2. Planning Context

2.1 UCSD Campus Context

The UCSD campus extends across 1,200 acres of land from the Pacific Ocean to inland parcels east of Interstate 5. Bisected by the Interstate 5 freeway and major roads, the Campus is divided into three primary land components: Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO), West Campus, and East Campus. The Science Research Park (SRP) is located within the East Campus adjacent to Regents Road. (Figure 2.1).

The UCSD Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) and the UCSD Master Plan study guide development on the Campus. In general, the LRDP identifies the Campus land uses, development areas and open space preserves; and the Master Plan study outlines planning principles and design guidelines for Campus development. Together they provide a framework to manage growth and physical development in an orderly fashion to conserve and enhance the functional effectiveness, environmental quality and ambiance of the Campus.

The LRDP delineates development of a variety of land uses on the East Campus, including: academic, clinical, science research, housing, recreation and parking facilities as well as Campus open space reserves. These land uses are discussed in more detail in Section 2.2 - East Campus Context. A summary of the Master Plan principles and guidelines common to all Campus development and particularly pertinent to the East Campus and the SRP neighborhood includes the following:

- Development will occur within definable neighborhoods with clear boundaries and character.
- The shoreline, canyons, eucalyptus groves, and large areas of native habitats will remain interconnected and constitute the UCSD Park, a prominent natural resource to be respected and
The majority of East Campus acreage was undeveloped as recently as 1990; however, since that time, this Campus has been steadily urbanizing (Figure 2.2). Existing and planned development immediately surrounding the SRP includes:

- A new Campus entrance road (Health Sciences Drive) and a surface parking lot are located north of the SRP. The parking lot contains approximately 1,770 spaces and is used as remote parking for the West Campus.
- The East Campus Health Sciences (ECHS) neighborhood located northwest of the SRP is in the process of being developed. The existing buildings consisting of Thornton Hospital, Perlman Ambulatory Care Center, and Shiley Eye Center, will undergo future expansion, and new facilities will be constructed for clinical outpatient services, clinical research, and specialized health institutes. Several parking structures are also planned for development in this neighborhood (Figure 2.3).

In addition, the street system will be modified by terminating Campus Point Drive at the northern perimeter of the ECHS neighborhood, rather than extending through the neighborhood to an intersection with Medical Center Drive. A loop road will also be completed around the ECHS Neighborhood. Health Sciences Drive will be extended to intersect this loop road, completing the new East Campus entrance from Regents Road.

- The UCSD Park also adjoins a portion of the western edge of the SRP parcel, but is not contiguous with SRP development. This condition is discussed in greater detail in Section 2.3 – SRP Site Context.
- Mesa Housing, a residential neighborhood for UCSD’s graduate and married students, is situated south of the SRP. This neighborhood consists of 600 two-story units sited in a park-
Additional existing and planned development on the East Campus, but not contiguous to the SRP, includes:

- UCSD will construct a new bridge across Interstate 5 (east of Gilman Drive near the VA Medical Center) to provide additional vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connections between the East and West Campus areas. It is anticipated to be implemented by the year 2003. The bridge will have a unique design consisting of a cable-stay structure incorporating advanced composite materials. In addition to its functional purpose, the bridge will serve as a visual and symbolic landmark for UCSD and the City of San Diego.

- The Preuss School, a UCSD charter school for students in grades 6-12, is located southwest of Genesee Avenue and Campus Point Drive.

- A Campus parcel southeast of Genesee Avenue and Campus Point Drive is designated by the LRDP as a reserve for a future academic use. It may be a potential site for the relocation of
the Extended Studies Public Programs facility (formerly called UCSD Extension). There is no date set for development of this land.

- Development located immediately east of Regents Road and the SRP that is not a part of the UCSD Campus includes La Jolla Country Day School, Mandell Weiss Eastgate City Park, and further to the east and south, University City commercial development (Figure 2.4a).

2.3 SRP Site Context

The SRP parcel consists primarily of undeveloped land located at the eastern end of a large canyon that bisects the East Campus. The canyon landform to the west of the SRP is generally undisturbed, although the natural vegetation has been modified in some areas by introduction of non-native plant species.

In contrast, the landform and vegetation within the SRP parcel has been extensively modified by past military use, subsequent Campus use of a portion of the site as a golf driving range and recent grading. One of the remaining modifications by the military includes a manufactured earth berm, which separates all but 1.67 acres of the SRP parcel from the main canyon. The SRP acreage to the east of this berm will be developed, while the remaining 1.67 acres of the parcel on the west side of the berm will be preserved as open space. The preserved land will be contiguous to the UCSD Park, and is intended to provide an open space and visual amenity for the SRP development.

The original canyon landform of the SRP parcel requires grading and filling to accommodate development. The variation in the original site topography provides the opportunity to vary the grades of the site development and capitalize on the view corridor to the west as well as distant views of the West Campus (Figure 2.4b).
A wetland habitat meanders along the length of the canyon bottom within the UCSD Park open space preserve, and it originally extended into the SRP parcel. This habitat was initially created and supported by urban runoff emanating from development east of UCSD and discharged into the Campus from a City storm drain outlet on the west side of the Regents Road/Eastgate Mall intersection.

UCSD received permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Fish and Game in 1993 allowing removal of 1.5 acres of habitat within the SRP parcel pursuant to completion of mitigation. The required mitigation entailed the enhancement of 2.1 acres of wetland habitat in the adjacent canyon preserved within the UCSD Park and preservation of 1.67 acres of wetland (a riparian habitat) within the western portion of the SRP site. A water supply to the habitat west of the SRP is maintained by a subsurface storm drain which extends beneath the SRP from the outlet at Regents Road/Eastgate Mall intersection to a new outlet that discharges into the preserved habitat.

The Campus has completed the required mitigation and proceeded with the habitat removal and associated grading and drainage improvements within the SRP during Summer 1999. Additional grading will be needed to prepare the site for development.

There are no streets currently within the SRP parcel; the only circulation improvement within the parcel is a combined pedestrian and bicycle path extending between Mesa Housing and the ECHS neighborhood. This circulation corridor will be preserved, although it will be realigned to accommodate SRP development.

The street system that will be developed in the SRP neighborhood will integrate with the East Campus and off-campus street system. Three intersections on the north, east, and west sides of the parcel will become the entrances to the SRP neighborhood. The primary entrance into the neighborhood will be from the east at the intersection of Regents Road and Eastgate Mall. Secondary entrances will be located at the north perimeter of the SRP neighborhood at the intersection of Health Sciences Drive and Voigt Drive, and at the northwest corner of the neighborhood at the realigned intersection of Medical Center Drive and Street C (formerly noted as Campus Point Drive in the UCSD Master Plan study). Street C will be extended through the SRP neighborhood and will connect with each of the entrances. A new street name indicative of the SRP (e.g. Science Research Drive) will be coordinated with the UCSD Naming Committee.

The future alignment of the LRT across UCSD has not yet been finalized; however a potential alignment is depicted in Figure 2.2. This alignment would span over the southwest corner of the SRP. Therefore, tall structures could not be built within that area, but low development such as surface parking would be feasible. It should also be noted that this alignment of the LRT would require modification of the vegetation that currently serves as a buffer between the SRP and Mesa Housing. Although the LRT would likely provide some landscape screening along its alignment, the SRP development concept should also provide landscaping along this edge to augment the buffer (Figure 2.5).
Figure 2.4b Views to the west of canyon, wetlands and riparian areas, and West Campus buildings beyond

Figure 2.5 Pedestrian/bike paths along the western edge of the site