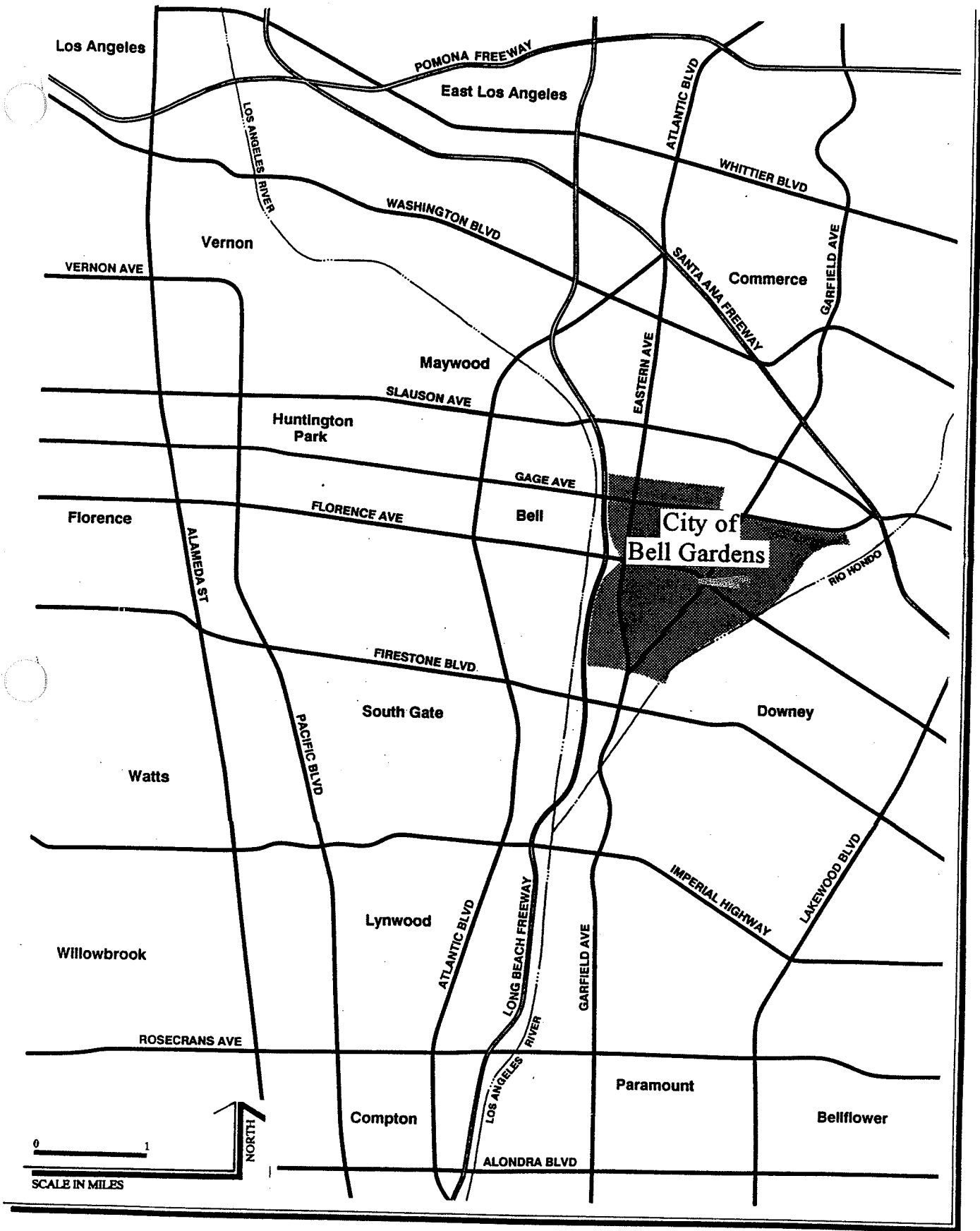


EXHIBIT 1-8
VICINITY MAP

Section 1: Land Use Element (continued)

was awarded to Antonio Maria Lugo, a Spanish soldier. Lugo established a rancho near the fork of the Rio Hondo and Los Angeles Rivers. O.C. Beck, a land developer, offered this land for as little as \$20 down and \$10 per month. As a result, the old rancho was subdivided with many small farms and ranch homes.

During the early years of this century, gardeners and small farms in the Bell Gardens region produced quality vegetables for regional markets. These agricultural communities were short-lived, however, due to the urbanization that followed in the 1920s and 1930s. Nearby Vernon, which incorporated in 1905 for the sole purpose of promoting industrial development, fueled the development of surrounding communities which provided housing and services to those working in the industrial belt. By the 1930s, the Bell Gardens area became an important residential area. The defense plants of the 1940s brought prosperity to the region and Bell Gardens became largely developed with single family homes, bungalow courts and strip commercial

development along major arterials. By 1961, with a population of close to 30,000 persons, the City of Bell Gardens was incorporated.

Existing Development

In January 1993, a land use survey was performed. The results of the survey are summarized in Table 1-4. The residential areas did not always fall into the existing General Plan designation categories or the existing Zoning Ordinance categories. The survey revealed a mix of single family developments with multi-family developments, with densities ranging from one unit per lot to twenty-two units per development. In response to this mix of residential uses (and only for the purposes of this Background Report), new categories were used to illustrate the density range for a given block. Also, a Public/Quasi Public category was created to call out civic and education uses. A category of Parks/Open Space/Vacant was used to assist in the evaluation of available open space land in the City.

TABLE 1-4 1993 EXISTING LAND USES		
LAND USE CATEGORY	Acres	Percent of City Total
Residential (1 - 4 units per lot)	167.1	10.9
Residential (1 - 8 units per lot)	249.4	16.3
Residential (1 - 16 units per lot)	190.5	12.5
Residential (1 - 20 units per lot) ¹	88.7	5.8
Neighborhood Commercial	0.4	negligible
General Commercial/Office Professional ²	138.7	9.1
Industrial	133.3	8.7
Public/Quasi-public	100.9	6.6

TABLE 1-4 1993 EXISTING LAND USES (continued)		
LAND USE CATEGORY	Acres	Percent of City Total
Parks/Open Space/Vacant	181.2	11.4
Streets	279.4	18.3
TOTAL	1529.6	100%
¹ Includes mobile home parks. ² The two categories were combined due to the limited amount of Office Professional uses. Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc. 1993.		

Several residential neighborhoods have retained their identity as lower density residential areas despite historic development practices. The majority of residential neighborhoods were historically zoned "R-3" and developed with single family developments that have, over the years, been redeveloped or recycled to higher densities. The resulting development is characterized by a mix of single family, duplex, triplex, tandem and multiple family developments.

Commercial uses in the City are limited, to a great extent, to strip or highway commercial development. The primary commercial areas in the City consist of major retail commercial activities located along Eastern and Florence Avenues. Smaller concentrations of retail commercial development are found along Garfield Avenue, Gage Avenue, Florence Place, Clara Street, and Foster Bridge Boulevard.

Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Regulations of the City of Bell Gardens are the primary implementation mechanism for the General Plan Land Use Element. The current Zoning Regulations control development in the City by designating areas where specific land uses are allowed, compatible with the General Plan Land Use Element. The Zoning Regulations consist of two primary components: the Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Map. The Zoning Ordinance consists of detailed development standards, including lists of permitted and conditional uses and various standards governing setbacks, minimum lot sizes, building height, etc. The Zoning Map is a parcel specific map with each and every parcel of land assigned a zone designation. The Bell Gardens Zoning Map contains sixteen zones. Four of these zones apply to residential development, one applies to agriculture, four apply to commercial development, and four zones are industrial. Table 1-5 summarizes the zone designations.

Section 1: Land Use Element (continued)

TABLE 1-5 SUMMARY OF EXISTING ZONE DISTRICTS		
Zoning Category	Symbol	Permitted Uses
Single Family Zone	R-1	Single family dwelling units
Low Density Multiple Zone	R-2	Single family dwelling units, duplexes, and triplexes
Medium Density Multiple Zone	R-3	Apartments, single family dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, public parks and playgrounds
General Commercial	C-2	Banks, savings and loans, churches, day care centers, medical clinics, fire stations, homes for aged, children and seniors, education, libraries, offices, public parks, police stations, restaurants
Neighborhood Commercial Zone	C-1	Auto service stations, retail shops, churches, day care centers, restaurants, medical clinics, offices
Light Industrial	M-1	Automobile car washes, sales, & rentals; building materials sales, bus terminals, storage & rentals; carnivals, circuses & fairgrounds; contractors yards, equipment rental, golf courses, lumber yards, public utility yards, skating rinks; truck storage, sales and rental; stations, bus, railroad and taxi
Public Institutional	P-1	Off-street parking, employee recreation areas, accessory signs, landscaping
Streets	N/A	
Source: City of Bell Gardens Zoning Map.		

Redevelopment

The City of Bell Gardens Redevelopment Agency has been active since 1972. The current redevelopment areas are shown in Exhibit 1-3. The Redevelopment Plan for the Bell Gardens Central City Redevelopment Project (Redevelopment Project Area 1) established the area west of El Selinda Avenue, between Gage Avenue and Clara Street as the City's first redevelopment project area, in 1978. The Plan set goals and criteria for development within the Central City area.

The Redevelopment Agency has been involved in two major projects in the Central City Redevelopment Area. The first project was the

Bicycle Club, which has been open since late November 1984, and the Toys-R-Us center opened operations shortly thereafter. In 1986-87, the Redevelopment Agency pursued the acquisition of properties to the south of the Bicycle Club. Other projects include Flynn's Industrial Catering, Wyss Brothers Metal Products, Wilcox Machine Company, and J. Berg Enterprises. The Bicycle Club continues to be the City's leading single source of revenue.

The Florence Avenue and Eastern Avenue commercial districts have long been the subject of redevelopment efforts. These areas serve as the primary entrance to the City due to their proximity to the Long Beach Freeway and the intersection of the two major highways. A downtown

revitalization study, prepared in 1978, identified a number of problems in this area including the highway commercial orientation of businesses, a significant lack of available parking, and an inappropriate mix of commercial and residential land uses. In 1980, plans were initiated to revitalize the downtown area. However, a 1983 survey of merchants and property owners in the area indicated relatively low interest in participating in the area's revitalization.

Urban Design

In recent years, the City of Bell Gardens has undertaken steps to revitalize the City's commercial areas and improve the quality of life in the City through the implementation of urban design principles. Urban design guidelines set forth in the City of Bell Gardens CBD Urban Design Plan, developed in May of 1987, established standards to revitalize the City's streetscapes, commercial, and residential development within the commercial area.

In 1984 and 1985, two large-scale developments spearheaded the revitalization of the City's commercial districts. The Bicycle Club gambling casino and the Bell Gardens Shopping Plaza highlight those revitalization efforts for commercial development in the City.

A Beautification Plan, developed in 1989, provided a framework to extend urban design principles throughout the City (Exhibit 1-4). The Beautification Plan focused upon six basic components to be implemented as individual projects or in conjunction with other development. The six components of the Beautification Plan include:

- Entrances to the City;
- Landscaped Median and Traffic Islands;

- Central Business District Landscaping;
- Southern California Edison Right-of-Way Screen Planting;
- Street Tree Plan; and
- Public Information Signing.

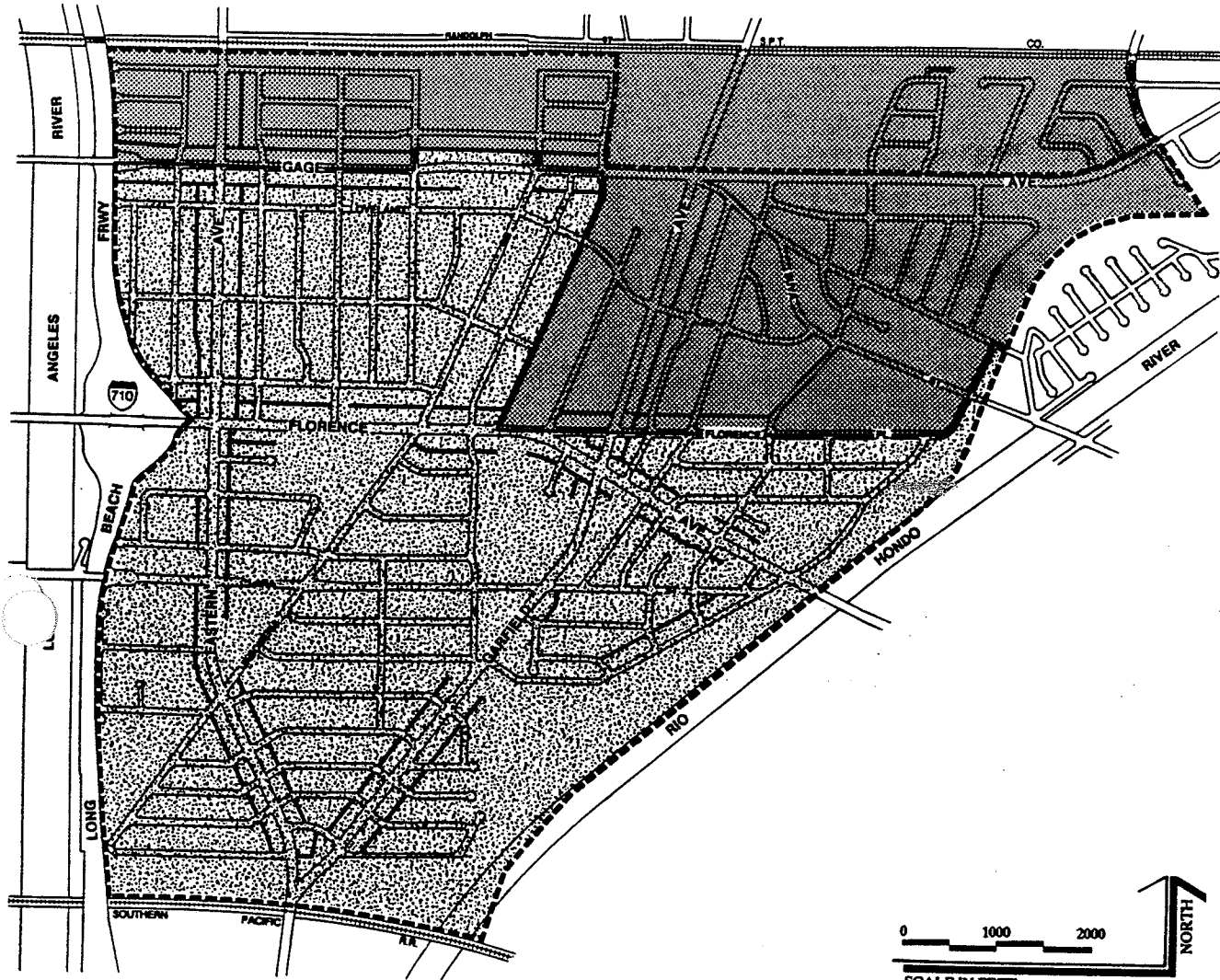
Infrastructure

Water

Two utilities, Park Water Company and Southern California Water Company, provide water service to the City of Bell Gardens. Bell Gardens Water Company serves approximately 25 percent of the City (the northerly area) and Southern California Water Company serves the remaining 75 percent (see Exhibit 1-9). Both companies utilize two major sources:

- **Imported Water.** Both companies have connections to the Metropolitan Water District system, which provides 75 percent of the City's demand.
- **Wells.** Both companies have several local wells from underground aquifers to provide the remaining 25 percent of the City's needs.

The wells are located in the Central Basin Pressure Area while the imported water is delivered by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) through metered connections operated by the Central Basin Municipal Water District (CBMWD). Over a ten-year period (prior to the City of Bell Gardens' 1988 Water Master Plan Update), approximately 60 percent of the total



- Park Water Company
- Southern California Water Company

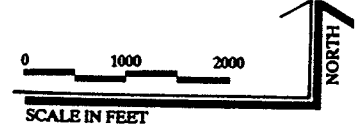


EXHIBIT 1-9
WATER COMPANY SERVICE AREAS

water supply for the City was taken from the MWD system.

Eight active wells exist within this water system. Seven of these wells belong to the Southern California Water Company and one belongs to the Park Water Company. The ground water basin is adjudicated and extraction is limited by terms of an agreement between water producers in the Central Basin to prevent overdraft of the underground water supply. In addition to monitoring the withdrawal of ground water from the aquifers, water producers have organized the Central Basin Water Replenishment District which has undertaken a program of recharging the underground water basin using imported water from MWD and reclaimed wastewater.

The wells are capable of producing a combined flow of approximately 5,400 gpm, although, less than 40 percent of the total City water demand has been supplied by the wells in recent years.

The barrier and basin recharge projects which influence underground water supplies in the Bell Gardens area are directed by the Central and West Basin Water Replenishment District. This District is primarily concerned with maintaining the yield of the basin rather than increasing the availability of water. No treatment other than the addition of chlorine is given to the well water.

The Metropolitan Water District delivers water to both Park Water Company and Southern California Water Company through the Middle Feeder. This major MWD transmission main begins at the Weymouth Softening and Filtration Plant at La Verne and conveys water to the Garvey Reservoir. From that reservoir, the Middle Feeder passes through the cities of Monterey Park, Montebello, and Commerce before reaching Bell Gardens. The pipeline operates entirely by gravity from the Garvey Reservoir, and so, is unaffected by local or regional electrical power outages. MWD

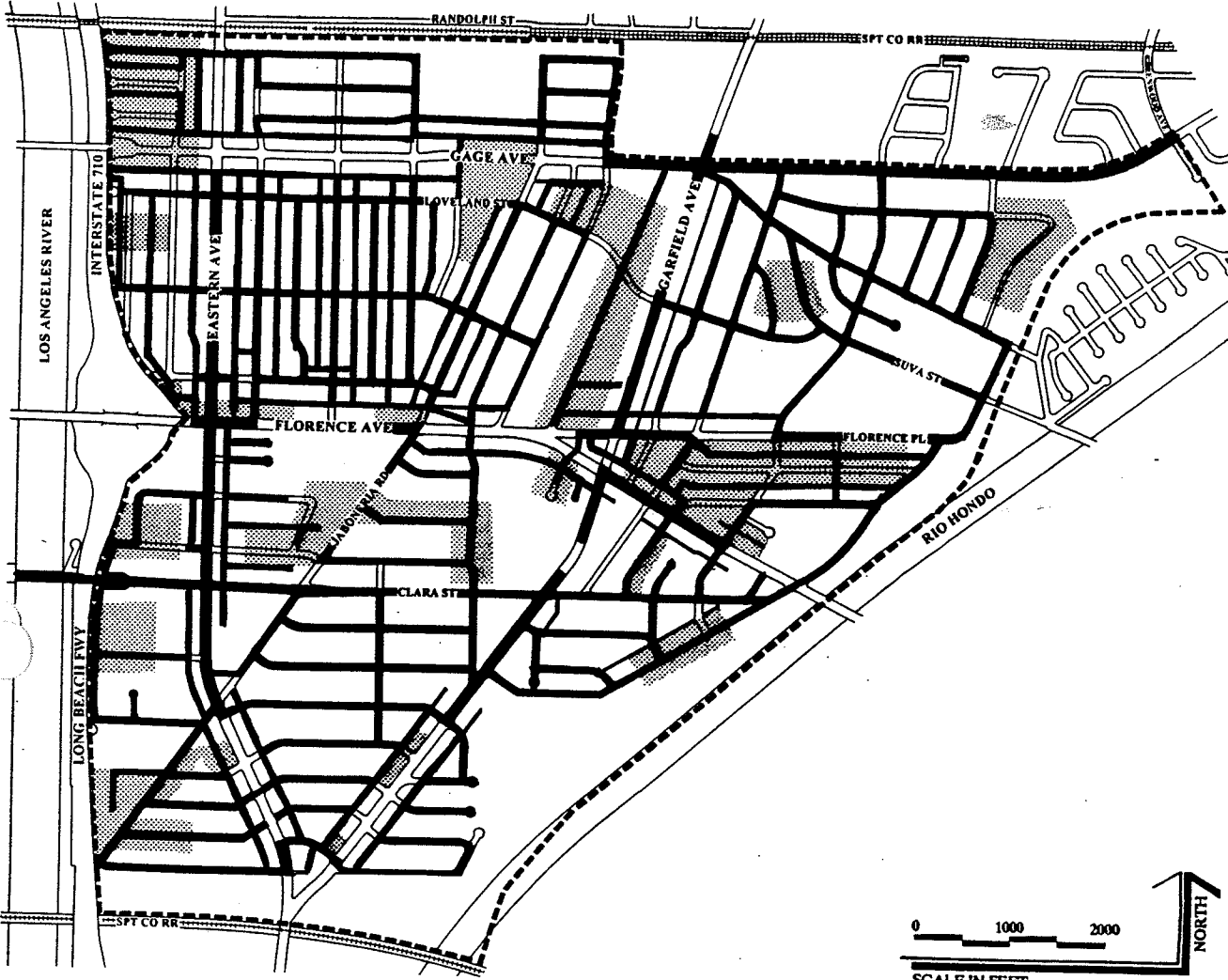
anticipates that the Middle Feeder (which has a capacity of approximately 250 cubic feet per second) will have capacity in excess of future predicted demands.



In 1988, a Water Master Plan Update was prepared to evaluate the adequacy of the City of Bell Gardens water supply system and to propose feasible long-term solutions. The Water Master Plan Update identified portions of the water system needing upgrading in order to meet the water supply demands anticipated due to development and redevelopment and then, recommended a capital improvement program for completing the proposed changes (Exhibit 1-10). The Plan proposes to utilize Community Development Block Grant and Redevelopment Agency funds as well as contributions from the two local purveyors to upgrade delivery facilities to provide an adequate service level for present and future land uses. The following information pertaining to water systems and services was derived from the 1988 Water Master Plan.

Although both of the local water companies have made efforts to address a number of system deficiencies, some deficiencies still remain in terms of the distribution and its reliability. The distribution system deficiencies consist of undersized mains, inaccessibility of mains, inadequate number and spacing of fire hydrants and inadequate storage and pumping capacity.

The water systems have insufficient reliability to meet peak domestic demands or fire demands during interruptions of electrical power.

According to the Water Master Plan, the total average day water demand (adjusted to reflect projected water usage) is 3,872 gallons per minute. The amount of equalizing water storage that is required to supply the maximum day demands over the average day demands is 33 percent of the volume of the average day demand, or 1.84



-  Existing Water Mains
-  Areas of Deficient Fire Protection

NOTE: See "City of Bell Gardens Water Master Plan Update - 1988" for more detailed information.
 SOURCE: Willdan Associates

EXHIBIT 1-10 WATER MASTER PLAN AND DEFICIENT FIRE FLOW

million gallons. If storage is also to be provided for the largest fire flow demand that could be expected (0.84 million gallons) then the total minimum storage that should be available within the City is 2.68 million gallons.

The Park Water Company currently has only one well operating within the City and can take a maximum of 7.5 cubic feet per second from the MWD Middle Feeder. In recent years, the Company has taken nearly 100 percent of its water from its MWD connection. Park Water Company currently does not have any storage facilities within its Bell Gardens water system.

Southern California Water Company currently has two ground level water storage reservoirs located at its well facility near Gage and Jaboneria. The combined capacity of the reservoirs is 690,000 gallons (0.69 MG) and booster pumps provide the lift from the reservoirs to the hydraulic grade line of the distribution system.

Drainage

The City's existing storm drain system appears to have adequate capacity to meet the ultimate local needs. There are 8,000,000 in deficiencies that have been identified in the system (Exhibit 1-11). Bell Gardens is bounded by two major flood control improvements: the Los Angeles River channel to the west and the Rio Hondo channel to the east. Both are regional facilities capable of containing a 100-year frequency flood without hazard to the City. The City should, however, keep abreast of regional flood control activity due to proximity of the two major channels.

Sewers

Bell Gardens has a fully developed sewer system which is maintained by the County and is included in Los Angeles County Sanitation

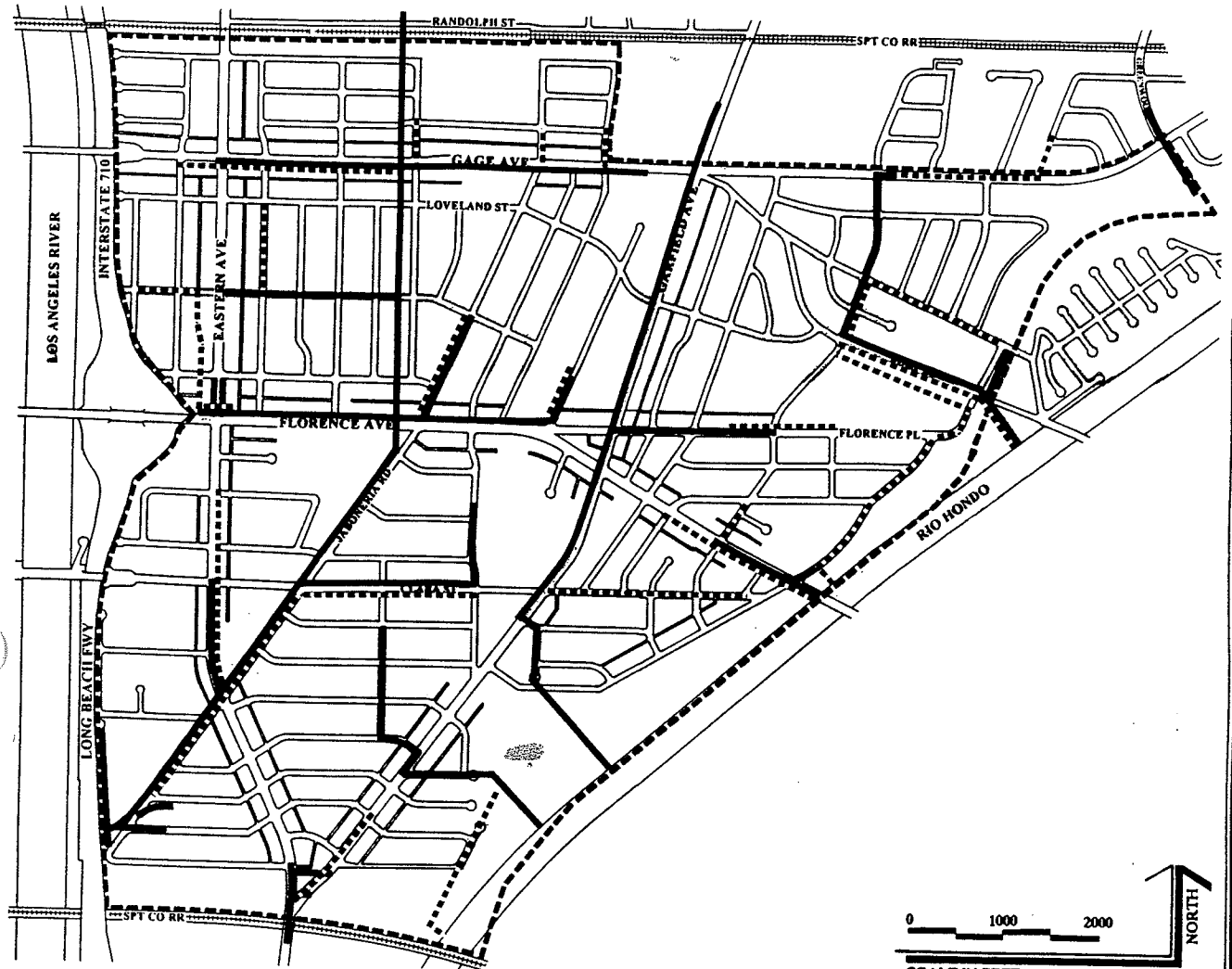
District No. 2. The existing facilities are shown in Exhibit 1-12.




The Los Angeles County Sanitation district is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the City's sewer system. The District operates a joint outfall system throughout the county. Sewage from Bell Gardens can be routed to a number of treatment facilities for liquid removal and treatment. Bell Gardens Public Works officials indicate that the City's sewer system adequately services the City's needs. In redevelopment areas, new trunk lines and lateral lines are installed on an "as needed" basis. Sewer system maps are on file at the City's Public Works office, at County Sanitation District offices, and with the County Department of Public Works.

Needs Assessment

In a general sense, the City of Bell Gardens has an advantageous location in the Los Angeles Basin, in an area near the urban core with excellent access from the regional freeway system. From the perspective of residential development, this location places the City within a comfortable commute of Southern California's principal employment center, making Bell Gardens potentially a very desirable place to live.

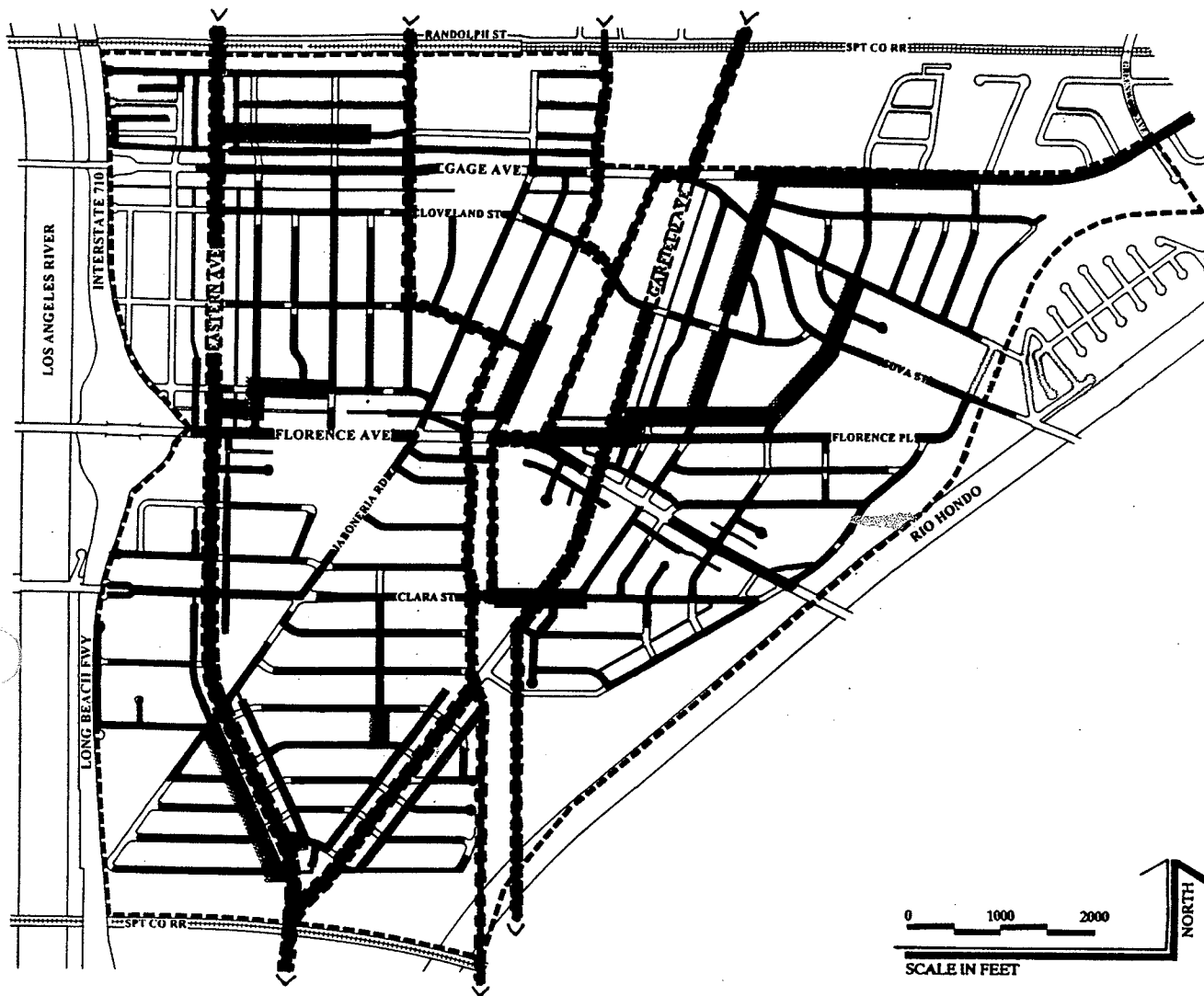
The downtown commercial center has potentially excellent visibility from the Long Beach Freeway with a full bi-directional interchange at Florence and Eastern Avenues, and is near to the center of a growing market area for general retail activity. There is a healthy industrial base in the City, which can form a core for expansion and modernization. The City's socioeconomic characteristics are such that it qualifies for and can significantly benefit from most federal and state assistance programs. The City has a Redevelopment Agency with an excellent record of accomplishment, and has generated revenues to continue and to expand







-  Existing Drainage Facility
-  Proposed Drainage Facility
-  City of Bell Gardens Boundary

SOURCE: Willdan Associates

EXHIBIT 1-11
 MASTER PLAN OF DRAINAGE



-  City of Bell Gardens Collector Sewer
-  L.A. County Sanitation District Trunk Sewers (May Run Parellel with City Collector Sewers)
-  Direction of Flow
-  Presently or Predicted Overloaded Sewers

NOTE: See "City of Bell Gardens Sewer Master Plan-1990" for more detailed information.
 SOURCE: Willdan Associates

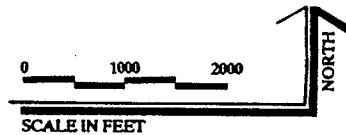


EXHIBIT 1-12 SEWER MASTER PLAN

Section 1: Land Use Element (continued)

the redevelopment efforts, focused primarily on the downtown. However, the City continues to suffer from the effects of a haphazard land use planning history dating back to the 1930s and 1940s (prior to incorporation); and ineffective zoning which allowed for the location and development of uncontrolled relationships of unlike uses in virtually every neighborhood throughout the City. This mixed pattern is still highly visible today, where housing, in various stages of repair, shares blocks with commercial and industrial facilities along most of the major streets.



CITY OF BELL GARDENS GENERAL PLAN
July 27, 1995