

4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section identifies and evaluates the potential impacts to cultural resources associated with implementation of the 2012 General Plan. The summary of existing conditions includes a brief historic overview to provide a context for understanding the types of cultural resources found within the City, and a description of known cultural resources, including archaeological, historical, and ethnographic sites. Potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the 2012 General Plan, and appropriate mitigation measures where applicable, are described below.

4.4.1 Existing Environmental Setting

History of La Mesa

La Mesa was settled in the late 1800s after California was annexed to the United States. The City provided a convenient way station for travelers and shipments going east, especially after gold was discovered in Julian. La Mesa incorporated in 1912 with 700 residents, and a cluster of residences and businesses centered on the intersection of Lookout Avenue (now La Mesa Boulevard) and Chollas Road (now University Avenue). This area, known today as the Downtown Village, contains most of La Mesa's oldest surviving cultural resources.

The City grew to 2,500 people by 1930; however, growth was stifled during the Great Depression until World War II. The post-war period resulted in tremendous growth throughout Southern California. In 1950, La Mesa's population was approximately 11,000 and by 1960 it had nearly tripled to more than 30,000. The resulting residential development boom occurred along the University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard corridors, and, toward the end of this period, on the north side of the City.

Commercial development activity accelerated after World War II. In the 1950s, the City subdivided and sold land that it owned in the area that is now an industrial area, north of I-8 and southeast of the trolley tracks. In 1961, the 65-acre Grossmont Shopping Center was developed. Concurrently, larger residential tracts appeared in the 1950s and 1960s along the north side of I-8. These neighborhoods tend to have wider, curvilinear streets that sometimes end as cul-de-sacs.

Low-density single-family neighborhoods on hillside lots are located south of University Avenue and extend east into unincorporated County of San Diego land. Development in this area occurred gradually, resulting in a housing stock that varies noticeably in age and style. There are surviving houses from the 1920s and 1930s that are associated with the citrus and avocado

farming that was prevalent in the area, as well as a larger number of mid-century modern custom homes from the 1950s and 1960s.

Also in the 1950s and 1960s, apartment developments were constructed on the edge of some of La Mesa's earliest residential neighborhoods. This trend was reversed in the 1970s as citizens took a more active interest in preserving the heritage of their City. The results of this interest are reflected in the policies contained in the Historic Preservation Element of the 2012 General Plan.

Archaeological and Historic Resources

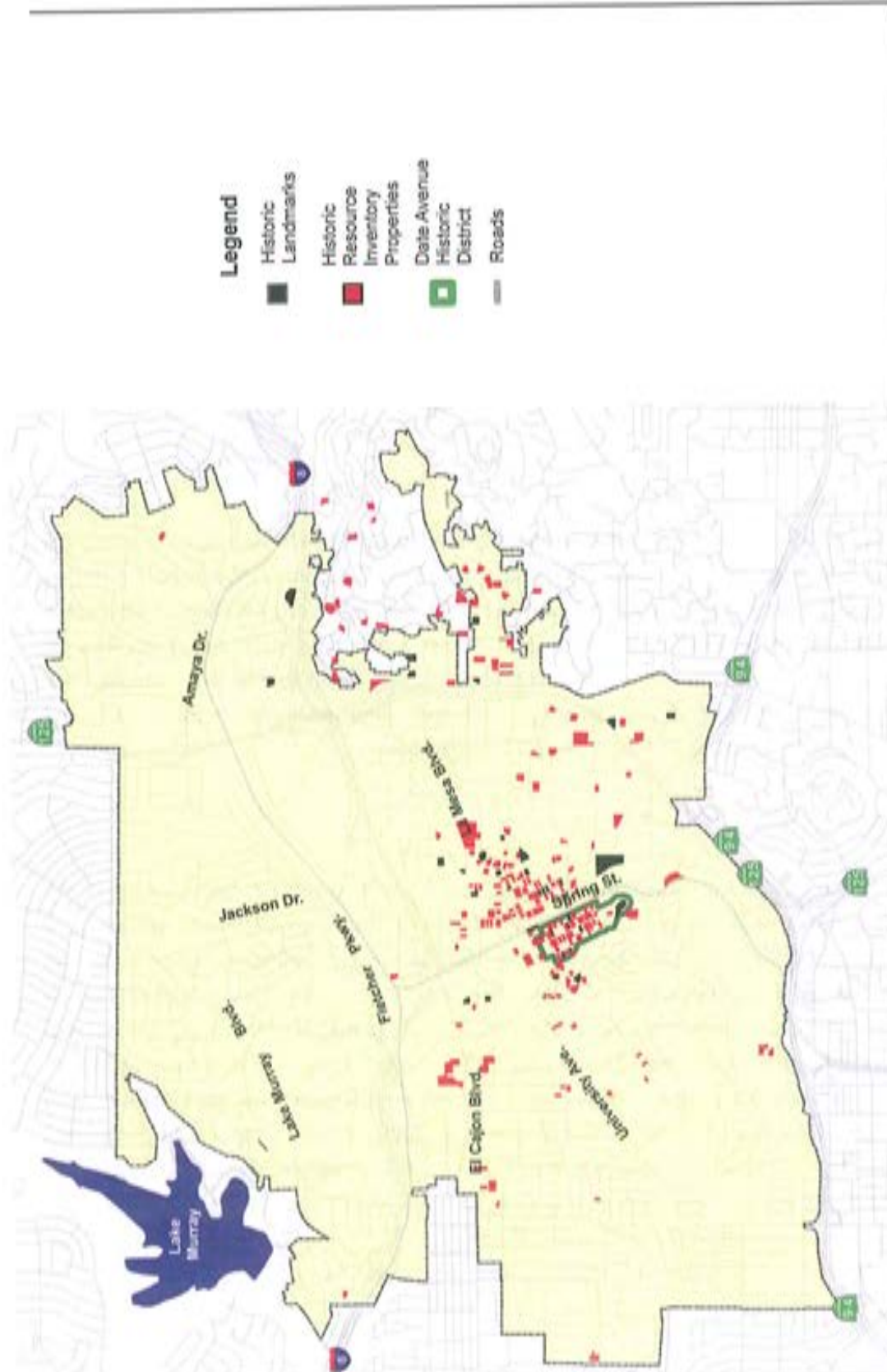
The La Mesa Historic Resources Inventory was adopted in 1983 and is updated periodically. The inventory is an accounting of some of the historic-era properties within La Mesa's municipal boundaries, and includes information on the appearance, condition, ownership, and occupancy history for each documented property, and additionally includes significance and eligibility conclusions for the documented properties. More than 300 structures and more than 50 nonstructural sites and public facilities have been identified as historical resources, most of which are located within a core area of downtown La Mesa covered by the Downtown Historic District (Figure 4.4-1). In addition, the inventory identifies four archaeological sites within the City's boundaries. As there has not been a recent comprehensive update to the Historic Resources Inventory, there are potential and future historic resources dating to the modern period (circa 1935–1975) that have not been identified.

Ethnographic Resources

On February 28, 2012, a request was sent to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a search of the Sacred Lands Inventory for information on cultural resources related to Native American occupation of the planning area. On March 6, 2012, the NAHC responded that there were two known Native American cultural resource sites within the City: near Lake Murray and in the northeast corner of the City. The City subsequently invited consultation with 13 Native American groups identified by the NAHC as having possible interest in the 2012 General Plan. None of the contacted groups chose to consult with the City.

4.4.2 Regulatory Setting

The federal government and the State of California provide a regulatory setting for local preservation management. Historic preservation concerns are regulated in comprehensive environmental planning laws and in topic-specific historic preservation legislation enacted at the federal and state levels. This framework is implemented locally within the City and further informs the City's historic preservation program.



- Legend**
- Historic Landmarks
 - Historic Resource Inventory Properties
 - Date Avenue Historic District
 - Roads

Figure 4.4-1
Historic Resources

Source: City of La Mesa

Federal

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, contained within 16 U.S. Code (USC) 470, established the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), authorized funding for state programs with participation by local governments, created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and established a review process for protecting cultural resources. The NRHP, the official list of historic places worthy of preservation, is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect historic and archeological resources. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) serves to preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of the national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice.

State

Formal state-led programs for identifying, protecting, and commemorating historical resources were established through the California Historical Landmarks Program (1932), the California Points of Historical Interest Program (1965), and the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (1992). The 1970 CEQA was amended in 1992 to create the CRHR and to account for and include historical resources within the comprehensive definition of the environment, thus providing a process for identifying, treating, and managing resources within the local discretionary project review process when CEQA is applicable.

Archaeological and Cultural Protection

Several state and federal laws address the importance of Native American involvement in the development review process and provide requirements for the treatment of human remains and grave goods and protection of cultural places. Among these laws is the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 2001. This act was put into place to ensure that all California Native American human remains and cultural items are treated with dignity and respect. In addition, sections of the California Health and Safety Code address the discovery of human remains outside of a dedicated cemetery, and provide requirements for consultation with appropriate Native American individuals for disposition of the remains. The Public Resources Code establishes the NAHC and the state's Sacred Places List. The requirements for local agencies to consult with identified California Native American tribes as part of general plan adoption or the amendment process, and prior to the dedication of open space, are provided in Government Code Sections 65352.3, 65352.4, 65562.5, and others, collectively referred to as SB 18.

Local*City of La Mesa Historic Preservation Program and Municipal Code*

The City's current historic preservation program includes a Historic Preservation Element, Historic Preservation Ordinance, Historic Preservation Commission, Register of Designated Landmarks, Inventory of Historical Resources, Design and Resource Management Guidelines, and an Incentives and Benefits Program. No property included in the Inventory of Historical Resources may be altered or demolished except in compliance with the procedures established in Title 25 (Historic Preservation Ordinance) of the City's Municipal Code. Additionally, a property that is determined eligible on the Inventory of Historic Resources is generally considered to meet the definition of a historical resource unless new information is presented to demonstrate a change in eligibility or a reduction of integrity such that the property no longer physically conveys significance.

4.4.3 Thresholds of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact related to cultural resources would occur if implementation of the 2012 General Plan would do any of the following:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Section 15064.5.
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Section 15064.5.
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

4.4.4 Analysis of Environmental Impacts**Historical Resources**

Although implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not cause direct destruction of, or damage to, historical resources, future land uses and infill development permitted under the General Plan could result in changes that affect historic structures or the historic character of neighborhoods or districts. The 2012 General Plan includes a Historic Preservation Element that contains specific policies, programs, and incentives/benefits that encourage property owners to retain, preserve, rehabilitate, and reuse La Mesa's historic building stock. Even with adherence to these policies and programs, significant impacts to historic resources would be anticipated from new development and redevelopment associated with the 2012 General Plan.

La Mesa transit stations are anticipated to be used more intensively in coming years, and the 2012 General Plan encourages new infill development near each transit station. The downtown location of the La Mesa Village station intersects major bus routes and provides transit access to the Civic Center, village commercial area, and surrounding residential areas. The old police station, old post office site, and civic center parking lot areas offer opportunities to develop compact new uses that complement the variety of uses in the heart of downtown. Much of the City's historic building stock, including the residential Date Avenue Historic District, is located within the downtown village area and within walking distance of the La Mesa Village transit station. As the areas around the transit station intensify, nearby properties listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources could be targeted for redevelopment or could be otherwise impacted. The character of the historic district could be similarly affected.

Both the Grossmont Shopping Center site and properties within the industrial area are cited as potential redevelopment opportunities in the 2012 General Plan. These areas were initially developed in the 1950s and 1960s. Although there are no anticipated impacts to currently identified historic resources within these areas, numerous structures built during the modern period (1935–1975) could emerge as having historical significance during the life of the 2012 General Plan. These emerging resources could be affected by redevelopment.

The 2012 General Plan also identifies mixed-use corridors as important development opportunity areas. In 2003, the City adopted a Mixed Use Overlay Zone for lots designated “Mixed Use Urban” along University Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, portions of La Mesa Boulevard, and near the Spring Street trolley station. The Mixed Use Overlay Zone is intended to revitalize older commercial corridors, increase opportunities for infill housing, encourage innovative retail that is less automobile dependent, and help create pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods served by transit.

Infill and redevelopment in the areas described above would result in a **significant impact** to historic resources, and Mitigation Measure CR-1 is required.

Archaeological Resources

The 2012 General Plan encourages new infill development near La Mesa's transit stations. There is redevelopment potential for more-intensive mixed-use projects located near the 70th Street trolley station in the Alvarado Creek area. Sites in this area are designated for regional-serving commercial uses such as office, hotel, multi-family residential, or mixed-use development. Development along Alvarado Creek has the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource.

None of the other opportunity sites identified in the Land Use and Urban Design Element are located within proximity of a known archaeological site. Nevertheless, the possibility exists that archaeological deposits could be discovered during the course of excavation and construction activities. Therefore, implementation of the 2012 General Plan would result in a **significant impact** to archaeological resources, and Mitigation Measures CR-2 and CR-3 are required.

Human Remains

While there are no known graves or burial sites outside of established cemeteries documented within the City, there is potential for prehistoric burials or human remains. Ground-disturbing activities such as construction associated with infill, redevelopment, and/or expansion of infrastructure have the potential to impact buried human remains. The likelihood of encountering such resources is greatest in areas that have been minimally excavated in the past.

Native American human remains have specific provisions for treatment in PRC Section 5097.98, as amended by AB 2641, which addresses the disposition of Native American burials, protects such remains, and establishes the NAHC to resolve any related disputes. Additionally, disturbing human remains would destroy the resources and could potentially violate health code. Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 has specific provisions for the protection of human burial remains if they are discovered, Native American or otherwise. Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that, in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there will be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains until the County Coroner has examined the remains.

New development and redevelopment projects that result from the implementation of the 2012 General Plan would be required to adhere to the laws and regulations discussed in Section 4.4.2. Therefore, impacts associated with the disturbance of human remains from implementation of the 2012 General Plan would be **less than significant**.

4.4.5 Mitigation Measures

CR-1 Prior to construction of specific development projects that would disturb a historic structure listed or eligible to be listed in the NRHP, the CRHR, or the Inventory of Historic Resources, the City shall require the development of feasible project-level mitigation measures, identified in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office when appropriate, to avoid or substantially reduce impacts to significant cultural resources. Feasible project-level mitigation measures include maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation, relocation,

or reconstruction of any impacted historic resource, which shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

CR-2 During construction of specific development projects, the City shall require monitoring by a qualified archeologist of grading, ground-disturbing, and other major earth-moving activities in previously undisturbed areas with known archaeological resources. The archacologist shall observe grading, ground-disturbing, and other major earth-moving activities.

CR-3 The City shall require a qualified archacologist to evaluate and determine the significance of any cultural resources discovered during site construction activities. Should an archacological deposit and/or feature be encountered during construction, an archacological data recovery program shall be prepared and implemented, including consultation with interested Native American tribes. The archeologist and Native American monitor shall strive for agreement on the determined significance of an artifact or cultural resource. Once in agreement, either the archeologist or Native American monitor may divert or halt ground-disturbing activities for the purposes of implementing a data recovery program. A data recovery program for archaeological sites consists of excavation of a percentage of the site, determined in consultation with the project implementer, to provide information necessary to answer significant research questions.

All Native American human remains and associated grave goods discovered shall be returned to their Most Likely Descendent and repatriated. The final disposition of artifacts not directly associated with Native American graves shall be negotiated during consultation with interested Native American tribes. Artifacts shall consist of material recovered from all phases of work, including initial survey, testing, indexing, data recovery, and monitoring.

The qualified archaeologist shall apply mitigation measures prior to the resuming of construction work. Local Native American tribes shall be consulted in the identification of mitigation measures to address impacts, consistent with California requirements, including provisions to address inadvertent discoveries.

4.4.6 Significance after Mitigation

Historical Resources

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1 would reduce impacts to historical resources to a **less-than-significant** level by requiring feasible project-level mitigation measures prior to construction of specific development projects that would disturb a historic structure listed or eligible to be listed in the NRHP, CRHR, or the Inventory of Historic Resources.

Archaeological Resources

Implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-2 and CR-3 would reduce impacts associated with archaeological resources to a **less-than-significant** level. Mitigation Measure CR-2 requires that a qualified archaeologist monitor any grading and ground-disturbing operations on sites located within proximity of a known archaeological resource. Mitigation Measure CR-3 requires that a qualified archaeologist evaluate and determine the significance of any cultural resources discovered during any construction activities. Mitigation Measure CR-3 further requires that an archaeological data recovery program be prepared in consultation with interested Native American tribes.

Human Remains

No significant impacts were identified. Impacts are **less than significant**.

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