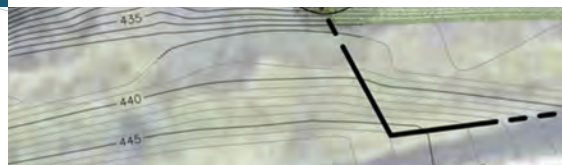
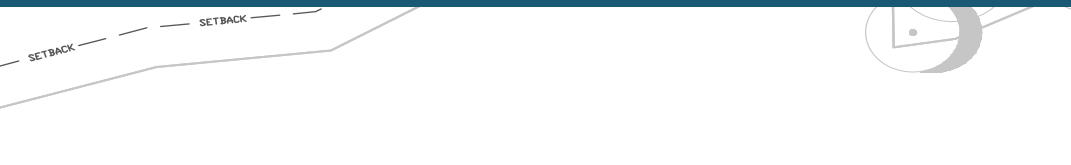


**DRAFT | ALVARADO**

**SPECIFIC PLAN**  
Revised February 2020







# **ALVARADO SPECIFIC PLAN**

**Revised February 2020**

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### I - A. SPECIFIC PLAN OVERVIEW

#### I - A. 1. Site and Planning Area

The Alvarado Specific Plan is a master development plan for a multi-family “transit-oriented development” (TOD) on approximately 12 acres located along the south side of Alvarado Road generally between 70th Street on the west and Guava Avenue on the east within the City of La Mesa. The Specific Plan area has operated a recreational vehicle campground since 1998. Prior to this change in use the site was operated as a mobile-home park from the early 1950’s when the Interstate 8 (I-8) freeway was constructed.



Figure 1 - Aerial View of the Specific Plan Area

Surrounding uses include the MTS light-rail (LRT) 70th Street station immediately west of the site and the double track LRT Green Line south of the site. East of the site is an automobile dealership. On the north is Alvarado Road and the I-8 freeway. A significant feature of the site is Alvarado Creek which bisects the property as it intersects Alvarado Road on the easterly portion of the site. The creek continues within the property and the adjoining MTS property toward the westerly end of the site as it enters underground storm drainage facilities below Alvarado Road and the trolley line flowing westerly through San Diego until reaching the San Diego River in Mission Valley.

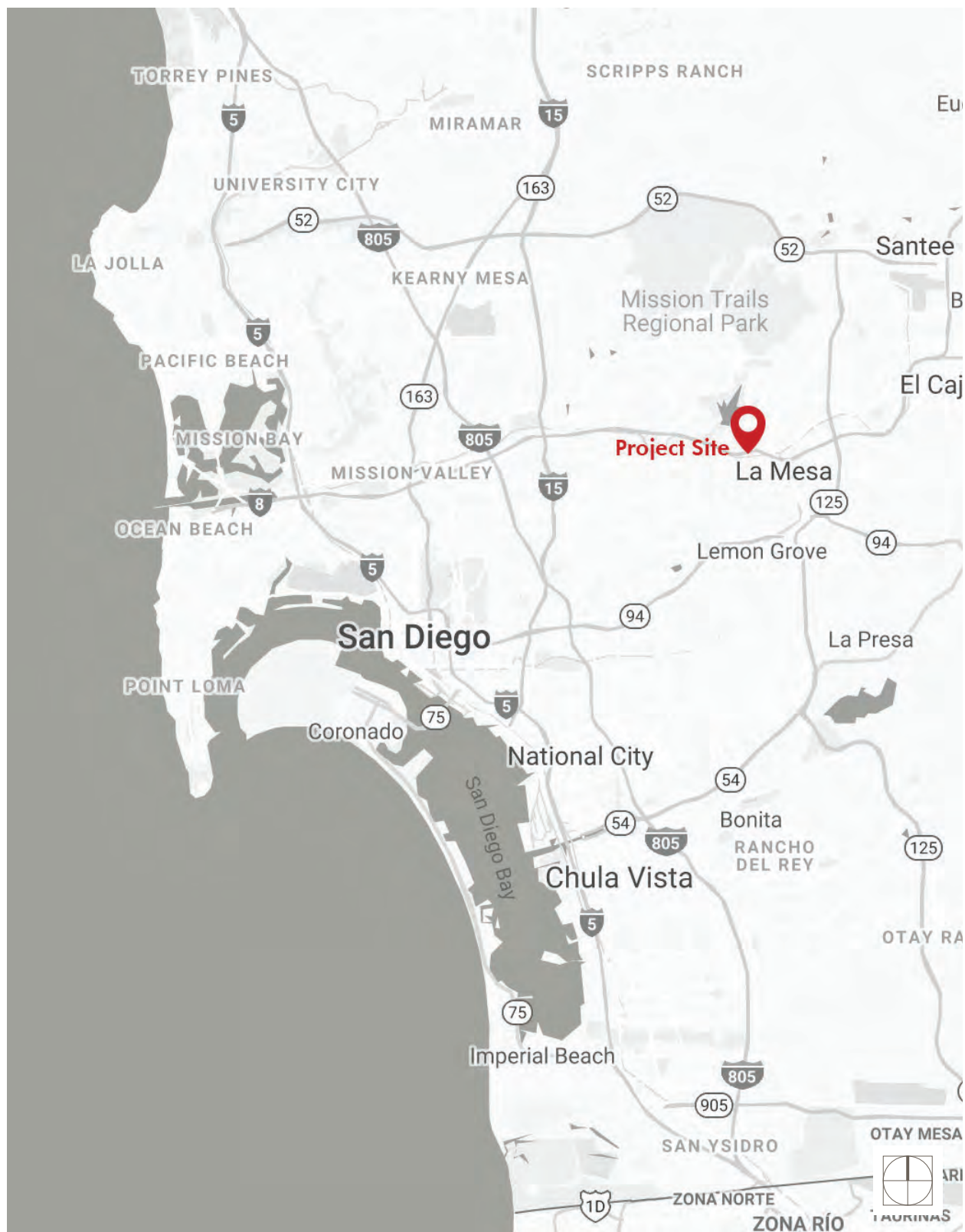


Figure 2 - Regional Vicinity Map



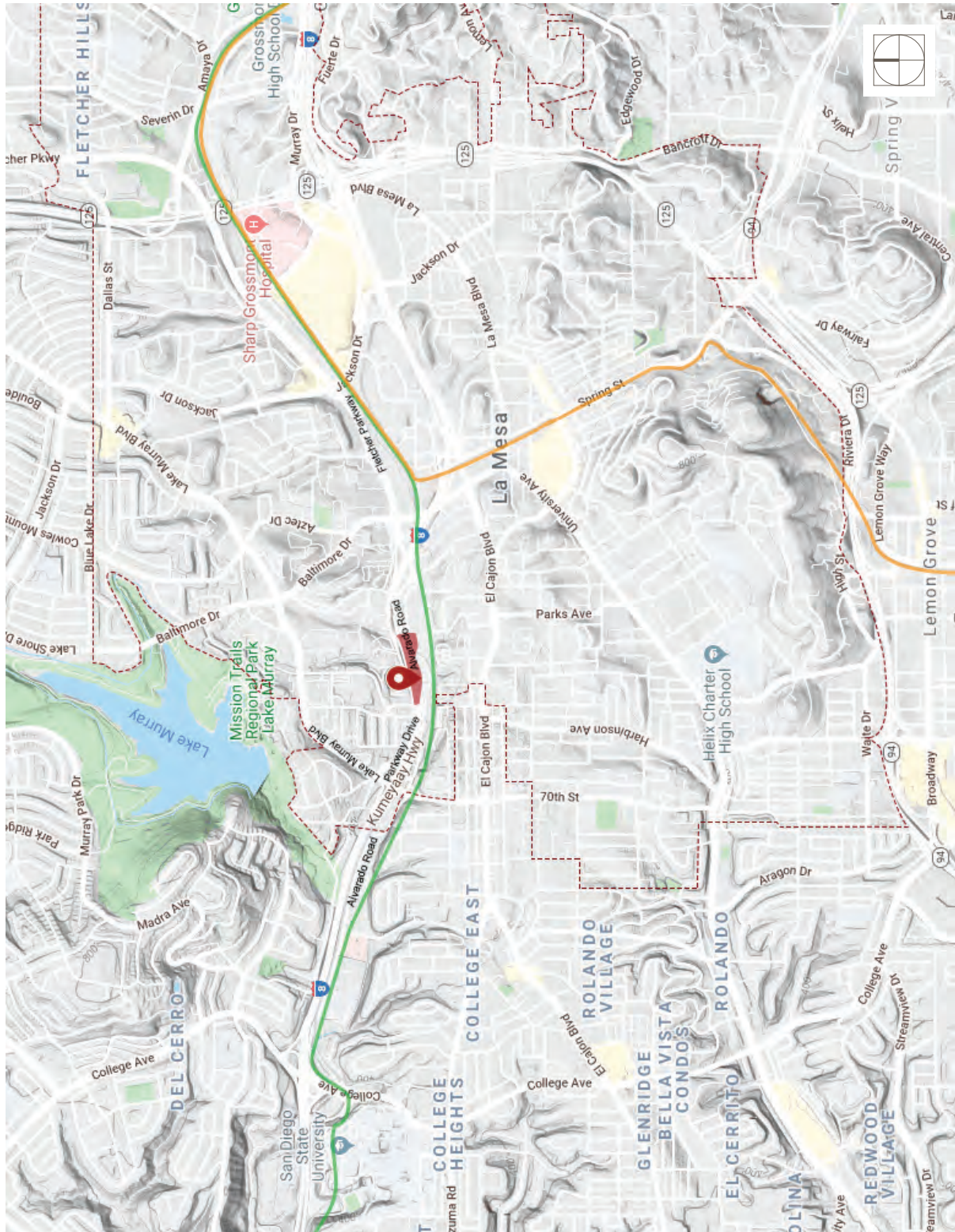


Figure 3 - Community Scale Vicinity Map



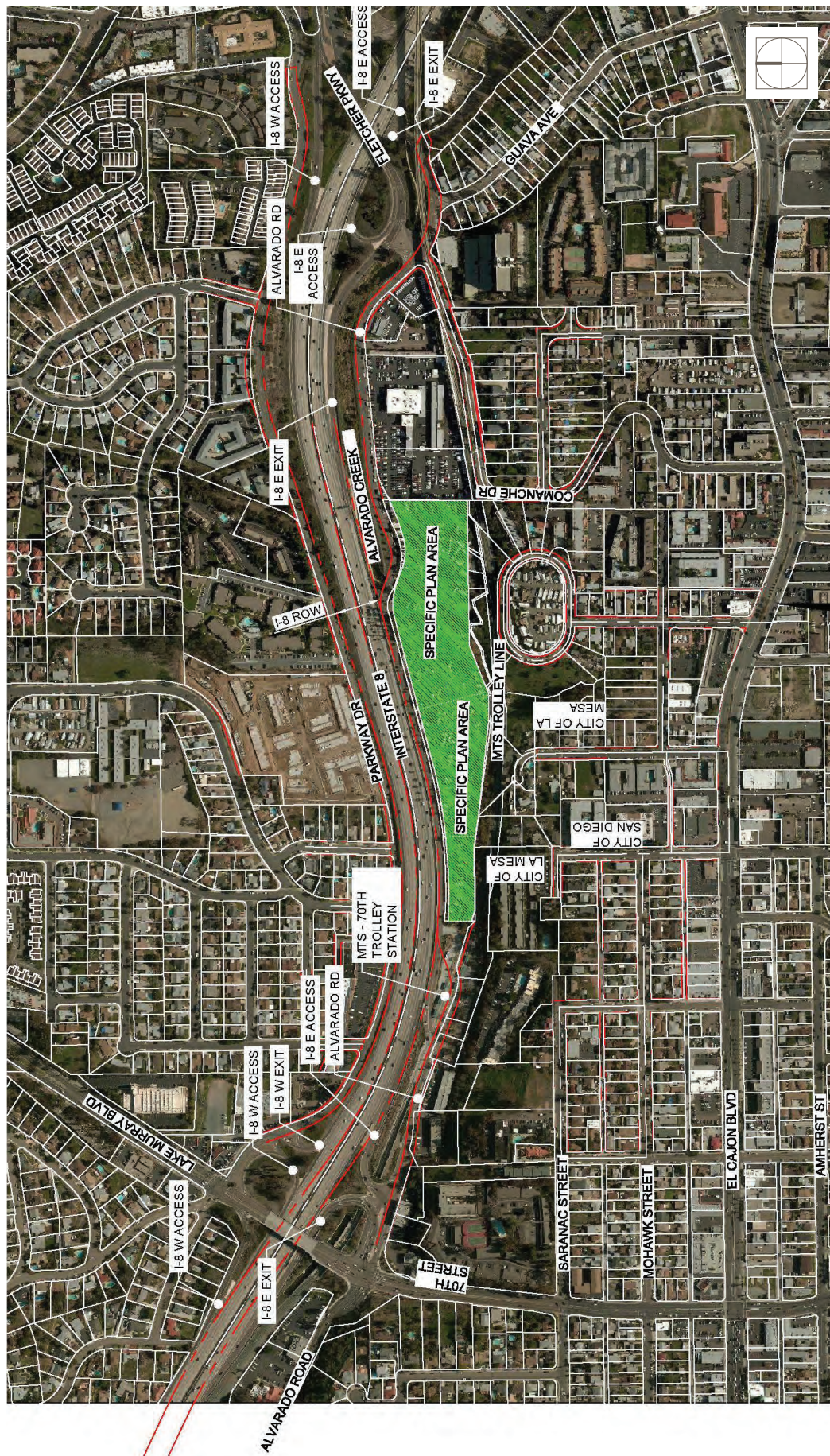


Figure 4 - Color Aerial Photo of Specific Plan Vicinity



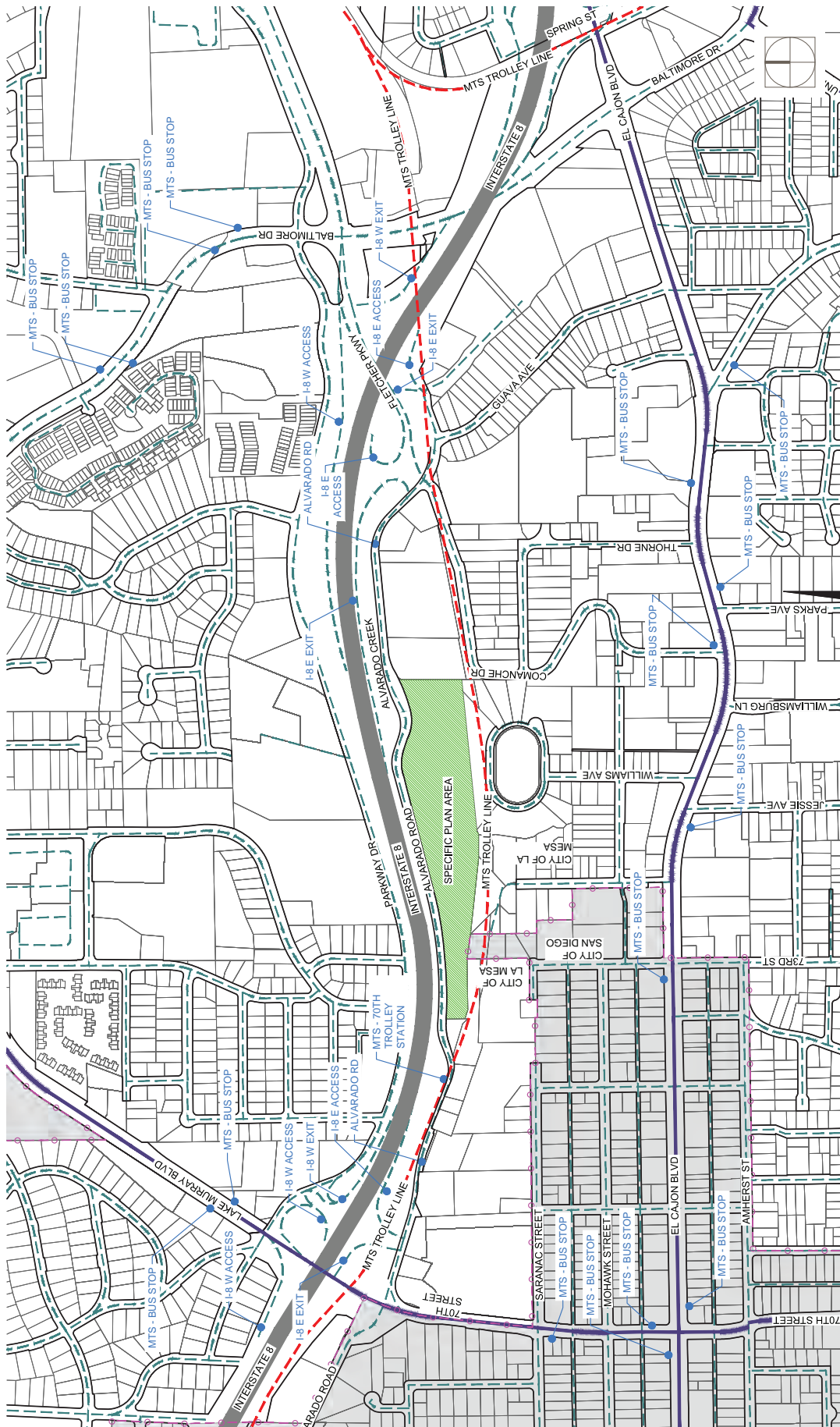


Figure 5 - Specific Plan Site Vicinity

## I - A. 2. Specific Plan Purpose

The purpose of the Alvarado Specific Plan is to establish a Land Use Plan and Development Standards that will be used to implement La Mesa's long-term planning goals, policies and objectives established in the City's General Plan when applied to the Specific Plan Area. The Alvarado Specific Plan has been formulated by the property owner to define a development plan that will bring the City's General Plan Goals and Policies into consistency with the existing land uses, General Plan Land Use Designation and existing Zoning Classification. With the establishment of the Specific Plan Land Use and Development Plans, Development Standards and Implementation steps, both public and private improvements will be constructed to address the existing safety conditions and lack of public improvements within the Specific Plan Area. The intent of the Specific Plan is to document the terms under which the private property owner(s) within the Specific Plan Area will be able to work in partnership with La Mesa, and the other affected public agencies identified in the Plan to provide the needed public and private improvements for the revitalization of the Specific Plan Area.

A key objective of the Alvarado Specific Plan is to re-establish a viable means to achieve the City's long-term plans to improve the physical conditions and permanently improve the public safety along this section of Alvarado Creek and Alvarado Road which were a part of the City's former Alvarado Redevelopment Project (adopted in 1987). The State of California's action to dissolve all Redevelopment activities throughout the State in 2012 created the need for new forms of public and private partnerships to complete the remaining unmet needs for the area. The Alvarado Specific Plan has been developed as a viable land use plan in coordination with the City's long-term redevelopment objectives, public improvement plans, and General Plan goals that directly relate to the existing conditions in the Specific Plan Area.

The purpose of the Specific Plan is to define a means for the City of La Mesa to establish a land use plan and set of development standards which will reflect the City's long-term planning objectives and General Plan goals for the Specific Plan Area, to provide a plan for the installation of public improvements which meet La Mesa's standards and to eliminate the existing safety and flooding conditions within the Specific Plan Area. The City's General Plan goals spell out support for higher intensity in-fill development in association with regional public transit systems where land use changes and new development can be a good "fit" within the existing fabric of the community. The Alvarado Specific Plan establishes a plan to meet these goals and objectives.

The Specific Plan as a General Plan implementation tool will also serve to outline a means of bringing the existing land uses, the General Plan goals and policies, General Plan Land Use Designation, and Zoning consistency for the Specific Plan Area into alignment. For many years, the existing land use, recreational vehicle resort/mobilehome park, has been classified as a "non-conforming use" by the La Mesa Zoning Ordinance. The General Plan Land Use Designation for the Specific Plan Area is for Regional Servicing Commercial. The long-standing Zoning classification for the site is Commercial Manufacturing-Flood Overlay Zone-Design Overlay Zone. At the same time, the General Plan describes long-term goals and policies encouraging redevelopment and revitalization of the Specific Plan Area with more intensive infill development, the need for missing and updated public improvements, and provision of flood protection facilities for the Area. The General Plan Goals and Policies that support the development projects defined by the Specific Plan are discussed in more detail in Section C-2 General Plan Consistency of this Chapter.

## I - A. 3. Specific Plan Objectives

The Alvarado Specific Plan objectives are listed below:

1. *Create a unified private development plan that is consistent with the City's General Plan, Climate Action Plan, Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan,*

*Urban Design Program, and the Regional Smart Growth Strategy.*

2. *Establish a land use plan that will improve public safety in the Area by providing missing public improvements at current City standards for Alvarado Road, construct channel improvements to address flooding conditions from Alvarado Creek, and relocation and improvement of existing sanitary sewer system infrastructure within the Alvarado Creek Flood Channel.*
3. *Create a development plan that can transform Alvarado Creek within the Specific Plan Area into a valued example of how to combine the objectives for a properly engineered urban storm-water and flood plain management plan with a system for maintaining the Area as an urban creek and open space feature within a planned residential community.*
4. *Provide for the development of a mix of housing types to maximize the advantages locating new infill housing in close proximity to the existing regional transportation facilities, including the adjacent 70th Street MTS Trolley Station, connecting bus routes, and freeway access.*
5. *Provide a comprehensive public and private circulation system that can manage new vehicle traffic from the project safely and efficiently within the existing local street network.*
6. *Within the existing site constraints from major public transportation facilities and infrastructure over many decades that have defined the physical characteristics of the Specific Plan Area, establish a the Land Use Plan that will transform the under-utilized value of the site with private development and public improvements that will serve as a new and positive gateway image for the community.*
7. *Provide a plan which clearly defines the land use and development commitments that are necessary for this overlooked Area that will result in a good fit for this location based on adopted goals and policies of La Mesa, and support the public/private partnership that will be financially feasible for private the investment necessary for the project and fiscally sound for the City.*
8. *Establish a Development Plan that will assist with the necessary cooperation and coordination between the local, regional, State and Federal agencies that will be part of the project review and permitting process to implement the private and public improvements described in the Specific Plan.*

#### **I - A. 4. Project Summary**

The Specific Plan proposes to encompass four development parcels. The plan provides for construction to occur in two phases. Phase 1 is planned for the properties west of the intersection of Alvarado Creek and Alvarado Road with 3 development parcels for Buildings 1, 2 and 3. Phase 2, the parcel east of the Alvarado Road/Alvarado Creek intersection, is planned for a potentially later development schedule with a similar development concept in Building 4, while the San Diego RV Resort facilities remaining as an interim use. The Specific Plan describes the commitment to construct major missing public improvements for the Specific Plan Area with Phase 1 construction.

The land use and development standards in the Specific Plan define a “form-based” development concept for multi-family housing on each of the development parcels. Each development parcel is proposed to include up to five floors of residential construction on a Type I concrete parking garage structure. Buildings 2, 3, and 4 are planned for the equivalent of approximately 300+ residential units with a 3-level parking structure. Building 2 on the westerly end of the site is planned for

a “student housing” development managed by a nationally recognized college and university housing firm to take advantage of the direct link via the MTS LRT to San Diego State University. The “student housing” building form and size will be similar to buildings 3 and 4, but with larger student residence units (i.e., more bedrooms per unit) and therefore, a lower total dwelling unit count. The most westerly Building 1 on the smaller development parcel, adjacent to the MTS Trolley Station, will have approximately 60 residential units with just one level of structured parking.

Each Building within the Specific Plan Area will incorporate a variety of housing types ranging from the unique student housing options to the more traditional range of multi-family concepts including units with two- and one-bedrooms, studios and loft units. Along the interior or southerly portions of the Buildings, “liner” units are planned where lower level units can have direct access to the interior creek side area via a “front stoop” concept. All buildings will include interior project amenity spaces and active outdoor spaces on the parking podium deck levels. Throughout the project, the principles of “defensible space” will be applied through high quality site and architectural design, creating a vibrant and active residential environment consistent with both local and regional goals for “smart growth.”

Significant improvements will be made to the site to meet all development requirements for the FEMA mapped flood prone areas, while retaining the necessary storm-water flows within the creek’s defined flood channel. A key objective of the Specific Plan is to clear the existing creek of non-native plant material and debris, and restore the creek environment with appropriate plant materials and channel improvements. This restoration is proposed to include a long-term commitment to maintain this section of Alvarado Creek as an example of how to achieve multiple objectives for flood protection, clean water, and urban creek restoration while providing a valued amenity for the future residents of the Specific Plan area. The channel improvements will result in a more effective means of managing the flooding and regional storm-water requirements within the Specific Plan Area. This Specific Plan objective will assist in achieving the City’s regional clean water mandates through restoration of the urban creek environment, the planned relocation of an existing waste-water trunk line out of the flood channel, and other waste water system improvements made possible through private investment supported by the Specific Plan.

Major Specific Plan elements include public and private transportation improvements to create a safe, functional and well-designed urban streetscape with traffic safety features, sidewalks, landscaping, street lighting, and on-street parking along the very extensive Alvarado Road frontage. The Specific Plan outlines a means to provide significant pedestrian and bicycle facilities to improve the safety of Alvarado Road and improve the connections to the MTS Trolley Station adjoining the Specific Plan Area. Circulation for the development plans for a system of secondary enhanced interior streets to minimize points for vehicular access to Alvarado Road. These private interior streets to the south will provide ingress and egress to the resident parking structures, as well as serving as the primary emergency vehicle access and staging areas so that Alvarado Road remains open to the east and west in the event of a need to deploy rescue equipment to the site. The enhanced internal streets will also provide for other service and delivery vehicle functions to maintain a free flow of traffic on Alvarado Road. The enhanced paving and landscape design for these interior roadways will create a functional, but also inviting, pedestrian environment serving to connect project residents with the creek side environment, outdoor amenities and pedestrian access to the 70th Street MTS station.

Due to the unique location and topographic characteristics of this site, the Specific Plan provides for a site sensitive land use plan that will create the opportunity for a significant land use change that is financially feasible, fiscally sound, and consistent with La Mesa’s General Plan and other local and regional land use and transportation plans. The Specific Plan creates a real opportunity for the community to recapture the true value of the public’s investment regional transportation serving the area, and resolve long-standing safety and missing public improvements with an appropriate land use plan to serve La Mesa residents well, now and into the future.





## I - B. PLANNING CONTEXT

### I - B. 1. Background

The Specific Plan Area site was originally developed with the construction of the I-8 freeway project through La Mesa and extending into Mission Valley in San Diego. This modernization of San Diego's transportation replaced the Old Highway 80 function of El Cajon Blvd. connecting East County to San Diego. Years of highway construction, including the system of overpasses and access-ramps have divided La Mesa into neighborhoods that were previously connected by local street networks. With the advent of the protected high-speed freeway right-of-way, frontage roads were created along the freeway with local auto access limited only to major arterial streets with significant clover-leaf interchanges.

The Specific Plan Area is one of these locations where the existing topography of bluffs and mesas to the south and the protected freeway right-of-way below to the north created a narrow and rather isolated strip of land. Alvarado Road that was once the main road connecting La Mesa to Mission Valley became the isolated frontage road with minimal improvements that exists today. During this early time period, the Area was developed as the "Camperland" mobile-home park. The mobile-home park has remained essentially in the same physical condition for the past 65 years. The site continues to be subject to severe flooding throughout its existence as the storm water from large urbanized areas of north La Mesa funnel into the Specific Plan Area via Alvarado Creek before entering San Diego west of 70th Street.



1957 Aerial View. Image Source: San Diego History Center (Image ID: 82-13673-1381)

Figure 7 - Historic Aerial Photo





*Figure 8 - Historic Flooding Photos*

In the late 1970's, La Mesa undertook a major review of the General Plan and land use regulations. Many of the City's older mobile home parks dating back many decades had become rundown and contained many public safety and housing code violations. At that time, the City rezoned many residential parts of the community, including all the remaining mobile home parks which were rezoned and deemed "non-conforming." This applied to the Specific Plan Area (i.e., Camperland) as well. Through the following years, the property changed hands and became very rundown with numerous code violations and safety problems. The current owner of the site purchased the property in 1998 and subsequently made significant improvements to the site and has operated the property as a short-term recreational vehicle resort to the present.

Starting in the 1980's the City embarked on a major redevelopment effort to improve a significant corridor along Alvarado Creek from the Grossmont Summit area near Water Street, all the way to the intersection of 70th Street and Alvarado Road. This planning and public investment effort included the Fletcher Parkway Redevelopment Area from Amaya Drive to Jackson Drive, and the Alvarado Creek Redevelopment Area from Jackson Drive to 70th Street. The Alvarado Creek Redevelopment Area (RDA) included the stretch of Alvarado Road from the Baltimore Drive/Fletcher Parkway/I-8 interchange to 70th Street. A primary objective of the City's redevelopment effort was to remove and replace the blighted conditions along the corridor, solve the ongoing flooding problems and to work in partnership with property owners to construct much needed public improvements with updated land uses.

During this period of change in La Mesa, two major rail transit projects have been constructed through La Mesa by MTS (formerly MTDB). The first trolley project was the Orange Line connecting to Downtown San Diego with a southern route in the late 1980's. This was followed by the Green Line extending to the west from the Grossmont Station to Mission Valley and Old Town in San Diego. The extension of the Green Line tracks run directly south of the Specific Plan Area and MTS shares ownership of a portion of the Alvarado Creek channel. During construction of the Green Line, a significant change to the physical conditions in the area was created by the vertical retaining walls to elevated the light rail tracks as they rise in elevation to the east in order to over the Baltimore

Drive/I-8 over pass. This significantly changed the Alvarado Creek appearance. At this time, MTS also constructed the storm-water improvements at the westerly end of the Specific Plan Area and the 70th Street Trolley Station.



Figure 9 - 70th Street MTS Station, Existing Conditions

## I - B. 2. The Planning Process

Dating back to the 1970's La Mesa's redevelopment efforts have taken advantage of the regional investments in transportation infrastructure with several award winning and highly successful Transit Oriented Developments (TOD's). The redevelopment efforts all involved significant land use changes and long-term commitments to creating public-private partnerships that connect local land use planning with regional transportation facilities within La Mesa. In 2012, tied to the many fiscal challenges facing the State of California, legislation was passed to dissolve all local redevelopment project areas and tax increment financing as a land use and financial tool in the State. As a result, the Alvarado Creek RDA was not able to complete the adopted objectives for revitalization of the Specific Plan Area and solve the long-standing flooding along Alvarado Road from Baltimore Drive to 70th Street.

Much of the City's past "redevelopment" efforts along this drainage system to the east involved a rethinking of similar land use patterns with extensive removal of deteriorating light industrial and heavy commercial uses along the Fletcher Parkway corridor. Significant stretches of Alvarado Creek were placed in large underground storm drainage boxes to resolve the flooding conditions and create parcels with enough depth for viable commercial and multi-family developments. These projects created several examples of how public-private partnerships can successfully provide an overall benefit to the community with new development opportunities, new housing, higher property

values, improved public safety and enhanced community appearance. Placement of open channel urban creeks and storm-water drainage systems in underground facilities is no longer a permitted development option by the State and Federal agencies with oversight and permitting authority for the Alvarado Creek channel.

For purposes of policy guidance though, as discussed in the General Plan Consistency section of this Chapter, the Goals and Policies in the La Mesa General Plan reflect the remaining need for significant public improvements, and the opportunities for private revitalization of the land uses in the Specific Plan Area. The many decades of community planning process and stated commitment in support of revitalizing the Alvarado Specific Plan Area serves as the policy foundation for the development of the current Specific Plan land use changes and development plans.

### **I - B. 3. Specific Plan Organization and Content**

The Alvarado Specific Plan is intended to be the guiding tool for the development of the needed public improvements, infrastructure and private land uses in the Specific Plan Area. To serve the purpose the Specific Plan is divided into four chapters.

Chapter I provides a summary of the Specific Plan and site, along with the background and community planning history that has led up to the development of the Alvarado Specific Plan. This Chapter outlines the legal authority for the Plan and relationship to the Goals and Policies in the adopted Elements of La Mesa's General Plan. In addition, there is a discussion to how the Specific Plan is consistent with and serves as a tool to implement the goals and policies of other related other local and regional land use and transportation documents. This Chapter will also address the correlation between Specific Plan and the Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project.

Chapter II outlines in more detail the Land Use and Development Plans for the Specific Plan. This Chapter describes the land use concepts for the Area and how development will be coordinated with La Mesa and the other public agencies that are will be tied to the construction of the public and private investment needed to complete the Plan. Chapter III focuses on the more detailed Development Standards and Design Guidelines that will be used to provide the necessary clarity and direction to evaluate future permitting and construction plans to assure compliance with the vision and goals established by the adopted Specific Plan. Chapter IV provides a summary of the Implementation measures that will serve in the administration of the Specific Plan document during the development stages of the Plan, as well as over the life of the Plan.

## **I - C. LEGAL CONTEXT AND AUTHORITY**

### **I - C. 1. Authority to Prepare the Specific Plan**

A Specific Plan is a land use planning and regulatory tool authorized by the State to local governments as a means to implement the broad goals and policies of the local General Plan. A Specific Plan provides the link between the stated implementing policies of a local General Plan and the more precise development plans for a defined area. The Specific Plan may cover general set of objectives for broad policy issue within the community or subarea, or it can be tailored to a development plan for a defined neighborhood or site. When used as a practical alternative to more traditional community-wide zoning and land use regulations to implement a General Plan, State law requires that the Specific Plan must be consistent with the adopted local General Plan.

All locally adopted Specific Plans must comply with Sections 65450 – 65457 of the Government Code which defines both the content of the plan and the methods by which the plan must be locally adopted. Government Code Section 65451 requires that a Specific Plan must clearly define the



objectives of the plan in text and diagrams which outline:

- the distribution, location, and intensity of land uses, including open space, within the plan area;
- the distribution, location, and intensity of major infrastructure components;
- design standards and criteria for development and use of natural resources, and;
- a program of implementation measures, including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out the Specific Plan program.

The specific plan must also include a section to state in detail the relationship of the Specific Plan to the locally adopted General Plan and how implementation of the Specific Plan will assist in implementing the goals and policies of the General Plan.

The structure and content of the Alvarado Specific Plan has been developed to meet the State requirements outlined above. It has also been written and illustrated to make the Specific Plan a clear and useful tool for citizens, community leaders, property owners and other affected agencies that will be active participants in the successful implementation of the Plan.

Along with the State authorization, La Mesa has a long history of using specific plans as a useful tool to implement the General Plan where there is a benefit from the provided flexibility which goes beyond the standard citywide zoning classifications to achieve the stated objectives for a unique location or district. The Land Use and Urban Design Element of the General Plan states the following policy to regarding the use of a specific plan as means of effectively tailoring implementation of the General Plan:

**Specific Plans:** *Specific plans are used in many California cities to establish a link between implementing policies of the General Plan and the individual development proposals in a defined area. The content of a Specific Plan remains consistent with the General Plan, and usually includes an examination of current conditions, a forecast of future conditions, a list of goals and policies, needed public improvements, and a set of development regulations tailored to the unique characteristics and planning issues in an area. La Mesa General Plan, Land Use and Urban Design Element, page LD-57*

## I - C. 2. General Plan Consistency

The Specific Plan outlines how the proposed land use plans and implementation measures are consistent with the goals and policies of La Mesa's adopted General Plan. The Specific Plan also discusses how the past land use designation concepts for the site are in need of an updated approach to achieve the best fit for the City's expressed goals for the Area. Adoption of the Specific Plan is consistent with the City's long-term vision and policies that encourage higher intensity infill development near existing transit facilities with new housing opportunities, connecting housing with employment, preserving existing neighborhoods, improving public safety, and creative means for financing needed infrastructure.

Sections of the Specific Plan discuss in detail how the proposed development plans are consistent with the relevant goals and policies in the General Plan. The goals and policies from each Element have been quoted and shown in *blue italics* below, followed by a brief statement regarding the relevant consistency with the Specific Plan.

## Land Use and Urban Design Element Goals:

*The Goals and Policies of this Element [Land Use and Urban Design] emphasize the following five concepts:*

- *The City's neighborhoods and facilities should be preserved and improved.*
- *New development and redevelopment should exhibit high quality design and fit the characteristics of the City's neighborhoods and Districts.*
- *Land use decisions should support sustainability by conserving valuable resources and planning for future generations.*
- *Promote local job creation and retention by encouraging new business opportunities.*
- *Land Use and Urban Design are integrated in this Element to ensure that the physical forms, patterns, and aesthetics of future development advance La Mesa's goals for high quality of life and a more sustainable future. LM GP, Land Use and Urban Design Element, Page LD 2*

*The advent of trolley service in La Mesa has encouraged the concentration of planning efforts around the transit stations to encourage mixed use, Transit-Oriented Developments La Mesa General Plan Land Use & Urban Design Element | LD-11 2012 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE (TODs)... Moving forward to the General Plan horizon year of 2030, much of the development proposed in the intervening years will consist of "infill" development. Infill development is the use of vacant or underutilized sites within a previously developed area. This sustainable form of land development was also recommended in the last General Plan Update (1996) because it recycles developed land in context with existing features of the City. Page LD 10-11*

*La Mesa transit stations are hubs of activity and are anticipated to be used more intensively in coming years. New infill development is encouraged near each station...*

**70th Street Station:** *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 to contribute to the local economy, such as office, hotel, multi-family or mixed-use development. Page LD-21*

*A key goal of the General Plan is to insure that new development fits within the context of existing neighborhoods. The "fit" of a proposed project is determined through the development review process and includes a review of specific development standards as well as aesthetic considerations. Page LD-26*

**Regional Serving Commercial:** *This land use designation is assigned to those areas of the City which are suitable for more intense urban activities, such as high volume retail sales, and other sales and services which are expected to draw local and Regional customers. Areas designated Regional Commercial are served by convenient freeway access and public transportation. Grossmont Center, Fletcher Parkway and Alvarado Road are examples of areas where the designation is applied. Examples of uses intended in the Regional Commercial designation include retail shopping centers, large office complexes and uses*

providing services to the traveling public such as restaurants, service stations, hotels, and motels. Entertainment uses such as movie theaters and nightclubs may be conditionally permitted. Within larger areas of the City, which have been designated Regional Serving Commercial; there may be areas which are suitable for mixed-use or high density residential developments. The appropriate mix of uses permitted within these areas will be determined on a case-by-case review or by the amendment or adoption of a specific plan which will also establish the appropriate residential density. Page LD-32

**Implementation:** The General Plan is a policy document adopted by City Council Resolution. In order to implement its policies, other plans and programs must be adopted. A variety of these plans and programs have been used in La Mesa to implement Land Use Policy; including Specific Plans, redevelopment project areas, development regulations, the Urban Design Program, and a collection of related activities. This section briefly describes how each of these plans and programs work within La Mesa. Specific Plans Specific plans are used in many California cities to establish a link between implementing policies of the General Plan and the individual development proposals in a defined area. The content of a Specific Plan remains consistent with the General Plan, and usually includes an examination of current conditions, a forecast of future conditions, a list of goals and policies, needed public improvements, and a set of development regulations tailored to the unique characteristics and planning issues in an area. In La Mesa, Specific Plans have been adopted in four areas. Page LD-55

### **Land Use and Urban Design Element Goals:**

Goal LU-1: A safe and healthy community. Page LD-35

Goal LU-2: Residential neighborhoods with strong character and cohesion. Page LD-36

Goal LU-3: Revitalized Commercial and Industrial Districts.

Policy LU-3.1.4: Parking and circulation shall be adequate to serve the use and location of new development.

Policy LU-3.1.5: Promote more intensive mixed-use and sustainable development in commercial areas consistent with the Urban Design Program.

Policy LU-3.1.6: Provide new site amenities, such as outdoor seating areas, bike racks, landscaping, and street trees as development occurs.

Policy LU-3.1.7: Encourage mixed-use transit-oriented development near public transportation facilities; new construction should be compact in form to take advantage of these transit-rich locations. Page LD-37

Goal LU-4: An equitable community that meets the needs of all residents.

Objective LU-4.1: Adequate and affordable housing available for all segments of the community.

Policy LU-4.1.1: Opportunities for affordable housing should exist in all residential areas to support the policies and programs for the City's Housing Element. Page LD-38

Objective LU-4.2: A development review process that balances the needs of all stakeholders

*Policy LU-4.2.1: Changes in patterns of building intensity and population density will be reviewed relative to: The compatibility of the proposed development with surrounding uses and design objectives. The adequacy and proximity of public facilities given the scale of the proposed development.*

*Policy LU-4.2.3: New development shall provide adequate parking.*

*Goal LU-6: A City where the environmental, social, and economic needs of the residents are met without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.*

*Objective LU-6.1: Evaluate the short-term and long-term impact on valuable resources such as water, energy, and open space when making land use decisions.*

*Policy LU-6.1.1: Reduce the City's Greenhouse Gas Emissions through energy efficient improvements, support for alternative modes of transportation, transportation demand management (TDM) practices and sound waste management practices.*

*Policy LU-6.1.2: As new building methods and technologies become available, update Building Codes to meet State of California and local energy conservation objectives.*

*Policy LU-6.1.4: Provide incentives for Transit-Oriented and Mixed-Use development, such as a parking reduction consistent with Regional Standards, for more intense development and higher density residential uses along major transportation corridors or in areas accessible to transit use.*

**Goals, Objectives, and Policies / La Mesa's Urban Design Goals:** Policies, and Objectives are in line with the following principles: 1. Development pattern, form, and structure are crucial to creating a sense of place. 2. Well-designed development is sustainable, visually appealing, and designed to fit within the current or planned context of the surrounding area. 3. Natural features of a site are valuable amenities.

*Goal UD-1: A built environment that contributes to the qualities distinguishing La Mesa's unique community identity.*

*Objective UD-1.1: To protect La Mesa's existing built environment and cultural heritage. Policy UD-1.1.1: The visual quality and continuity of the community will be enhanced through consistent circulation patterns, definition of community edges and boundaries, distinct gateways and nodes, and removal of visually disruptive elements.*

*Policy UD-1.1.4: Incorporate defensible design principles into future buildings and site design schemes to facilitate crime prevention, also known as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).*

*Policy UD-1.1.5: Improve the quality of public gathering spaces and buildings.*

*Objective UD-1.2: To facilitate property that is well maintained and creates visually appealing neighborhoods.*

*Policy UD-1.2.1: Promote reinvestment in private property, and encourage private property maintenance. Page LD-53*

*Goal UD-2: Well-designed development based upon proven urban design principles.*

*Objective UD-2.1: Preserve and enhance the aesthetic, environmental, economic, and social character of La Mesa through careful design review decisions.*

*Policy UD-2.1.1: Give careful attention to Urban Design Standards related to building scale, architectural materials, landscaping, and other elements to emphasize attractive building and site design in new developments and redevelopments.*

*Policy UD-2.1.2: The review of projects should place a priority on the compatibility of adjacent land uses. Special attention should be given to buffering and transitional methods, when reviewing projects of differing residential densities or land uses.*

*Policy UD-2.1.3: Adopt revised Street Design Standards to maintain an efficient and aesthetically pleasing street network while meeting the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.*

*Policy UD-2.1.6: Consider shared parking, parking reductions and/or parking management plans to reduce the amount of physical space devoted exclusively to parking vehicles. Parking lot landscaping should further water conservation goals. Page LD-54*

*Goal UD-3: A built environment that respects La Mesa's natural environment and climate.*

*Objective UD-3.1: Development that is architecturally and environmentally sensitive and is compatible with neighboring design and scale.*

*Policy UD-3.1.1: Encourage resource-efficient building techniques, materials, and principles of sustainable design in new construction and renovation. Page LD54-55*

**Land Use and Urban Design Element Consistency:** The Specific Plan establishes the land uses, development concepts, development standards, design guidelines, primary infrastructure and public improvements that will direct future development within the Specific Plan Area in a manner that is consistent with the stated objectives of the General Plan Land Use and Urban Design Element. The Specific Plan proposes to include four development parcels within two primary phases. Phase 1 is planned for the properties (Parcels 1-3) west of the intersection of Alvarado Creek and Alvarado Road. East of the intersection of the Creek and Alvarado Road will be developed as Phase 2 for Building/Parcel 4 with the San Diego RV Resort facilities on the site remaining as an interim use. The primary land use plan for Phase 1 and 2 is for multi-family residential. The Project will include a range of multi-family residential unit types and sizes, open space and environmental enhancements, new public infrastructure improvements, and focus on creating a new transit-oriented development (TOD).

### **Circulation Element Goals:**

*Goal CE-1: A comprehensive, flexible transportation system that is functional, safe, accessible and attractive. Page CE-18*

*Goal CE-3: A diverse transit system offering a safe, time-efficient, and cost-effective transportation choice that reduces traffic congestion and improves air*



*quality. Page CE-20*

*Goal CE-4: Local and regional facilities that accommodate the unique needs of bicycle travelers. Page CE-21*

*Goal CE-5: Provide opportunities that encourage safe pedestrian travel. Page CE-21*

**Circulation Element Consistency:** The Specific Plan Area is located in close proximity to the 70th Street Station that allows for direct and safe pedestrian access to the MTS Trolley and Bus network. The 70th Street Station serves the Green Line trolley that travels along Interstate 8 through the Mission Valley corridor, linking many of the surrounding neighborhoods and uses. Circulation for the development will use a system of enhanced interior private roadways to minimize points for vehicular access to Alvarado Road. These interior private roads with access to Alvarado Road will provide ingress and egress to the resident parking structures, and as serving as the primary emergency vehicle access and staging areas so that Alvarado Road remains open to the east and west in the event of a need to deploy rescue equipment to the site.

The internal streets also provide for other service and delivery vehicle functions to maintain a safe free flow of traffic on Alvarado Road. The enhanced paving and landscape design for these interior roadways will create a functional but also inviting pedestrian environment serving to connect project residents with the creek side environment, outdoor amenities and pedestrian access to the Trolley station. The streetscape improvements for Alvarado Road will provide the missing public improvements to bring the road up to the Local Collector classification in the Circulation Element, and incorporate a plan for a pedestrian sidewalk along the entire Plan Area frontage connecting to the 70th Street Trolley Station to the west, and a new bridge structure to provide a safe route for pedestrians and bicycles where Alvarado Road crosses Alvarado Creek. A shared pedestrian and bicycle path is planned for the Specific Plan Area frontage to provide consistency with the Circulation goals and policies for roads, sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

### **Conservation and Sustainability Element Goals:**

*Goal CS-1: The sustainable use of natural resources and land. Objective CS-1.1: Create compact, mixed-use projects with amenities to enhance the City's natural setting. Policy CS-1.1.2: Promote the Mixed-Use Overlay Zone and related Design Guidelines to encourage infill along the City's transit corridors. Page CS-11*

*Goal CS-3: Safe mobility and access for all without compromising our ability to protect public health and safety. Objective CS-3.1: Facilitate a reduction of automobile dependency in favor of affordable alternative, sustainable modes of travel. Policy CS-3.1.1: Encourage businesses, organizations, and residents to participate in the implementation of Regional transportation demand management, including carpooling programs. Page CS-12*

**Conservation and Sustainability Element Consistency:** The Specific Plan will implement a "transit-oriented" multi-family project that provides a range of dwelling unit types and sizes. The project will be located in close proximity to the 70th Street Station and will provide direct and safe pedestrian access to the MTS Trolley and Bus network. The 70th Street Station travels along Interstate 8 and links many neighborhoods through the Mission Valley corridors, including to San Diego State University. The streetscape design, includes a new pedestrian bridge over Alvarado Creek, that will create a walkability and enhances connectivity to the existing 70th Street trolley station. The Plan anticipates that as the multi-family housing is fully populated, there may be the potential to include some complimentary non-residential "mixed uses" (i.e., commercial, services) within each Parcel.

Significant improvements will be made to the site to remove all development from the FEMA mapped flood prone areas, while retaining the storm-water flows within the Alvarado Creek flood channel. A key objective of the Specific Plan is to clear the existing creek of non-native plant material and debris, and restore the “urban” creek environment with appropriate plant materials and channel improvements. This restoration is proposed to include a long-term commitment to maintain this section of Alvarado Creek as an example of how to achieve multiple objectives for flood protection, storm water management, clean water, and urban creek restoration while providing a valued amenity for the future residents of the Specific Plan area.

**Recreation and Open Space Element Goals:**

*Goal RO-1: A network of public parks throughout the City that will be convenient and beneficial to all segments of the community. Page RO-11*

*Goal RO-2: A City that values areas of native vegetation for their open space and biological habitat. Page RO-12*

*Goal RO-3: Open space areas within private developments that supplement and complement the City’s public open spaces. Page RO-13*

**Recreation and Open Space Element Consistency:** The project’s extensive and creative open space and landscape solutions will result in a valuable new community asset. The project has been designed to include the restoration and enhancement of Alvarado Creek with adjacent open spaces areas for pedestrian access. This represents a significant amount of site area that will serve as a valuable open space element when combined with the design for the interior private creek side streets. This area will have limited vehicle access and serve as a quiet pedestrian path adjoining the creek side zones. The project will implement a long-term plan that will allow for the on-going maintenance of the channel restoration components so that its value in terms of water quality and public safety can continue into the future. One of the primary objectives and design features of the Specific Plan projects will be to restore and maintain the riparian environment within Alvarado Creek as a key visual open space feature for the project.

**Historic Preservation Element Goals:**

*Goal HP-2: Safeguarded heritage by preserving those elements that reflect our cultural, social, economic, and architectural history so that community residents will have a foundation upon which to measure and direct physical change. Page HP-13*

**Historic Preservation Element Consistency:** As part of the technical studies prepared for the Alvarado Specific Plan Program Environmental Impact report, a Historical Resource Analysis Report has been prepared. It has been determined that there are no existing structures within the Specific Plan Area that have been determined to meet the State or local criteria for designation as an historic landmark.

**Noise Element Goals:**

*Goal NS-1: A community where noise and the effects of noise are minimized. Page NS-11*

**Noise Element Consistency:** The City require that project development plans will resolve significant noise impacts that have been identified through the Project EIR prepared for the Specific Plan to ensure consistency with the policies of Noise Element for all interior residential uses. Acoustical studies must be prepared for proposed multiple-unit residential structures within the CNEL noise contours of 60 dBA or greater. The studies must demonstrate that the design of the building will reduce interior noise in habitable rooms to 45 dBA CNEL or lower. Proper site planning to reduce

noise impacts should be considered for all noise-sensitive developments. Buildings will be oriented on each site in such a way as to exploit the building's noise attenuating features for interior courtyards and open spaces. By consideration of a site's natural topography, size and shape, it is possible to reduce, and possibly eliminate, noise impacts from vehicular traffic.

**Safety Element Goals:**

*Goal SE-1: Protection from the adverse effects of flooding. Page SE-26*

*Goal SE-2: Protection from risks associated with landslides and other geologic hazards. Page SE-27*

*Goal SE-4: Protection from risks associated with fire. Page SE-28*

**Safety Element Consistency:** The Specific Plan development site characteristics and constraints are described in detail in Chapter I which outlines the context and constraints associated with the Area. The project will increase the capacity of the Creek channel so that the 100-year flood will be contained within the channel. This will be done through a combination of widening the Creek bed, and raising the elevation of the top of the bank. Retaining walls will be utilized to steepen the bank, thus allowing the bed of the Creek to be widened without significantly impacting the developable area of the pads. The top of bank elevation, ground floor finished floor, and garage entry elevations will all be elevated at least 1.0' above the 100-year flood elevation. Grading within the channel will be limited to the minimum needed to construct the flood protect walls and the relocation of the City's sanitary sewer trunk line from the channel to a new easement in the interior private street as shown in Figure 48. The flood control improvements will actually increase the area of the channel and allow for additional planting of appropriate riparian plant materials as an environmental enhancement element of the Plan from a clean water and natural resources management perspective. All earth work in the channel and the site which is within the FEMA mapped "flood plain" will be part of the required multi-agency cooperation and authorization needed to implement the Specific Plan. In addition, all grading and earthwork construction activity will be subject to any mitigation measures and monitoring requirements established by the Project EIR.

In addition, the interior lanes will be dedicated fire lanes to meet the requirements of the Heartland Fire and Rescue Fire Marshal in providing public safety for the residents of the future housing in the Area. The size and design of the dedicated fire lane will assure that fire apparatus and emergency response vehicles can effectively serve the new multi-family housing units in the size and configuration planned from the interior protected streets. With this emergency access plan, Alvarado Road will be able to remain unobstructed for public safety vehicle movement as well as local traffic both to the east and west in the event of an emergency.

**Public Services and Facilities Element Goals:**

*Goal PSF-3: Economic development to expand revenue sources to fund necessary infrastructure. Page PSF-34*

*Goal PSF-4: A safe community. Page PSF-35*

*Goal PSF-5: A community where fire risk is minimal. Page PSF-35*

*Goal PSF-6: Infrastructure of streets, sewers, and storm drains that sustains a high quality of life. Page PSF-36*

**Public Services and Facilities Element Consistency:** As describe in this Specific Plan, the project includes a commitment to provide public improvements that will enhance public services, health, and welfare, provide additional traffic improvements, and economic development within the City. The major public improvement and utility projects that are planned to be constructed with

implementation of the Specific Plan and Development Agreement include: Alvarado Road (sidewalks, curb and gutter, street lights, street trees); pedestrian connection to 70th Street Trolley Station; a pedestrian bridge on south side of Alvarado Creek bridge; overhead Power and Communication Line Relocation; flood Channel Improvements; sanitary sewer system improvements (relocation of one of the City sewer trunk line out of the channel); and the removal of abandoned sewer lines in the creek that will address an existing regional storm-water management issue. La Mesa is a member of the Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority, a coalition of agencies that utilize the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant operated by the City of San Diego. A Wastewater Master Plan was completed in 2008 in which it was determined that the City is expected to have sufficient capacity to accommodate anticipated development through 2030. A key part of the project will be the construction of improvements to the flood channel that will include a long-term maintenance commitment so the creek area remains an environmental asset for the City and the project. The Alvarado Specific Plan has been designed to provide access and space for vehicles within the site for service and delivery vehicles, as well as move-in locations that will maintain the required emergency vehicle access requirements. This is intended to assist with maintaining traffic flow and safety on Alvarado Road as well.

### **Health and Wellness Element Goals:**

*Goal HW-1: A community where residents are healthy and feel safe and secure.*

*Page HW-16*

**Health and Wellness Element Consistency:** The project will locate a mixed-use, higher density development near a transit station that will encourage use of transit. The project was designed to encourage walkability and provide a safe circulation system. The multi-family residential projects planned for Alvarado Specific Plan will all include substantial open space and recreation amenities for the residents. A key design element of the Specific Plan is to create a series of interior private roads that will serve as a linear open space area and create a visual link to the restored Alvarado Creek. The residential projects will be required throughout the site development plan process to incorporate building and site design techniques that reduce crime, such as utilizing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) design strategies.

### **Housing Element Goals:**

*Goal HE-1: High-quality and well-maintained residential neighborhoods. HE-112*

*Goal HE-2: Availability of a wide range of housing by location, type of unit, and price to meet the existing and future needs of La Mesa residents. Page HE-113*

*Goal HE-3: Housing for lower income households, including ownership and rental opportunities for moderate-income households. Page HE-114*

*Goal HE-4: A City that mitigates potential governmental constraints to housing production and affordability. Page HE-115*

*Goal HE-5: A City where all residents have an equal opportunity to reside in the housing of their choice. Page HE-116*

**Housing Element Consistency:** The Specific Plan will implement a “transit-oriented” multi-family project that provides a range of dwelling unit types and sizes. The Specific Plan Area will place new housing units within walking distance of regional light rail and bus routes already serving the region, and provide an easy and direct connection for San Diego State University students and employees with the development envisioned by the Alvarado Specific Plan. The streetscape design, includes a new pedestrian bridge over Alvarado Creek, that will create a walkability and enhances connectivity to the existing 70th Street trolley station. The Specific Plan will result in a well-designed

development that is visually appealing, and designed to fit within the current or planned context of the surrounding area. The Development Standards and Design Guidelines for the multi-family developments in Chapter IV of the Specific Plan outlines a “form-based” approach to govern the land use and development regulations within the Specific Plan Area that will result in a mix of well-designed and highly functional residential elements and open space areas throughout. The Design Review Application process will ensure high quality site and architectural design, creating a vibrant and active residential environment.

### I - C. 3. Consistency with Other Local and Regional Plans

In addition to the City’s General Plan, the Alvarado Specific Plan will serve as a means of implementing the goals and objectives of other local and regional land use and transportation plans. These planning policy documents include the City’s Climate Action Plan adopted in 2018. In 2012 the City adopted a comprehensive study and policy document to assist with improving the City’s bicycle and pedestrian network and infrastructure in the Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan. The City is also active at the regional level in supporting policies to better coordinate transportation facilities with land use planning through the Regional Smart Growth Strategy adopted by SANDAG. A brief summary of the goals and policies from these documents that are consistent with the Alvarado Specific Plan are provided below.

#### a. La Mesa Climate Action Plan Goals and Policies

**TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE STRATEGY:** *Where people live, work, shop, and play influences how far they have to travel daily and whether they choose to walk, bike, use public transit, or drive. Measures that support mixed land uses and opportunities for higher-density development along transit routes are essential to supporting alternative transportation options. Pg. 67*

**T-1 Bicycle And Pedestrian Infrastructure Development:** *Continue to plan for and construct safe, attractive bicycle and pedestrian paths and facilities within the community, and provide education programs aimed at increasing use of alternative transportation options.*

*Pedestrian enhancements support safe and comfortable walking environments, potentially increasing foot traffic to retail establishments and businesses, while decreasing automobile trips and emissions. Pedestrian enhancements include the provision of seating, shading, way-finding signs, safe crosswalks, and traffic calming measures. Providing connectivity and convenient, enjoyable pedestrian areas also improves residents’ quality of life. Pg. 72*

**T-4 Mixed-Use And Transit-Oriented Development:** *Continue to encourage mixed-use and transit-oriented development through land use and zoning designations to support alternative transportation opportunities.*

*Transit-oriented development (TOD) places higher density and intensity development within walking distance of transit stops. This strategy brings residents and jobs closer to transit opportunities, providing additional ridership for the public transit system.*

*Land use strategies that place daily needs near each other and near residential neighborhoods allows some trips to be made without a car. Development patterns that provide convenient pedestrian connectivity...*

*Redevelopment and increased development along the transit corridors and*

*around transit has, and will continue to, provide new housing options and destinations in a mixed-use environment.*

*The City will continue to identify areas that can support the increased densities and activities associated with mixed-use development strategies, including:*

- analyzing infrastructure capacity and developing infrastructure investment strategies*
- identifying amenities that can be constructed in planned higher-density development areas to help attract investment*
- restructuring development impact fees to reflect reduced public facilities demand associated with more compact development*
- distribution of shared parking opportunities*
- identifying strategies to increase densities around primary transit nodes*
- incorporating incentives to new developments that include transportation strategies to reduce VMT (reduced parking offset by TDM incentives). Pg. 80-81*

***T-5 Alternative Refueling Infrastructure Development:*** *Support community-wide use of alternative fuel vehicles through expansion of alternative vehicle refueling infrastructure. Pg. 84*

**Consistency with La Mesa's Climate Action Plan:** The goals and policies described above in sections T-1, T-4, and T-5 all represent elements that directly correlate with the planned land uses and improvements that are a part of the Alvarado Creek Specific Plan. Facilities that are missing portions of the City's planned pedestrian and bicycle network plans are incorporated into the development plans. The project represents a major land use change that will allow for the development of a wide range of housing to create a new residential environment that will be able to take advantage of direct access to existing transit facilities and services provided at the 70th Street MTS station. The Specific Plan creates the opportunity for new development that will construct missing infrastructure, and provide for infill development that will not adversely impact existing neighborhoods and public services. The planned residential development projects will incorporate parking strategies that can maximize use of alternative transportation options and use of EV recharging stations.

## **b. La Mesa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan Goals and Objectives**

***3.1 Pedestrian Facilities Goals, Objectives and Policies:*** *The notes in parentheses after some policies refer to the existing Circulation Element policies for consistency.*

*Goal - To encourage walking by providing a safe means of travel through improvements that support policies such as smart growth, transit, and allowing for a healthier lifestyle.*

*Objective 1 - Develop and maintain a safe pedestrian network that is free of barriers and hazards to create a real as well as perceived sense of security for the pedestrian. Where deficiencies exist, utilize corrective measures through engineering, education and enforcement. Page 57*

*Objective 2 - Create pedestrian environments that encourage walking through the use of public art, street trees, furnishings and other amenities.*



*Assure a positive walking environment by making the pedestrian feel protected, comfortable and connected with the environment and the city.*  
Page 59

*Objective 3 - Develop a complete pedestrian network that provides continuous and convenient access to transit...* Page 60

*Objective 4 - Support walking as a primary means of transportation that can meet travel demands. A positive walking environment is essential for supporting smart growth, mixed land uses, transit oriented development...*  
Page 61

### **5.1 City of La Mesa Public Transit Goals, Policies and Objectives Goal:**

*To provide and promote a diverse public transit system which offers an efficient and cost effective transportation alternative to the community and a means of reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality. (CE 17) Objective: Promote an efficient and reliable transit system that offers convenient alternatives to private vehicle travel.* Page 121

**Joint Development Ventures:** *The City will continue to work with MTS and developers interested in pursuing TOD projects at other locations adjacent to trolley stations.* Page 118

**Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan Consistency:** The Alvarado Specific Plan provides for the improvement of Alvarado Road to include a shared pedestrian and bicycle path system to connect directly to the existing 70th Street MTS station. In addition, the project will develop an interior street system to encourage walking along the Alvarado Creek area which will also provide direct pedestrian access to the Trolley Station. This will provide connections to the City's sidewalk and bicycle routes. Direct barrier free pedestrian and bike access to these existing transit facilities will create real opportunities to reduce vehicle trips as stated in the objectives of the City's Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan.

## **c. SANDAG Regional Growth Management Strategy**

The Specific Plan Area adjoins an existing light rail station directly to the west that currently has one of the lower daily boarding levels in the MTS system due to its physical location and challenging access. SANDAG's Smart Growth Strategy Map identifies the Alvarado Specific Plan Area as a potential Community Center as Smart Growth Opportunity Site LM-10.

*LM-10 70th Street Trolley Station Existing/Planned Community Center Potential exists for a transit-oriented, mixed-use development located adjacent to the 70th Street Trolley Station. Existing Trolley (Green Line). Community Center Areas [plan for] housing within walking/biking distance of transit stations:*

- *Low- to mid-rise residential, office, and commercial buildings*
- *Draws people from nearby communities and neighborhoods*
- *Served by local high-frequency transit*

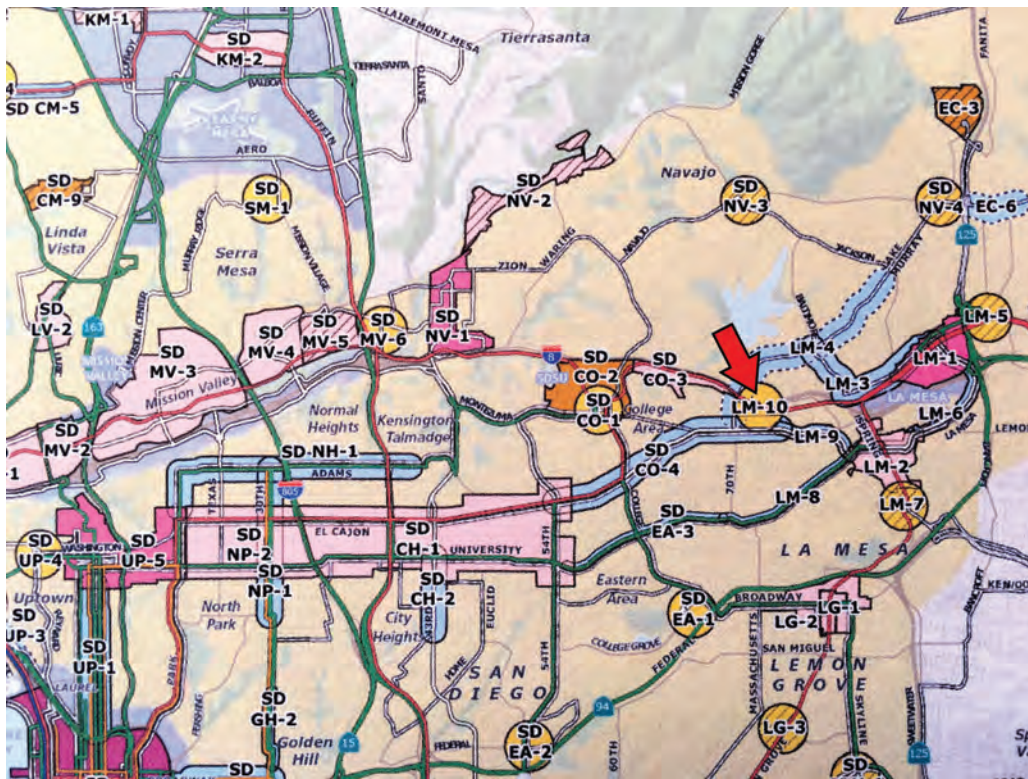


Figure 10 - SANDAG Regional Smart Growth Strategy Plan

## I - D. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Alvarado Specific Plan constitutes a discretionary project and is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared for the Alvarado Specific Plan in accordance with the requirements of CEQA. The EIR has evaluated the potential for direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with the proposed land use changes and public improvements proposed by the Specific Plan. While the CEQA analysis in the project EIR is a separate document from the Specific Plan, the environmental review process and has been completed to directly correlate with the Specific Plan. The intent of the Specific Plan implementation is the provide that all CEQA based implementation requirements will be met as part of the planning process for the proposed private development projects and public improvements defined in final Specific Plan.

The Specific Plan anticipates construction projects will occur in phases, incorporating both private development and public improvements. It is intended that the Program EIR prepared for the Alvarado Specific Plan will serve as the primary environmental documentation for all future projects that are found to be consistent with the approved Plan. When considering individual projects to implement the Specific Plan, if the City determines that the proposed development or projects are consistent with the findings of the CEQA analysis completed for the Specific Plan, the City can approve the project(s) without additional environmental review. If there are significant changes to the adopted Specific Plan proposed at a later date that the City determines may result in new impacts not adequately, not previously analyzed with the Program EIR, additional environmental review may be required and shall focus on evaluating the areas affected by the proposed changes to the Plan.



# CHAPTER II

## LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### II - A. LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OVERVIEW

The Specific Plan represents a significant land use change that is consistent with existing local and regional land use goals and policies. Due to the unique location and topographic characteristics of this site, the Specific Plan has used the physical constraints of the site, existing street network, and adjacent transit services as key design elements in formulating the Specific Plan land use concept. This Chapter outlines the various elements of the Land Use and Development Plan, including the following major components:

- Multi-family Residential Uses and Projects
- Landscaping, Open Spaces, and Recreational Uses
- Circulation Plans
- Public Improvements and Infrastructure

In the traditional pattern, the General Plan Goals and Policies are linked to a General Plan Land Use Map that is closely aligned with local zoning classifications. In turn the zoning ordinance typically defines the development limitations and standards for parcels or projects within the classification. The Alvarado Specific Plan has been established as an alternative tool to bridge this traditional hierarchy. Adoption of a specific plan that is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan may authorize more flexibility for the land uses and development standards that are prescribed for the Specific Plan Area. This correlation between the Specific Plan and the General Plan is addressed in Chapter I. The primary land use in the Alvarado Specific Plan is multi-family residential within four primary development parcels. Rather than the traditional land use designation correlated to a La Mesa residential zoning classification, the Alvarado Specific Plan establishes the types of land uses and development standards to guide implementation of the City's General Plan goals and policies as applied to this Specific Plan Area.

Chapter II describes the land use and development plan that is authorized by the tailored approach for the Alvarado Specific Plan. This includes the location and arrangement of the planned uses, as well as the public improvements and infrastructure that will be required with implementation of the Plan.

Chapter III defines the more detailed Development Standards and Design Guidelines that will be used to review future projects to determine consistency with the Specific Plan. The development regulations to implement the Specific Plan, in lieu of standard zoning classifications, is established by the Specific Plan document along with the various exhibits that also define what will be permitted and the standards under which it can be built. The objective the Alvarado Specific Plan is to provide even more clarity to the community than the broad General Plan Land Use Designation and Zoning Classification approach to define what is allowed to be built within the Area and how the City's General Plan Goals and Policies can be achieved through implementation of the Plan.

The alternative to the traditional general plan goals-land use designation- zoning classification

approach, for the Alvarado Specific Plan is a form-based land use plan. The form-based approach establishes the level of development that is authorized, but uses an alternative set of parameters to define the what and how the area will be developed. Each development parcel has a description of a form and a set of standards in which the multi-family projects must fit within defined locations, with requirements for site preparation, site improvements, infrastructure, range of multi-family units, parking, and open space. The Development Plan also defines the public improvements and infrastructure to be constructed as a prerequisite for the multi-family residential projects. In this manner, the Specific Plan will be substituted for the traditional residential units/per gross site area and related zoning standards and calculations for each project.

Chapter IV outlines the various steps that will be necessary for implementation of the Alvarado Specific Plan. This chapter addresses the various aspects of administering the plan, the implementing documents, and coordination with the project environmental review and other responsible agencies.

## II - A. 1. Private Development Parcels and Land Use Summary

Figures 11 – 13 provide an overall view of the Alvarado Specific Plan and assist in defining the physical location and community context in which the Specific Plan Area concepts have been developed. Figure 11 provides a community scale vicinity map to help to understand the surrounding land uses and local street network that will support the Circulation Plan described later in this Chapter. Figure 12 illustrates the Land Use and Development Plan proposed for the planned development of the site. Figure 13 provides a cross sections of the Specific Plan Area from north to south to help to represent the relationship of the Area to the various public transportation infrastructure and physical features which have played a significant role formulating the Land Use and Development Plans for the project.

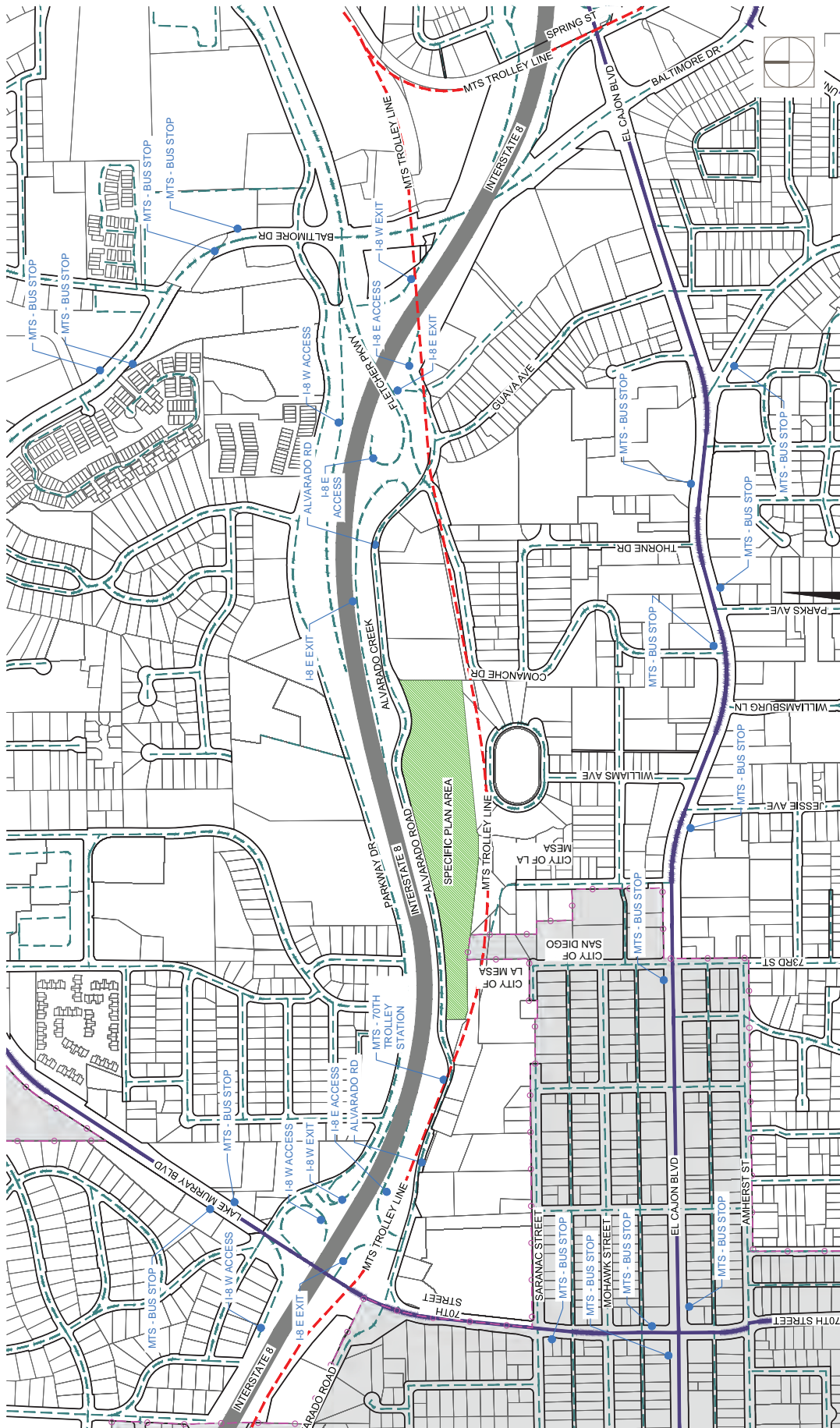


Figure 11 - Vicinity Map with SP Area and Local Street Network

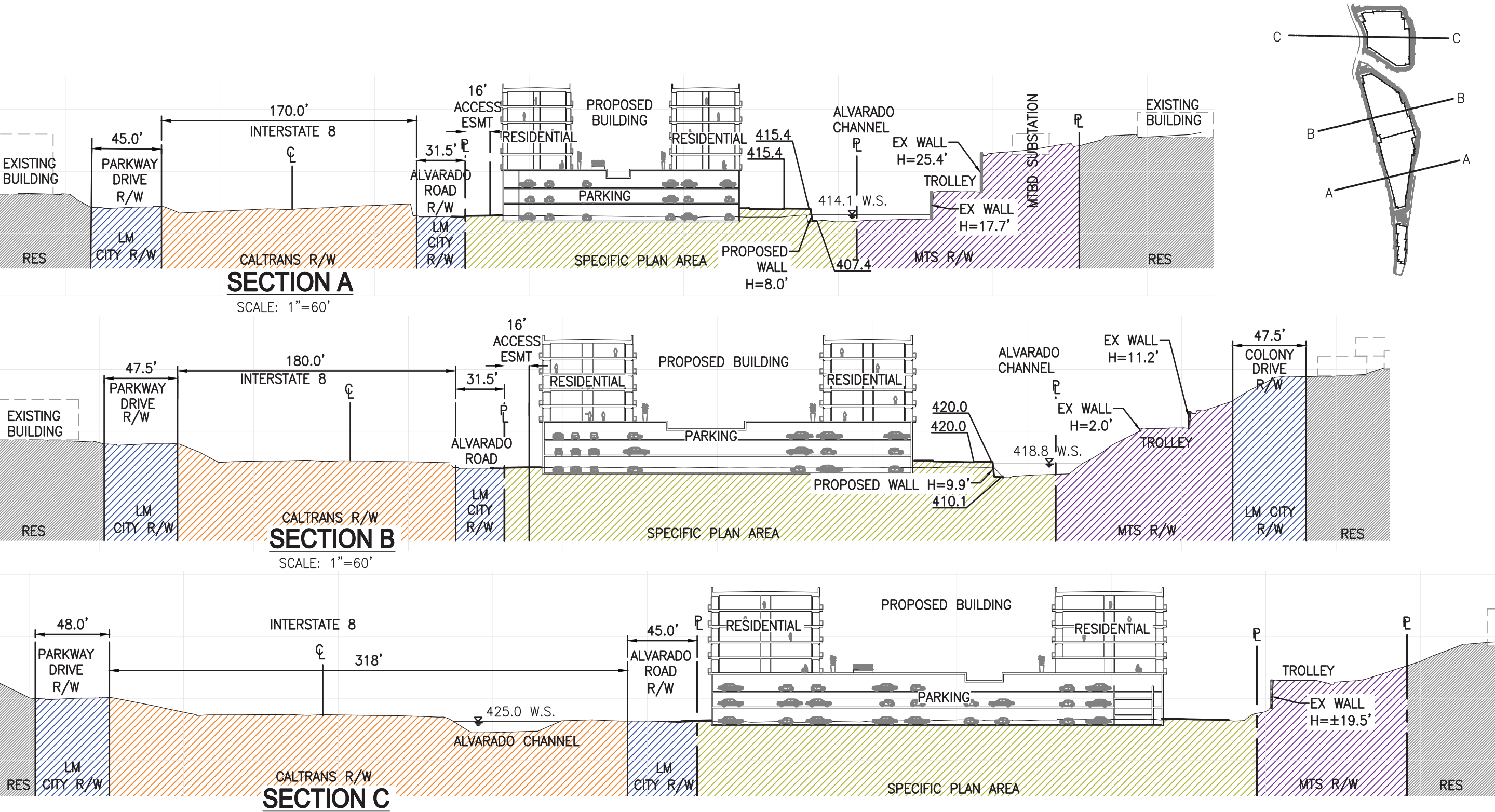
















## II - A. 2. Phasing

Market conditions, funding for public facilities, coordination with other Agencies or utility providers, and similar conditions beyond the control of the developer drives the overall implementation period. Nonetheless, an overall approach to phasing has been designed that ensures a logical and orderly expansion of roadways, public utilities, and infrastructure as the multi-family uses are developed. As shown in Figure 12 the Specific Plan Area consists of four development parcels. The parcels have been numbered 1 - 4 from west to east to correspond with the major multi-family buildings.

Phase 1 plans for the residential development and site improvements associated with Parcels 1, 2 and 3. Parcel 4/Building 4 is initially planned to be constructed as a separate phase project (see discussion of “interim uses” below). The Parcels contained within each phase of the project will be implemented with the approval of Site Development Plans to ensure consistency with the adopted Specific Plan and Project EIR. Development of the projects in Phase 1 are non-sequential. For example, Parcel 2 may be constructed after Parcel 3, followed by Parcel 1, etc.

Major public improvements that will be linked to the Phase 1 projects will include the Alvarado Road streetscape improvements as describe in more detail in this Chapter. These public infrastructure investments will also include the Alvarado Creek flood control and environmental restoration projects, and utility relocations. As long as infrastructure and public improvements required to serve a development parcel is secured, and the City approves, the parcels may develop in any order.

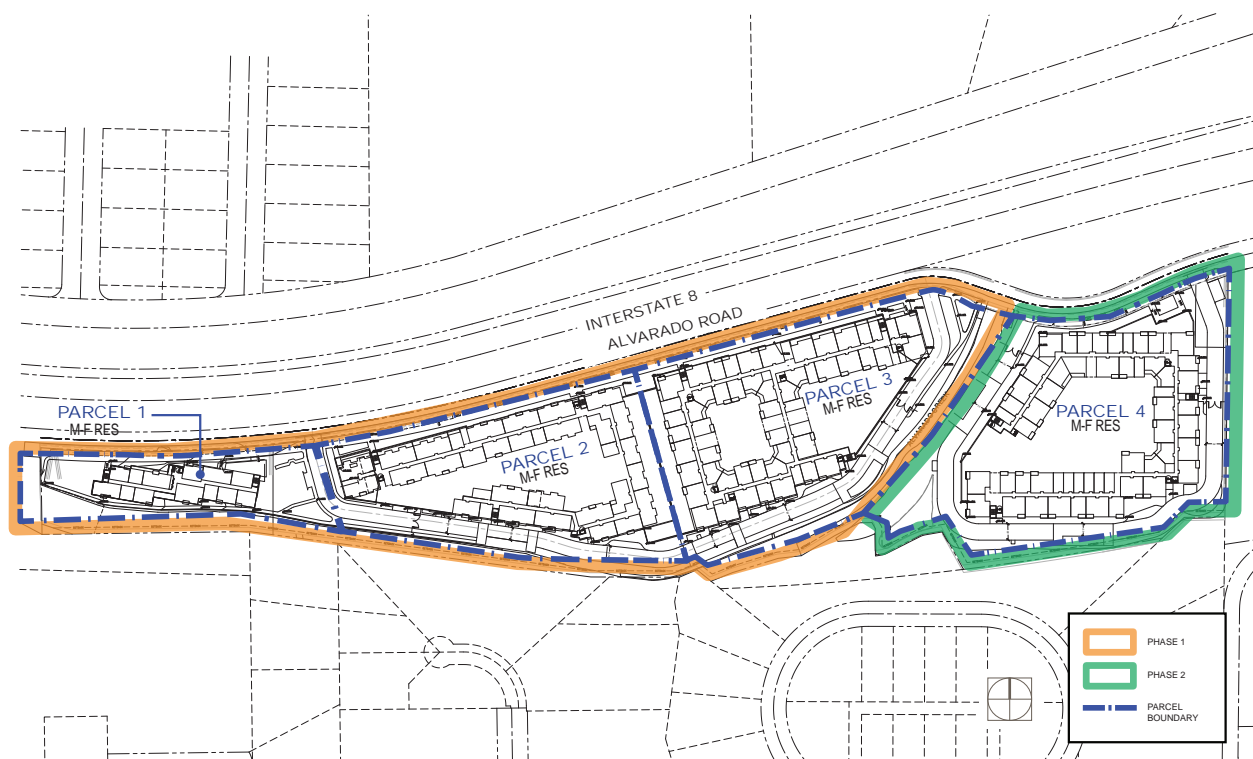


Figure 14 - Development Parcels and Phasing Plan

## II - A. 3. Public Improvements and Infrastructure Summary

One of the primary objectives of the Specific Plan is to define the numerous public improvements and infrastructure that is needed within the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan Area was formerly part of the City's Alvarado Creek Redevelopment Area, and identified as such as well in the General Plan consistency discussion in Chapter I. Public improvements which are a key implementation measures in the Alvarado Specific Plan include:

- Alvarado Road reconstruction and streetscape improvements
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities to implement City plans
- Improved access to public transit
- Flood channel and stormwater management facilities
- Sanitary sewer system improvements
- Undergrounding of overhead utilities

A more detailed description of what public improvements are provided with implementation of the Specific Plan is provided in Section E. in this Chapter.

## II - B. MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL USES

### II - B. 1. Summary of Multi-family Residential Projects

The primary land use for the Alvarado Specific Plan is to develop four multi-family rental projects, conceptually shown in the Specific Plan Development Plan shown in Figure 12. A description of the multi-family residential building form, construction type and range of dwelling unit types planned within the overall projects is summarized in this Chapter.

The Phase 1 projects plan to construct two larger multi-family residential structures with similar construction type, form and size consisting of multi-level parking structures with residential units above the parking. On the smaller and narrower western Parcel 1, a smaller scale building (with a similar construction type) is planned with one level of structured parking and multifamily levels above the parking. The podium deck construction design allows for well distributed outdoor spaces and recreational amenities as illustrated in the overall Development Plan shown in Figure 12. The open space and recreation areas for the individual buildings and shared project spaces are described below in Section II-C.

Alternative multi-family and parking structure design concepts could achieve similar design quality and residential project objectives, and if proposed, would be subject to a determination of consistency with the Specific Plan during the implementation process.

### II - B. 2. Multi-family Residential Building Forms

Each Building within the Specific Plan incorporates a variety of dwelling unit types. Within the overall project, unit types range from the unique student housing options to a more traditional range of multi-family concepts including units with two- and one-bedrooms, studios and loft units. Along the interior or southerly portions of the Buildings, "liner" units are planned where some lower level units can have direct access to the interior creek side area via a "front stoop" concept. The multi-family structures for each parcel are planned to have interior project amenity and active

outdoor spaces utilizing the parking podium deck level. Throughout the project, the principles of “defensible space” will be applied with high quality site and architectural design, creating a vibrant and active residential environment consistent with both local and regional land use, housing and transit-oriented in-fill development goals.

Figures 15a-d illustrate the primary building forms in relationship to the project site and surrounding streets and area features, including Alvarado Road, the interior private streets, open spaces, Alvarado Creek, and the MTS trolley line.

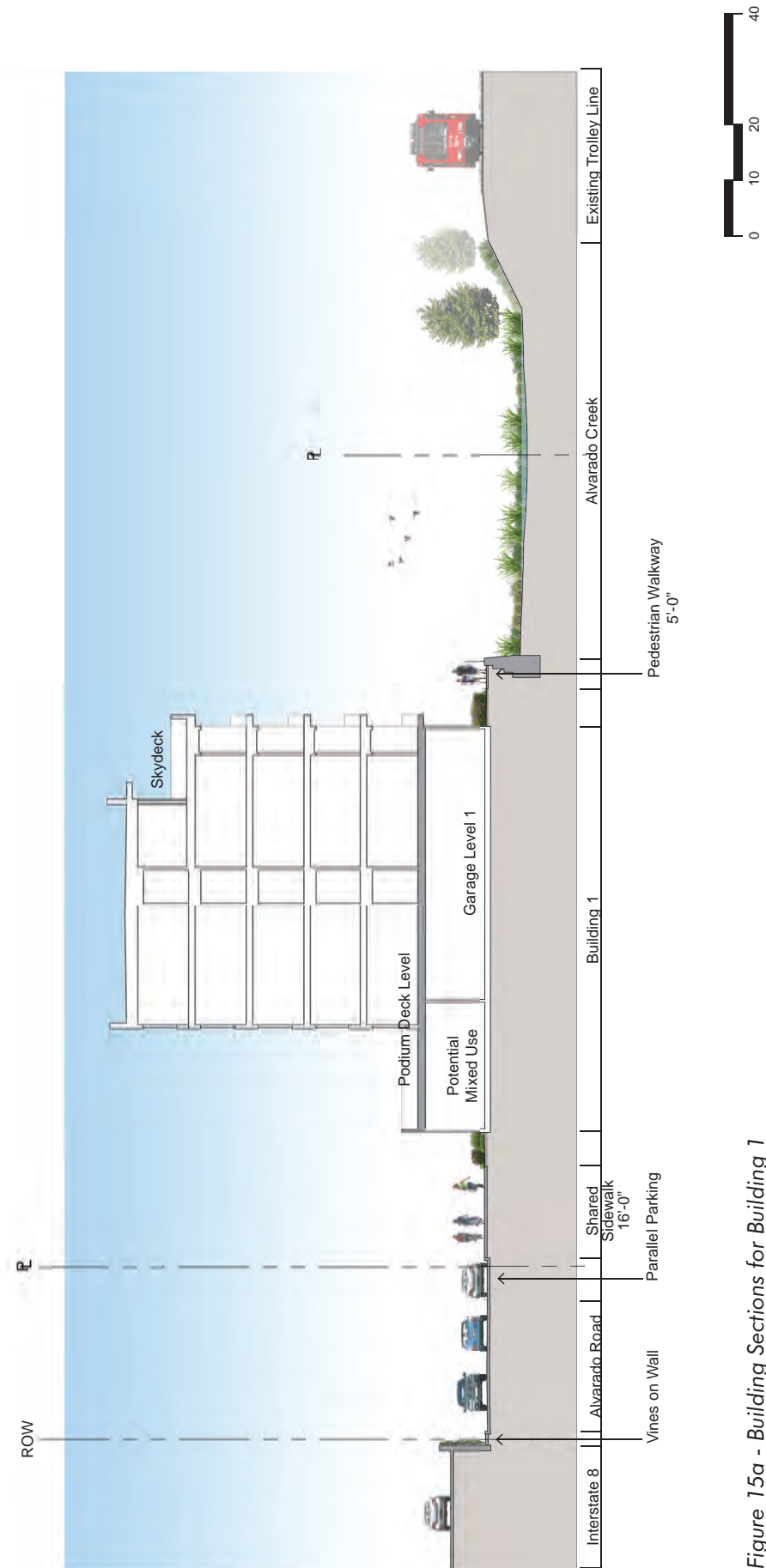


Figure 15a - Building Sections for Building 1

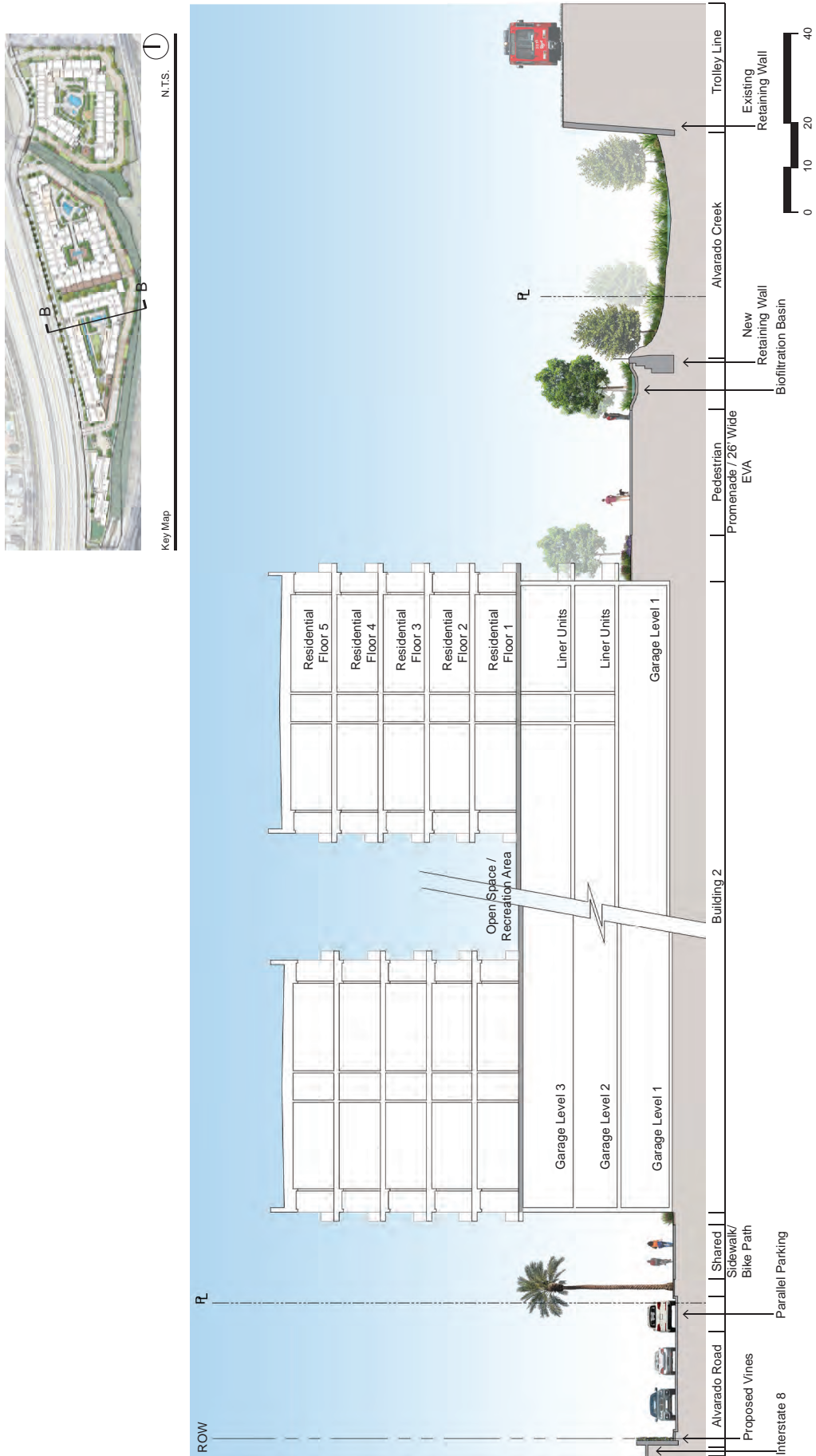
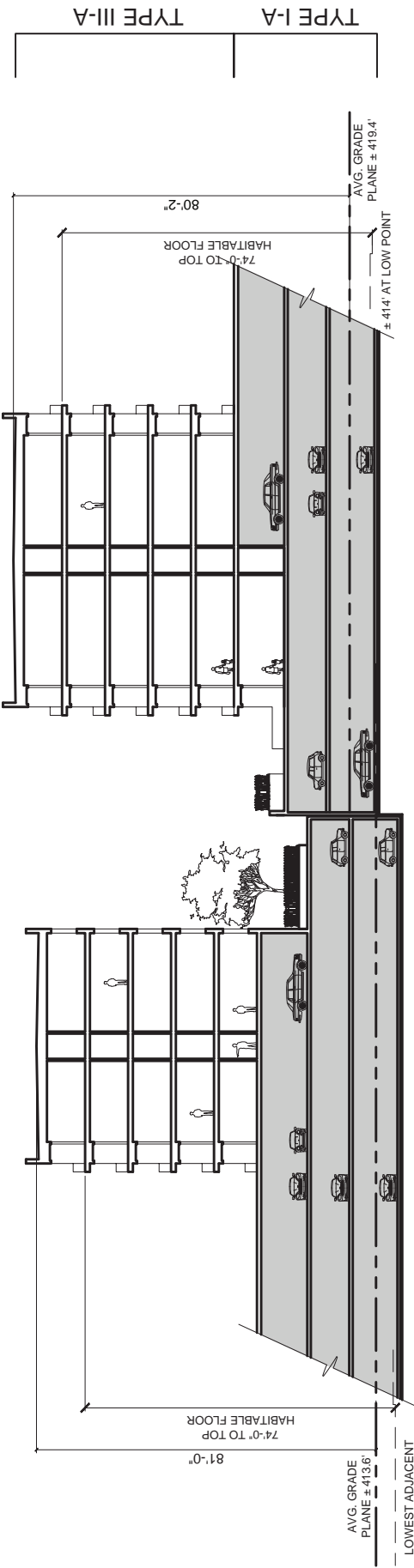


Figure 15b - Building Sections for Building 2





BLDG. 3

BLDG. 2

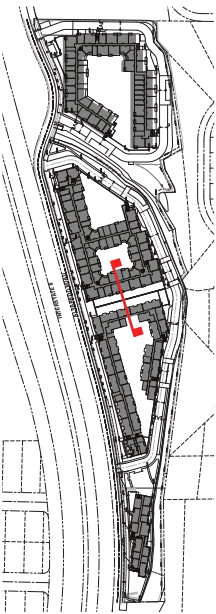


Figure 15c - Building Sections for Buildings 2 and 3

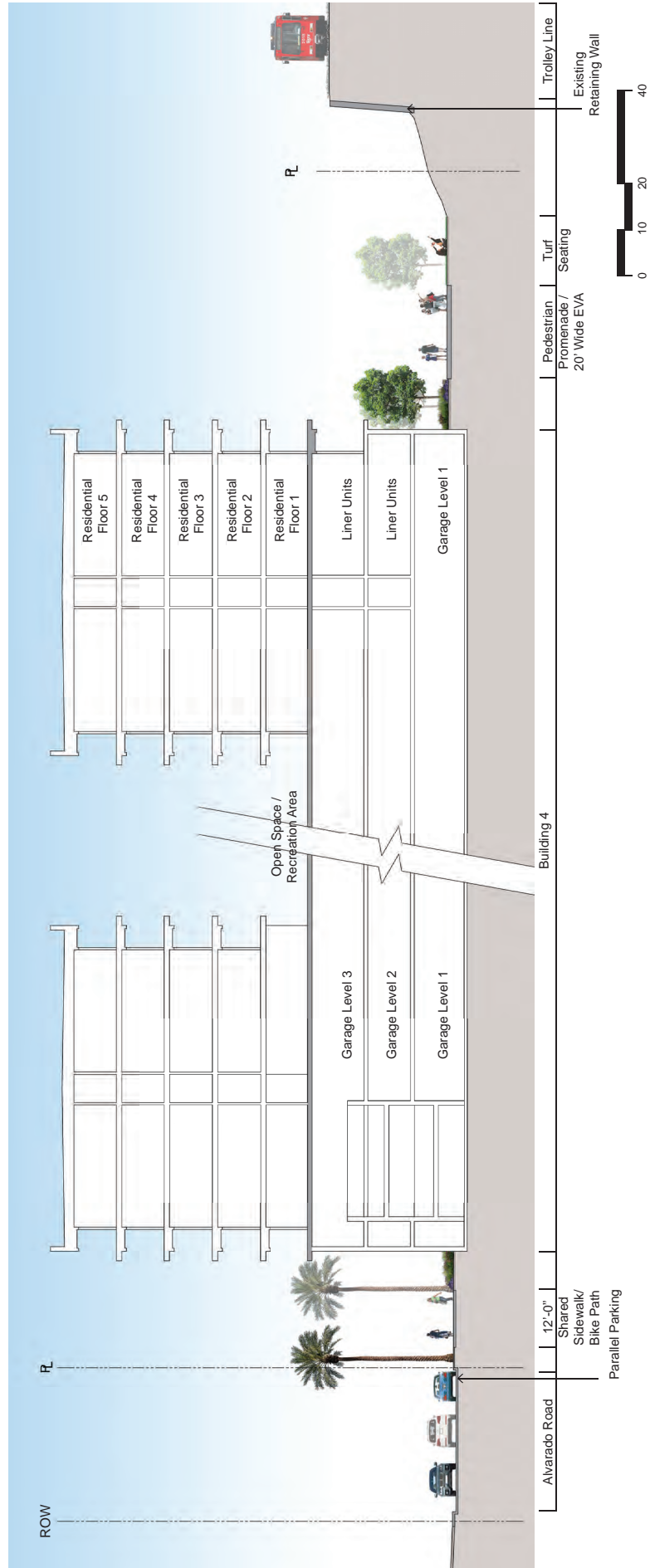


Figure 15d - Building Sections for Building 4

**Liner Units:** Throughout residential Buildings 2-4, there will be the opportunity to use liner units along the interior private streets. Liner units are not proposed for project facades adjacent to the Alvarado Road frontages. These units will include a similar mix of residential unit size from studios to 1-2 bedrooms. The Liner Units may also create the opportunity to provide for some variety of unit types that could include “loft” type units and units that have “front-stoop” type units with direct access to the Creekside promenade area. Examples of a typical floor plan, building sections and photographs are provided below to further describe this concept. Adding direct access and unit entries to the Creekside areas, creating more visibility, lighting and activity levels that represents a good use of defensible space design concepts into the Land Use and Development Plan.

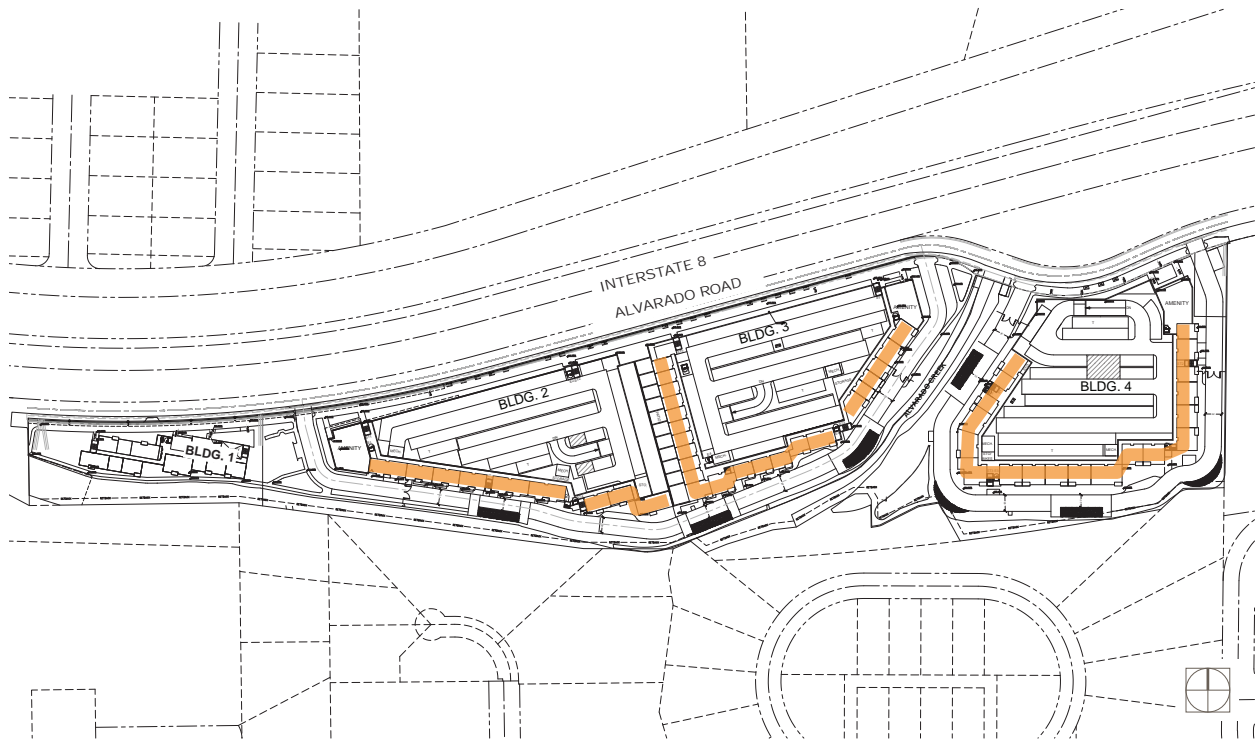


Figure 16a - Liner Units

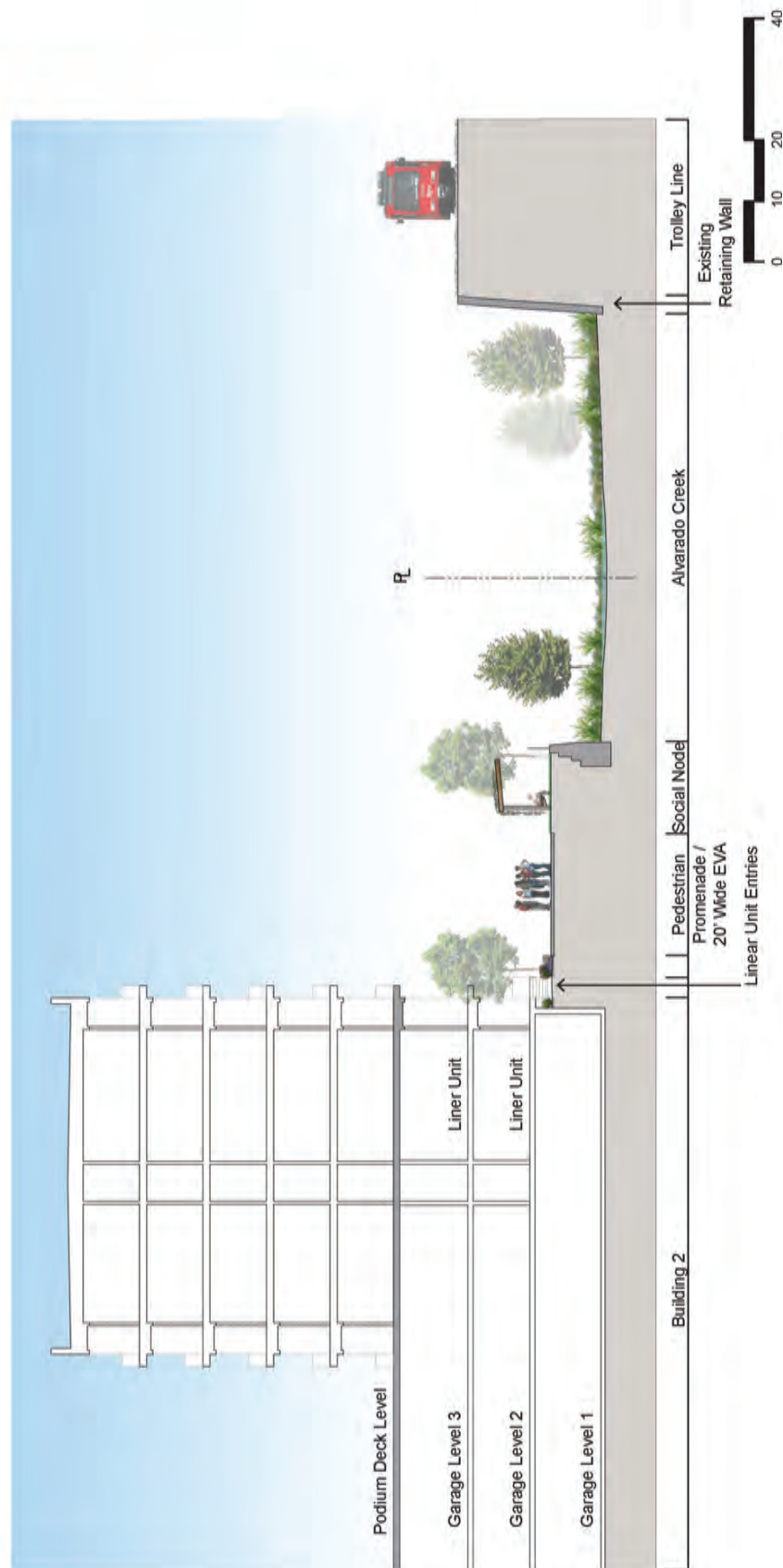


Figure 16b - Building Section with Liner Unit Examples

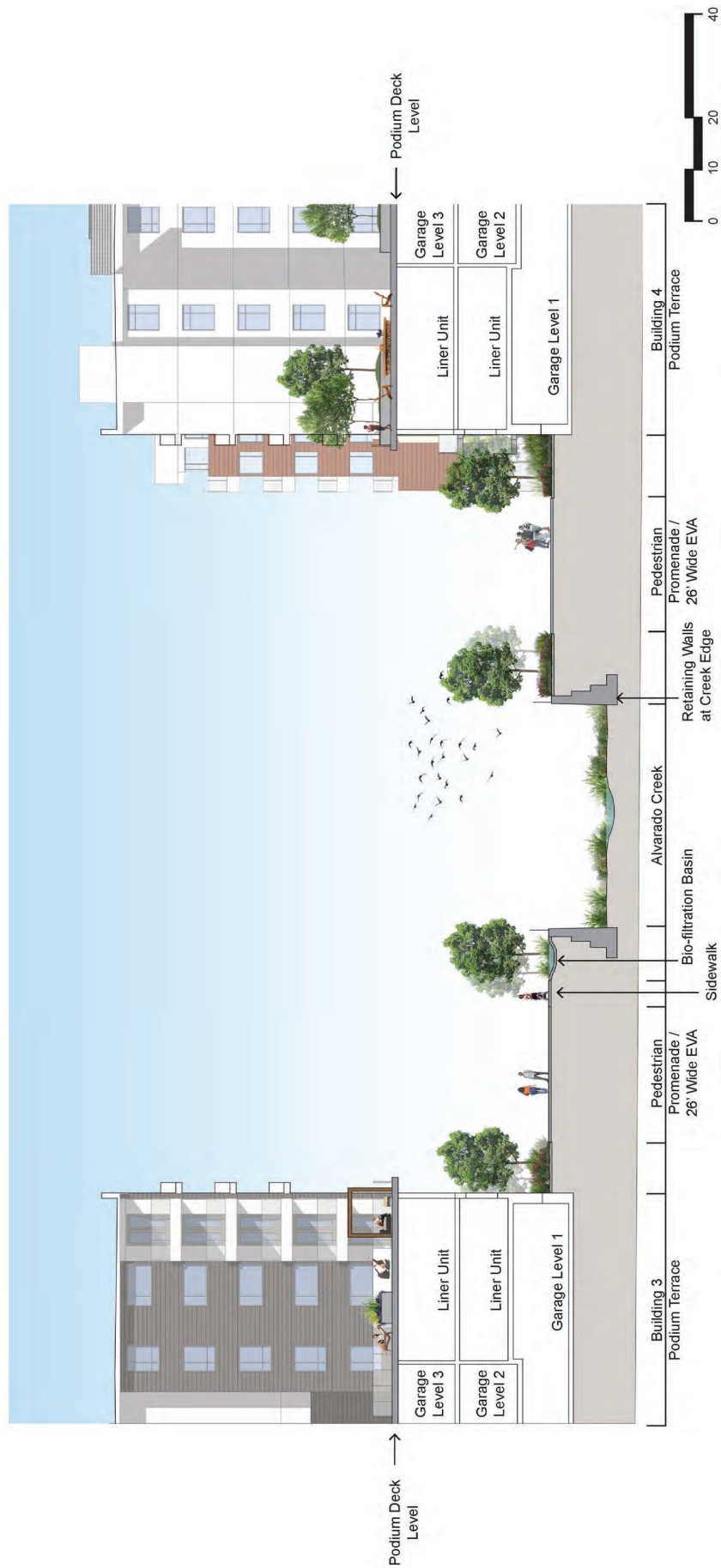


Figure 16c - Building Section with Liner Unit Examples





Figure 17 - Liner Unit Examples - Photos

## II - B. 3. Multi-family Residential Unit Mix

A summary of the multi-family residential projects is provided in the chart below, Figure 18. The number of residential units and parking spaces are estimates, and will vary based on the final mix of unit type and size in the plan submitted at the time of Site Development Plan approval.

Phase	Parcel/Building	Land Use	Estimated Units	Building Form	Dwelling Unit Mix	Parking Ratio Estimate	Estimated Parking Spaces
One	1	Multi-Fam Res	60	5 Res Floors Over 1 level parking	Studio/1 Bdrm	0.5/DU	30
	2	Option A - Student Housing	187	5 Res Floors Over 3 Parking Levels	Student Units	1.4/Bed	392
		Option B - Multi-Family Res	280	5 Res Floors Over 3 Parking Levels	Studio/1 Bdrm/2 Bdrm	1.4/DU	392
	3	Multi-Family Res	305	5 Res Floors Over 3 Parking Levels	Studio/1 Bdrm/2 Bdrm	1.4/DU	427
Two	4	Multi-Family Res	305	5 Res Floors Over 3 Parking Levels	Studio/1 Bdrm/2 Bdrm	1.4/DU	427
TOTALS Option A - Multi-Family Res + Student Housing			857				1276
TOTALS Option B - Multi-Family Res			950				1276

Figure 18 - Multi-Family Residential Unit Mix Chart

Throughout the planned projects, there will be a mix of unit types ranging from studios to one- and two-bedroom units. Within the Student Housing concept, the units will be much larger with a mix of units with the number of bedrooms ranging from 2 – 8 per unit. As shown in Figure 18, this could result in a lower overall total number of units for Building 2, but occupy the same basic building form and parking structure size.

A summary of the general development plan for Buildings 1-4 is provided in the sections below.

**Building 1:** As part of the Phase 1 projects, the 51,000 + sq. ft. parcel on the west end of the Area is planned for a project that is smaller in scale than Buildings 2-4 due to the shallow depth of the parcel. The development concept is illustrated in Figure 19 below. Parcel 1 is located adjacent to the planned pedestrian access improvements to the 70th Street Trolley Station. This Parcel is planned for approximately 60 multi-family residential units with a mix of smaller units that can contribute to providing a range of housing choices within the Specific Plan Area. This project concept is planned to appeal to residents that can take advantage of this immediate transit adjacency. Building 1 is proposed with a parking ratio of 0.5 space per unit, much lower than the other portions of the Specific Plan Area. With this parking ratio the building could have just one level of parking structure with five levels of apartments above.



# LEGEND

- 1 Existing billboards to remain
- 2 15'-0" wide pedestrian sidewalk / shared bike lane in front of building 1
- 3 Public connection to MTS Trolley Station
- 4 Private connection to MTS Trolley Station
- 5 Bio-filtration basin, Typ.
- 6 Parallel parking, Typ.
- 7 Existing creek / flood channel
- 8 Parcel division
- 9 Future resident parking
- 10 Proposed entry monument
- 11 Retaining wall edge, Typ.
- 12 Retaining wall at interstate
- ◀ Parking structure entry point
- \* Primary vehicle entry points
- Potential mixed use



Figure 19 - Building 1 Site Development Plan View Detail

**Building 2 - Multi-family Residential with Student Housing Option:** As listed in the data summary chart above, Figure 20, Building 2 is planned as one of the primary multi-family residential projects in Phase 1 with five residential floors above three levels of parking structure. The estimated units for Building 2 is approximately 280 residential units if developed with a traditional mix of studio, one- and two-bedroom units.

The Specific Plan allows for a variation to the multi-family residential unit mix for Building 2 with a “student-housing” concept as an option. Based on market demand, this development option could serve as an important off-campus housing opportunity to provide an affordable housing choice to help meet the community’s college and university student housing demands. This student housing concept would be required to be managed by a nationally recognized corporation that specializes in the development and management of housing for college and university students. Figures 20 and 21 show the site plan and examples of the typical dwelling unit mix for Building 2. The student housing configurations are much closer to dormitory style living arrangement allowing for independent living, yet within a fully managed and operated housing concept.

Some of the key elements of the Student Housing project will include:

- Fully furnished units
- Limited access and secured building
- 24/7 Security presence
- On-site management and professionally trained staff
- Designated liaison with the University
- Required clear policy on resident behavior and enforcement

The development concept for this part of the project is to provide high quality student housing with a short and direct link to SDSU from the Trolley Station adjoining the project site. This element of the Specific Plan exemplifies the creative nature of the specific plan approach to help in achieving both local and regional smart growth objectives. This part of the Plan represents an opportunity to create a real and lasting community partnership with the local higher education institutions. This can also be a small part of helping to solve the lack of well-managed housing options for students in the area that has often spilled over into neighborhoods where student housing overcrowding has been an ongoing issue around SDSU and in La Mesa.



LEGEND

- 1 Social node with shade element and turf area. Typ.
- 2 Parcel divisions
- 3 Retaining wall at creek edge. Typ.
- 4 Vehicular and pedestrian gate
- 5 Existing creek / flood channel
- 6 Decorative paving in pedestrian promenade 20'-0"-26'-0" wide / Emergency Vehicular Access (EVA)
- 7 Pick up & drop off zone
- 8 Loading zone
- 9 16'-0" wide pedestrian sidewalk / shared bike lane (4'-0" tree grate, 12'-0" shared path).
- 10 Accent street trees. Typ.
- 11 Palm trees in 5x8 tree grates. Typ.
- 12 Building 2 landscape corridor between buildings
- 13 Building 3 private residential patios
- 14 Outdoor courtyard at podium level
- 15 Bio-filtration basin. Typ.
- 16 Parallel parking. Typ.
- 17 Retaining wall at interstate
- 18 Existing power pole to remain
- 19 Pole light. Typ.
- ◀ Parking structure entry
- \* Primary vehicle entry point

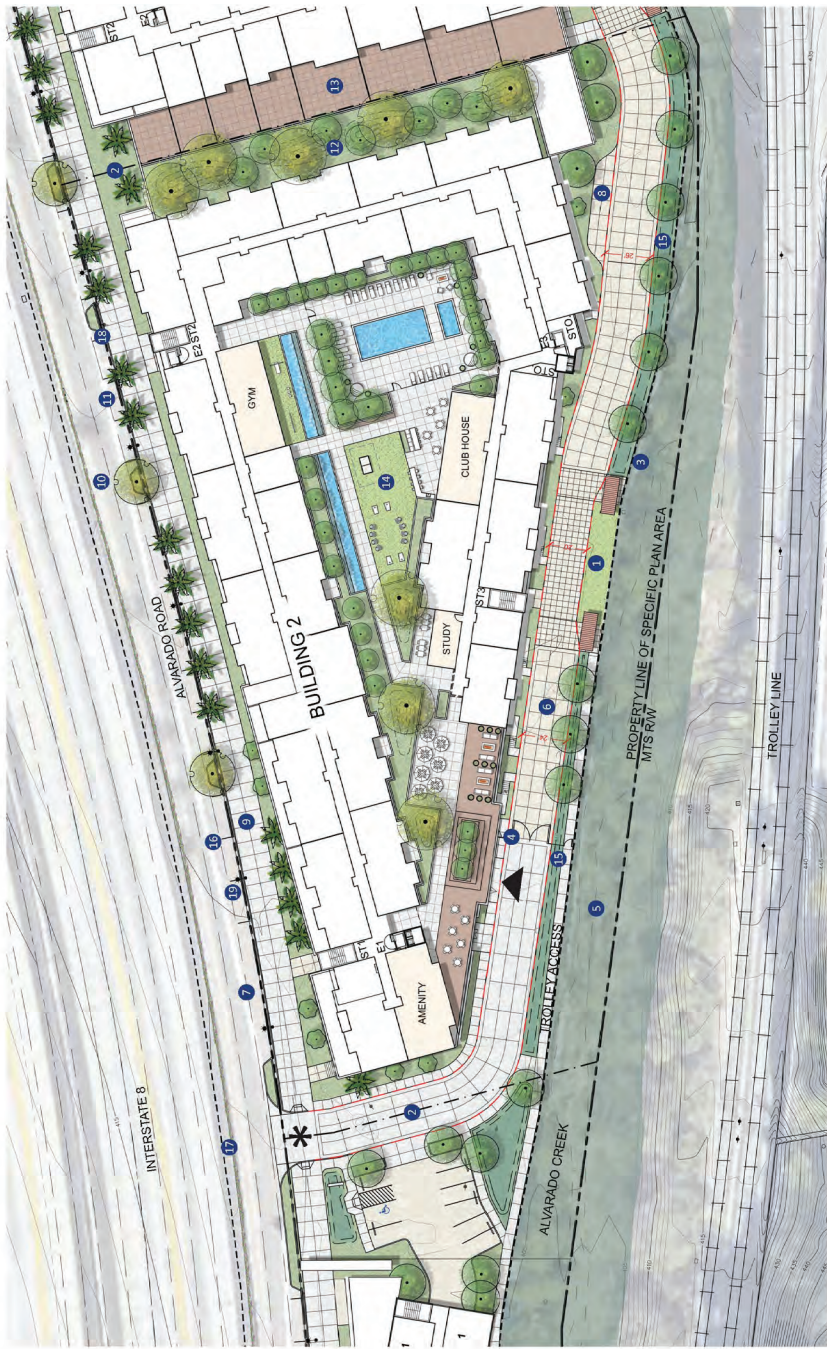


Figure 20 - Building 2 Site Plan Detail



Figure 21 - Typical Student Housing Floor Plans

**Buildings 3 and 4:** Buildings 3 and 4 will be developed as separate projects as shown in the project development plan shown in Figure 22. Each project will use the same basic building form and size with three levels of structured parking with the lower level approximately one half floor level below the overall site grade that will be above the required FEMA flood plain elevation. There will be five floors of residential units constructed above the parking structure floors at the podium deck level. In addition, on the interior project elevations (e.g. fronting onto the interior private road, and not facing Alvarado Road) there will be “liner units” as described above. Each building will include a mix of residential unit sizes, including studios, and one- and two-bedroom units. As summarized in the Figure 18 chart, residential unit estimates are for approximately 300 units within the Building 3 and 4 depending upon the unit mix set at the time of final design.

Each project will use secured access points onto the interior private streets for ingress and egress to the parking structures to avoid vehicle parking access and turning movement delays from Alvarado Road. Pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements, including a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge, will significantly improve the safety and connectivity between the east and west sides of Alvarado Creek and assist with creating a more cohesive residential environment within the overall Specific Plan Area.

As shown in Figure 22 below, buildings will provide open space and recreation amenities on the podium deck level to serve each building. Buildings 1-4 will also share access and use of the interior private street that serves as a key part of the open space concept for the Plan with active areas, enhanced paving and landscaping elements to highlight the creek-side promenade site design concept.



LEGEND

- 1 Building 3 private residential patios
- 2 Parcel divisions
- 3 Outdoor courtyard at podium level
- 4 Social node with shade element and turf area, Typ.
- 5 Bio-filtration basin, Typ.
- 6 Rain event bio-filtration basin
- 7 Palm trees in 5x8 tree grates
- 8 Accent street trees, Typ.
- 9 Existing creek / flood channel
- 10 Retaining wall at creek edge, Typ.
- 11 Prefabricated pedestrian bridge
- 12 Parallel parking
- 13 Future residential parking
- 14 Vehicular and pedestrian gate
- 15 Decorative paving in pedestrian promenade 20'-0" / 26'-0" wide / Emergency Vehicular Access (EVA)
- 16 16'-0" wide pedestrian sidewalk / shared bike lane. (4'-0" tree grate, 12'-0" shared path)
- 17 Proposed entry monument
- 18 Loading zone
- 19 Existing billboards to remain
- 20 Retaining wall at interstate
- 21 Pole lighting
- ◀ Parking structure entry points
- \* Primary vehicle entry points
- Secondary vehicle entry points



Figure 22 - Building 3 and 4 Site Plan View Detail

## II - B. 4. Non-Residential Mixed Uses

A key design and land use element of the Alvarado Specific Plan is to take a major step in transforming this section of Alvarado Road into Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area by taking full advantage of the existing adjacent access to both the regional trolley and bus routes servicing the 70th Street Station. A part of the TOD land use concept is to allow for the potential to incorporate some limited amount of resident-serving non-residential “mixed uses” as incidental or secondary permitted uses within each project. While the Alvarado Specific Plan emphasizes the multi-family component as the primary land use for the TOD concept, the Plan anticipates that as the multi-family housing is fully populated, there may be the market potential to include some resident-serving “mixed uses” (i.e., retail commercial, and services) within each Parcel. It is the intent of the Plan that this would be limited to secondary uses compatible with the objectives of the Specific Plan to create a quality living environment and to reduce daily vehicle trips. Limitations on the extent of mixed uses permitted with the Specific Plan are provided in the Development Standards in Chapter III.

## II - B. 5. Project Illustrations

Figures 23 a – g provide illustrations from several perspectives of each of the major multi-family Buildings to give a better visualization of what the overall building quality, type, and size will look like within the visual context of the Specific Plan Area and surrounding community features. These illustrations are provided as examples to represent the potential appearance of the planned multi-family residential projects, but are not intended as exhibits for the final project architecture and design solutions. As described in Chapter III, implementation of the Specific Plan required the future development projects to complete the City’s Site Development and Urban Design process to determine consistency with the Specific Plan.





Figure 23a - View East from Alvarado Road





Figure 23b - View from I-8 Westbound Looking Southwest



Figure 23c - View from I-8 Eastbound





Figure 23d - View West from Alvarado Road





Figure 23e - Looking West on Alvarado Road





Figure 23f - Looking Northeast





Figure 23g - Looking Northwest

## II - C. LANDSCAPING, OPEN SPACE, AND RECREATION USES

### II - C. 1. Open Space and Project Landscaping Overview

A primary goal of the Alvarado Specific Plan is the create a highly successful Transit Oriented Development project. In order to achieve this goal, the project must successfully meet the open space and recreational amenity needs and demands of the future residents of the projects. The new uses must represent a project that is seen by La Mesa residents as a valuable addition to the fabric of the community. One key element of the Specific Plan to meet this objective is through the extensive and creative open space and landscape solutions employed within the “urban character” of the overall Plan. The “urban character” will be seen initially as a striking change from the existing under-utilized conditions on the site dating back to its origins as a mobile-home park. The proposed development will express a newer “urban character” with its size, height, massing, and site orientations which have been designed to fit within the site’s constraints and unique physical features previously described in Chapter I. The project design team has worked diligently to develop a set of open spaces, pedestrian improvements and landscaping solutions that will make this a high quality and desirable contemporary living environment. This will be beneficial to residents of the project as well as serving a broader public benefit through the restoration and environmental enhancement of Alvarado Creek.

A summary of the areas included within the various types of open spaces in provided in Figure 24. A summary of the open space and recreational amenity elements defined in the Alvarado Specific Plan are illustrated in Figure 25.

Open Space Areas	Acres
Creek Restoration Area	1.57
Podium Deck Areas	2.13
Interior Private Street	2.65
Alvarado Streetscape	1.35
Stormwater Management Features	0.42
Additional Open Space/Landscaping	0.15

Figure 24 - Open Space and Landscaping Area Chart





Figure 25 - Open Space and Landscape Area Detailed Site Plan Views

**Landscaping:** The development plan shown in Figure 12 provides the most comprehensive diagram of the significant effort that has gone into insuring that, despite the very intense development that is proposed, landscaping will play a critical role in making this a cohesive residential environment. Landscaping is a key element within the individual multi-family projects, the site improvement plans and in the public improvement areas. Each of these areas is briefly outlined below and illustrated in more detail in Figure 25. A more detailed description of the project landscaping and open space development standards is included in Chapter III.

**Alvarado Streetscape Plan:** Improvements planned for the Alvarado Road street frontage includes street trees with mixed heights and species to create a vertical edge separating the roadway from the new sidewalk. The streetscape plan also includes a series of bulb-outs in the parking lane to add both depth and height to help reinforce the tree line street edge and provide some screening for above grade parking levels facing the street. In addition, there is a planting area planned between the sidewalk and the parking structures which allows for foundation planting and the potential for planting materials to serve as a screening tool for the garage structures as well.

**Enhanced Interior Private Streets:** The concept for the interior circulation roads is to create a pathway that can serve a variety of access functions described in the Circulation Plan section. This area will also provide an inviting pedestrian pathway as part of the project open space plan. The interior streets will include sections of enhanced paving treatment and a series of viewing areas at the creek side. These linear pathways will include a variety of planting solutions, including trees, low shrubs and plant materials that will coordinate with the creek restoration project.

**Stormwater Management Basins:** Phase 1 and 2 projects have incorporated the required stormwater detention facilities that will include the appropriate palette of plants to coordinate with the creek restoration area and developed residential project sites.

**Podium Deck Planting Plan:** Multi-family structures with podium deck courtyards include a substantial landscaping plan to provide for an inviting outdoor environment. Plantings will include trees and smaller materials in raised planters serving to define functional outdoor spaces. There is also a significant planting zone to include screening trees and shrubs as part of Building 2, and patio areas for Building 3 in the approximately 50 feet that separates Building 2 and 3 at the podium deck level.

## II - C. 2. Multi-family Residential Building Open Space and Recreational Uses

The Alvarado Specific Plan provides for a variety of open space uses and areas that are contained within each development project and a system that interconnects the individual projects into a cohesive system of active areas and environmental enhancements. This is especially important in order to meet the Specific Plan objective of transforming this area from its current condition to a vibrant and livable transit oriented infill residential area. As described throughout the Plan, the physical features of the site and the unique location has very limited “walking distance” access to existing neighborhood and community parks. As a result, the Development Plans have established a commitment to providing high quality open space and recreation amenities within each project and an integrated network of well-designed landscaped pathways serving the overall Specific Plan Area. The major open space elements are described below and illustrated in Figure 12 and 25.

**Open Spaces:** In the traditional zoning development standards in La Mesa, open spaces are calculated for projects that fall into the more tradition suburban “garden apartment” configuration. As called for in many of La Mesa’s supporting land use plans and policies, the Alvarado Specific Plan represents a more intense infill land use solution. The multi-family building types and site plans are necessary to fit within the site which is sandwiched between I-8/Alvarado (frontage) Road and the MTS Trolley line, and the added challenge of an urban creek/flood channel cutting through the site. As a result, a great deal of project costs will be allocated to make the Specific Plan Area a very livable residential environment. The Open Space elements of the project include components that are incorporated into the private developments, and more active elements that serve the overall project area. The conceptual Project Site Plan shown in Figure 12 illustrates the overall distribution of these elements. Figure 25 gives a more schematic diagram showing the various Open Space elements and the locations which may vary as detailed site development plans are created within the individual projects. The general Open Space components include:

**Podium Deck Outdoor Spaces:** Which contain various features within each project including: pools, space, water features, seating areas, fire pits, entertainment zones for more active features, quiet or study zones, landscaping and observation zones to view the creek side pedestrian areas.

**Amenity Zones:** Which include recreation and shared spaces such as gym, club house and study or classroom spaces that are arranged in proximity to the Podium Deck Outdoor Spaces.

**Patios and Balconies:** Throughout the multi-family projects in, where feasible, private balconies have been provided to additional outdoor space for the residents. In a very limited number of locations, some units will be able have patio spaces and there are some “liner units” that will have stoops leading directly to the creek side walkways.

**Sky Decks:** Buildings 1 - 4 have the potential to include a small scale “sky deck” as part of the open space amenities available to residents of the projects. This area is limited in size and would be located at the fifth floor above the podium level as prescribed by the Building Code.

## II - C. 3. Creekside Street and Pedestrian Zone

One of the most important features of the Open Space concept for the Alvarado Specific Plan was the effort that will go into transforming the urban storm water and flood management function of Alvarado Creek into a valuable example of an appropriately restored and well maintained “urban creek” environment. This represents a significant amount of site area that will serve as a valuable



open space element when combined with the design for the interior private creek side streets. This area will have controlled vehicle access and serve as a quiet pedestrian path adjoining the creek side zones. The interior streets will incorporate a series of viewing and resting nodes along the pathway that will provide opportunities for information about the storm-water management and regional water quality value the creek provides for La Mesa and the region.

## II - C. 4. Alvarado Creek Restoration Area

A key part of the project will be the construction of improvements to the Alvarado Creek flood channel that is shown in Figures 35 and 36 in Section E of this Chapter. The flood management features will include new walls that will provide the necessary storm water capacity with a design that is compatible with the aesthetic objectives for the urban creek concept. The channel work will also include relocations and improvements to the City's sanitary sewer system in the channel that can help to address outstanding regional clean water issues as a significant public benefit from the Specific Plan. After this work is completed, the Plan provides for an approved creek restoration planting program. The long-term benefit to the community as well will come from support to establish an ongoing maintenance agreement so the creek area remains an environmental asset and can avoid future flooding caused by excess build-up of non-native/non-riparian vegetation and urban debris in the channel.

## II - D. CIRCULATION PLAN

In addition to the public improvement plans this section discusses the existing and proposed circulation plans for vehicles, pedestrians and planned alternative transportation features to serve the Project Area. Major Specific Plan elements include public improvements to create a safe and coordinated streetscape with traffic safety features, sidewalks, landscaping, and street lighting along the length of the Specific Plan Area Alvarado Road frontage. Circulation for the development will use a system of enhanced interior private roadways to minimize points for vehicular access to Alvarado Road. These interior private streets will provide safe and efficient access to the resident parking structures. The private streets serve as the primary emergency vehicle access and staging areas so that Alvarado Road remains open to the east and west in the event of a need to deploy rescue equipment to the site. The enhanced internal streets also provide for other service and delivery vehicle functions to maintain a safe free flow of traffic on Alvarado Road. The enhanced paving and landscape design for these interior roadways will create a functional but also inviting pedestrian environment serving to connect project residents with the creek side environment, outdoor amenities and pedestrian access to the adjoining Trolley station.

### II - D. 1. Existing Conditions

In large part, the Alvarado Specific Plan Area is defined by the existing circulation network surrounding the site. Figures 26 shows the sub-regional network of highways, arterial and local streets, and transit systems that provide easy access to and from the Specific Plan Area. The existing condition of Alvarado Road and lack of standard public improvements, including curbs, gutters, safety street lighting, storm water management, and sidewalks is shown in the photos in Figure 27.

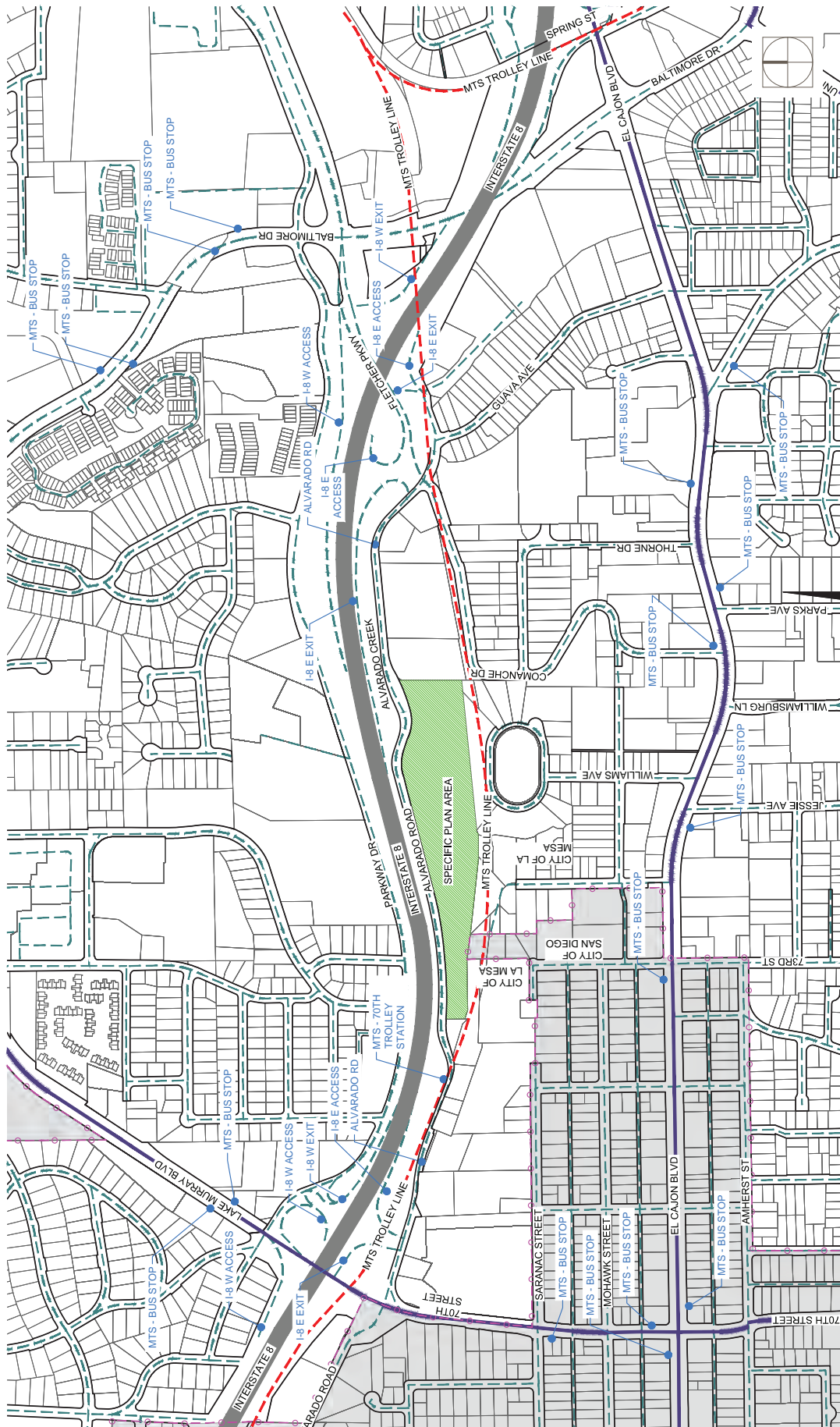


Figure 26 - Street Network and Transit Facilities Serving the Project Area



Figure 27 - Photos Showing Lack of Standard Public Improvements on the Alvarado Road Frontage

While the Specific Plan represents a major change in the historic land use concepts for the Area, by far, some of the most influential factors in the Plan's development are tied to several key transportation conditions, including:

- the proximity to the 70th Street Trolley Station;
- ease of access to major regional freeway transportation routes; and,
- the unique opportunity for intensification of land use needed to make redevelopment financially feasible in a location that can avoid adversely affecting surround neighborhood traffic patterns.

With these key factors as part of the planning foundation for the project, the Circulation Plan has been developed based on the following primary concepts:

- Maximize the opportunity to create a residential mix of housing that can take advantage of the proximity to the existing 70th Street Trolley Station and interconnecting bus routes;
- Improve Alvarado Road from just a freeway frontage road by: 1) providing a plan for constructing the needed public improvements to bring the street up to contemporary traffic safety and engineering design standards; and 2) creating a walkable and enhanced streetscape design that will support the goal of connectivity to the under-utilized transit options adjacent to the site;



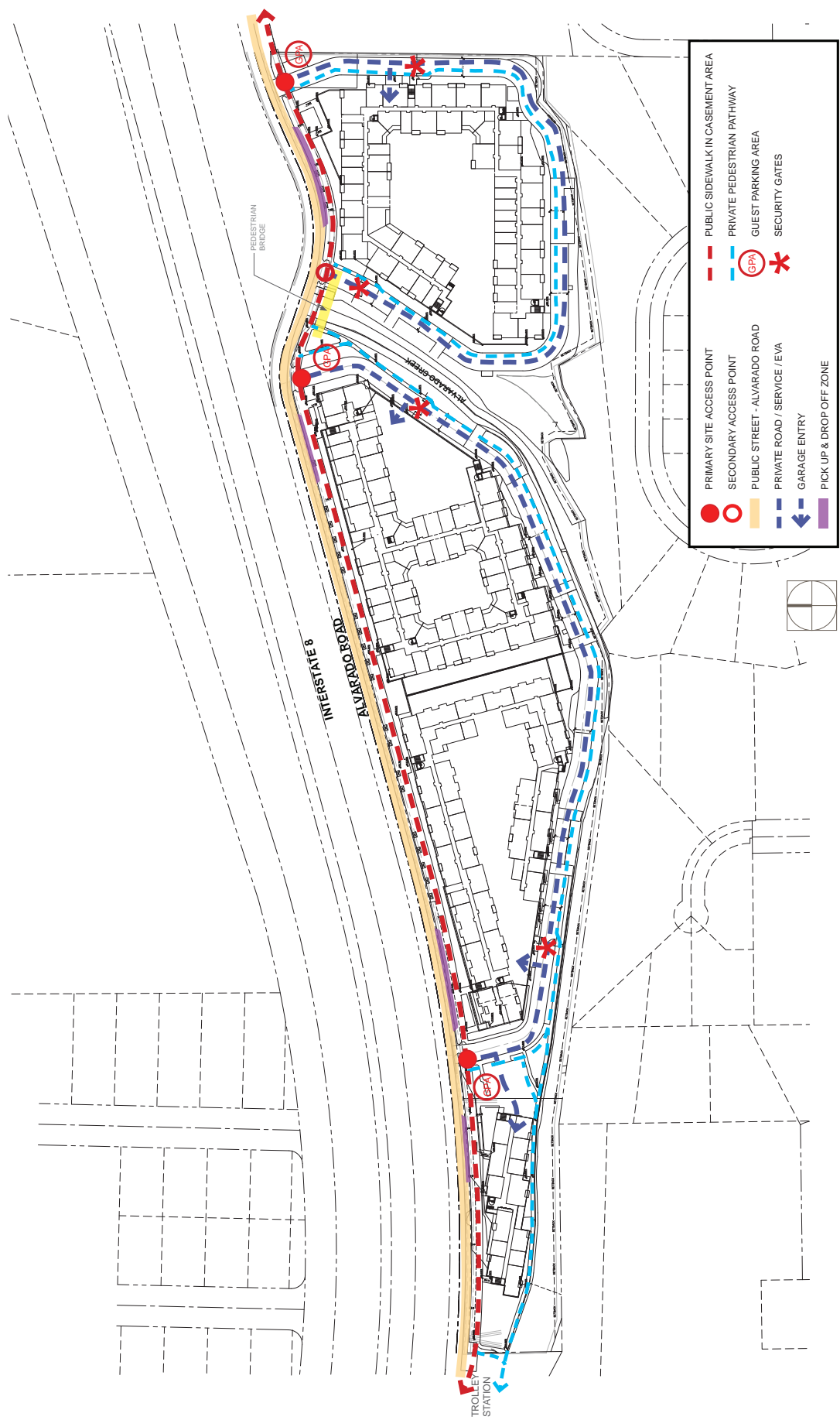
- Within every aspect of the project design, make pedestrian movement inviting and safe as a governing design concept for the project site development plans in concert with the circulation plan; and,
- To design an enhanced interior looped private streets system for each Project Phase that will be multi-functional for resident vehicular access, service vehicle functions, emergency vehicle and equipment access and safe operation, and blend this into an inviting and secure creek side “lane” that encourages residents to share and value this as a pedestrian pathway as well.

## II - D. 2. Vehicle Circulation and Emergency Access Plan

One of the primary physical features that defines the Specific Plan Area are the existing transportation facilities. The Caltrans I-8 freeway right-of-way establishes the northern right-of-way limits of Alvarado Road which was created as a frontage road when the freeway was constructed. Alvarado Road extends west from the Area, past the 70th Street Trolley Station to the intersection with 70th Street and the major freeway access ramps. To the west, Alvarado Road extends to an intersection with local streets (Comanche and Guava), the Fletcher Parkway overpass, and an access ramp to eastbound I-8. South of the Specific Plan Area is the Alvarado Creek channel and the elevated MTS Trolley tracks. As a result, the primary vehicle access to the Area is Alvarado Road which is identified on the City’s Circulation Element as a Collector Street.

With the Specific Plan limited to Alvarado Road for vehicle circulation, one of the first development plan design issues was to provide for adequate emergency vehicle access. The Circulation Plan concept with a set of interior private roads that meet the design standards necessary for emergency access and use was developed and approved by Heartland Fire & Rescue. From that design criteria, the development parcels were formed. The underlying concept for the interior private streets is to design and build them as dedicated fire lanes which in turn will allow for Alvarado Road to remain open to the east and west in the event of an emergency.

With the emergency access function for the interior roads set, the other key value of this circulation plan was the provide for all access to the residential parking structures to be from interior roadway entry points a safe distance from the roadway intersection. This will avoid unsafe turning movements into the parking garages from Alvarado Road. The interior private street is also planned to be gated beyond the parking garage entries to limit through traffic except for deliveries and move-in functions. In this way, along with enhance paving and landscaping features, the controlled and limited vehicle use of the streets created the opportunity to incorporate this area into a part of the linear creek-side open space. This will be used by project residents to walk, enjoy the restored creek area and provide a safe and lighted pathway to the 70th Street Trolley Station.



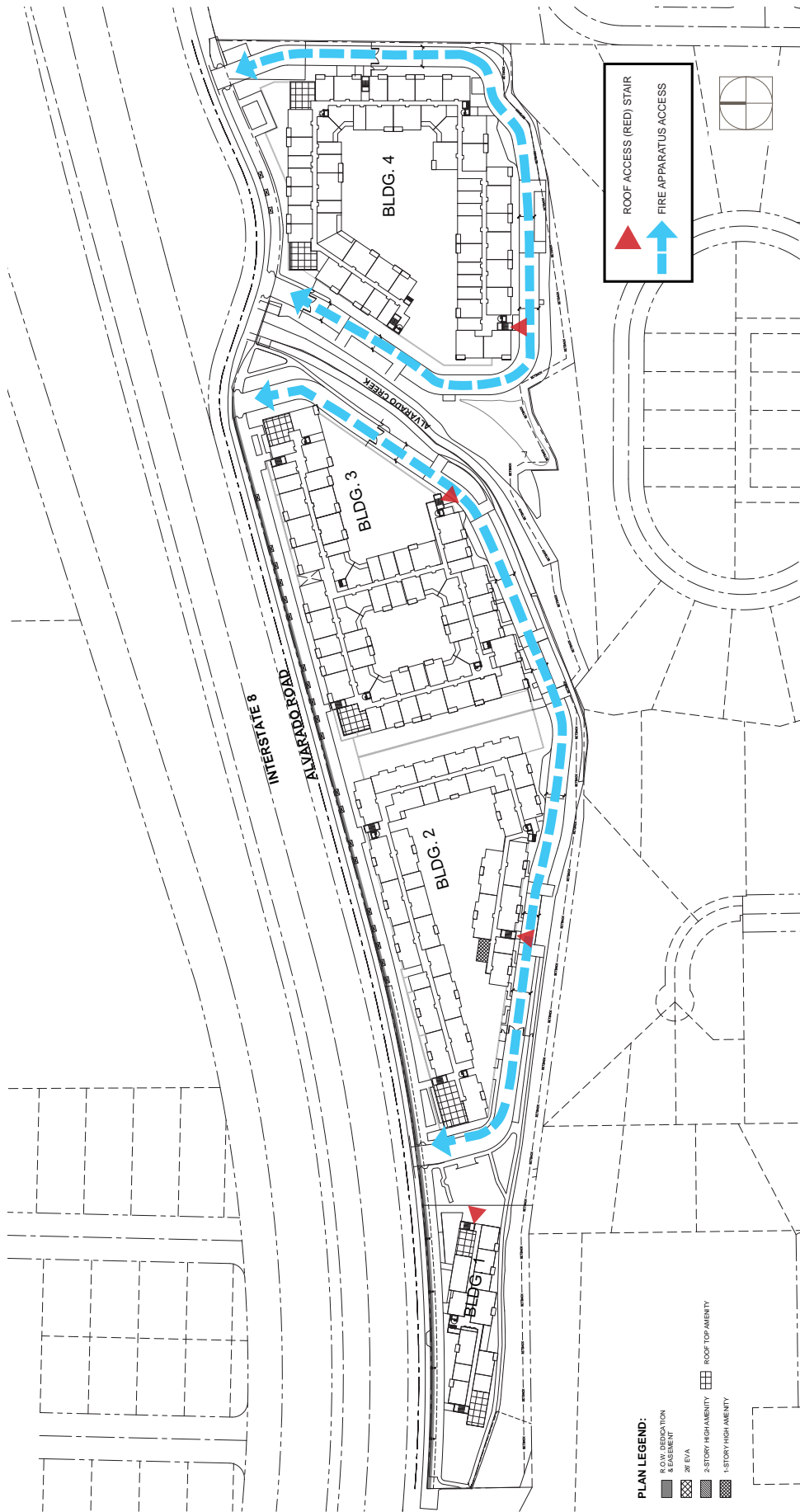


Figure 29 - Emergency Access Plan



## II - D. 3. Alvarado Road Streetscape Improvements

Alvarado Road represents a major public improvement project taken on as part of the development objectives with the Phase 1. The current alignment of Alvarado Road was constructed as part of the Interstate 8 freeway project in the 1950's as a highway frontage road with minimal improvements. Approximately 2,000 feet of Alvarado Road frontage within the Specific Plan Area has no public improvements (i.e., sidewalks, lighting, drainage, parking or landscaping) along the south side of the road as shown in the photos in Figure 27.

The Specific Plan provides for the construction of public improvements needed to bring the street up to local engineering design standards including:

- Curb and gutter
- Street lights
- Street trees
- Pedestrian and bicycle shared path
- Curb side pop-outs for street trees
- A parallel parking lane
- Curb site loading zones near access points
- A pedestrian bridge on the south side of the Alvarado Creek bridge
- A completely accessible pedestrian route to the 70th Street Trolley Station
- Traffic Safety measures at vehicle access points as needed to address sight distance visibility and lighting safety

The streetscape improvement plan for Alvarado Road is shown in the overall Specific Plan in Figures 30a-b. Illustrations showing more details about the streetscape components are provided below.

LEGEND

- 1

16'-0" wide shared pedestrian / bike path. 4'-0" tree grate and 12'-0" shared path.
- 2

On street parking / loading zones
- 3

Pedestrian / bike bridge at Alvarado Creek
- 4

Pedestrian access to MTS Trolley Station
- ◀

Private street entrances
- \*

Private vehicle street entrances
- Secondary vehicle street entrance

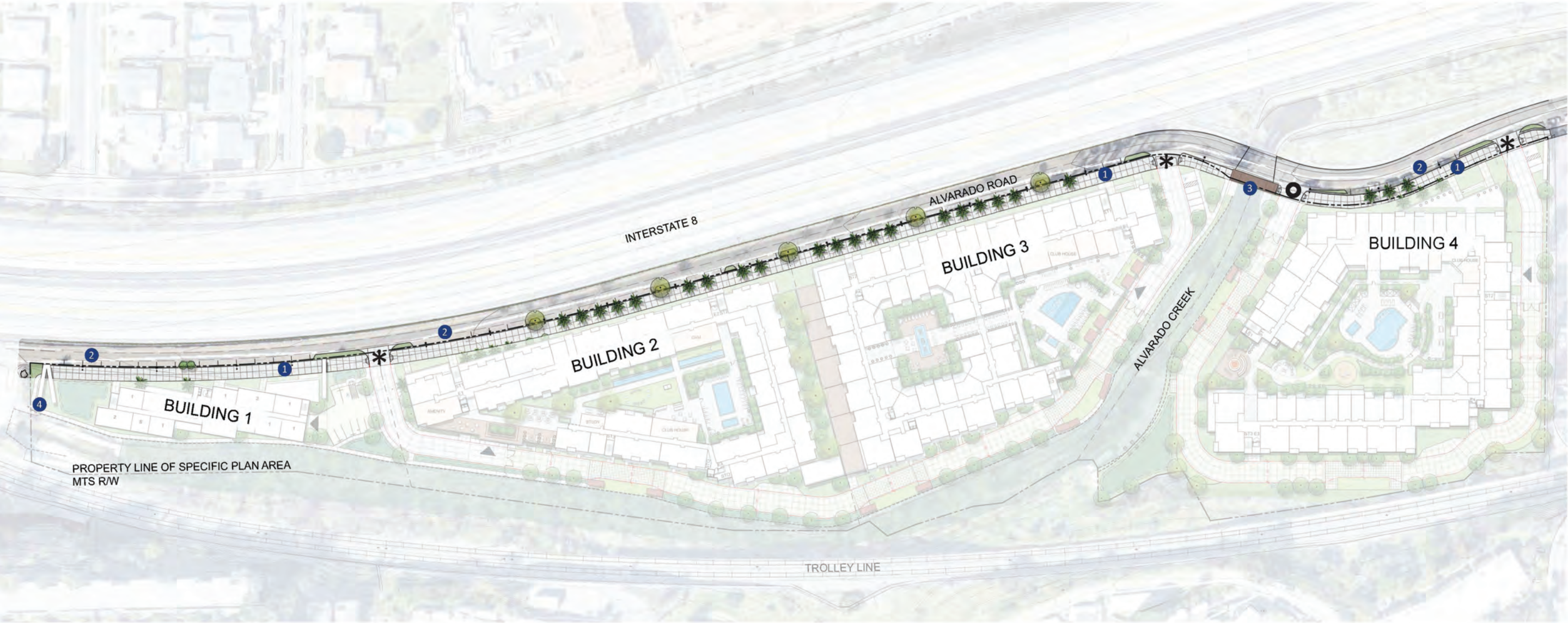


Figure 30a - Alvarado Road Streetscape Improvement Plan View Details





LEGEND

- 1

Pick up and drop off zone
- 2

MTS Trolley Station
- 3

Existing billboards to remain
- 4

Prefabricated pedestrian / bike bridge
- 5

Proposed entry monument
- 6

Pole light, Typ.
- 7

16'-0" wide pedestrian sidewalk / shared bike lane (4'-0" tree grate, 12'-0" shared path)
- 8

Parallel parking
- 9

Accent street trees
- 10

Palm trees in 5x8 tree grates
- \*

Primary vehicle entry point
- Secondary vehicle entry point

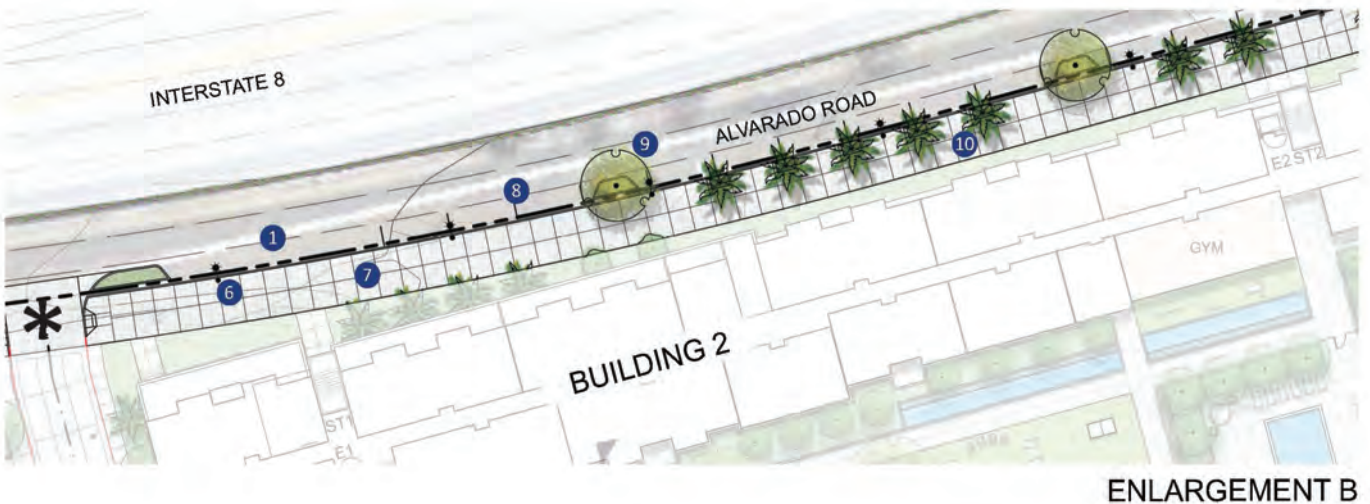
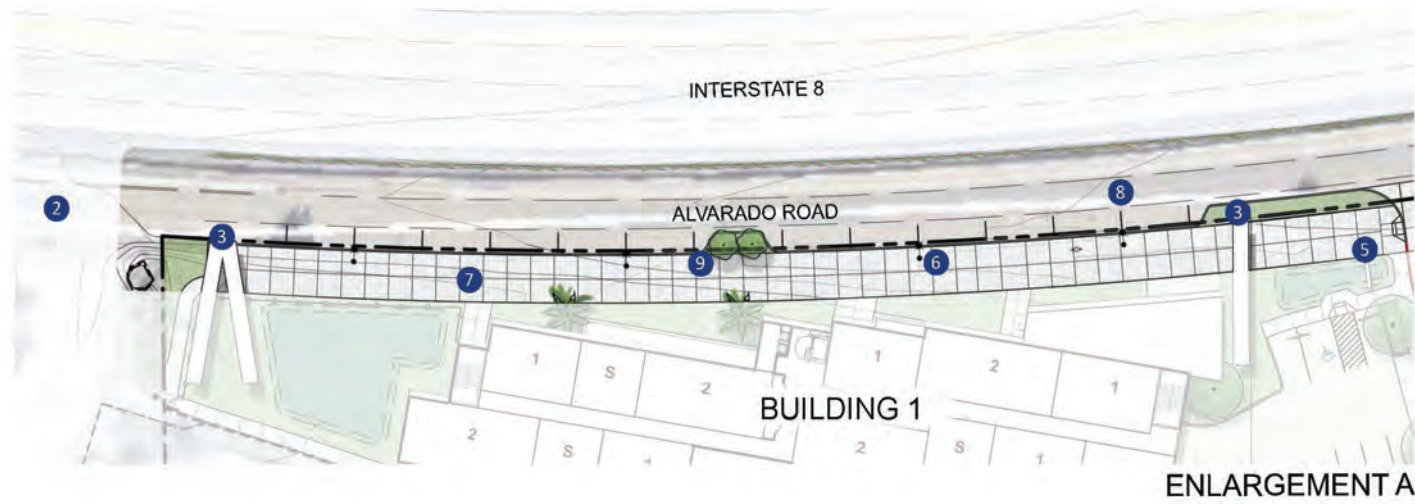


Figure 30b - Plan View of Alvarado Road Streetscape Improvement Plans





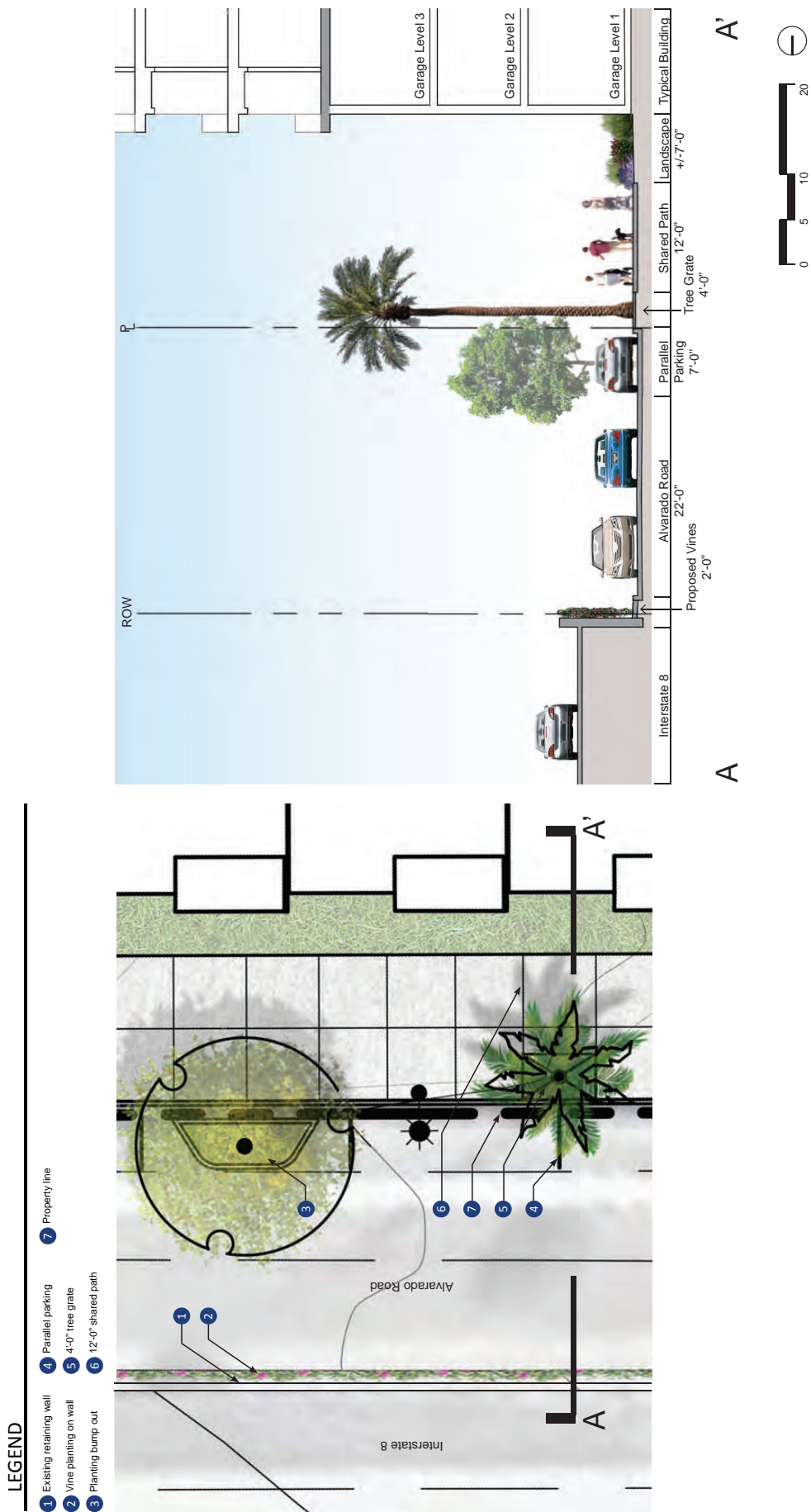


Figure 31 - Detailed Plan View: Shared Pedestrian/Bicycle Path Concept, Section of Shared Pedestrian/Bicycle Path Concept



## II - D. 4. On-site Circulation Plan

The Circulation Plan for Phase 1 and 2 provides an interior looped or ring road system that will provide several circulation functions as well being a key element of the project Open Space Plan. Figure 32 showing the overall development plan shows the concept for the private street looped interior street system with limited vehicle access points to Alvarado Road. These interior streets will serve several functions including:

- Ingress and egress for residents to the parking structures
- Locations for guest parking spaces near the project entry points
- Access and circular routes for service vehicles including deliveries, move-ins and trash collection
- The primary emergency vehicle access and staging area as a dedicated fire lane
- Security gates to prevent regular through vehicular traffic

In addition to these vehicle circulation functions, the interior private streets will provide an important pedestrian path connecting residents to the adjacent 70th Street Trolley station. The interior private streets are also a primary element of the project open space plan, providing a variety of landscape nodes and viewing areas that will enhance the creek side environment. Figure 32 below illustrates examples of the enhanced paving and landscaping that will be part of the interior on-site circulation plan.

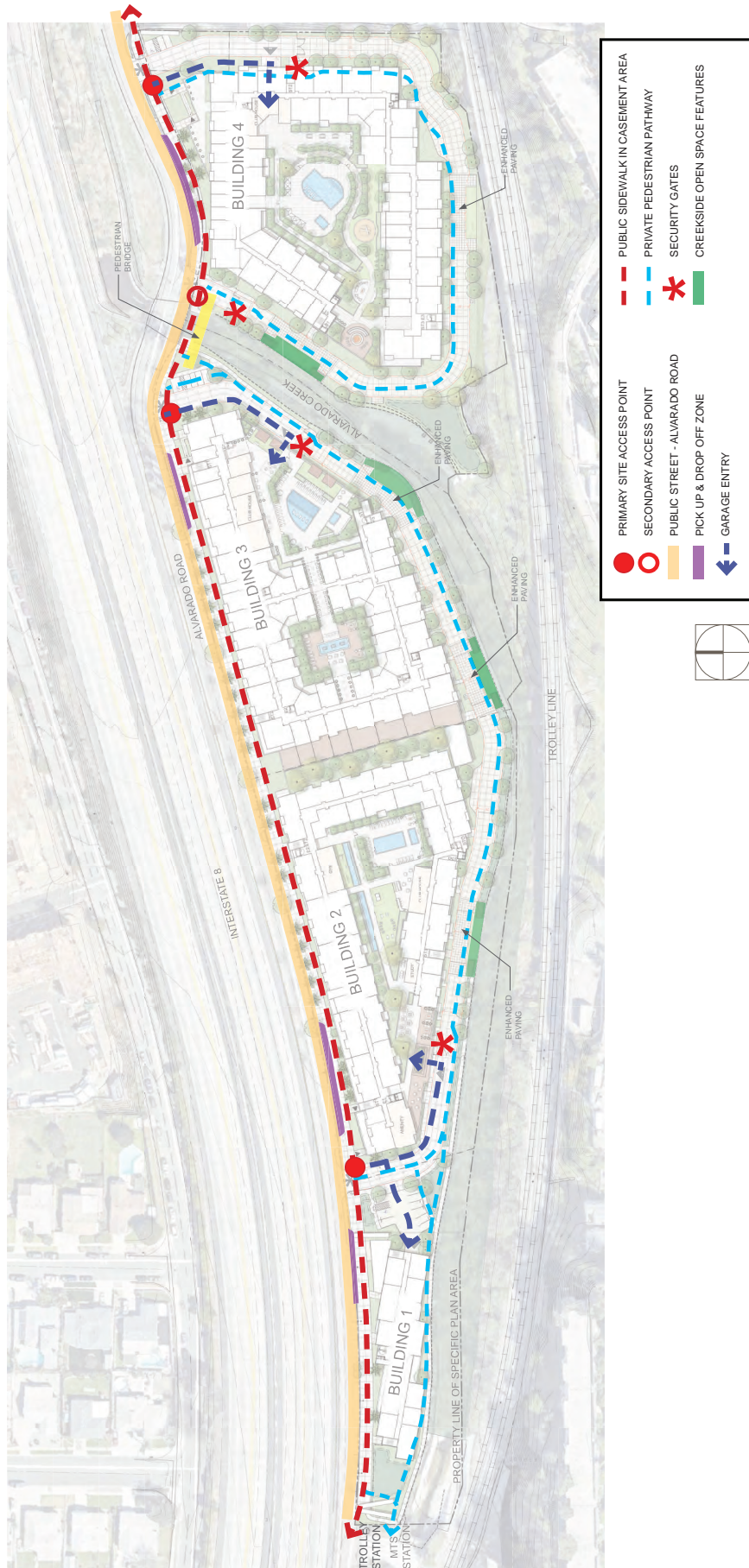


Figure 32a - Plan View of Interior Street Circulation and Mobility Plan



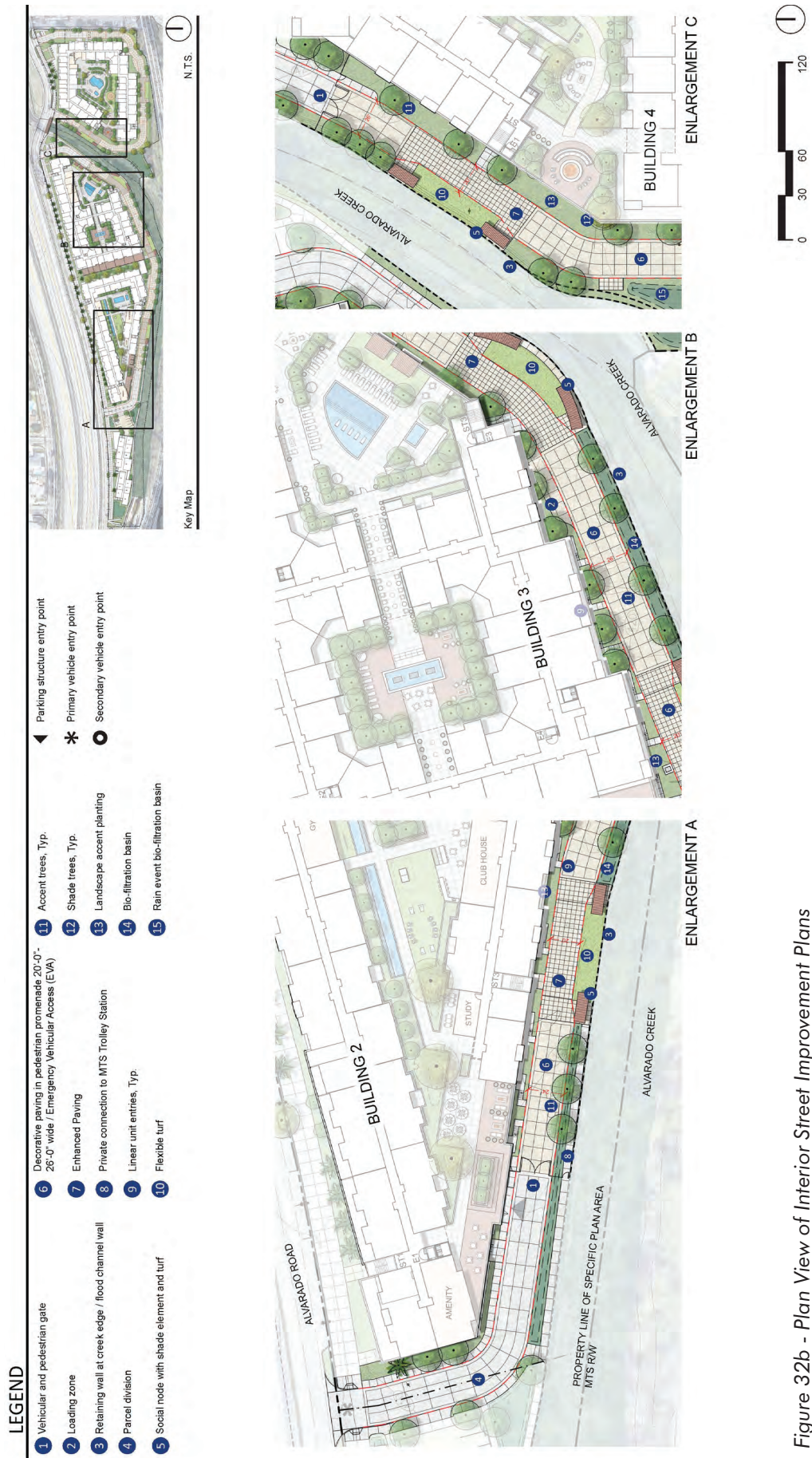


Figure 32b - Plan View of Interior Street Improvement Plans



## II - D. 5. Parking

Alvarado Specific Plan has been planned as a Transit Oriented Development, yet parking and vehicle access remains an important development and design standard. Elements of the Development Plan that outline how on-site vehicle circulation will be coordinated with non-automobile pedestrian and bicycle facilities are summarized below.

**Parking Structures:** Resident vehicle parking for each Building will be provided within a multi-level parking structures as described in Section B.3. above for Buildings 2, 3, and 4. Building 1 plans just one level of structured parking. Each parking structure will provide adequate ingress and egress to the interior private street. Parking structure access locations provide sufficient distance from Alvarado Road for queuing space from the public street traffic.

**Parking Ratios:** For Buildings 2, 3, and 4, within the multi-level parking structures to be constructed, the target parking ratio will be approximately 1.4 spaces per dwelling unit. This off-street parking ratio will be compatible with the reduced parking and automobile dependency objectives for a Transit Oriented Development. This same parking capacity will be provided in the student housing project (Building 2) which results in a similar parking amount when correlated with the planned “bed” count with fewer but larger dwelling units as shown in Figure 32 above. For Building 1, with one level of parking, the off-street parking ratio will be approximately 0.5 space per residential unit.

The parking structures for each building will serve as the total off-street parking requirements for the projects and will be inclusive of the anticipated demand for residents, guest parking, deliveries and move-ins, and very limited secondary resident-oriented mixed uses that will be permitted.

**Unbundled Parking:** A recognized Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measure that is specifically encouraged as part of Transit-Oriented Development Strategies is the use of “unbundled parking.”

***Unbundled Parking:** A parking strategy in which parking spaces are rented or sold separately, instead of automatically included in the rent or purchase price of a unit. Use of policies that also require the unbundling of parking spaces for a residential unit from the cost of the rent or purchase price have provided individuals the opportunity to both choose a less expensive residential option and a lifestyle with fewer or no car ownership. Transit Priority Areas MF Residential Parking Standards, January 2019*

The use of unbundled parking will be applied to the multi-family residential projects in the Alvarado Specific Plan. This approach represents a shift from the standard parking requirements in the La Mesa and is further defined in Chapter III, Development Standards and Design Guidelines.

**Guest Parking:** Guest parking within each project is accounted for in two general areas. A limited number of exterior spaces surface parking spaces will be provided in the vicinity of the main entry/leasing office for each project. In addition, a visitor parking spaces will be provided within and near the lower level parking garage entrances.

**Security:** Resident parking within the parking structures will be secured with gates and require an automated access control system within the parking structure and at an approved surface location along the interior private street to prevent through vehicle traffic beyond the primary garage entries.

**Services, Deliveries and Move-ins:** The Alvarado Specific Plan has been designed with serious consideration given to the changes that have occurred in how people shop and live in a contemporary multi-family environment. As a result, the site development plan will provide access and space for vehicles within the site for service and delivery vehicles, as well as move-in locations that will maintain the required emergency vehicle access requirements. This is intended to assist with maintaining traffic flow and safety on Alvarado Road as well.

**On-Street Parking:** The streetscape plans for Alvarado Road in the Specific Plan include the construction of improvements along the entire length of the site Area as part of Phase 1 projects. This includes on-street parallel parking spaces along the south side of the Alvarado Road frontage in areas that insures proper site distances from primary project ingress/egress locations. The on-street parking areas plans to be delineated by “bulb-out” features. This concept also proposes to dedicate a limited number of spaces in the vicinity of each primary project entry as “timed parking” and/or “loading zones” to facilitate the use of shared transportation options, such as taxis and ride sharing and delivery services.

## II - D. 6. Transportation Demand Management and Alternative Transportation Concepts

Another primary objective of the Specific Plan is to take a comprehensive approach in the design and implementation of a high-quality Transit Oriented Development. As a significant new housing project, the Specific Plan can maximize the opportunities to connect future residents with the existing transit systems serving the site and to encourage the use of transportation options that will result in lower daily residential vehicle trip patterns in the future. Where feasible the project plans to incorporate concepts that can assist in meeting the goals of reducing daily vehicle trips to address local and regional congestion management objectives. As noted earlier in reference to La Mesa’s work on adopting a Climate Action Plan, in older built-out communities it is often difficult to add or retrofit the infrastructure needed to support newer alternative transportation options. A significant new housing project as envisioned with the Alvarado Specific Plan will provide the platform to include the features that will support alternative transportation concepts for the future. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) concepts that can be implemented through the Specific Plan include:

- New improvements for direct and safe pedestrian access to the MTS Trolley and Bus network.
- The Alvarado Rd. streetscape improvements will incorporate a shared pedestrian and bicycle path that will implement the City’s General Plan Circulation Element and the Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan
- Consideration of ways to promote transit pass or discount programs for future tenants as incentives to use transit. This element could result in a significant contribution of transit use for daily trips associated with direct connections with the San Diego State University campus.
- Reduced parking ratios and unbundled parking standards that can encourage future tenants to use transit and become less dependent on the automobile for many daily trips and commuting to employment and schools.
- Electrical Vehicle (EV) charging stations will be included within each parking structure.
- Provide parking and circulation flexibility to allow for potential use of more energy efficient “shared” vehicle programs and emerging mobility options in the future.
- On-street “pick-up and drop-off zones” will be located adjacent to the primary entry to Buildings 1-4 to make it convenient and safe to use the rapidly increasing use of alternative “ride share” and delivery services.

## II - E. PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Earlier sections of the Specific Plan have discussed the City's long planning history for this area which has documented the needs for redevelopment, public improvements and infrastructure. A primary objective of the Specific Plan is to define a private development project to coordinate the public-private partnership needed to assist in the construction of the need public improvements now that the Alvarado Creek Redevelopment Project was dissolved by action of the State. As described in this Specific Plan, the project includes a commitment, memorialized and implemented through a Development Agreement, to provide public improvements that will enhance public services, health, and welfare, provide additional frontage road improvements, and economic development within the City. The major public improvement and utility projects that are planned to be constructed with implementation of the Specific Plan and Development Agreement are briefly outlined below and shown in Figure 33. The Agencies that will be associated with these projects have been listed with each project.

**Alvarado Road:** A streetscape enhancement concept for Alvarado Road includes the following components: sidewalks, curb and gutter, street lights, street trees, bulb-out landscape tree planting areas, on-street parallel parking land, pedestrian connection to 70th Street Trolley Station, and a pedestrian bridge on south side of Alvarado Creek bridge. As part of the public safety benefits of the Alvarado Road plans, the pedestrian bridge is planned to span the concrete lined section of Alvarado Creek (within the public right-of-way) to the south of the existing bridge structure and road safety railing. (City of La Mesa, MTS)

**Overhead Power and Communication Line Relocation:** Existing 12KV and communications lines that cross I-8 from Parkway Drive currently extend overhead within the San Diego RV Resort facility. For the planned development to occur this major power transmission line will need to be relocated underground generally around the west end of the project area before going overhead again to its current location on the south side of the MTS light rail tracks. (City of La Mesa, SDG&E, AT&T, Caltrans, MTS)

**Flood Channel Improvements:** The project includes seeking approvals to finally address the FEMA mapped need to address the flooding of the project site from Alvarado Creek. This will involve multi-agency approval to make the necessary channel improvements with engineered retaining walls within the San Diego RV Resort property. (City of La Mesa, Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, San Diego Regional Water Quality Board, City of San Diego)

**Sanitary Sewer System Improvements:** The environmental improvements to Alvarado Creek include plans for relocation of one of the City sewer trunk line out of the channel and under the planned interior street generally in the area of Building 2 and 3. The sewer work will also address the removal of abandoned sewer lines in the creek and raising and capping an existing manhole that cannot be relocated to above the flood flow levels. This project would address an existing regional storm-water management issue. (City of La Mesa, Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Fish and Game, State Fish and Wildlife, San Diego Regional Water Quality Board, City of San Diego)



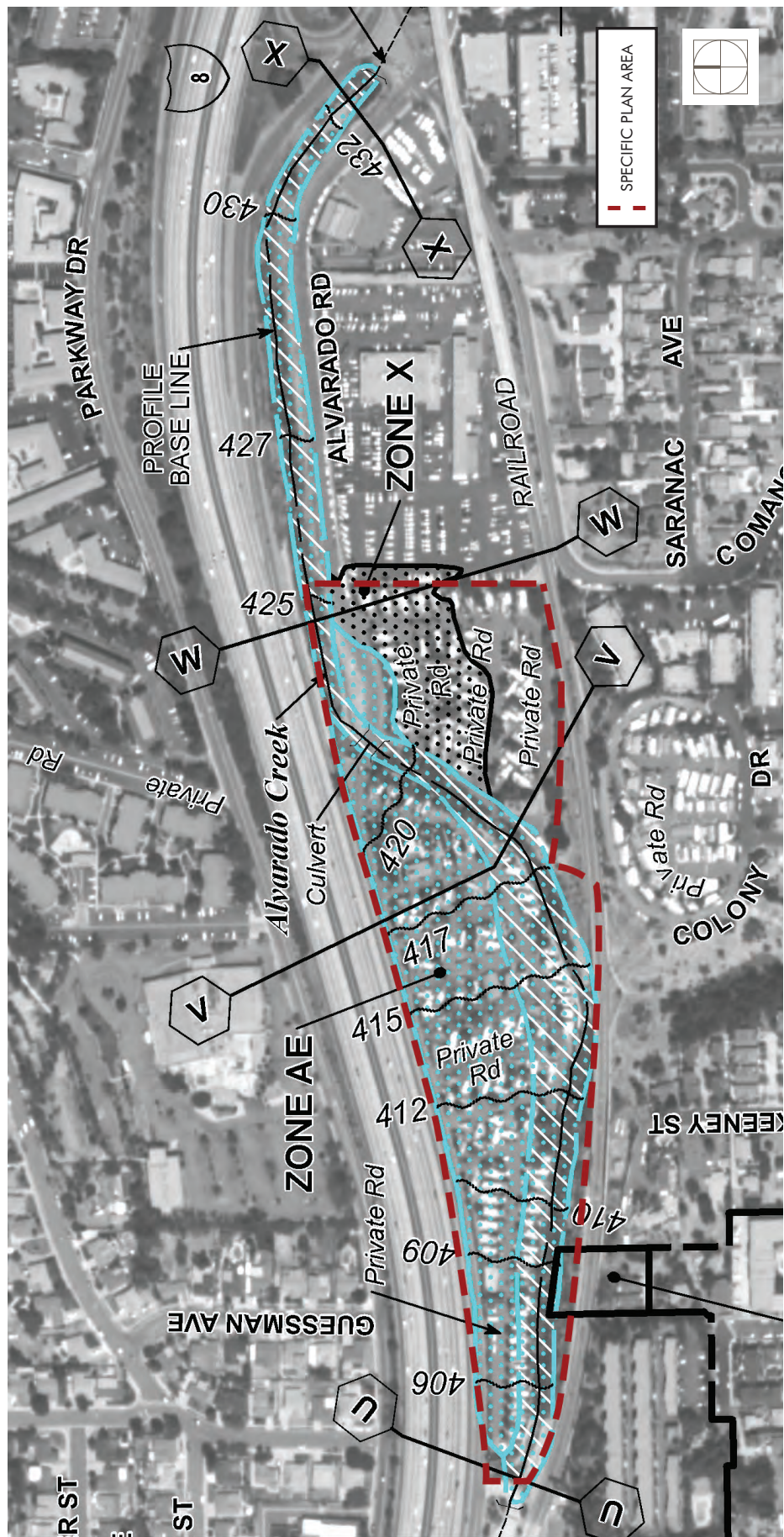


Figure 33 - FEMA Flood Map with Specific Plan Area



Figure 34 - Site Sections with Flood Channel Improvement Details





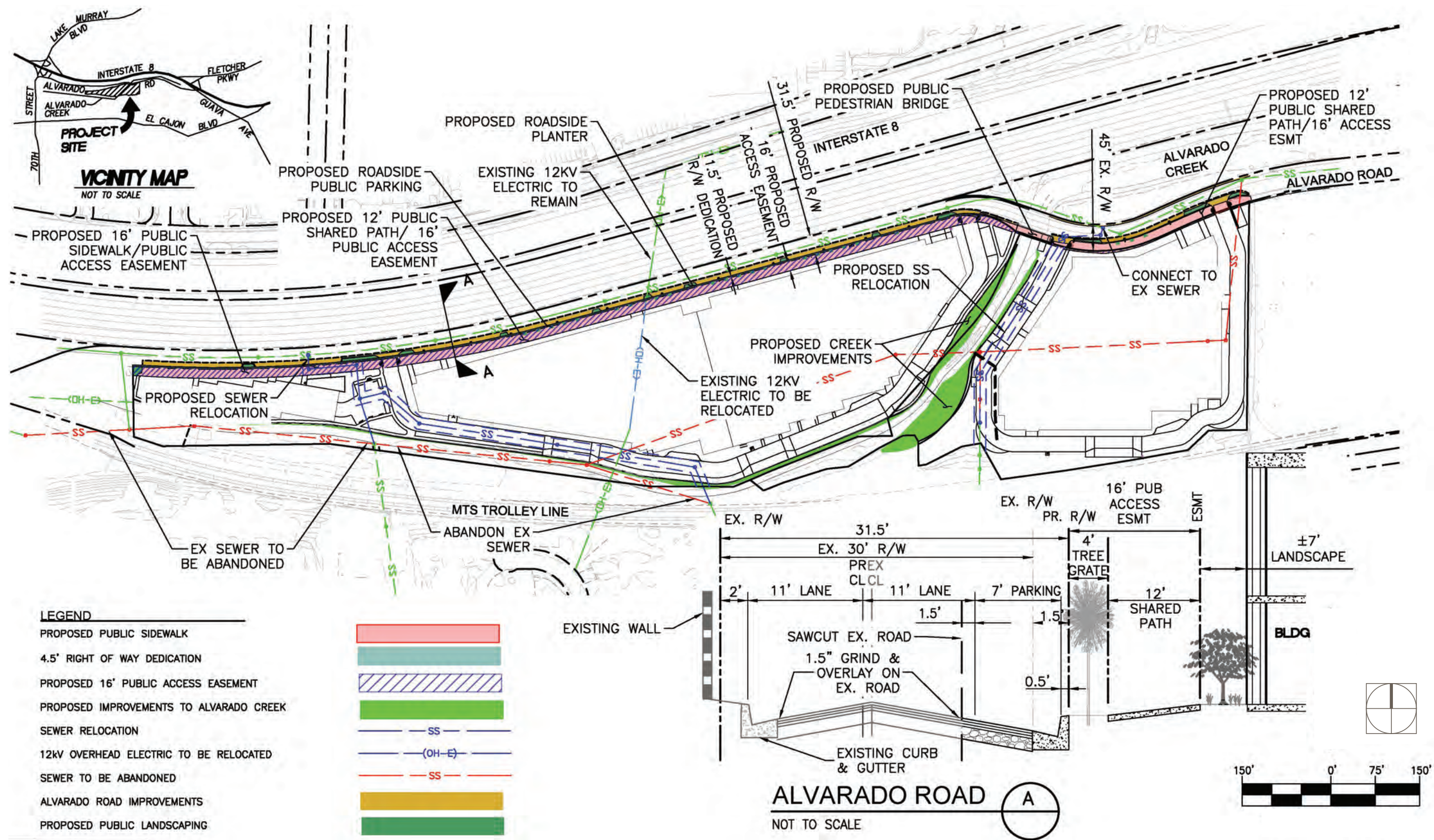


Figure 35 - Summary Map of Planned Public Improvements





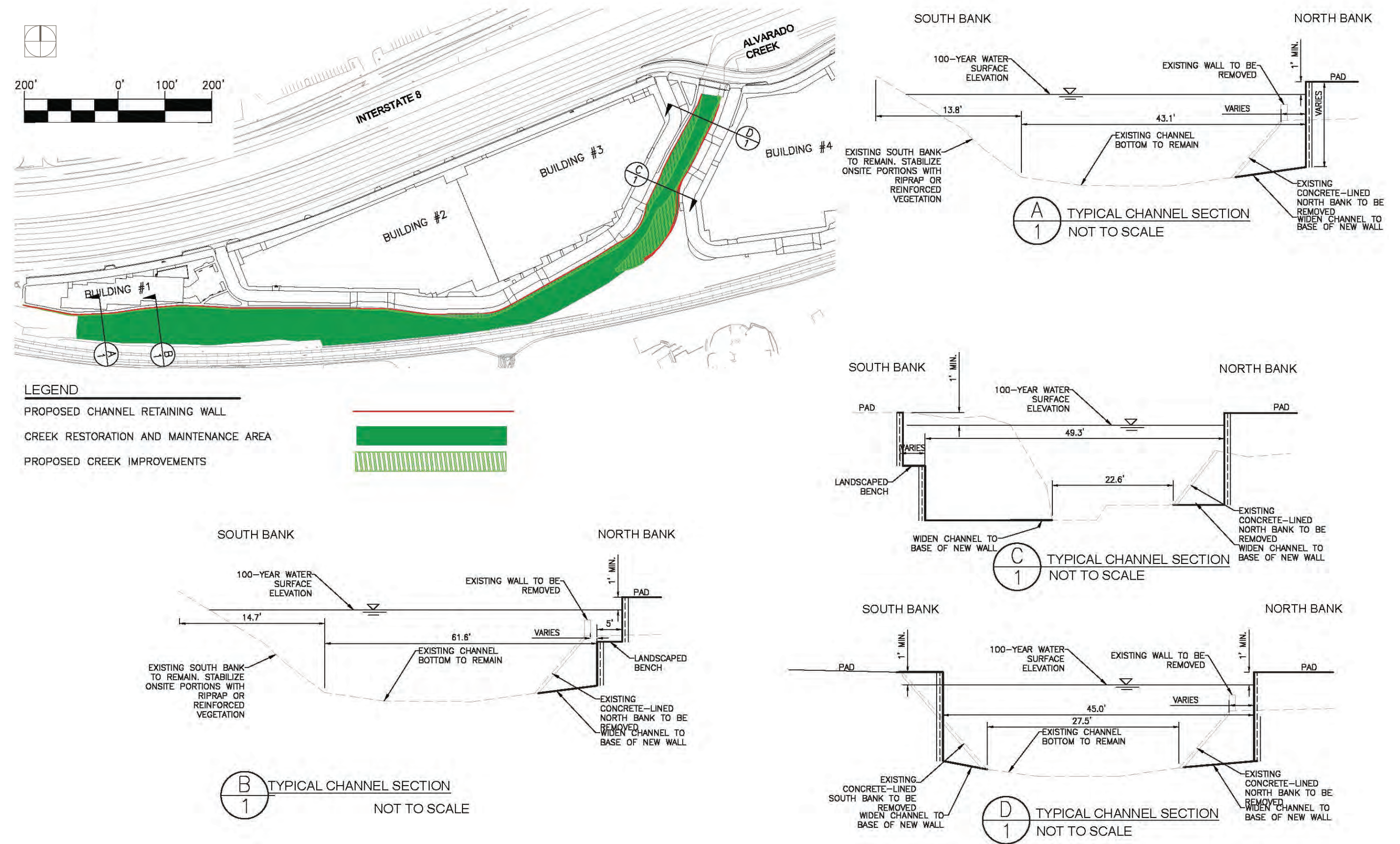


Figure 36 - Site Plan View with Flood Channel Improvement Locations





## **II - F. NON-CONFORMING AND INTERIM USES**

### **II - F. 1. Interim Uses (Phase 2 RV Resort)**

As described previously, Phase 2 is planned to consist of the site improvements and a multi-family residential structure for Building 4. As a result, the Specific Plan establishes that the portions of the existing San Diego RV Resort on Parcel 4 will be permitted to remain with the “non-conforming” status until Phase 2 is developed. This provision will permit the owner of the remaining RV Resort facilities to be maintained and improved to the extent needed to provide the necessary operational facilities equivalent to their current conditions, but otherwise not expanded or improved.

### **II - F. 2. Existing Off-site Advertising Structures**

The Specific Plan has identified the three existing freeway-oriented off-site advertising structures within the Specific Plan Area as “non-conforming structures.” Two are located on Parcel 1 and one is located on the very east end of the project site on Parcel 4. Figure 12 identifies the location of the existing billboard structures. In accordance with La Mesa’s Sign Ordinance, all existing off-site advertising structures (i.e., billboards) retain their existing non-conforming status until such time that they are removed. The Specific Plan incorporates a policy to permit these 3 existing billboards to remain on the site as part of the development plans and retain their non-conforming status.

## **II - G. OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

The following sections briefly describe the other community services that will be provided with implementation of the Specific Plan.

### **II - G. 1. Police Protection**

Police protection will be provided by the La Mesa Police Department.

### **II - G. 2. Fire and Emergency Medical Response**

Fire suppression and emergency medical response services will be provided by Heartland Fire and Rescue. The Heartland Fire Marshal has been consulted directly from the beginning of the project design process for the Specific Plan and assisted in prescribing the use of the interior ring road as the primary emergency vehicle access and staging area for the project. A diagram of the key components to the fire life safety access plan is shown in Figure 30.

### **II - G. 3. Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling**

Solid waste service will be provided by the City’s franchise operator EDCO Disposal. EDCO will work with the project owners to determine the frequency of trash and recycling pick up schedules based on demand. EDCO representative have reviewed the plans and confirmed the ability to service the multi-family structures as part of their routine services.

### **II - G. 4. Schools**

Elementary and middle school services for the Project Area are within the La Mesa Spring Valley School District. High School students living in the project area will be within the Grossmont High School District. Both jurisdictions will collect the respective school impact fees at the time of building

permit issuance.

## II - G. 5. Postal Services and Deliveries

U.S. Postal Service will work with the project architects to prescribe the location of mail delivery areas within the common space in the multi-family projects. The project design team has also taken care to consider the continuing trend toward rapidly increasing on-line retail and service deliveries to residences. The final project designs will be providing adequate spaces for short-term delivery parking that will not block the required Fire Lane.

## II - G. 6. Water Supply

A Water Supply Assessment (WSA) has been completed for the Alvarado Specific Plan in accordance with the State requirements of Senate Bill 610, CEPA, and Senate Bill 1262 (the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act). The WSA determined that adequate water supplies are available from Helix Water District to provide for the demands of the Alvarado Specific Plan. In addition, early in the project planning process, the Alvarado Specific Plan land use and development plans were evaluated by Helix Water District and Heartland Fire and Rescue to determine that adequate water supply infrastructure was available in the Specific Plan Area to serve the planned project development.



# CHAPTER III

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Previous chapters in the Alvarado Specific Plan include the planning background and policy foundation for a new and forward looking land use plan for this unique location. The Specific Plan Area has a history that has been impacted by the growth and development major transportation infrastructure in La Mesa. The Alvarado Specific Plan represents a “master development plan” for the revitalization of the Area in a manner which is consistent with the goals and policies of the La Mesa General Plan. As discussed in Chapters I and II, implementation of the development plans is anticipated to occur in two major phases of construction. The Specific Plan will be implemented as primarily private development projects in partnership with the City of La Mesa and other affected public Agencies to achieve the public safety, environmental protection and enhancement, and infrastructure needs in the Specific Plan Area.

### III - A. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

#### III - A. 1. Consistency with Specific Plan

This Chapter serves to outline the regulatory development standards and design guidelines to be used in the final design and basis of review for the development projects that will implement the private and public improvement plans described within the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan will be the guiding reference for the implementation and project review steps which are further described in Chapter IV - Implementation. As the guiding regulatory tool for all subsequent implementing projects, each future discretionary and ministerial project authorized by the Plan will be subject to a finding of “substantial conformance” with the Alvarado Specific Plan and the supporting Program EIR documentation for the Plan.

#### III - A. 2. Substitution for Zoning Ordinance

All subsequent projects to implement the Alvarado Specific Plan will rely on the Plans, Development Standards and Design Guidelines approved by the City and subject to a finding of “substantial conformance” with the Alvarado Specific Plan and the project EIR. As described in this Section, the Specific Plan will substitute for the land use and zoning standards that would traditionally be used to regulate new private development in the Specific Plan Area. Documentation of this transfer of regulatory standards will be implemented through the approval of an “Alvarado Specific Plan Overlay Zone” to clearly establish the implementation area, role, and authority of the Specific Plan as outlined in Chapter IV - Implementation.

#### III - A. 3. Form-based Development Standards

As described above, a new approach is proposed to clearly communicate what development standards are to be used to review and evaluate individual projects within the Alvarado Specific Plan Area. This section of the Plan defines a “form-based” approach as an effective means to ensure the goals and policies of the Plan are met at the project review level. This Section includes the set of defining characteristics and limiting factors that can achieve the development goals and

policies of La Mesa for the Specific Plan Area. Application of the Development Standards and Design Guidelines will:

- create a high quality “transit-oriented development” with a diversity of new multi-family housing
- provide for the construction of the needed public improvements in the Area;
- be financially feasible as a private investment in the future of La Mesa;
- be a fiscally sound land use change through the revitalization of the Area: and,
- be a “good fit” in the context of the City’s Urban Design Program, within the existing fabric of the Specific Plan vicinity, and the community as a whole.

The form-based approach serves to clearly communicate with text and diagrams the type, size, location, mix of uses, open spaces, landscaping and quality of the development that is authorized by the Specific Plan. The form-based approach established by the descriptions and diagrams in the Specific Plan provides a much more well defined and predictable image of the what will be built and how it will fit into the site and surrounding community than the traditional general plan/zoning classification approach.

This approach is in contrast to the traditional zoning regulations which focus on separation of uses, setbacks from adjoining properties, parking ratios and density calculations, with little emphasis on the unique characteristics or constraints of an actual location. Equally as important, this method describes the project review process and defines elements within each phase for providing the site improvements, public improvements, environmental enhancements, open space elements and transit connectivity, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other infrastructure that is not as clearly defined by a traditional zoning approach.

Figures 39 and 40 show a diagram of the overall site area and illustrate site sections through the project to specify the key dimensions that will define the proposed building envelope, distribution of uses, limiting factors that describe the individual multi-family residential buildings and the site improvements for the Alvarado Specific Plan. The descriptive elements in these diagrams correspond to the overall Site Development Plan shown in Figure 12 and described in detail in Chapter II – Land Use and Development Plan.

There are two key elements that have been used to create this “form-based” definition for the Development Plan. One is the overall site plan which has been designed to reflect the site’s physical characteristics and constraints in concert with the broader land use goals and infrastructure needs for the Area. The second primary basis for the development standards is the application of the current applicable Building Codes in California that define the limiting dimensions allowed for the proposed multi-family residential construction type over a Type I parking garage structures.

Within the “form-based” building envelope established by the Specific Plan, it is intended that the Plan may permit flexibility during implementation through the City’s Site Development Plan and Urban Design Program review process to achieve a determination of consistency with the Plan through an alternative mix of residential unit types and/or architectural design approaches.

Figures 37 to 40 define the areas in which Buildings 1-4 will be constructed in relation to the Alvarado Road improvements and the interior private street/emergency access road. Figures 38 and 39a - d provide typical site sections to define:

- the overall height limits for the primary structures,
- the requirements to comply with the minimum floodway elevations, and

- the maximum number of residential floors above the parking levels.

Figure 40 provides an oblique view of the overall Specific Plan Area with a simplified graphic representation of the building envelopes that are defined by the site

Figures 41a - e illustrate the typical floor levels for Buildings 1-4 to define arrangement of uses with project vehicle parking levels, parking access points, and multi-family residential uses on levels above the parking structure podium deck level.

Figure 41c represents the location and design concept for “liner units” that will be permitted on building facades oriented to the interior of the site and away from Alvarado Road.

On the Building facades oriented to Alvarado Road, parking levels will be adjacent to the pedestrian sidewalk and bicycle facility zone and required to be architecturally screened as described in the Design Guidelines section of this Chapter.







LEGEND

- 1 Outdoor courtyard at podium level

2 Decorative paving in pedestrian promenade 20'-0"-26'-0" wide / Emergency Vehicular Access (EVA)

3 Retaining wall at creek edge

4 Parcel division

5 Social node with shade element and turf area
- 6 Proposed entry monument

7 16'-0" wide pedestrian sidewalk / shared bike lane (4'-0" tree grate, 12'-0" shared path)

8 Parallel parking

9 Pick up & drop off zone

10 Palm trees in 5x8 tree grates
- 11 Accent street trees

12 Existing power pole to remain

13 Prefabricated pedestrian bridge

14 Bio-filtration basin, Typ.

15 Rain event bio-filtration basin
- 16 Loading zone

17 Future resident parking

18 Vehicular and pedestrian gate

19 Existing creek / flood channel

20 Existing billboards to remain
- 21 Public connection to MTS Trolley Station

22 Private connection to MTS Trolley Station

23 MTS Trolley Station

24 Building 3 private residential patios

25 Building 2 landscape corridor between buildings
- 26 Pole light, Typ.

27 Retaining wall at interstate

◀ Parking structure entry points

\* Primary vehicle entry points

● Secondary vehicle entry points

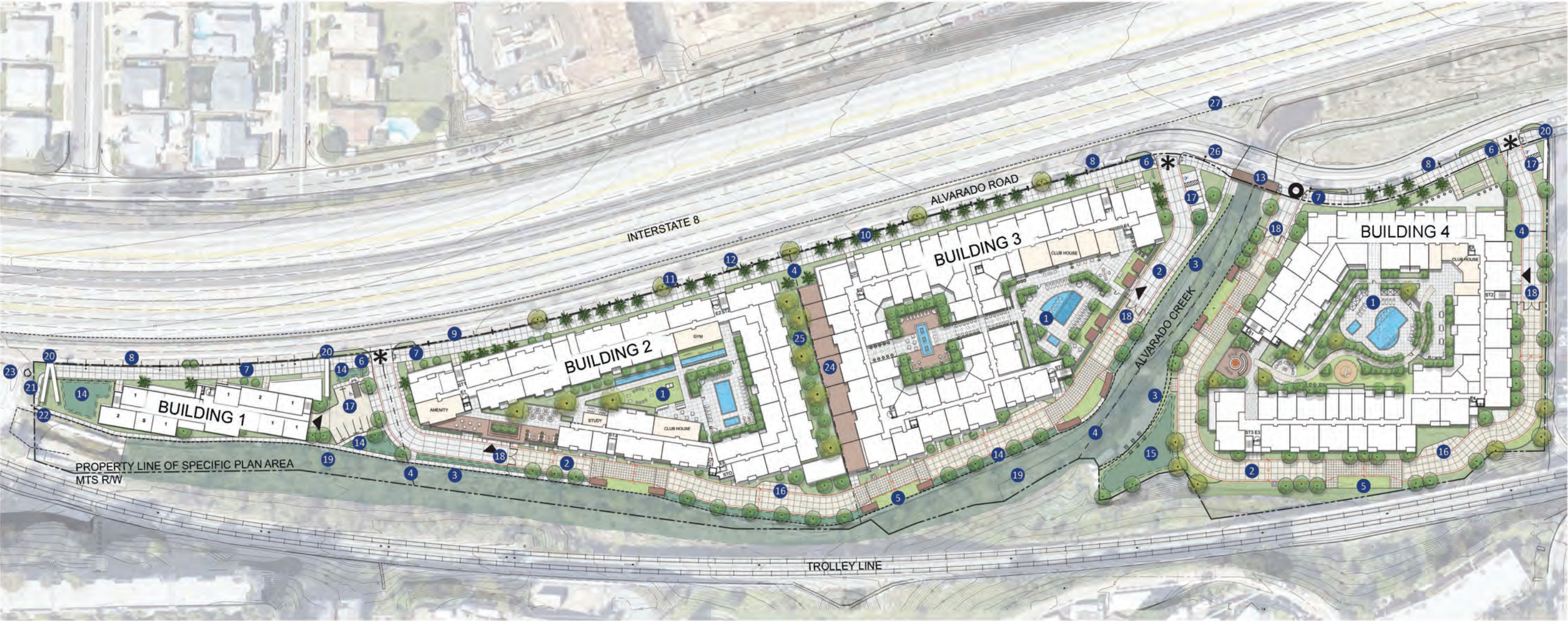


Figure 37 - Alvarado Specific Plan Land Use Development Plan (with details identified)







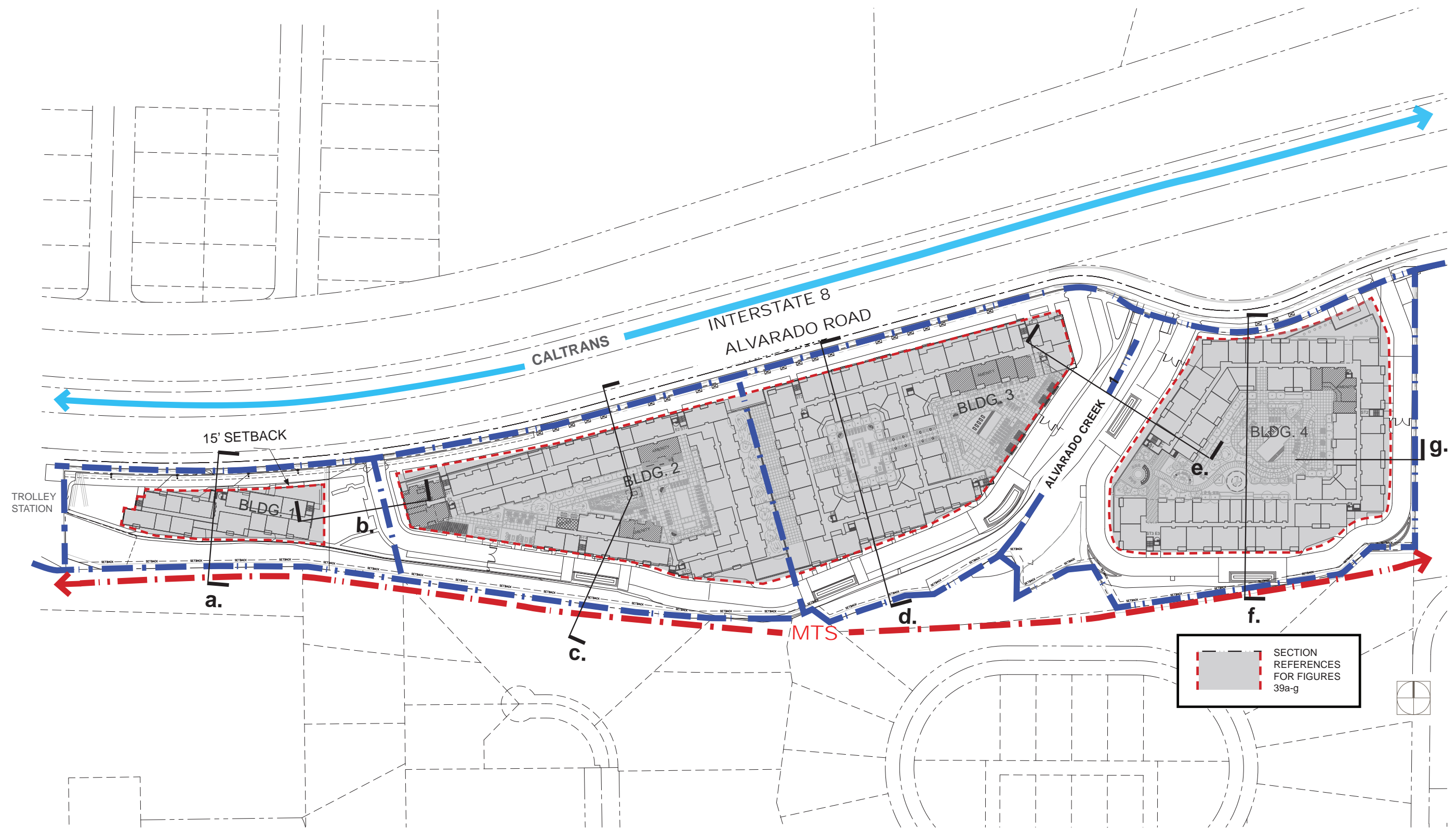


Figure 38 - Form-Based Development Standards Plan View Building Area Boundaries and Figure 39a-g Section Lines



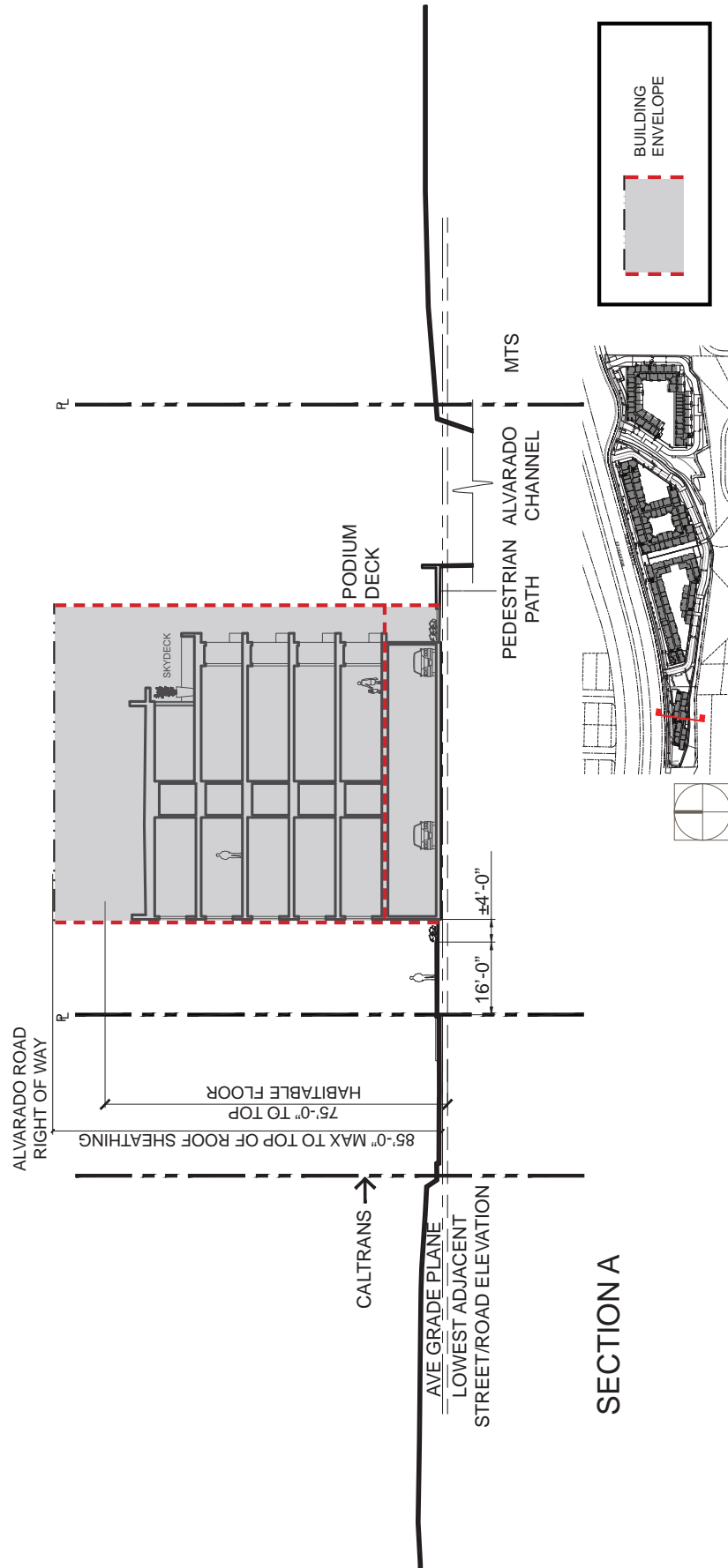


Figure 39a - Form-Based Development Standards, Fig. 38 Section a



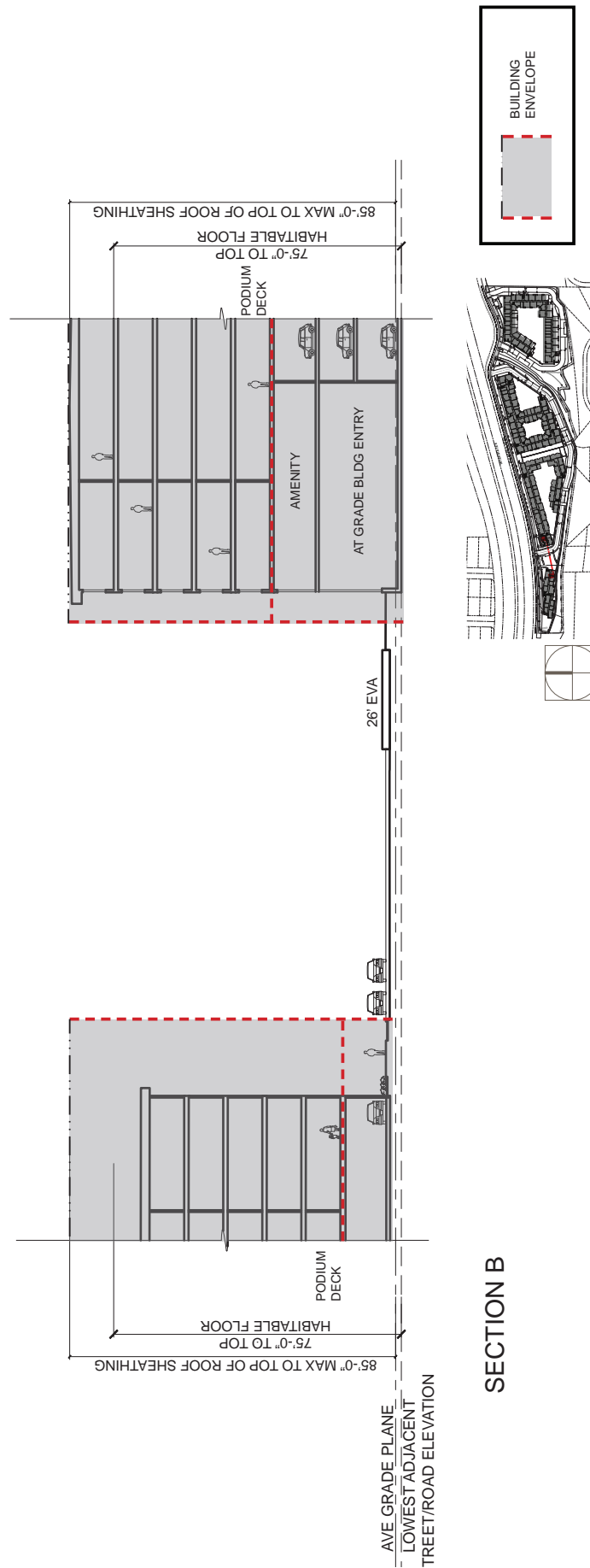


Figure 39b - Form-Based Development Standards, Fig. 38 Section b

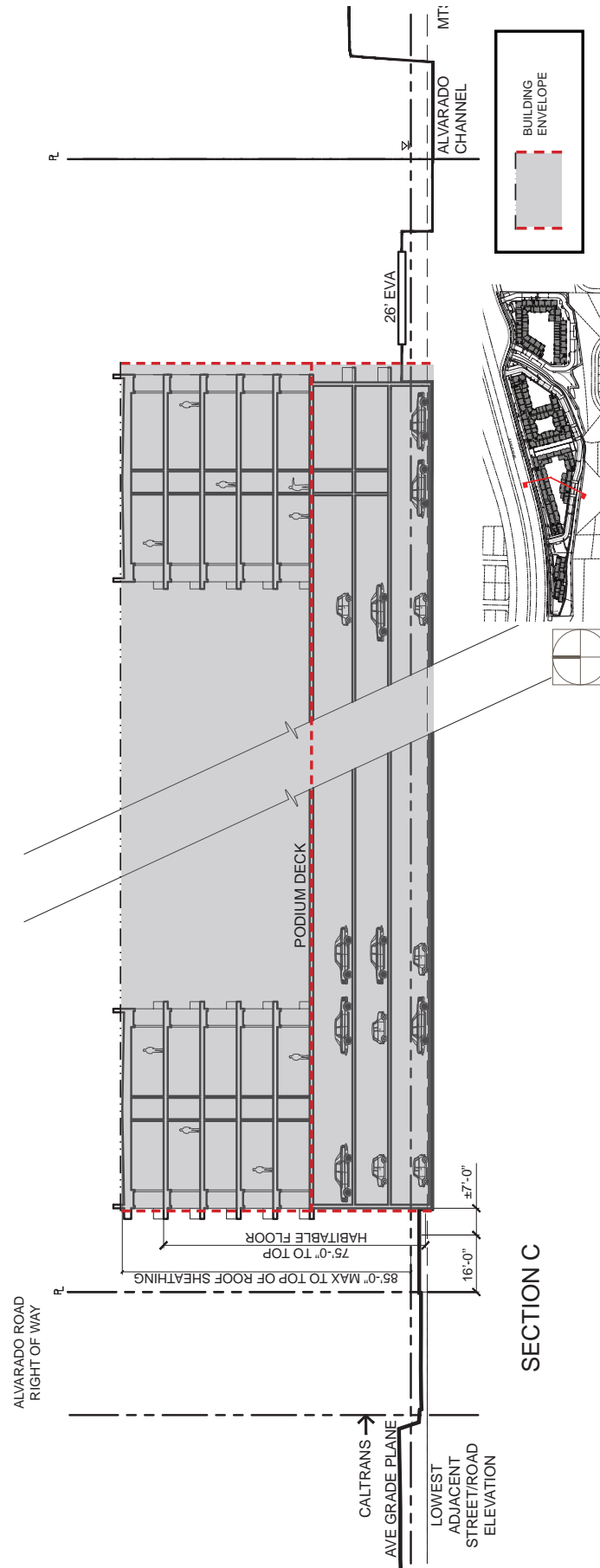


Figure 39c - Form-Based Development Standards, Fig. 38 Section c

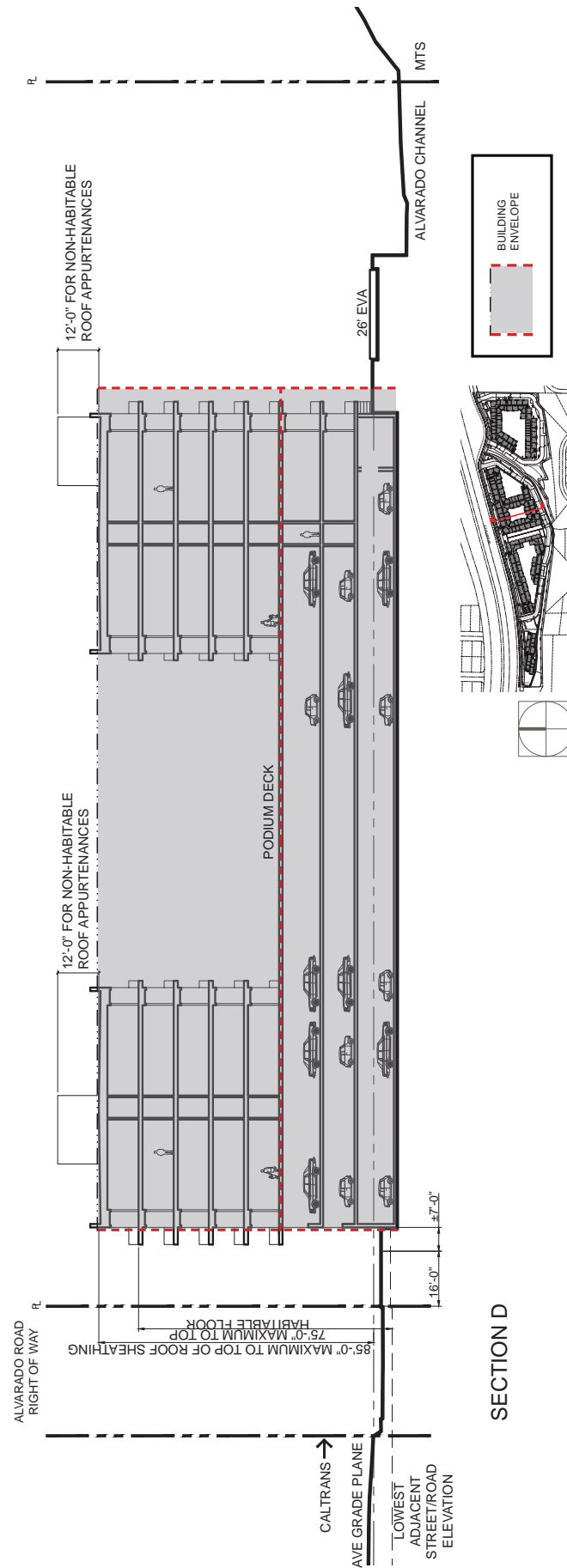


Figure 39d - Form-Based Development Standards, Fig. 38 Section d



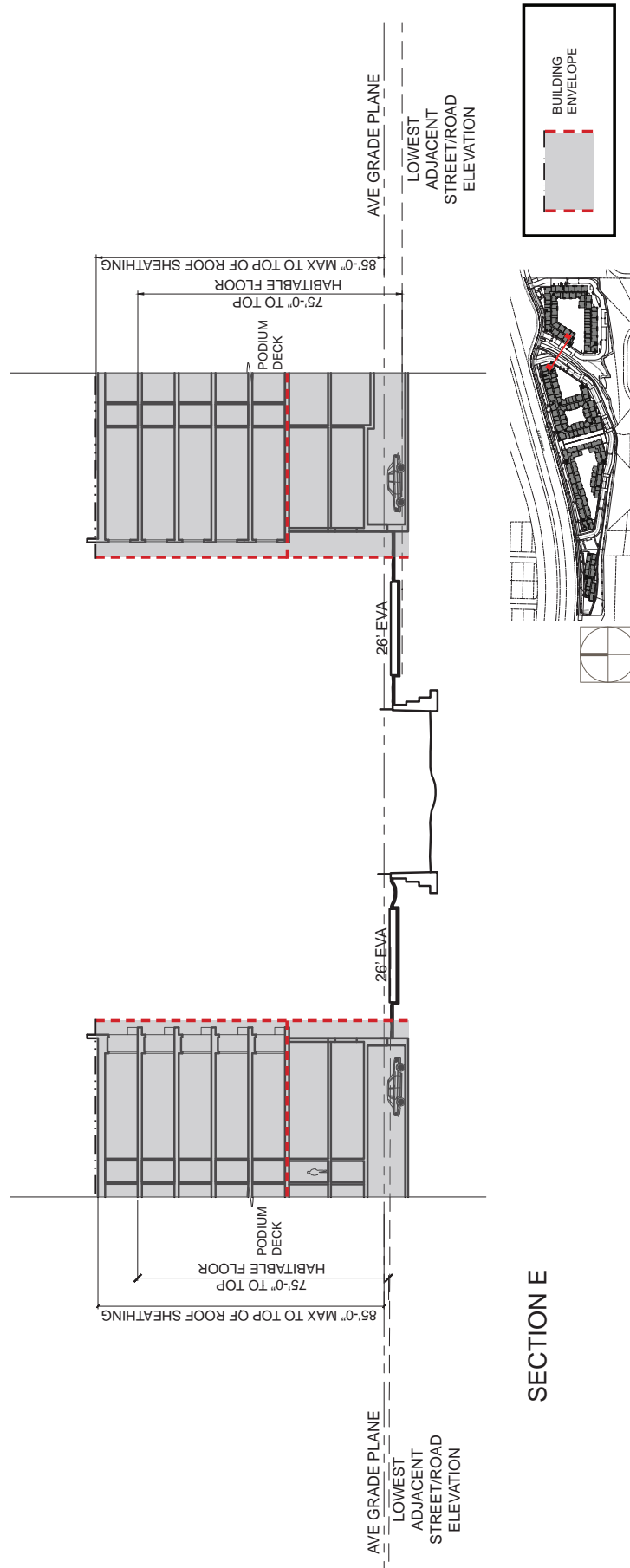


Figure 39e - Form-Based Development Standards, Fig. 38 Section e

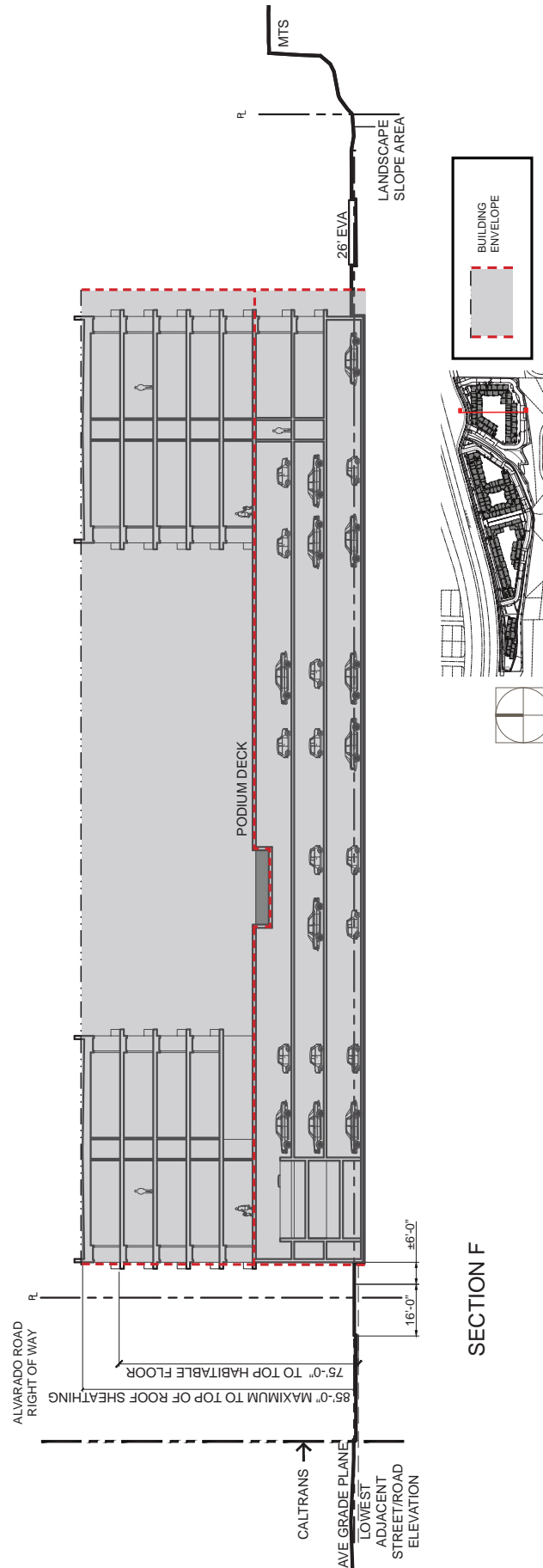


Figure 39f - Form-Based Development Standards, Fig. 38 Section f

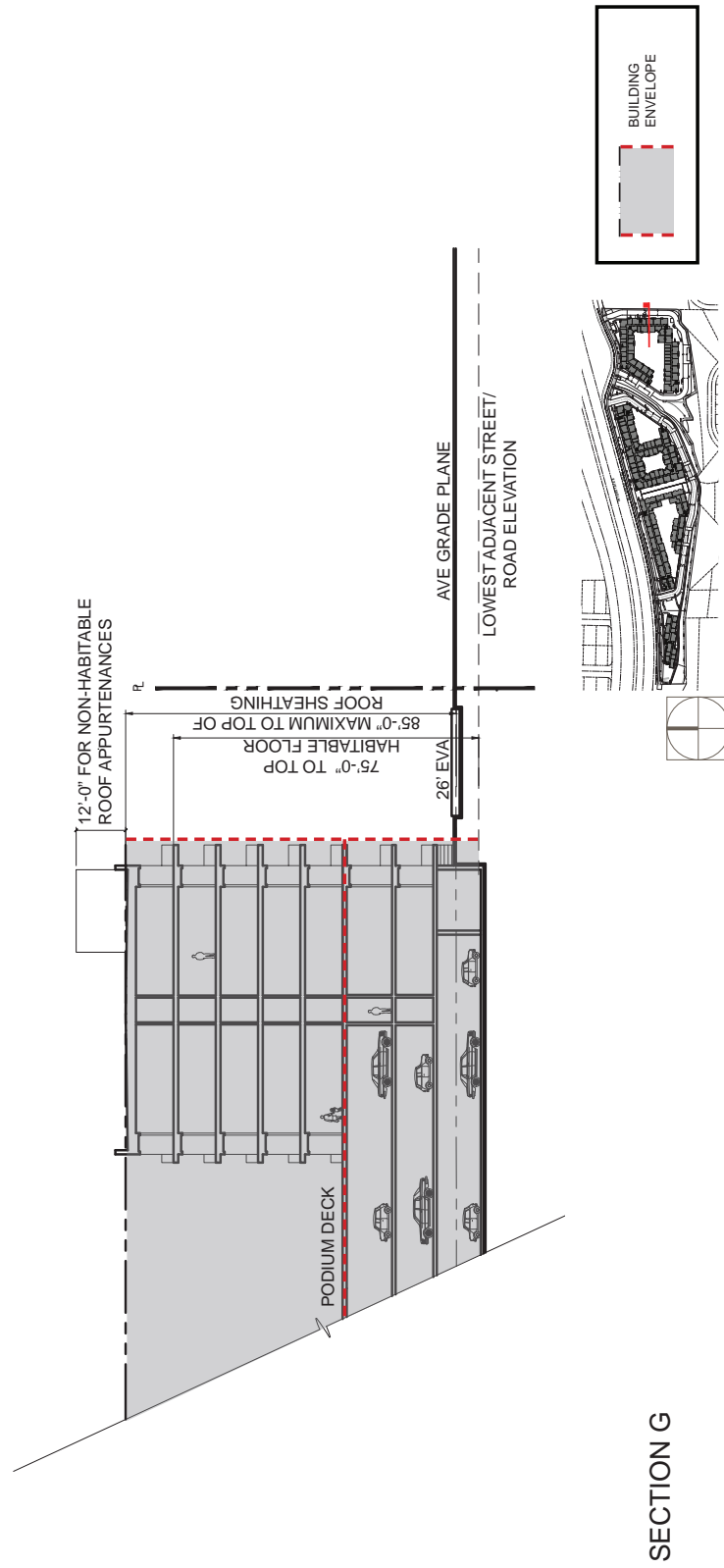


Figure 39g - Form-Based Development Standards, Fig. 38 Section g



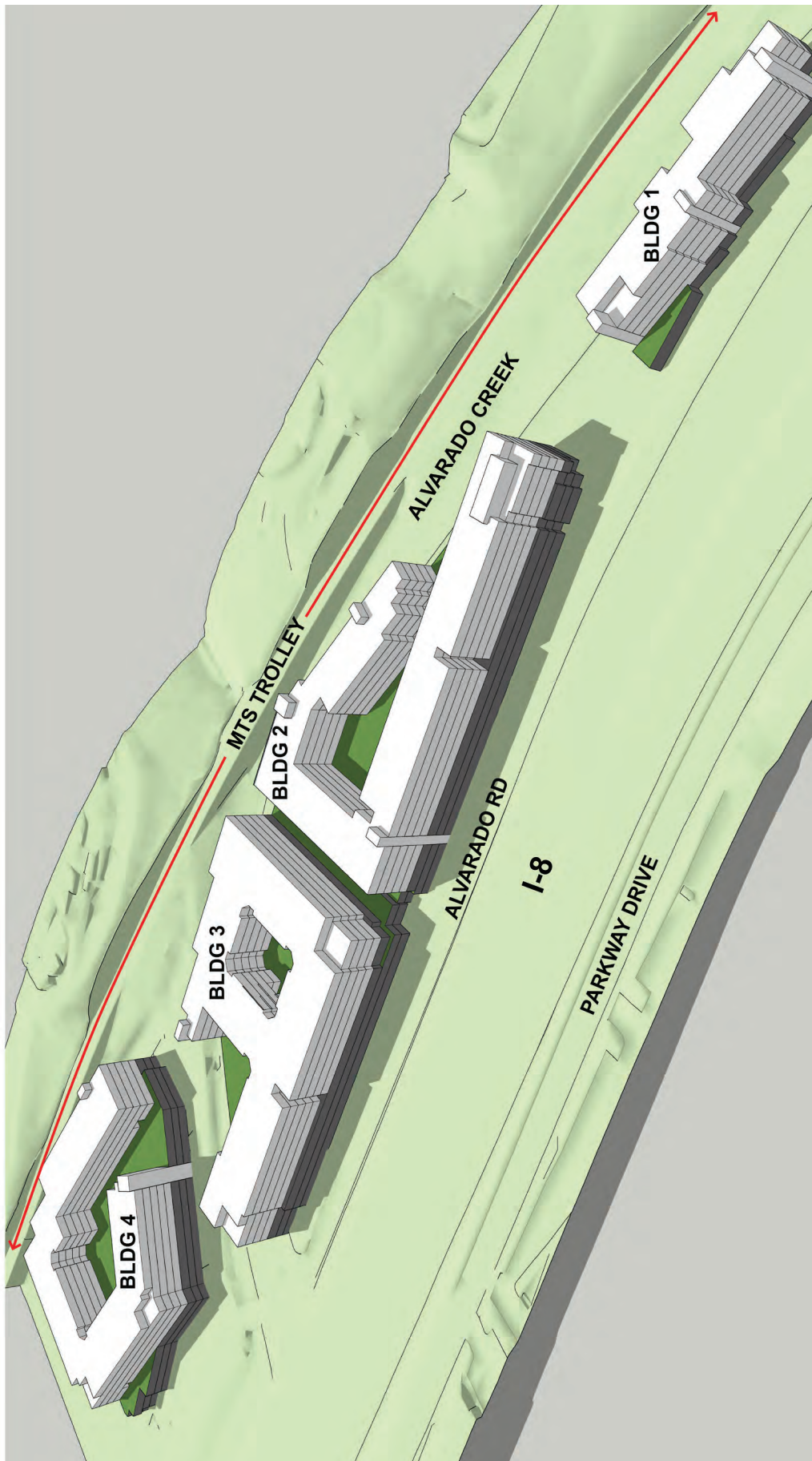


Figure 40 - Form-Based Development Standards Schematic View of Development Envelopes

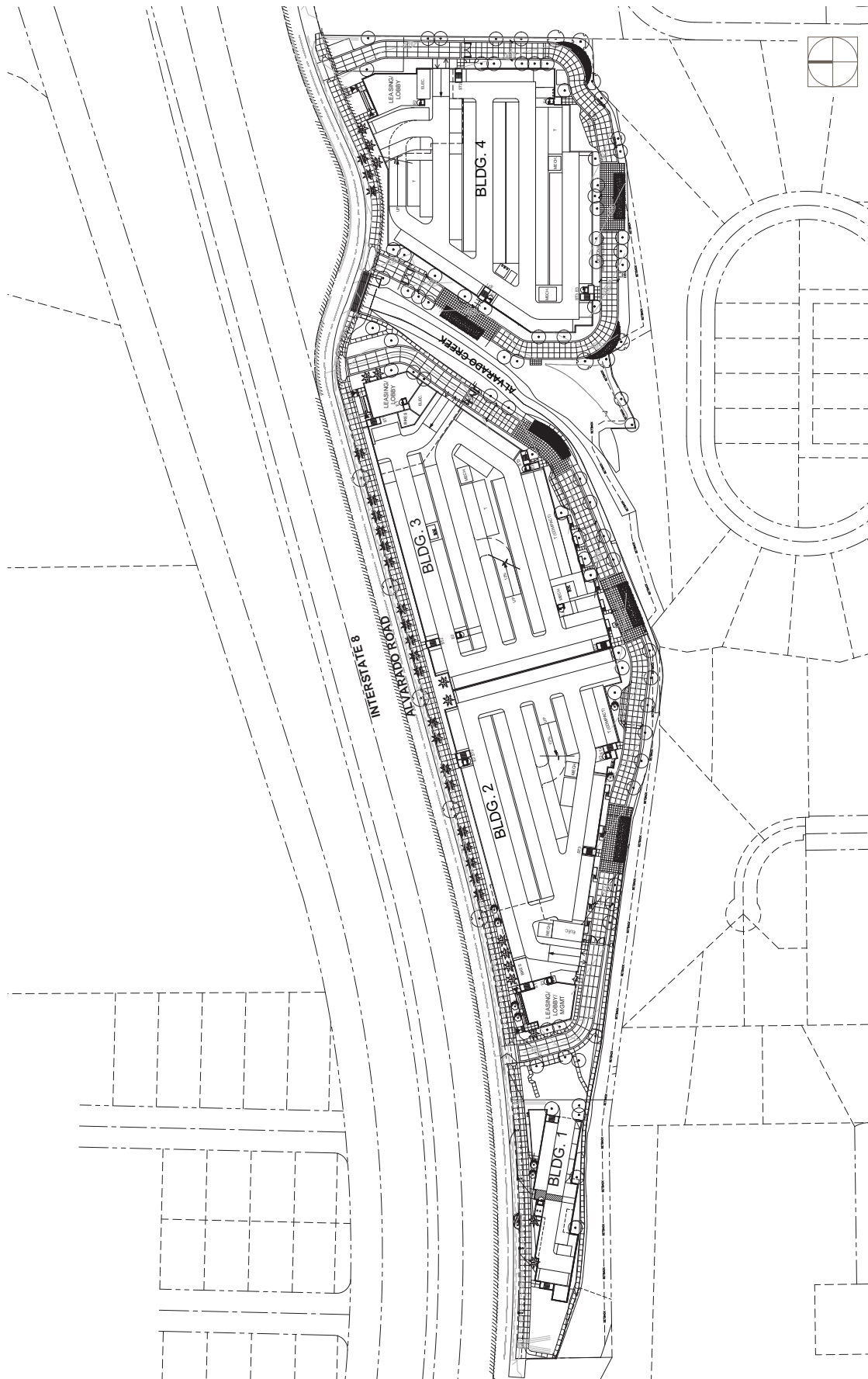


Figure 41a - Form-Based Development Standards Typical Building Plan View at Ground Floor

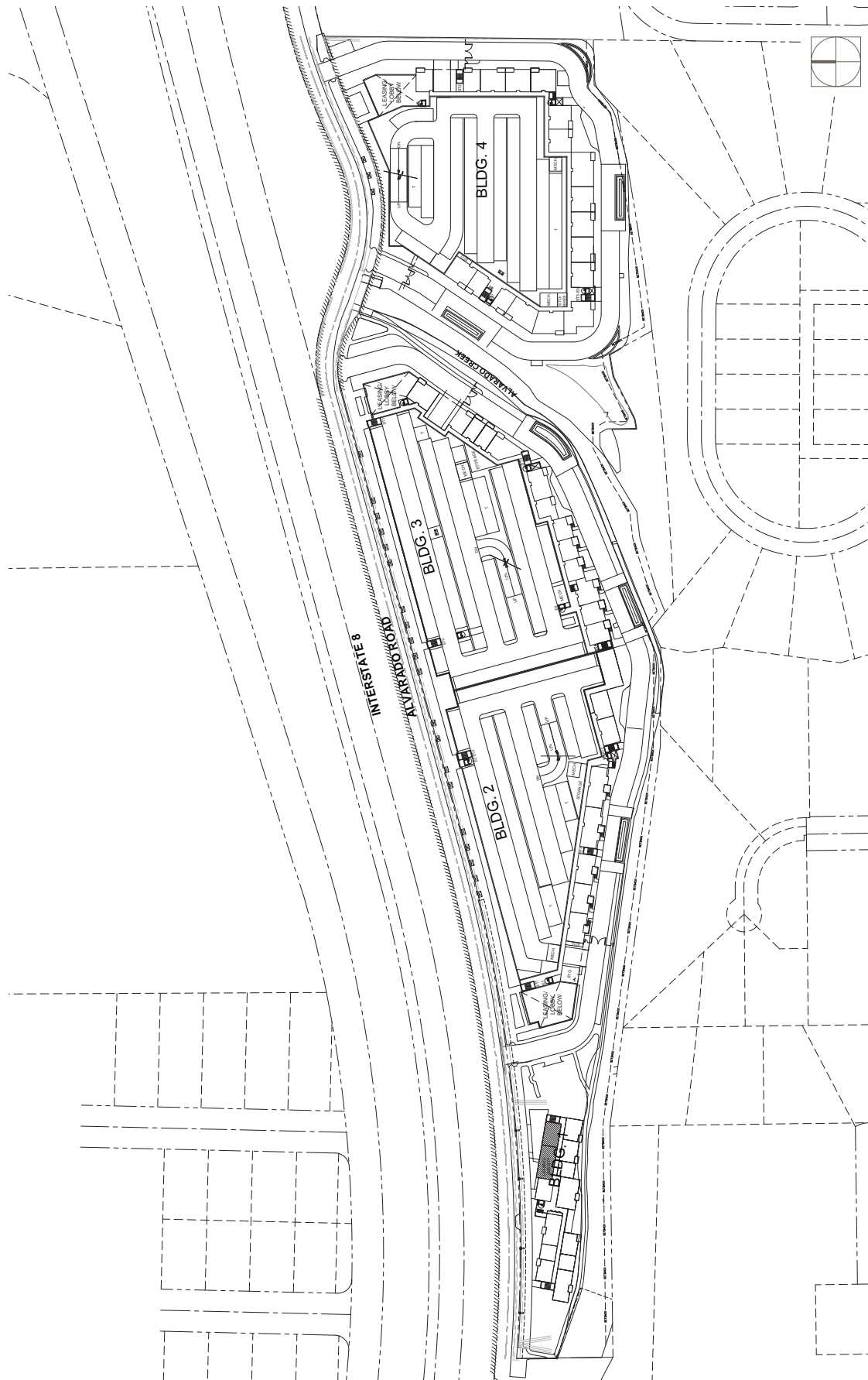


Figure 41b - Form-Based Development Standards Typical Building Plan View at Second Floor



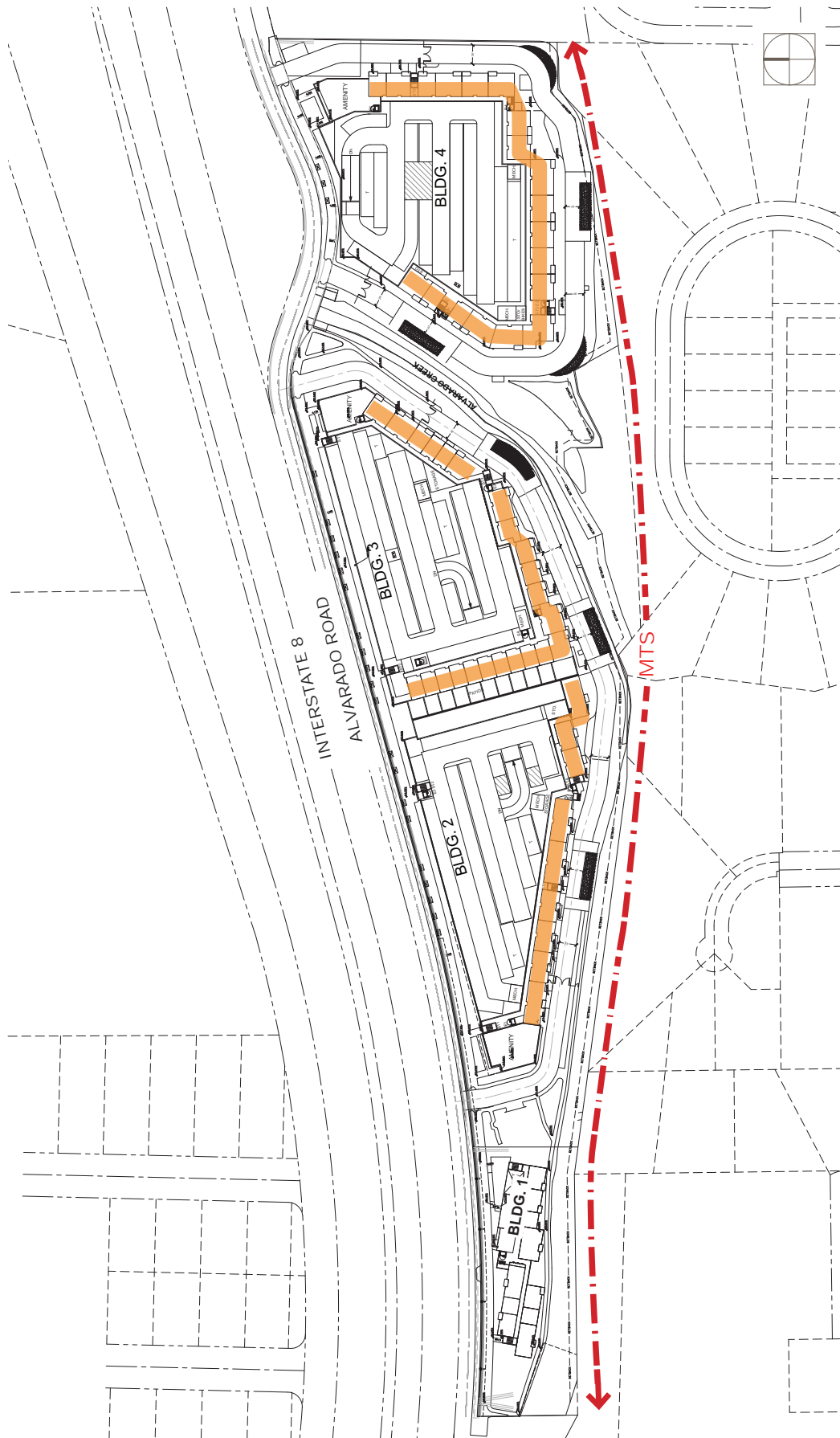


Figure 41c - Form-Based Development Standards Typical Building Plan View at Third Floor

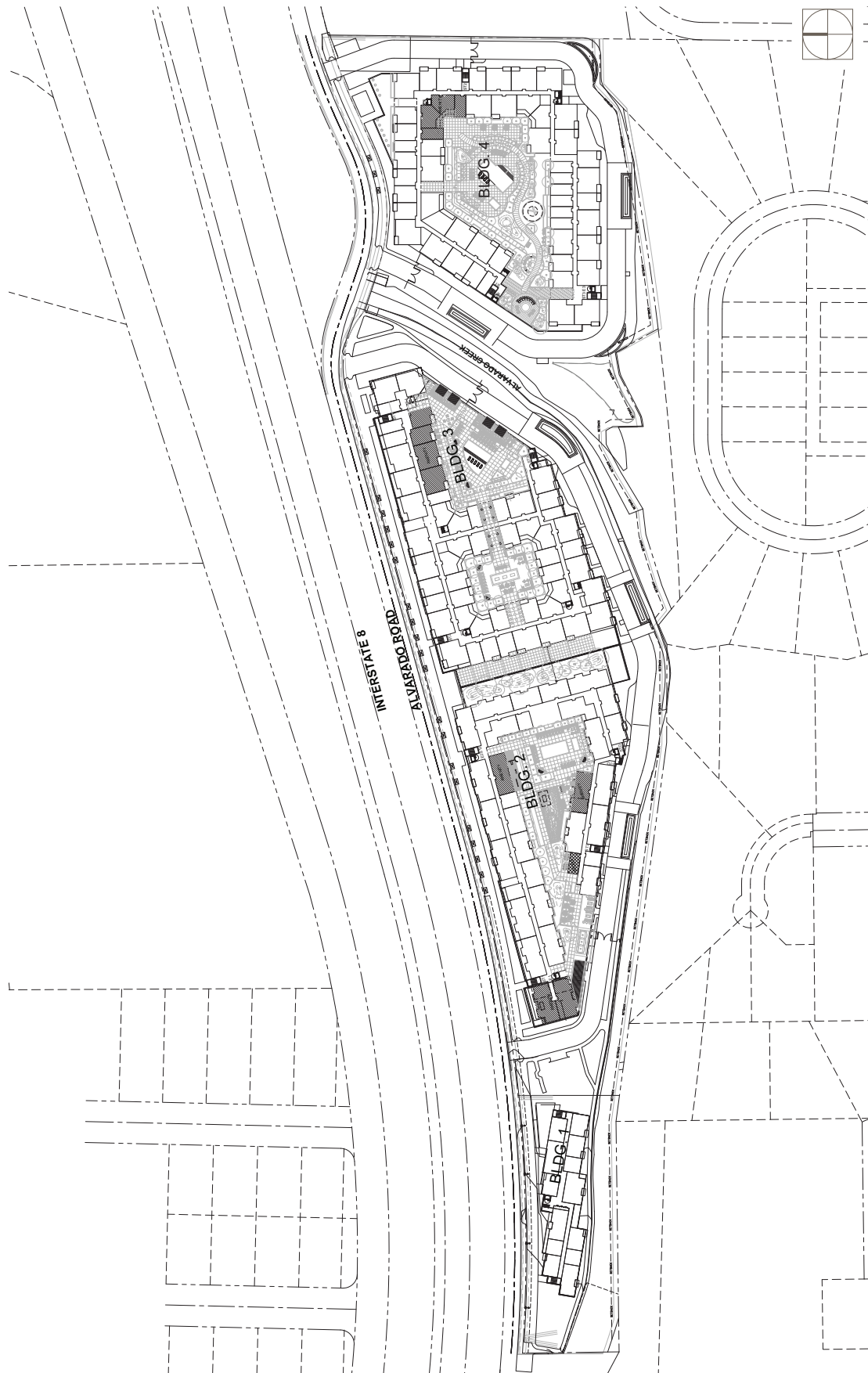


Figure 41d - Form-Based Development Standards Typical Building Plan View by Fourth Floor

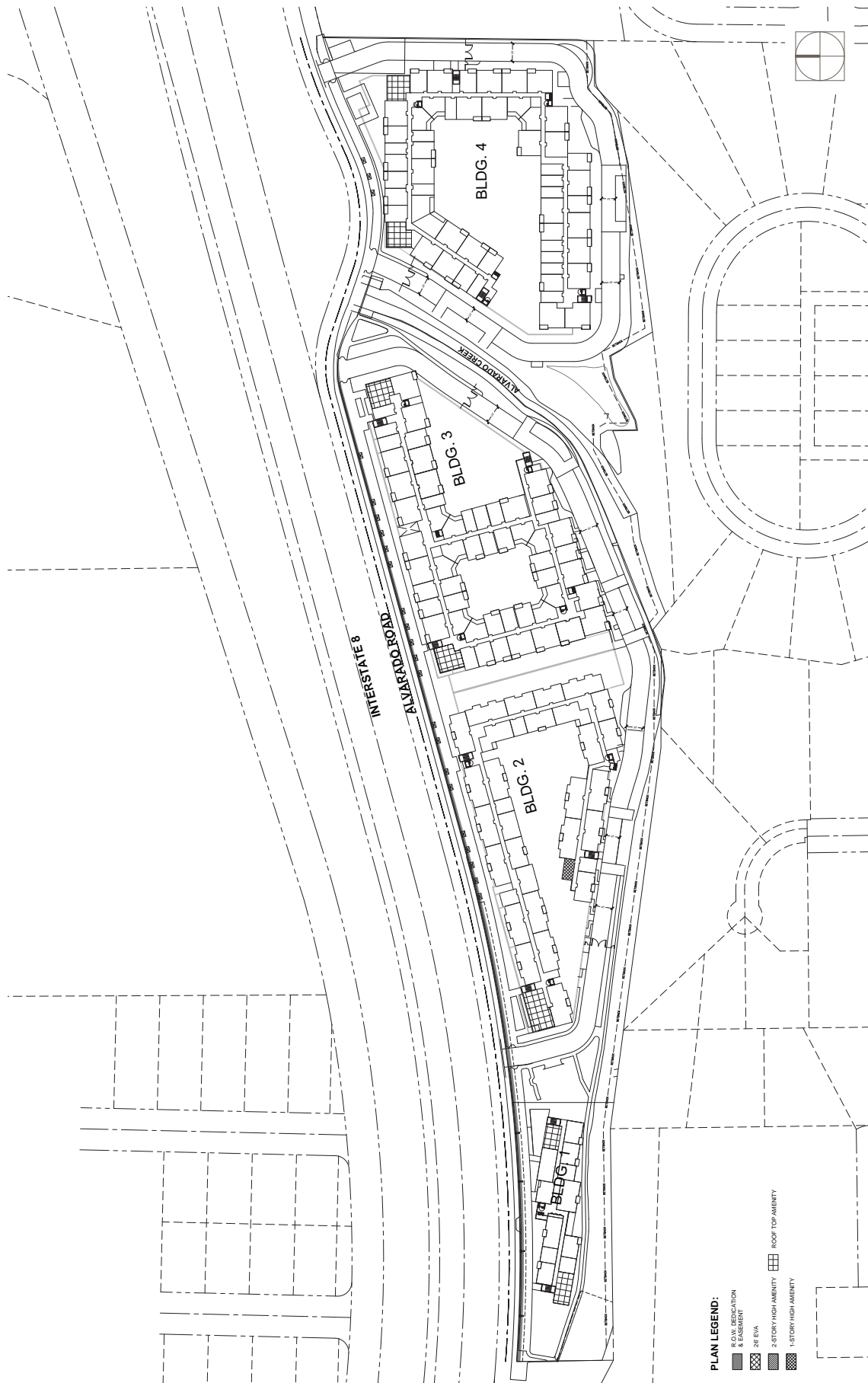


Figure 41e - Form-Based Development Standards Typical Building Plan View at Eighth Floor



### III - A. 4. Multi-family Residential Unit Mix

**Multi-family Apartments:** The unit mix for buildings 1-4 will include studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units. Final unit mix will be set at the time of Site Development Plan and Design Review by the City. The total number of residential units in an individual project will be limited by the location, site area, height and building massing parameters set in the form-based development standards established in this Chapter.

**“Liner” Units:** Buildings may incorporate liner units located below the parking structure podium deck levels on the interior elevations of the projects not directly oriented to the Alvarado Road frontage. The liner units may use a “loft” style design concepts within the mix of studio, one- and two-bedroom units. This design concept may also employ designs which include a front “stoop” element where direct access is available to the creek side interior private street and pedestrian pathways and open space areas. The liner units will meet the Flood Overlay zone requirements.

**Student Housing:** As described in the Land Use and Development Plan, Building 2 may be built as a “student housing” project focused on serving college and university students in the community with an economical housing option and direct and convenient existing Trolley access to the campus. Although the same standards for building location, size, and mass within the “form-based” concept described above apply, the net residential unit count for Building 2 will be lower with the “student housing” option due to the use of larger shared living design concepts as shown in Chapter II. The unit mix with the “student housing” concept may include a mix of: one-bedroom/one-bed units; two-bedroom/ two and four-bed units; and four-bedroom/four-bed units.

The student housing configurations are much closer to dormitory style housing, allowing for independent living, yet within a fully managed and operated residential concept. Some of the key elements of the Student Housing project will include:

- Fully furnished units
- Limited access and secured building
- 24/7 Security presence
- On-site management and professionally trained staff
- Defined policy on resident behavior and enforcement

### III - A. 5. Parking and Vehicle Access

Although the Alvarado Specific Plan is conceived as a Transit Oriented Development, parking and vehicle access still remains an important development and design standard. Implementation of the Specific Plan requires review and approval of Site Development Plans as described in Chapter IV - Implementation. Individual projects will provide vehicle parking and access as described in Chapter III – Land Use and Development Plan. The development standards for parking and project circulation are outline below and illustrated in Figure 42.

**Parking Structures:** Resident vehicle parking for each Building will be provided within a multi-level parking structures as illustrated in Figures 39 – 41 above for Buildings 2, 3, and 4. Building 1 plans for one level of structured parking. Each parking structure will provide adequate ingress and egress to the interior private street. Parking structure access locations will provide sufficient distance from Alvarado Road for queuing space on-site and away from public street traffic.

**Parking Ratios:** For Buildings 2,3, and 4, within the multi-level parking structures to be constructed, the estimated parking ratio will be approximately 1.4 spaces per dwelling unit as described in

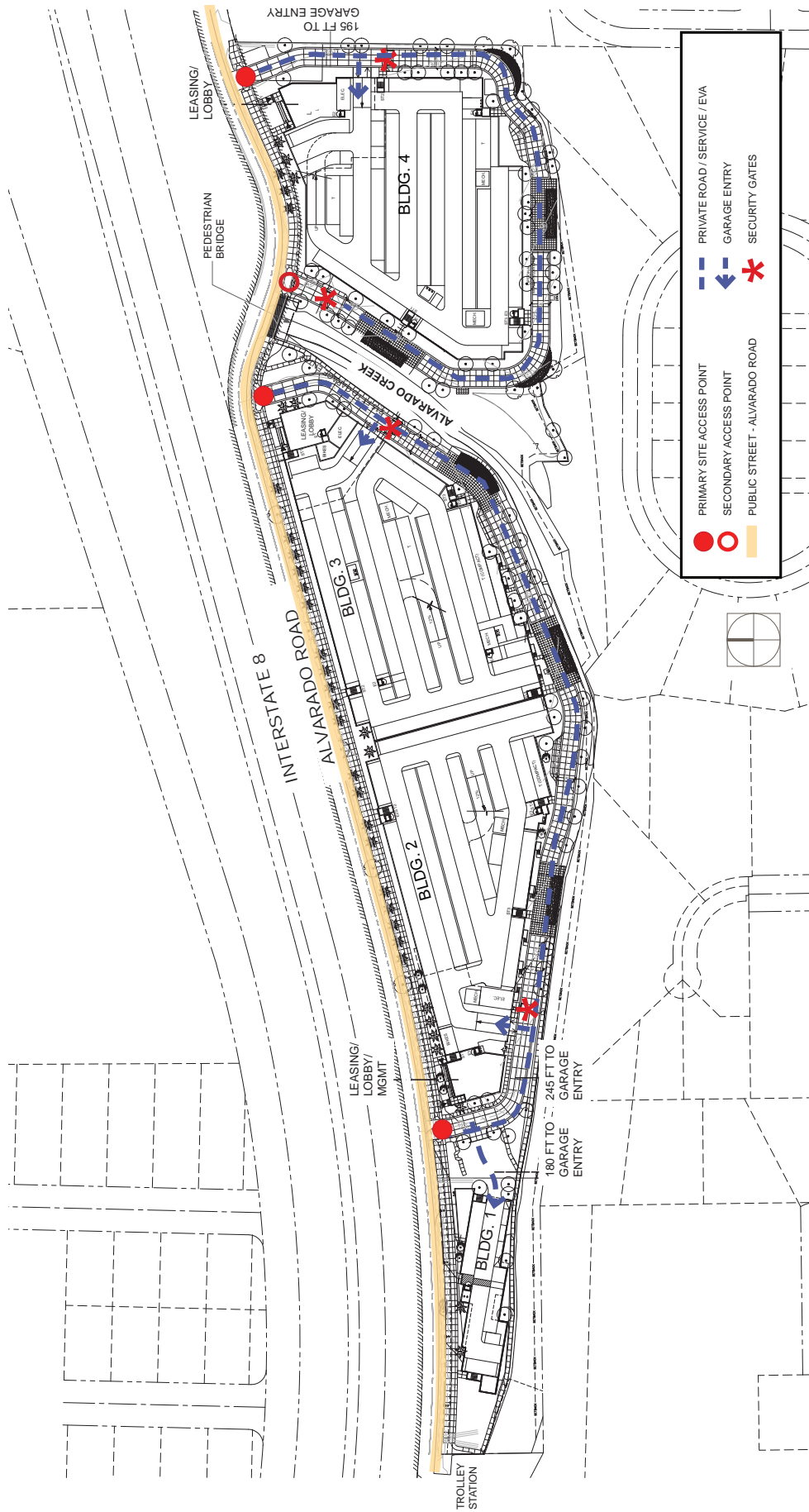


Figure 42 - Plan View to Show Site Access Points and Distance to Parking Structure Entries and Security Gates

Chapter II. This off-street parking ratio will be compatible with the reduced parking and automobile dependency objectives for a transit-oriented development (TOD). This same parking volume will be provided in the student housing option for Building 2 which results in a similar parking amount when correlated with the planned “bed” count with fewer but larger residential units. For Building 1 with an estimated 60 residential units above one level of parking, the off-street parking ratio will be approximately 0.5 space per residential unit.

These parking levels will serve as the total off-street parking requirements for the project and will be inclusive of the anticipated demand for guest parking and the secondary resident-oriented mixed uses that may be permitted on a limited basis within the project.

**Guest Parking:** Guest parking within each project is accounted for in two general areas. A limited number of exterior surface parking spaces will be provided in the vicinity of the main entry/leasing office for each project as shown on the Specific Plan diagram in Figure 37. Visitor parking spaces will also be designated within the lower level of Buildings 2-4, and near building leasing offices and parking garage entrances.

**Security:** Resident parking within the parking structures will be secured with gates and require an automated access control system within the parking structure. Along the private interior streets, there will also be security gates beyond the parking garage entrances to prevent through vehicle traffic and reserve this area as primarily a part of the pedestrian pathways and creek-side open space. Limited vehicle access will be permitted beyond the security gates for deliveries and move-ins.

**Unbundled Resident Parking:** As described in Chapter II - Land Use and Development Plan, all on-site vehicle parking provided within the required parking areas and structured parking levels may be unbundled from any requirement for an on-site parking per-unit ratio or an assigned residential unit parking space designation. With this unbundled parking standard, the management, use, and charges for resident on-site parking for each Building will be the responsibility of the project owner(s).

**Services, Deliveries and Move-ins:** The Alvarado Specific Plan has been designed with serious consideration given to the changes that have occurred in how people shop and live in a contemporary multi-family environment. As a result, the site development plan will provide access and space for vehicles within the site for service and delivery vehicles, as well as move-in locations that will maintain the required emergency vehicle access requirements. This is intended to assist with maintaining the interior private street and pedestrian pathways and primarily on open space feature and to keep traffic flow and safety directed to Alvarado Road.

**On-Street Parking:** The streetscape plans for Alvarado Road in the Specific Plan include the construction of improvements along the entire length of the site Area as part of Phase 1 projects. This includes on-street parallel parking spaces along the south side of the Alvarado Road frontage in areas that insure proper site distances from primary project ingress/egress locations. The on-street parking areas are planned to be delineated by “bulb-out” features as part of the streetscape plan. This concept proposes to dedicate a limited number of spaces in the vicinity of each primary project entry as “timed parking” and/or “loading zones” to facilitate and encourage the use of shared transportation options, such as ride sharing and delivery services.

**Alternative Transportation Support:** As a transit-oriented development, a key goal of the project is to facilitate future tenant use of alternatives to the single person vehicle trip.

- **Bicycle Parking:** All multi-family residential projects will include bicycle parking facilities.
- **EV Charging Stations:** All multi-family residential parking structures will



incorporate spaces dedicated for electric vehicle charging stations.

- **Transit Access:** The primary feature of the project supporting this objective is the adjacent 70th Street Trolley Station. The project proposes constructing new public pedestrian improvements for access to the Station on Alvarado Road to complete the missing public links to the MTS station. Phase 1 projects will also improve and complete pedestrian access for project tenants from the interior private streets along Alvarado Creek to the Station.
- **Transit Use Incentives:** It is the intent of the Specific Plan to work with MTS and project developments to encourage opportunities for use of incentives that will encourage transit use by project residents.

### III - A. 6. Open Space and Site Landscaping

Two of the most important design elements in the Alvarado Specific Plan are the mix of high-quality open space concepts and landscaping solutions. These two key areas were assigned a high priority in the formulation of the Land Use and Development Plans. This commitment in the Plan can work within the physical demands of the site and still create a very livable and transformative environment the future tenants of the Area and achieve the objectives of La Mesa's General Plan.

To balance the physical demands of the site improvements and with the goal of creating a quality living environment for the future tenants and the community as a whole, the master plan provides for a mix of well-designed and highly functional open space and landscaping solutions.

An illustration of the basic elements of the open space concepts and the major landscaping features of the project is shown in Figure 43. The overall site development plan shown in Figure 37 also graphically represents the important role of open spaces and landscaping elements distributed throughout the project Area. Each of these key components is briefly described below:

**Alvarado Road Streetscape Improvements:** The proposed frontage along Alvarado road includes parallel parking, a minimum 16 foot wide pedestrian/bicycle path and landscaping zone along the entire Alvarado Road frontage. The shared pedestrian sidewalk and bicycle path shown in Figure 44 includes street trees with tree grates, foundation planting, and vines planting at the building façade to assist in screen garage levels. The streetscape design also proposes a new pedestrian bridge that will provide a crossing over Alvarado Creek providing a contiguous sidewalk connection within the project limits to the existing 70th Street trolley station. The streetscape concept also will provide for on-street parallel parking zones defined by pop-outs that will include tree planting.

**Interior Private Street and Creek-side Pedestrian Pathway:** The project proposes a pedestrian promenade around the perimeter of the building that embraces the Alvarado Creek, providing pedestrians better access to the new landscape areas and a visual connection to the Creek. Figure 45 illustrates the key design elements to be incorporated into the interior street plans. The pedestrian pathways have several nodes that are designed for outdoor activity. Improvements may include shade elements, park benches, and synthetic turf. Each node accentuates and highlights the existing creek habitat while also increasing the outdoor walkable open space that also serves as the projects Emergency Vehicle Access plan. The pathway will be secured with automated gates and incorporate decorative fencing, lighting and paving to provide safety as well as enhance the pedestrian experience. Some creek side areas along the interior streets may also serve as part of the on-site storm water retention systems to meet regional water quality standards.

**Exterior Courtyard Open Spaces and Indoor Amenities:** Buildings 2-4 are proposed with exterior courtyards landscaped to provide residents a variety of outdoor spaces and indoor facilities to meet the open space and recreational activity needs of residents. The open space concepts

include passive restorative spaces, social nodes, and flexible spaces for a wide array of community activities. Furniture and social elements animate the spaces while garden landscapes and pools and water features help refresh and provide a sense of retreat. The courtyard amenities are planned to accommodate features such as pool and spas, outdoor seating, cabanas, water and fire elements, and barbeques with picnic tables. The project features are illustrated in Figure 46. In addition, as shown in the Development Standards, Buildings 2-4 will evaluate the feasibility of providing “sky deck” outdoor spaces that provided an additional amenity for residents and capture the opportunity to provide longer vistas of the surrounding community.

**Alvarado Creek Flood Improvements and Urban Creek Restoration:** In concert with the interior private street, described above, is the goal of restoring and maintaining the riparian environment within Alvarado Creek as a key visual and sensory element of the open space plan. A goal of the Specific Plan is to address the impact from flooding and urban storm-water management from much of north La Mesa on the site by improving and maintaining Alvarado Creek as a valued open space resource for the future residents of this newly created urban village. Figure 47 illustrates the proposed Alvarado Creek restoration and maintenance area.



Figure 43 - Open Space Concept Plans



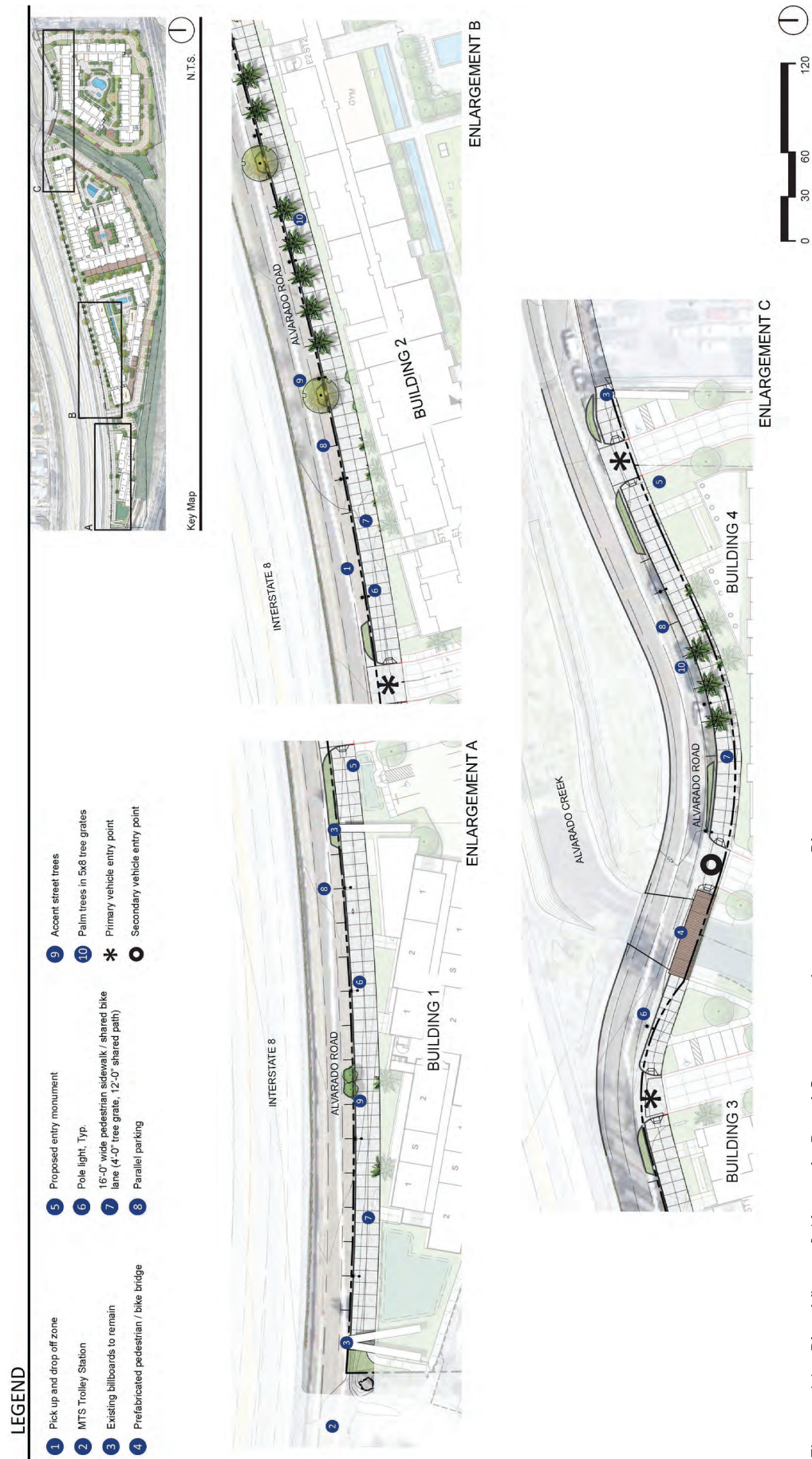
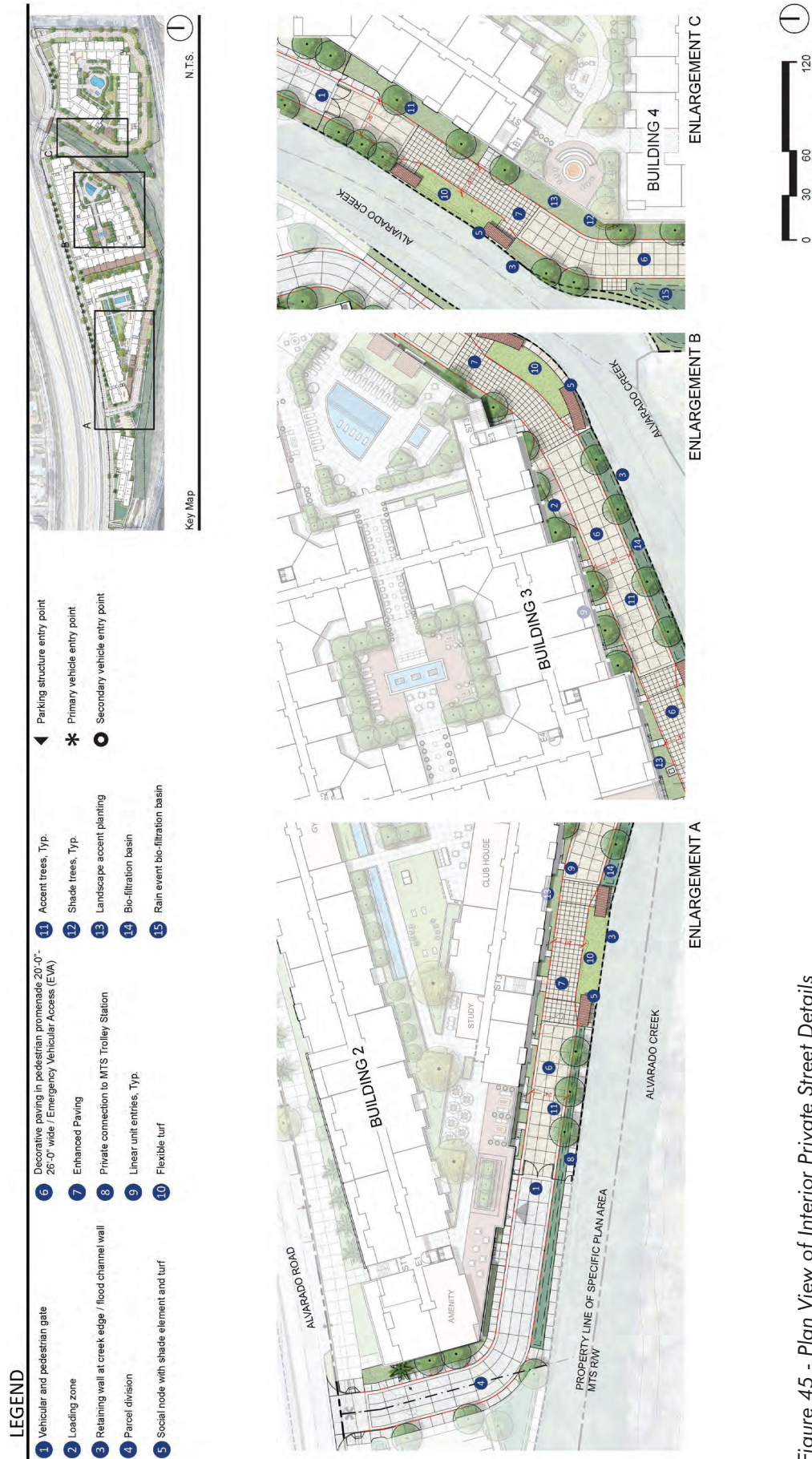


Figure 44 - Plan View of Alvarado Road Streetscape Improvement Plans





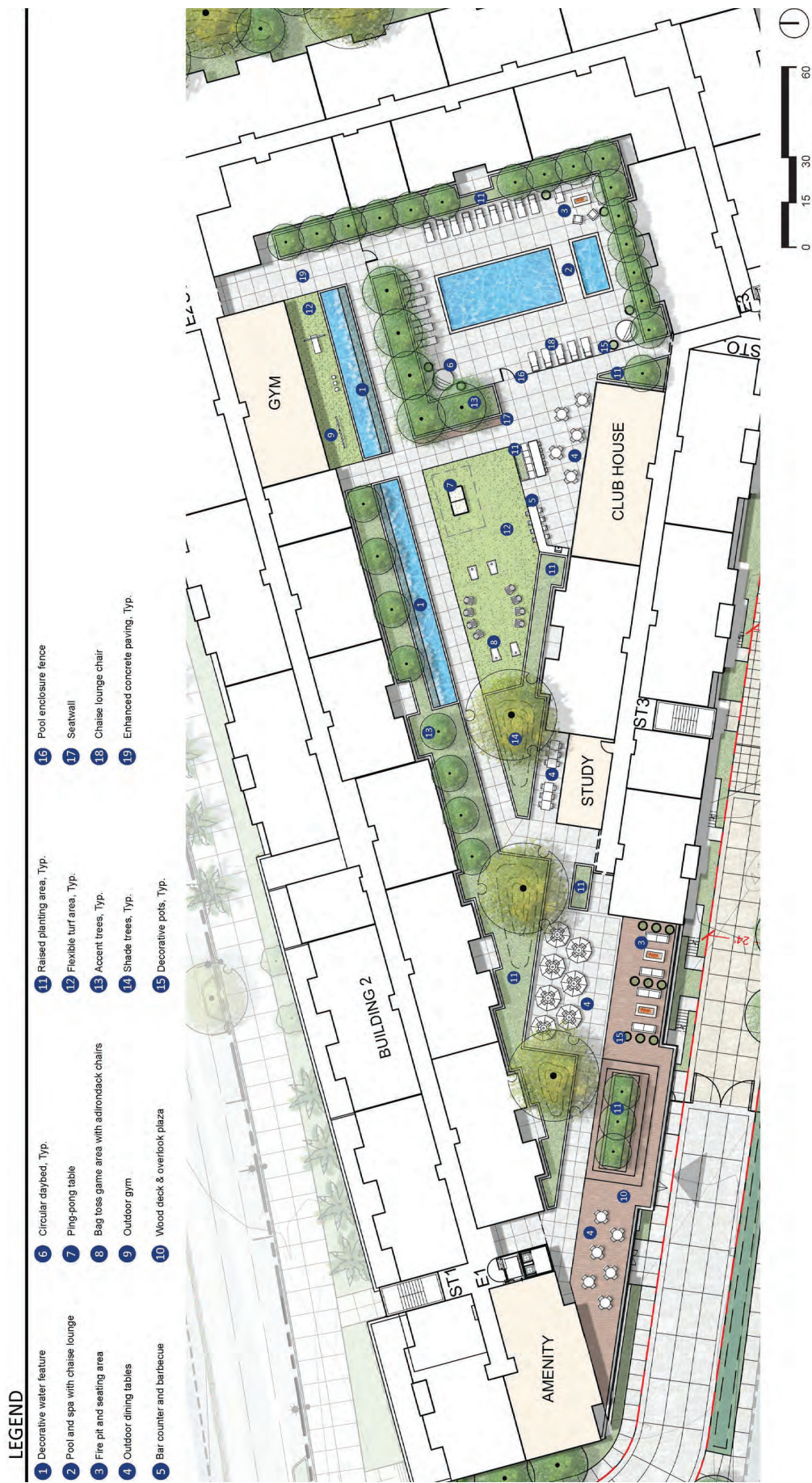


Figure 46 - Plan View to Illustrate Podium Deck Open Space and Landscaping Concept





Figure 47 - Plan View to Illustrate the Alvarado Creek Planting and Restoration Area

### III - A. 7. Site Grading and Flood Channel Improvements

The Specific Plan site characteristics and constraints are described in detail in Chapter I which outlines the planning context and history associated with the Area. While the site has many challenges, it is also unusual for La Mesa in that it is relatively flat. Developed originally in the 1950's with the alignment of Interstate 8 and Alvarado Road as a freeway frontage road, the initial urbanization of the site created an essentially flat site for use as a mobile-home park. The site has a very low slope gradient from east to west generally matching the flow line of Alvarado Creek.

The development plans for public improvements and multi-family housing will require grading of nearly all of the site area with the exception of the areas within the defined Alvarado Creek channel. Grading of the project site is largely driven the Alvarado Creek floodplain and floodway. The project will increase the capacity of the flood channel so that the required 100-year flood flows will be contained within the channel. This will be done through a combination of minor widening the channel width and raising the elevation of the top of the bank. Retaining walls will steepen the creek edge, thus allowing the bed of the Creek to be widened without significantly impacting the developable area of the building pads. The top of bank elevation for the site and garage entry elevations will all be elevated a minimum of 1.0 foot above the 100-year flood elevation established by FEMA.

Grading within the channel will be limited to the minimum needed to construct the retaining walls and the relocation of the City's sanitary sewer trunk line from the channel to a new easement within the interior private street as shown in Figure 48. The flood control improvements will actually increase the area of the channel and allow for additional planting of appropriate riparian plant materials as an environmental enhancement from the past conditions.

All earth work in the channel and the site which is within the FEMA mapped "floodplain" will be part of the required multi-agency cooperation and authorization needed to implement the Specific Plan. In addition, all grading and earthwork construction activity will be subject to any mitigation measures and monitoring requirements established by the Project EIR.

### III - A. 8. Public Improvements, Utilities, and Infrastructure

The public improvements that will be provided through the approval of the Specific Plan and its implementing actions are described below. These improvements will be constructed in conjunction with the Phase 1 development plans as part of the private development requirements. The agencies that will be involved in coordinating and approving the plans are listed with each project.

**Alvarado Road:** Improvement of Alvarado Road will include the following components: Streetscape improvement plans to include a shared sidewalk and bike path concept, curb and gutter, street lights, street trees, bulb-out landscape tree planting area, on-street parallel parking land, pedestrian connection to 70th Street Trolley Station, pedestrian bridge on south side of Alvarado Creek bridge, a traffic safety signal west of the Alvarado Creek bridge (City of La Mesa, MTS).

**Overhead Power and Communication Line Relocation:** The existing 12KV and communications lines that cross I-8 from Parkway Drive currently cross overhead in the San Diego RV Resort facility. This major power transmission line will need to be relocated underground generally around the west end of the project area before going overhead again to its current location on the south side of the MTS light rail tracks (City of La Mesa, SDG&E, Caltrans, MTS).

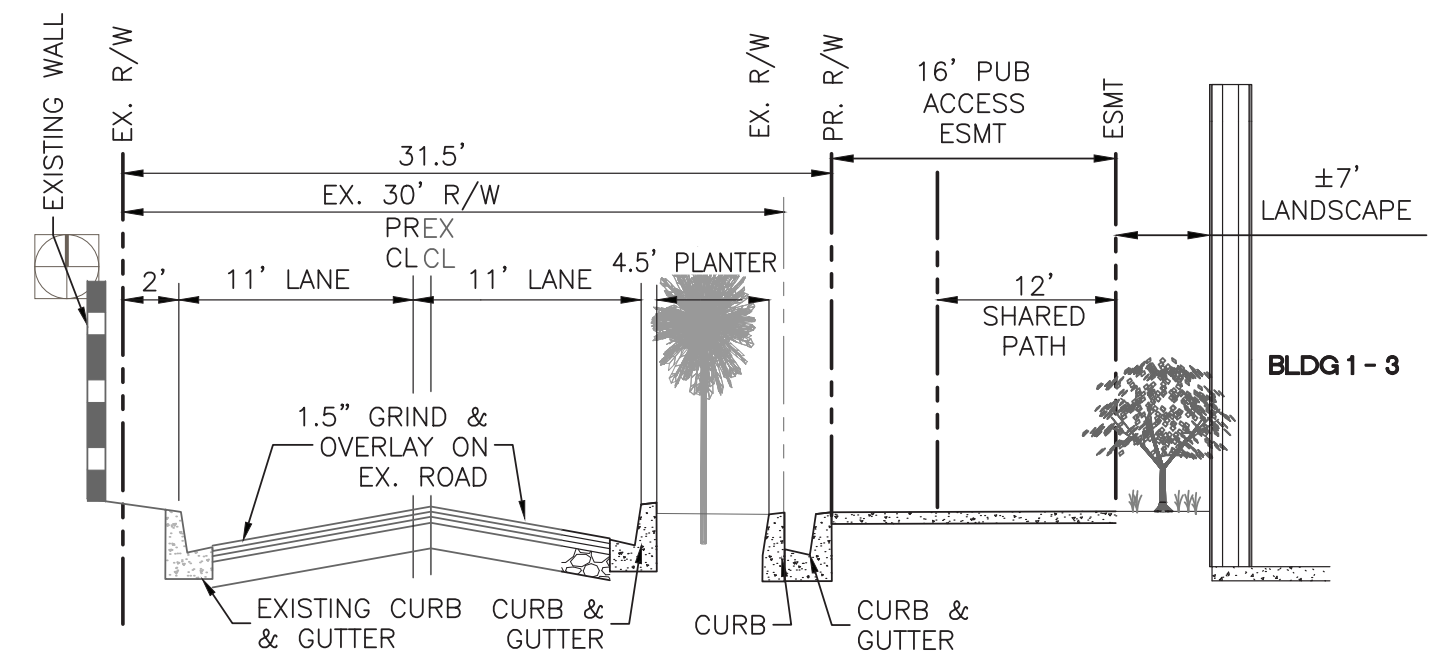
**Flood Channel Improvements:** The project includes seeking approvals to finally address the FEMA mapped need to address the flooding of the project site from Alvarado Creek. This will involve multi-agency approval to make the necessary channel improvements with engineered retaining walls within the San Diego RV Resort property (City of La Mesa, MTS, Army Corps of

Engineers, Federal Fish and Wildlife, State Fish and Wildlife, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, City of San Diego).

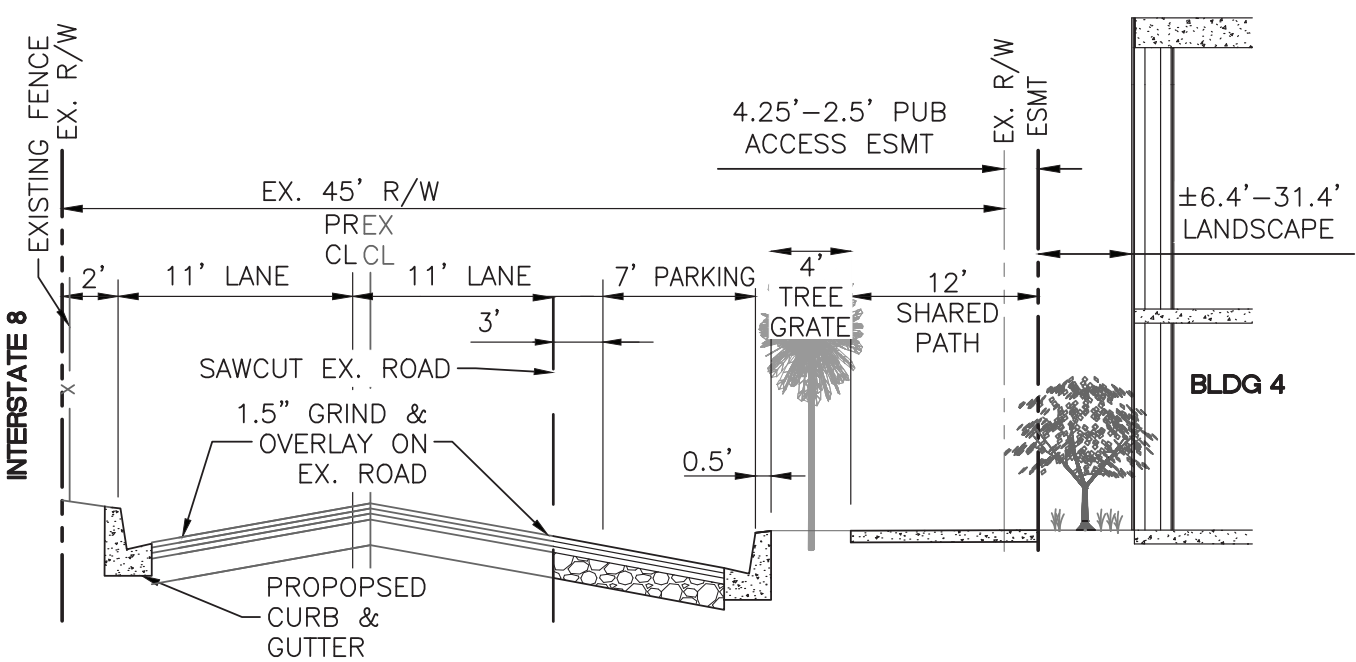
**Sanitary Sewer System Improvements:** The environmental improvements to Alvarado Creek will include the relocation of one of the City sewer trunk line out of the channel and under the planned interior street. The sewer work will also address the removal of abandoned sewer lines in the creek and raising and capping an existing manhole that cannot be relocated to above the flood flow levels (City of La Mesa, Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Fish and Wildlife, State Fish and Wildlife, San Diego Regional Water Quality Board, City of San Diego).



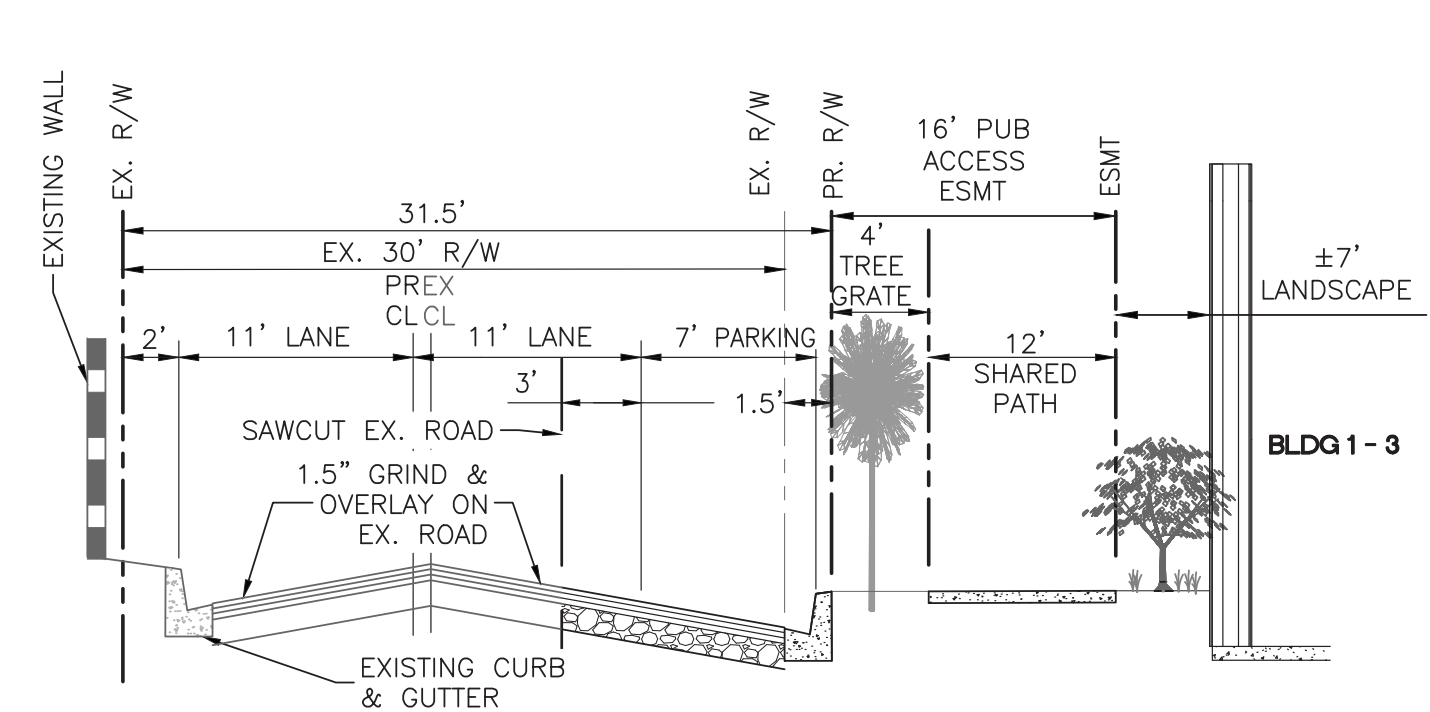




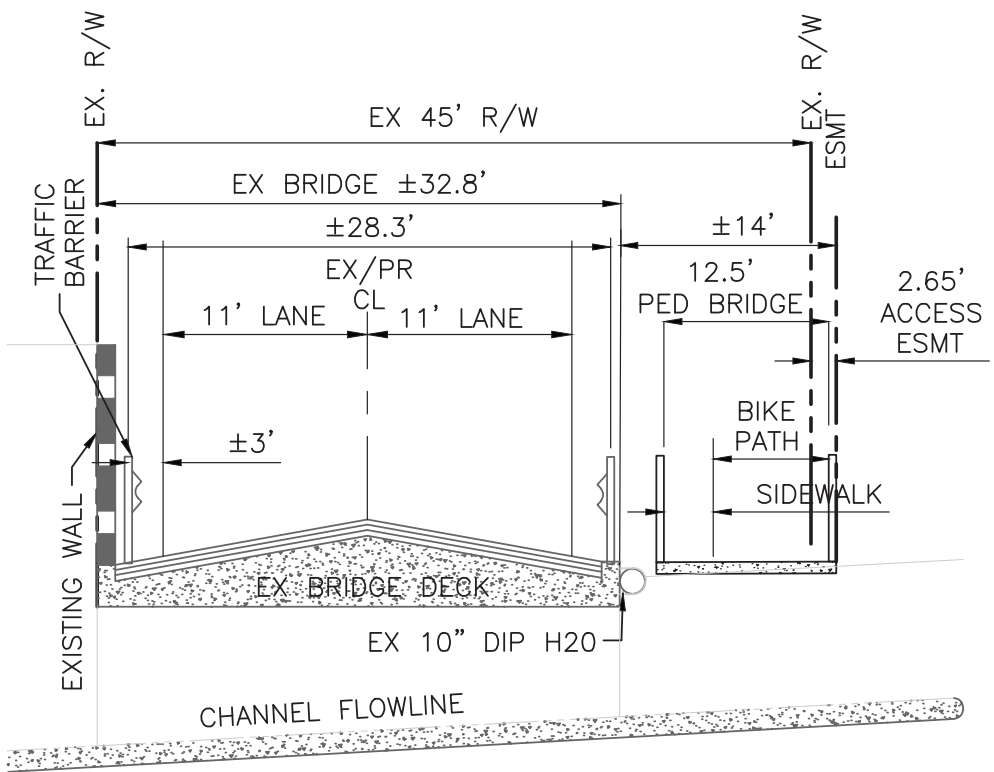
ALVARADO ROAD WITH BUMP OUT - WEST OF BRIDGE



ALVARADO ROAD - EAST OF BRIDGE



ALVARADO ROAD - WEST OF BRIDGE



ALVARADO ROAD - AT BRIDGE



Figure 48 - Plan View of Alvarado Road Streetscape Improvement Plans





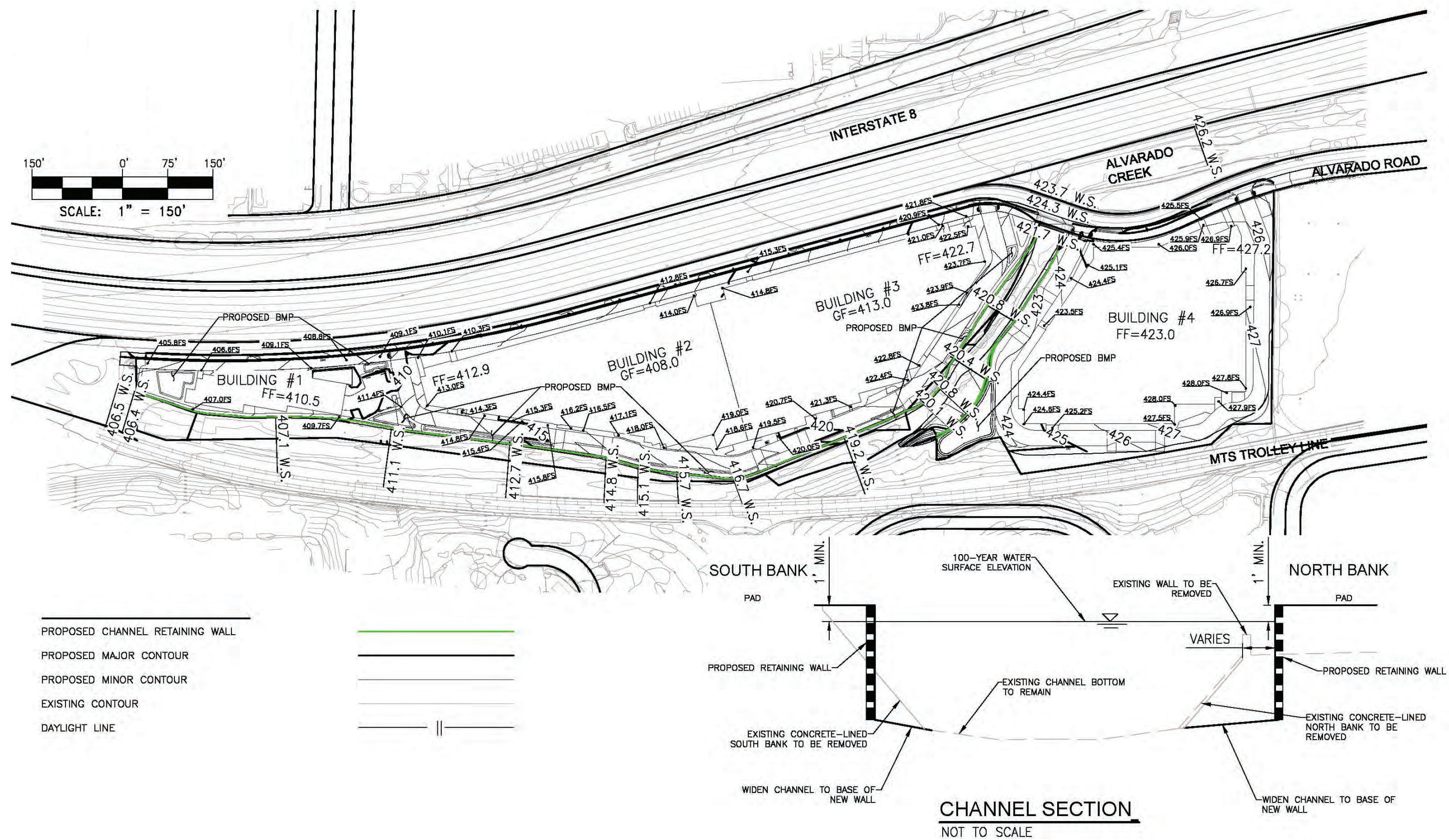


Figure 49 - Preliminary Grading Plan and Sections for Flood Channel Improvements







Development Standards and Design Guidelines





## III - B. SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT DESIGN GUIDELINES

Implementation of the Specific Plan will require all the multi-family residential projects to complete the City's Site Development Plan and Design Review process. The two primary objectives of the implementation steps will be to make sure the future projects are: 1) consistent with the Alvarado Specific Plan; and 2) meet the principles of the City's Urban Design Program.

Principles from the Urban Design Program that have been employed in formulating the Land Use and Development Plans for the Specific Plan projects include:

- *preserve and enhance the community character and sense of place by delivering projects and programs that build upon positive design features.*
- *promote a positive community identity and imageability;*
- *enhance the visual quality and continuity of the community through circulation patterns, definition of community edges and boundaries, distinct gateways;*
- *insure high quality community design for new construction;*
- *encourage energy conservation and safety conscious design methods for new development; and,*
- *provide specific project elements that will provide the attributes including: vitality, function, spatial form and quality, safe and efficient access, structural orientation, congruence, safety and defensible space principles, and stability. La Mesa Urban Design Program, page 13.*

The design guidelines that can be applied more directly to the projects as part of the implementation steps for the Specific Plan are outlined in the following sections.

### III - B. 1. Site Design

1. The Alvarado Road streetscape improvements will use a coordinated set of street lighting, tree grates, street trees, landscaping, and paving materials to establish a strong design statement that ties the four development parcels into a cohesive project area.
2. Within the private interior streets, a coordinated palette of enhanced paving, decorative fencing and gates, lighting, street furniture, shade structures, tree planting and landscaping will be used to tie the overall site development plan together.
3. Project lighting and landscaping along Alvarado Road, the interior private streets and pedestrian pathways connecting to the 70th Street Trolley Station will be used to create a safe and secure residential environment.
4. Project signs may include entry monument signs and/or signs incorporated into the project architecture. Each sign shall be so designed to complement the architectural style of the main building. Project signs should add clarity and direction to the project circulation system.
5. Throughout the Specific Plan Area, a unified system of site features and signage will be used to enhance the wayfinding character of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
6. As a unique location that will be transformed from a challenging freeway

oriented location, landscaping will play a strong role in creating a vital residential environment. Key areas that should be the focus to meet the project design objectives with landscaping solutions will be the:

- Alvarado Road streetscape street tree types, frequency and initial planting sizes.
- Significant role of planting areas and materials within the podium deck open space and recreations areas
- Coordinated use of planting materials and design features along the interior private street creek side pathways and socializing nodes
- Alvarado Creek flood channel plant restoration and maintenance plan

### III - B. 2. Architectural Design

1. All four primary multi-family residential project buildings should have a coordinated and unifying overall architectural style or theme, yet express an individual character with varying forms, features and materials to avoid an overuse of a single design concept for the Specific Plan Area.
2. As a major new land use change and highly visible gateway statement along the I-8 corridor, individual project design will provide strong forms and architectural elements at the primary project entrances to the interior private streets.
3. On the northern Alvarado Road facades, where balconies may not be feasible due to noise attenuation requirements, buildings will use sufficient architectural design forms, features and changes in materials to provide visual interest and variance in the elevations from the I-8 view corridor.
4. On the Alvarado Road frontages with exposed parking garage levels, buildings will incorporate both architecturally coordinated building materials and landscaping solutions to add value to the pedestrian scale and environment along the Alvarado Road streetscape zone.
5. Roof top mechanical equipment should be architecturally screened from views from locations above the site to the south.
6. Interior elevations viewed from the podium deck open space areas and elevations fronting on to the interior private street pathways should reflect sufficient architectural interest with forms, massing, fenestration, balconies and viewing locations to enhance a sense of an active residential environment.



# CHAPTER IV.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### IV - A. SPECIFIC PLAN ADMINISTRATION

The Alvarado Specific Plan has been adopted as a means of implementing La Mesa's General Plan within the Specific Plan Area. In this role the Specific Plan establishes the land use and development standards that for future development projects and public improvements in the Specific Plan Area. With text and diagrams, the Specific Plan discusses general provisions and procedures, permitted land uses, site development plans for private and public improvements, development standards and design guidelines, circulation and mobility plans, public utilities and infrastructure. The Specific Plan addresses potential phased development within the Specific Plan Area and coordination that will be required with other public agencies with regulatory authority over planned projects within the Specific Plan Area. Development projects within the Alvarado Specific Plan Area will conform to the policies and procedures established by the Specific Plan.

#### IV - A. 1. Interpretation

Any interpretation regarding the content or in the application of the Specific Plan for subsequent actions under the authority of the Specific Plan may be subject to the review authority of the Community Development Director to determine consistency with the goals, policies, purposes and intent established by the Specific Plan. The Community Development Director shall have the authority to determine if a requested interpretation or clarification of the policies, plans, development standards or design guidelines is minor in nature and in substantial conformance with the Specific Plan.

#### IV - A. 2. Specific Plan Minor Modifications and Amendments

Modifications, adjustments or changes to the text and exhibits in the Specific Plan may be necessary during the implementation process to address unforeseen conditions or events affecting the planned development within the Specific Plan Area.

Minor Modifications to the Specific Plan will be addressed administratively without the requirement for a formal Specific Plan Amendment Application and public hearing before the Planning Commission. The Community Development Director shall have the authority to determine if the Minor Modification request should be approved, approved with conditions, or denied. The Community Development Director may refer the request for a minor modification to the Planning Commission or the City Council for review. The Community Director's determination for a Minor Modification may be appealed to the Planning Commission.

Changes to the Specific Plan that are determined to be more substantive or significant than an interpretation or minor modification shall require a formal application and procedures for a Specific Plan Amendment with review by the Planning Commission and City Council. Amendments to the Specific Plan must be found to be consistent with the La Mesa General Plan.

### IV - A. 3. Severability

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of the Specific Plan, or any future amendments or additions, is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Specific Plan or any future amendments or additions.

## IV - B. IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Upon adoption of the Alvarado Specific Plan, there are several steps that will be required to properly document and implement the Plan. These actions are outlined below:

### IV - B. 1. Program EIR Requirements and Mitigation Monitoring

The Alvarado Specific Plan constitutes a discretionary project and is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared for the Alvarado Specific Plan in accordance with the requirements of CEQA. The EIR has evaluated the potential for direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with the proposed land use changes and public improvements proposed by the Specific Plan. While the CEQA analysis in the project EIR is a separate document from the Specific Plan, the environmental review process has been completed to correlate with the Specific Plan. The intent of the Specific Plan implementation is to provide that all CEQA based implementation requirements will be met as part of the planning process for the proposed private development projects and public improvements defined in the approved Specific Plan.

The Specific Plan anticipates construction projects may occur in phases, and incorporate both private developments and public improvements. It is intended that the Program EIR prepared for the Alvarado Specific Plan will serve as the primary environmental documentation for all future projects that are found to be consistent with the approved Plan. When considering individual projects to implement the Specific Plan, if the City determines that the proposed development or projects are consistent with the findings of the CEQA analysis completed for the Specific Plan, the City can approve the project(s) without additional environmental review. If there are significant changes to the adopted Specific Plan proposed at a later date that the City determines may result in new impacts not adequately or not previously analyzed with the Program EIR, additional environmental review may be required and shall focus on evaluating the areas affected by the proposed changes to the Plan.

Actions to formally comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for adoption of the Alvarado Specific Plan include:

- Certify the adequacy of the Alvarado Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Adopt findings, mitigation measures, and a mitigation monitoring program as identified in the approved Alvarado Specific Plan EIR

### IV - B. 2. Specific Plan Adoption

Formal adoption of the Alvarado Specific Plan shall be upon completion of the required public hearings and adoption of a resolution or ordinance documenting that the Specific Plan has been found to be consistent with and will serve to implement the La Mesa General Plan.

### IV - B. 3. Overlay Zone

The Alvarado Specific Plan is designed to implement the goals and policies adopted within the City's General Plan by establishing a framework for future development projects to be evaluated to determine consistency with the Land Use and Development Plan laid out within the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan is intended to be consistent with, and to serve as an extension of the La Mesa General Plan. The policies and standards approved with the Alvarado Specific Plan will take precedence over more general policies and standards for the review of private developments and public improvements outlined within the Specific Plan. In cases where the development plans and standards relating to a particular element of an implementing project are not adequately addressed within the Specific Plan, the existing policies and standards of the La Mesa General Plan and Zoning Ordinance will apply.

To establish the relationship and authority of the Alvarado Specific Plan to the City's General Plan and development regulations, an Alvarado Specific Plan Overlay Zone will be adopted as an implementation step to define the affected area and connect the City's Zoning administration to the Alvarado Specific Plan.

### IV - B. 4. Development Agreement

It is the intent to the Alvarado Specific Plan to be further implemented through the adoption of a Development Agreement to memorialize the terms and conditions under which the private development interests will be responsible for the design and construction of certain public improvements documented in the Specific Plan. It is intended by the Specific Plan that the corresponding Development Agreement will be established by mutual agreement between the City and the private interests in the Specific Plan Area, and that it will be adopted in conjunction with approval of the Specific Plan by the City.

### IV - B. 5. Project Processing and Plan Review

Upon adoption of the Alvarado Specific Plan, it is intended that future development projects will be subject to completion of the City's Site Development Plan and Design Review process. Site improvements and the multi-family residential projects defined in the Specific Plan will require findings of consistency with the Alvarado Specific Plan.

Specific plan projects that will include site grading, utility relocations, Alvarado Creek flood channel improvements, and the Alvarado Road improvements may be subject to review by other public agencies and utilities including, but not limited to:

- MTS
- Caltrans
- Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agency
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- San Diego Regional Water Quality Board
- Helix Water District



## IV - B. 6. Alvarado Creek Flood Channel Maintenance Agreement

An objective of the Alvarado Specific Plan is to provide for the construction of site improvements and Alvarado Creek flood channel improvements that will comply with the City's Flood Overlay Zone and FEMA regulations affecting the Specific Plan Area. In conjunction with the Flood Channel improvements are requirements to relocate existing sanitary sewer facilities which are in need of updating and in some cases relocations out of the flood channel as part of the Development Plans.

With the completion of the flood channel improvements the Specific Plan calls for the restoration of an appropriate palette of vegetation and plant materials within affected parts of Alvarado Creek. It is the intent of the Specific Plan to provide for better long-term management of the flooding conditions within the Area, as well as, the significantly improving the ongoing role Alvarado Creek serves as part of the City's storm water management system. The resulting improvements to Alvarado Creek within the Specific Plan Area are intended to provide a very positive example of how an urban creek can serve both civil engineering, environmental and aesthetic objectives. Recognizing that the Alvarado Creek is a natural and dynamic environment, the restoration area is in need of regular maintenance in order to continue to achieve these objectives. It is the intent of the Specific Plan to explore the potential opportunity to establish a multi-agency agreement to allow for the appropriate regular maintenance of the flood channel and the riparian habitat.

## IV - B. 7. Non-conforming Uses and Structures

1. **Nonconforming Uses:** As addressed in the Land Use and Development Plan, the Specific Plan may be developed in phases. It is the intent of the Specific Plan to permit portions of the existing RV campground use, which operates as the San Diego RV Resort, to continue to be operated and maintained as a non-conforming use until such time as Phase 2 is developed.
2. **Off-Premise Advertising Structures:** La Mesa's sign regulations are governed by Title 15 of the Municipal Code and generally are guided by land uses on a particular site. Section 15.10.039 specifically addresses the City's regulations regarding non-conforming off-premise advertising structures. There are 3 existing non-conforming off-premise advertising structures (billboards) within the Specific Plan Area. It is the intent of the development plan to retain the billboards subject to the City's non-conforming sign regulations for off-premise advertising structures stated below.

*La Mesa Municipal Code Section 15.10.039 - Nonconforming signs.*

*(b) Removal of nonconforming billboards and off-premise advertising structures.*

*(1) Any off-premises advertising structure or billboard which was lawfully erected prior to the adoption of this chapter shall be deemed a nonconforming off-premises advertising structure.*

*(2) Maintenance. Any existing off-premises advertising structure or billboard which has been determined to be nonconforming may continue in its customary use and maintenance until such time that the city requires the removal of said structure in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and any state or federal provisions for removal and compensation for such required removal of nonconforming off-premises advertising structures.*

*(3) Alterations. A sign permit shall be required for any alteration or relocation required to bring a sign(s) into compliance with the provisions of this chapter.*

As provided in California State law (Business and Professions Code Section 5412) “local entities are empowered to enter into relocation agreement on whatever terms are agreeable to the display owner and the city, county, city and county, or other local entity and to adopt ordinances or resolutions providing for relocation of displays.” The three non-conforming off-premise advertising structures in the Specific Plan Area are identified in Figure 37. With the appropriate procedures, consideration of a relocation agreement described above would be consistent with implementing the Specific Plan objectives subject to mutual agreement between the City and the property owner.

## **IV - C. FINANCING**

Provisions in the California Government Code establish specific plans as a systematic means of implementing the general plan. In meeting the State’s requirements, the Plan must address “financing measures necessary to carry out” the Plan [G.C. Sec. 45451 (a) (4)]. In accordance with this requirement this Section is provided to outline the financing plan for the Alvarado Specific Plan.

As described in Chapters I-III the Alvarado Specific Plan is a master development plan proposed by the property owner (the Owner) for a multi-family “transit-oriented development” (TOD) on a challenging site with unique qualities and characteristics. The multi-family residential development projects for the four primary parcels will be the financing responsibility of the Owner.

The Specific Plan describes the history of the site and the significance of the surrounding public transportation and storm water facilities that have helped to define the private development solutions and public infrastructure needs for the Area. The purpose of the Specific Plan is to establish a more up-to-date land use plan and set of development standards to implement the City’s long-term objectives for redevelopment of the site, and to memorialize the public and private commitment and cooperation needed to achieve the goals outlined in the Specific Plan.

Implementation of the Specific Plan will facilitate the construction, operation and maintenance of infrastructure and facilities; assist in clarifying the roles and responsibilities for the planned development; and assist in the development of the Project in a manner that will provide long-term fiscal and other benefits to the City, including increased employment opportunities, an increased tax base and revenues, additional housing opportunities and an enhanced quality of life for the City’s residents.

The major Public Improvements planned by the Specific Plan have been described in Chapters I – III. The public facilities and services required to support the project are to be available and financed as needed. Public improvements shall be provided using various sources and methods of public and private financing. The recommended financing mechanisms are provided as guidelines and should not be considered final recommendations. Actual implementation of a specific financing mechanism will be accomplished pursuant to certain proceedings as established by special districts, the City, and relevant state and federal laws. Public Financing District(s) may include, but not be limited to, such financing mechanisms as a Community Facilities District, Landscaping and Lighting District, or other similar public financing mechanisms selected by the Owner. It is anticipated that the Owner may receive credits against the payment of the City’s Sewer System connection fees for costs associated with the upgrades described for the sewer system trunk lines within the Specific Plan Area.

The Owner may request the formation of a Public Financing District(s) to provide for infrastructure construction and maintenance, landscaping, lighting, streets, pedestrian facilities, public safety, open space management or other services and long-term financing requirements in connection with the development phases of the Project.

All costs associated with the consideration and formation of such financing districts or funding mechanisms shall be paid by Owner subject to reimbursement, as may be legally authorized, out of the proceeds of any Public Financing District. The cost of providing Public Improvements and Infrastructure to the Project or the Property would be consistent with the following principles: (i) a reasonable relationship between the Project and any Public Improvement or Infrastructure required to be constructed by the Project; (ii) a reasonable relationship between the services and the Project; (iii) the costs that are to be borne for such services by the Project shall not exceed the estimated reasonable cost of providing such services; and (iv) a reasonable relationship between any fee required to finance Project Improvements, infrastructure or municipal services, and the cost of such improvements or services funded by such fee. For purposes of this paragraph "reasonable relationship" between the Project and any requirement imposed thereon, shall mean an "essential nexus" and "rough proportionality" between the Project in accordance with State law.