Rose Canyon/Creek Industrial District

Land Use Compatibility Analysis

Clairemont Community Plan Update

October 2025

A. INTRODUCTION

The City of San Diego is updating the Clairemont Community Plan Update to provide a long-range land use vision for economic prosperity, housing, mobility, and climate action. The Clairemont Community Planning Area contains with approximately 82,600 people living the community (2025) and 2,885 jobs (2025). Clairemont contains a mix of light industrial and business park uses along Morena Boulevard and Sante Fe Street north of Balboa Avenue.

General Plan

The General Plan recommends evaluating the designation of Prime Industrial Lands during a comprehensive community plan update. If change is proposed, the GP requires several factors to be analyzed to ensure that viable industrial areas are protected from encroachment and conversion to non-industrial uses. General Plan policy EP-A.12 of the city's GP Economic Prosperity Element contains the following requirements for any justification to change Prime Industrial with residential, commercial, institutional, mixed-use, public assembly, or other sensitive receptor land uses:

- Evaluate the Prime Industrial Land Criteria in Appendix C, EP-1
- Analyze the Collocation/Conversion Suitability Factors in Appendix C, EP-2
- Study the potential contribution of the area to the local and regional economy

This report explores items (a) and (b). The study of the potential contribution of the area to the local and regional economy is illustrated in a separate report, *Market Demand Analysis and Evaluation of Potential Impacts of Collocation*, prepared by Keyser Marston Associates.

Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan update in 2022, prioritizes the implementation of the General Plan's Mobility Element and the City of Villages Strategy to increase housing near job centers and promote the use of transit, walking, and biking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Meeting the Climate Action Plans goals require achieving better walkability and transit-supportive density by locating most of new housing and employment within the Transit Priority Areas.

Rose Canyon/Creek Industrial District

The Rose Canyon/Creek Industrial District is identified as prime industrial lands in the General Plan Economic Prosperity Element. Sorrento Mesa is expected to see future employment growth to support the regional economy. Figure 1 shows the location of the Rose Canyon/Creek Industrial District.

The Rose Canyon/Creek Industrial District is 178 acres and contains 55 parcels with a median parcel size of 1.8 acres and a median FAR of 0.35. The total building area is 1,936,560 million square feet

with a median building area of 18,000 square feet. The current land use is mostly office, industrial park, and business park.

Table 1 illustrates the employment breakdown within the District. The largest share of employment is Industrial Park.

Table 1 – Rose Canyon/Creek Industrial District Employment

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Floor Area	Employee Density Rate (Employees / 1,000 sq ft)	Employees
Industrial Park	25	1,419,698.00	1050	1,352
Public Storage	1	50,000.00	15000	3
Communications and Utilities	2	-		
Other Transportation	1	400.00	450	1
Regional Shopping Center (300,000 SF or more)	1	50,000.00	750	67
Community Shopping Center (100,000 SF or more)	1	115,000.00	500	230
Arterial Commercial	7	23,808.00	700	34
Service Station	1	4,100.00	300	14
Office (5.1 ksf - 10 ksf)	2	15,687.00	200	78
Office (10.1 ksf - 20 ksf)	1	18,869.00	200	94
Office (20.1 ksf - 35 ksf)	3	88,876.00	200	444
Office (35.1 ksf - 50 ksf)	1	40,122.00	200	201
Office (greater than 100 ksf)	1	110,000.00	300	367
TOTAL		**1,936,560.00**		**2,885**

Rose Canyon Gateway Village

The following criteria were used to identify the Rose Canyon Gateway Village as collocation study focus area in the District:

- Outside Open Space Area;
- Within Transit Priority Areas;

- Near Existing and Planned High Frequency Transit.

B. PRIME INDUSTRIAL LAND CRITERIA

The General Plan Economic Prosperity Element requires justification for changing the land use of prime industrial land by evaluating the 'Prime Industrial Land Criteria' identified in General Plan Appendix C, EP-1. The Prime Industrial Land Criteria evaluation was conducted on the Sorrento Mesa Subarea level to explore feasibility of land use change. However, the assessment of non-industrial encroachment will be within the smaller Sorrento Mesa Focus Area. Appendix C, EP-1 asks the following:

Community Plan Land Use – Is the land designated for industrial uses in the applicable community plan?

Yes – The Rose Canyon Gateway Village (APN: 6760300100) is approximately 18.6 acres. As depicted in the adopted Clairemont Community Plan, the land use designation is 'Industrial Park.'

Market Feasibility: In communities where at least 30 acres of fully entitled vacant land is available for sale, are land prices low enough so that new industrial development is still feasible.

No – There are zero acres of developable vacant land in the District. Most of the existing industrial and office buildings are 40 to 65 years old.

Predominantly Developed or Developable with Industrial Uses: Has the majority of the developed portion of the industrial area been developed with heavy industrial, light industrial, research and development and other base sector uses? Does the area have the physical characteristics suitable for modern industrial development?

The Rose Canyon Village area functions as a City of San Diego Operations Yard and has not been developed with heavy industrial, light industrial, research and development or other base sector uses. The Prime Industrial areas within Clairemont:

- Lack in amenities/shopping/services, mixed-use (residential), and walkable environments for employees; and
- Do not have sufficient land area to create critical mass (cluster) of new comparable base sector uses.
- Most of the existing industrial and office buildings are 40 to 65 years old.

Free From Non-Industrial Encroachment: Is the industrial area generally free from residential uses and does it contain few institutional or "public assembly" uses or sensitive receptor land uses? Are less than 50% of existing uses commercial or non-industrial uses? Commercial uses are defined as institutional uses, retail sales, commercial services, offices, and vehicle and vehicle equipment sales and services.

- The Rose Canyon Village does not have residential uses and does not contain institutional or public assembly uses.
- Multi-family and single development is adjacent to the Rose Canyon Village.

Proximity to Resources of Extraordinary Value: Is the area in proximity to certain human resources and infrastructure investments to which access is fundamental to the type of use it would support?

The Rose Canyon Village area is located within five miles of UCSD and Sorrento Valley, life sciences sector businesses, flex/R&D users, corporate headquarters, and medical centers. The area does provide the opportunity for smaller and start up industrial business to rent space.

Base sector users are not the primary use of Prime Industrial land in the Clairemont Community Planning Area. Demand for employment space in surrounding areas, such as the University, Sorrento Mesa, Sorrento Valley, Mira Mesa, and Kearny Mesa areas. However, these areas are considered superior in terms of meeting the City's Prime Industrial land criteria.

C. COLLOCATION/CONVERSION SUITABILITY FACTORS

The city's GP Economic Prosperity Element requires justification for changing the land use designation of prime industrial land by performing an evaluation using the city's 'Collocation/Conversion Suitability Factors' identified in GP Appendix C, EP-2 of the city's Economic Prosperity Element. This section's analysis will concentrate on the Sorrento Mesa Focus Area. Appendix C, EP-1 asks the following:

Area Characteristics – ***The amount of office and commercial development in the area. The significance of encroachment of the non-industrial uses which has already occurred in the area. The area's attractiveness to manufacturing, research and development, wholesale distribution, and warehousing uses, based on a variety of factors including: physical site characteristics, parcel size, parcel configuration, surrounding development patterns, transportation access, and long-term market trends.***

The Rose Canyon Village site is located on the western border of the Clairemont Community Planning Area. The 18.6-acre site is located on an elongated parcel that spans between Santa Fe St. and Morena Blvd. The village area is narrow along its northern boundary and broadens as it expands southward. The area is bounded on north by prime industrial designated land that is presently occupied by commercial, and office uses, Morena Blvd on the east, the Coaster/Amtrak/freight rail tracks and Blue Line Trolley tracks, as well as Santa Fe Street to the west, and Balboa Avenue to the South.

The Rose Canyon Village area site and many of the industrial designated properties near it are occupied by non-industrial uses. These non-industrial uses are largely commercial uses. The presence of these commercial uses may decrease demand for industrial uses, thereby increasing industrial vacancy rates and diminishing synergy across impacted sites. Most of the City's Prime Industrial land is in the other parts of the City and are considered major employment centers and meet more of the Prime Industrial criteria. This Village area has convenient access to the Interstate 5 (I-5) to the west and the Balboa Avenue Transit Station immediately to the south.

Transit Availability – ***The area is located within one-third mile of existing or planned public transit. The project proponent's ability to provide or subsidize transit services to the project, if public transit service is not planned or is inadequate.***

This area is located within Mobility Zone 2. The Southern terminus of the village area is located approximately 300 feet, across Balboa Avenue, from the Balboa Avenue Transit Station. Given the area's proximity to transit options, the site is desirable for both new home and job opportunities. By allowing for both home and job growth opportunities within areas with high frequency transit access, the conversation of this site from prime industrial to mixed use supports a shift from single-occupancy vehicles to walking, biking and transit. This helps to reducing the per capita vehicle miles traveled citywide, consistent with the General Plan and Climate Action Plan.

Impact on Prime Industrial Lands – ***The location of the proposed project adjacent to prime industrial lands and the impact of the proposed project utilization of the prime industrial lands for industrial purposes.***

Industrial land accounts for less than 1% of the total land area in the Clairemont Community Planning Area. As such, there is a limited amount of existing industrial space within Clairemont. Designated industrial areas generally run along I-5 Morena Boulevard between SR 52 and Balboa Avenue. Industrial space within Clairemont is predominately occupied by non-industrial uses. A limited number of base sector users exist in the Prime Industrial area; these include aerospace manufacturers, beer and wine distributors, corporate offices, and other construction and building material suppliers. Citywide, the largest concentrations of Prime Industrial land are outside of Clairemont and are in the communities of University, Sorrento Mesa, Sorrento Valley, Mira Mesa, and Kearny Mesa. These other submarkets are considered major employment centers and meet many of the Prime Industrial characteristics, such as access to labor force, proximity to similar businesses (clusters) and anchors (University of California, San Diego (UCSD), amenities for employees, multiple transportation options, and sufficient land area and configuration to create a critical mass of Prime Industrial uses. By comparison, these factors are relatively deficient in the Rose Canyon/Morena submarket.

Significance of Residential/Employment – ***The significance of the proposed residential density to justify a change in land use. If residential is proposed on the same site, the amount of employment space on the site is to be retained.***

The Community Plan Update designates the Rose Canyon Village areas with a land use of Community Village (0-145). The is the most intense residential land use density proposed by Update's land use plan. The Community Village land use designation provides for retail, service, civic, and office uses and allow for housing as part of mixed-use development. Given the size of the site and the land use designation, the village area plans for up to 2,697 new home opportunities within a High Resource Area. Existing jobs onsite would be relocated to other city owned/leased facilities and new job opportunities could be included through mixed use development.

- **Residential Support Facilities –** ***The presence of public and commercial facilities generally associated with residential neighborhoods in close proximity to the area, such as recreational facilities, grocery stores, and schools.***

  The Rose Canyon Village is adjacent to an established neighborhood and would be served by the following existing residential support facilities, such as schools, recreational facilities, and grocery stores:

  Parks: South Clairemont Community Park and Recreation Center (0.8 of a mile), Cadman Community Park and Recreation Center (0.7 miles)

  Schools: Clairemont High School (0.5 mile), Cadman Elementary School, (0.7 miles), Marston Middle School (0.8 mile)

  Grocery Stores: Vons (1.5 miles, Pacific Beach), Vons (1.5 miles), and Sprouts (1.53 miles)

  Fire Station: Fire Station 27 (1.8 miles)

  Libraries: North Clairemont Branch Library (1.5 miles)

- **Airport Land Use Compatibility –** ***The location of the site in the airport influence area where incompatibilities may result due to adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan policies, Air Installation Compatibility Use Zone Study recommendations, and restrictive use easements.***

  The Rose Canyon Village is not located within the Airport Land Use Compatibility Overlay (ALUCOZ), Airport Influence Area (AIA), or ALUCP area.

- **Public Health: –** ***The location of the site in an employment area where significant incompatibilities may result regarding truck traffic, odors, noise, safety, and other external environmental effects.***

  Non-industrial uses found near the Rose Canyon Village site between Santa Fe Street, Damon Avenue and Interstate 5 are presently occupied by non-industrial uses including commercial and retail services. North of Damon Avenue, between Interstate 5 and Santa Fe Street includes a utility facility and other commercial and retail services. These non-industrial uses are not anticipated to present significant incompatibilities that could result in significant environmental effects.

- **Public Facilities: –** ***The availability of facilities to serve the residential units. Provide public facilities onsite wherever feasible.***

  In addition to the facilities described above, the Rose Canyon Village site is located with the Community Enhancement Overlay Zone. The Community Enhancement Overlay Zone Supplemental Development Regulations would require public space that is privately owned, publicly accessible spaces to be integrated into different development contexts. Further, a site-specific supplemental development regulation applies within the Rose Canyon Village site. The supplemental development regulation would require a public park that is a minimum of 3-acres in size and shall include a minimum of one paved north-south oriented pedestrian pathway at least 8-feet in width connecting the site to Balboa Avenue

- **Separation of Uses –** ***The adequacy of the separation between industrial and residential properties with regard to hazardous or toxic air contaminants or hazardous or toxic substances. Determine if there are any sources of toxic or hazardous air contaminants, or toxic or hazardous substances, within a quarter mile of the property between proposed residential or other sensitive receptor land uses and proposed properties where such contaminants or substances are located. If so, an adequate distance separation shall be determined on a case-by-case basis based on an approved study submitted by the applicant to the City and appropriate regulatory agencies. If no study is completed, provide a 1000-ft. minimum distance separation between property lines. Uses which are not sensitive receptor land uses, such as most commercial and business offices, retail uses, parking, open space, and public rights-of way can locate between the properties within the separation area.***

  Given the presence of non-industrial uses on prime industrial designated land near the Rose Canyon Village, there are no sources of hazardous or toxic air contaminants or hazardous or toxic substances within a quarter mile of the village site.

D. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Base sector uses are not a primary use of Prime Industrial land within the Clairemont Community Planning Area and demand for employment space in surrounding areas, such as the University, Sorrento Mesa, Sorrento Valley, Mira Mesa, and Kearny Mesa areas, is anticipated to remain strong.

However, these areas are considered superior in terms of meeting the City's Prime Industrial land criteria. The conversation of the Rose Canyon Village site from prime industrial land to a residential land use and mixed-use base zone would assist meeting the significant unmet residential demand within the Clairemont Community Planning Area.