

# I. Project Summary

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## A. Purpose

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This Specific Plan (SP264) has been prepared in order to facilitate project review in accordance with the requirements established by the County of Riverside. The Specific Plan proposes a residential development consisting of 56 homes on approximately 71 acres. Due to the relatively small size and limited scope of the project, and the low intensity of land use proposed by this Specific Plan, the County has not required an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed project. An Environmental Review of the proposed site was performed, and is included in this document. This review will assess the environmental consequences of the several actions included, and is presented within this document in a succinct format in order to facilitate easy review of the proposed development.

## B. Project Description

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The project site is located on the southwest side of Mockingbird Canyon Road approximately one-half mile south of Van Buren Boulevard (See Figure 1-1 and Figure 1-2). The subject property consists of eight parcels and includes approximately 71.77 acres of land. The property is bordered on the northeast by Mockingbird Canyon Road, with a frontage of approximately 1200 linear feet. The applicant proposes to develop the property into 56 single family dwellings on lots not less than one acre in size. The relatively small scope of the project and the rolling hills of the local terrain favor a single land use development at this site. The proposed project consists entirely of Category III Rural Residential Land Use. This is consistent with existing land uses in the area and with Approved Land Uses in the surrounding area.

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## **C. Public Support**

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Since the early planning stages of the proposed project, the applicant has been in close contact with property owners of parcels surrounding the proposed site. The applicant also consulted with numerous County agencies prior to the initial planning phase of the project. Adjacent property owners and County personnel have continued to provide input throughout the planning process, and the resulting project as proposed has elicited strong support from surrounding owners. At the time of this writing, owners of sixteen (16) parcels in the area have expressed written support to the County in favor of the project as proposed. Several of these families have been local property owners for over 25 years. Appendix A included in this document contains copies of written support from adjacent and surrounding property owners.

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## **D. Parallel Applications**

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The applicant has filed several applications with the County of Riverside pursuant to the proposed project. These applications include:

**SPECIFIC PLAN - SP264**

**GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT - CGPA234**

**CHANGE OF ZONE - CZ5593**

**TENTATIVE TRACT MAP - TM24985**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - EA34293**

The Comprehensive General Plan Amendment (CGPA234) is required and has been requested in order to designate the project site as "Adopted Specific Plan" subsequent to the approval of the proposed development. The site is currently

designated on County Maps as "land not designated as open space" (66 acres) and "mountainous" (6.5 acres). In addition to the Comprehensive General Plan Amendment, a zone change to "R-A-1" zoning designation (CZ5593) is required and has been requested. Most of the project site (46.4 acres) was previously zoned RA-20,000, with a smaller portion (18 acres) zoned for 2.5 acre lots. Finally, the Tentative Tract Map (TM24985) and the Environmental Assessment (EA34293) are required to provide additional review of the proposed development.

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## **E. Project Objectives**

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The proposed project involves the development of approximately 71.77 acres of vacant, rural land into a residential subdivision in an area of Riverside County that is currently experiencing pressure for rural residential development. The zone change is proposed to facilitate the stabilization of lot sizes within the tract. Existing lot sizes contiguous to the site range from 1/2 acre to large parcels. The reparcelization of this land will facilitate an improved infrastructure of roads, emergency service access, and public utilities to the area.

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## **F. Market Characteristics**

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The project site is located in an area of rolling hills to the south of the city of Riverside. This general area includes much of the Woodcrest area and extends into the greater Lake Matthews area as well. The housing market in the area is evolving as a medium-low to low density single family dwelling market. This is due in part to terrain conditions which encourage a rural spaciousness and partly in response to the General Plan of the County of Riverside. The General Plan acknowledges the semi-rural nature of the existing market, which consists mostly of lot sizes 7200 square feet and larger. Most lots in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site are 1/2 acre and larger. An additional

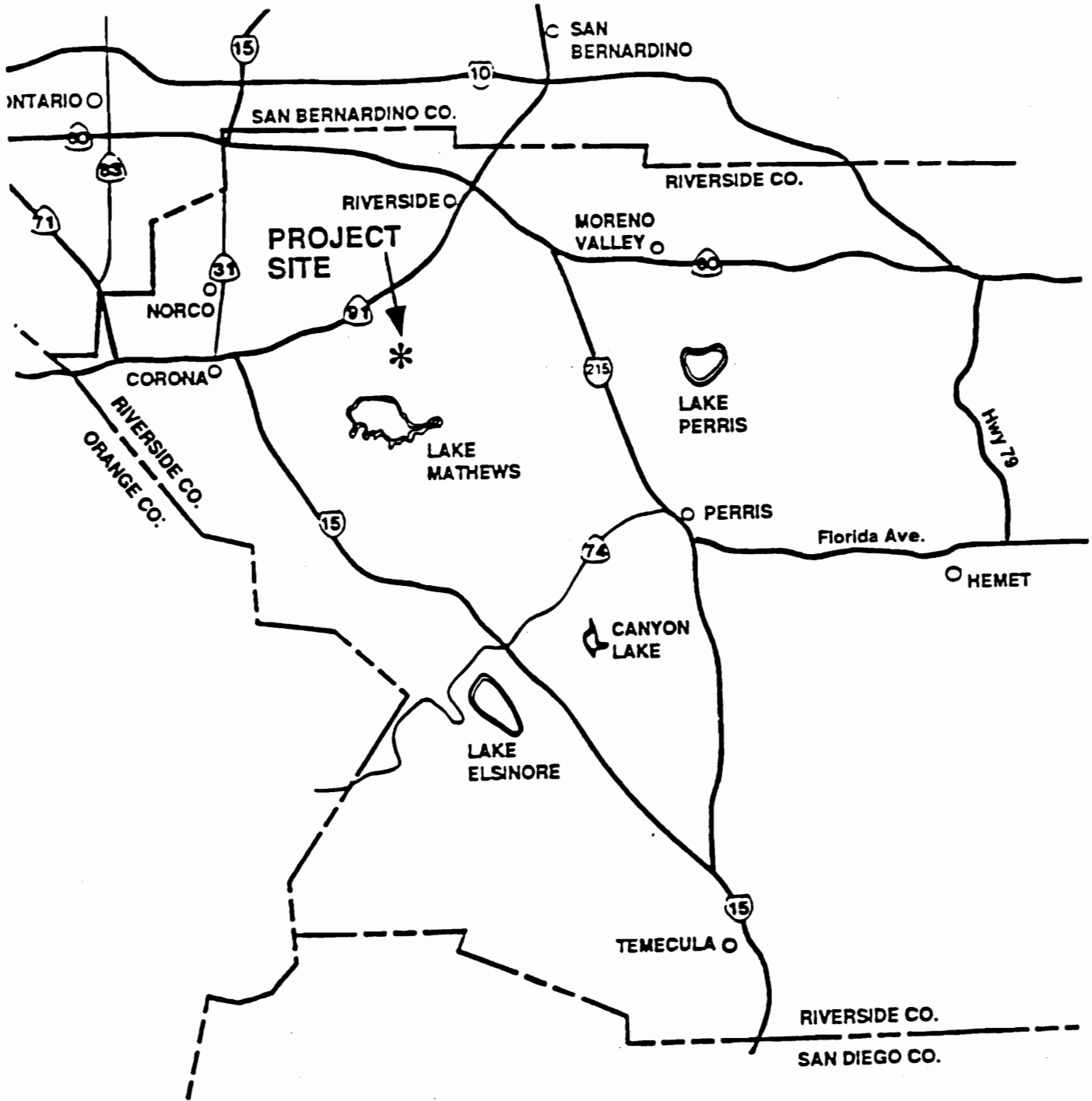
component in the past few years has been a growing market demand for spacious homes on larger lots; homes designed to accommodate active families in well-designed new home neighborhoods. This project will help to satisfy the demand for attractive new rural homes for established families in the greater Riverside area.

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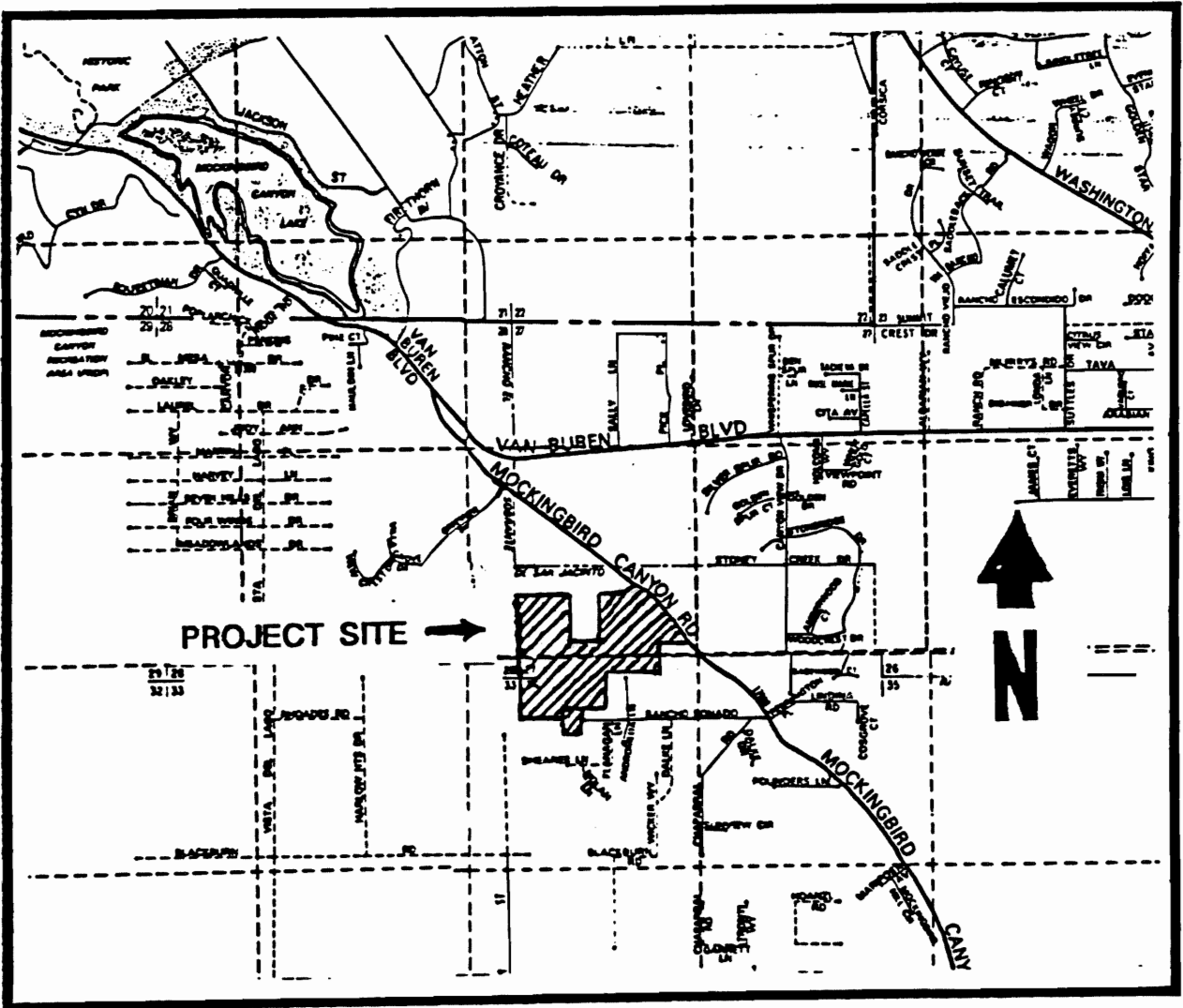
## **G. Overall Design Objectives**

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The primary design consideration throughout the preliminary planning phase of this proposed development was the retention of the aesthetic characteristics of the area in its present natural state. Interactive issues such as circulation, emergency access, lot sizes and boundaries, and building pad locations and elevations were evaluated with this primary design characteristic in mind. Generous lot sizes coupled with judicious and careful building pad siting are intended to minimize aesthetic disruption due to grading and also to minimize damage to the extant drought-resistant vegetation on the existing natural slopes within the site. The design of the proposed project promotes the retention of this vegetation and of the existing natural rock outcroppings wherever possible. The reasons for these policies are two-fold; to preserve the natural character of the area and to preserve the natural efficiency of the drainage patterns and erosion control systems that currently exist at the site in its natural and undeveloped state. Many other features of the proposed project are the result of careful attention to these design objectives. Important examples include street lighting, building pad placement and orientation, and on-site sign placement and design. Each of these important aesthetic issues were given site-specific design treatment in order to minimize visual disruption. The project when complete will provide an excellent neighborhood in which active families can enjoy the benefits of a rural lifestyle while residing just outside the city limits of Riverside.



**FIGURE I.1  
REGIONAL MAP**



**FIGURE I.2  
VICINITY MAP**



**FIGURE I.3  
AERIAL PHOTO**