

Environmental Setting

Section 2.0

2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

2.1 LOCATION

The City of Lemon Grove is located in the southwest portion of San Diego County, which comprises the southwest corner of California (Figure 2.1-1). The County is located about 150 miles south of downtown Los Angeles and immediately north of the United States-Mexico border.

Encompassing 3.75 square miles, the City boundaries are defined by State Route 94 (SR-94) to the north, Sweetwater Road to the east, 69th Street and Mac Arthur Drive on the west, and Lemon Grove Avenue, Larwood Road, Lincoln Place and Carlisle Drive on the south (Figures 2.1-2 and 2.1-3). The City of La Mesa lies just north of the City, across SR-94. To the east of the City is the unincorporated community of Spring Valley. The City of San Diego wraps around the western portion of the City. The San Diego community of Rolando is located to the northwest, across from SR-94, and the Oak Park and Encanto communities extend to the eastern and southern boundaries of Lemon Grove.

Access to the City is primarily provided by SR-94, Sweetwater Road, Lemon Grove Avenue (which becomes Imperial Avenue within the City of San Diego), and the San Diego Trolley line.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

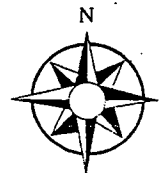
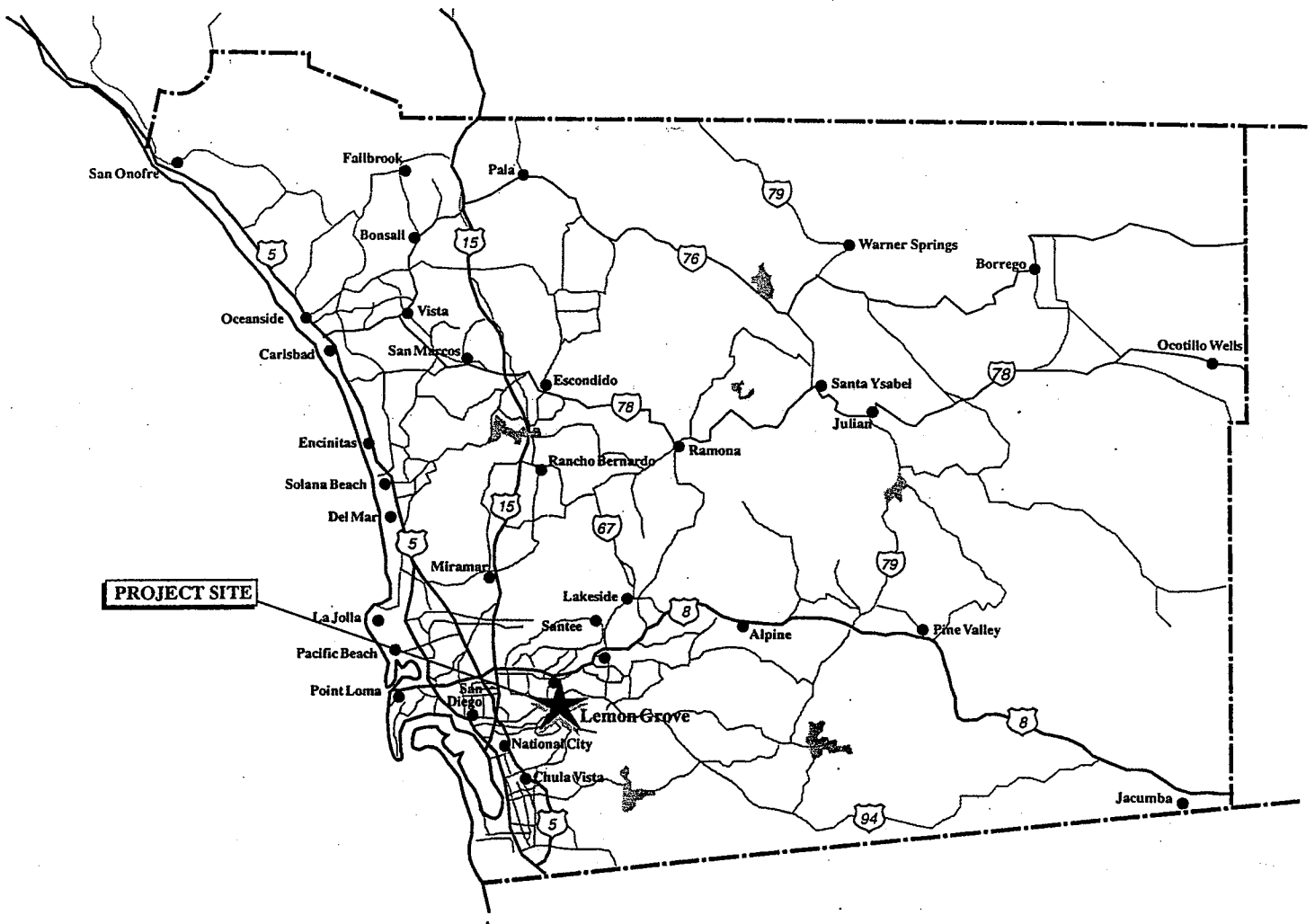
Lemon Grove enjoys warm, mild weather characteristic of mediterranean climates. Summers are warm and dry, and winters are cooler with occasional rains. The average daily temperature is 62° Fahrenheit. An average of 13 inches of rain falls each year between November and early April. Cool ocean breezes help to moderate the temperature.

Lemon Grove is marked by varied environmental features. The topography consists of coastal mesas and associated drainage, and some of the original topographic features have been altered by grading required for development. Elevations range from approximately 280 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) in the northwestern part of the City to approximately 528 feet AMSL along Golden Avenue near the northeastern boundary (Figure 2.1-4). Several intermittent streams flow through the City during rain events. As a result of a shallow groundwater table, several natural springs occur in the City.

Most of the City has been developed, and few natural areas exist (Figure 2.1-3). Natural habitat includes some disturbed wetland along two drainages and disturbed coastal sage scrub in three limited areas. Open space is provided by municipal parks and schools and by areas that cannot be developed due to slope constraints.

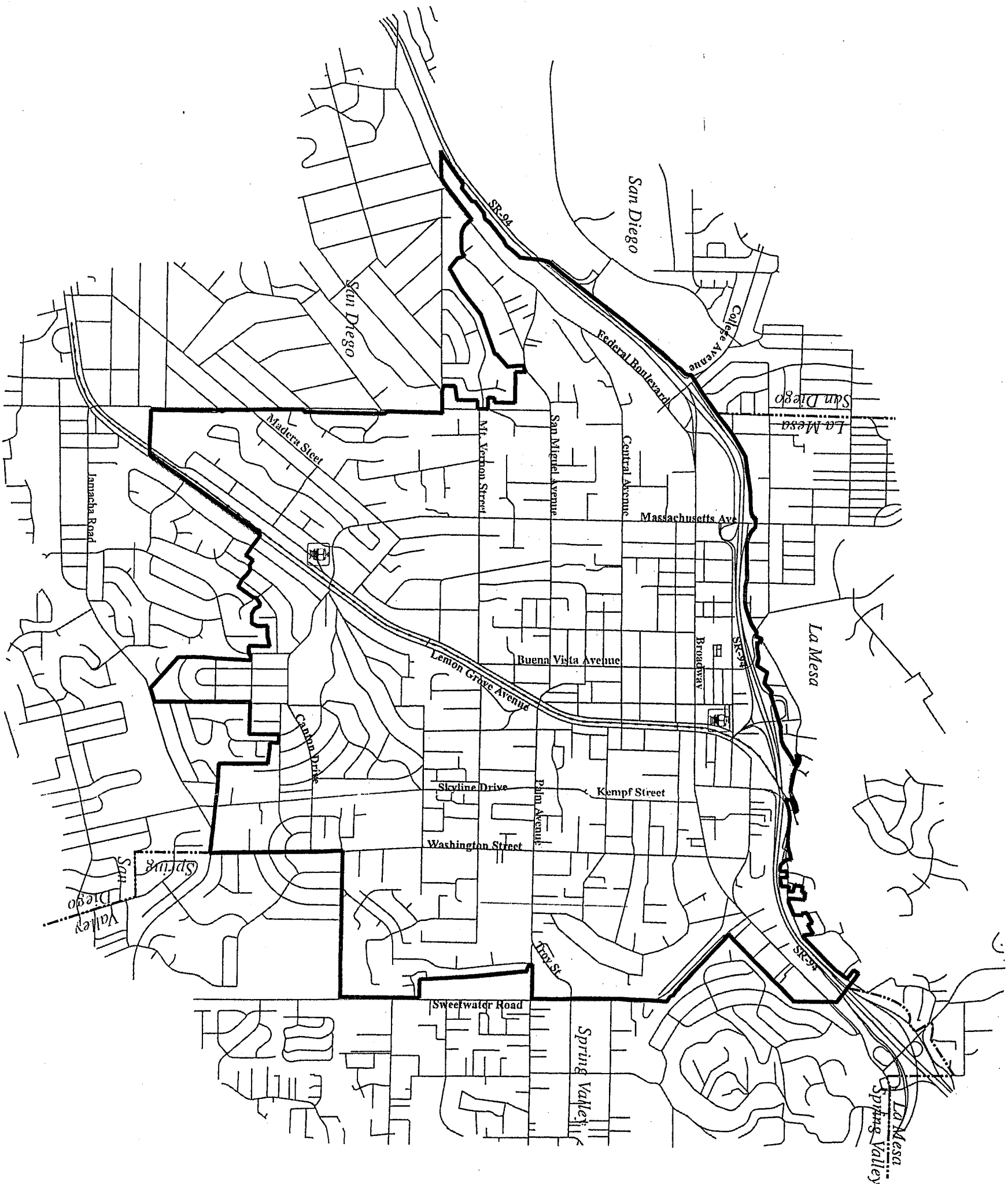


*General Plan
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Environmental Impact Report*



Not to Scale

**Figure 2.1-1
Regional Location**



- Legend**
- Lemon Grove City Boundary
 - - - Surrounding City Boundaries
 - - - MTDB Trolley System
 - ☐ Trolley Station
- Source: RUIS

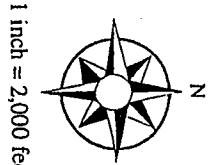


Figure 2.1-2
City of Lemon Grove

2.3 DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The development pattern in Lemon Grove dates back to 1869 when Robert Allison purchased a portion of Rancho Mission San Diego. A rail line was extended from San Diego out to Lemon Grove in 1890, and the production of citrus and berry crops boomed in the warm, temperate climate. The center of town was established along the rail tracks, which have been recently replaced by the tracks for the San Diego Trolley. Homes were constructed as new settlers arrived to enjoy the "Best Climate on Earth." The little agricultural town prospered and schools, churches and even a country club were constructed.

Residential development flourished during the 1940s, particularly after World War II. Citrus orchards slowly gave way to single-family neighborhoods. The boom lasted until about 1970 when the number of housing units was about 7,500, and the population reached about 20,000. Businesses established during this period were concentrated along Broadway, Federal Boulevard and Lemon Grove Avenue. By the mid-1970s, most of the vacant land in the City had been developed, and the growth rate dropped off substantially.

The Lemon Grove of today is characterized by a well-established land use pattern. The commercial and industrial areas are primarily focused in the northern part of the City, near SR-94 (Figure 2.1-3). The primary commercial area is along Broadway with some commercial activity along Lemon Grove Avenue. Single-family neighborhoods occupy most of the area south of Broadway although a few apartments are distributed in these neighborhoods. Most multi-family residential development is located along major transportation arterials within one or two blocks north and south of Broadway. Several municipal parks, schools and churches are located throughout the Lemon Grove neighborhoods.

2.4 CITY DEMOGRAPHICS

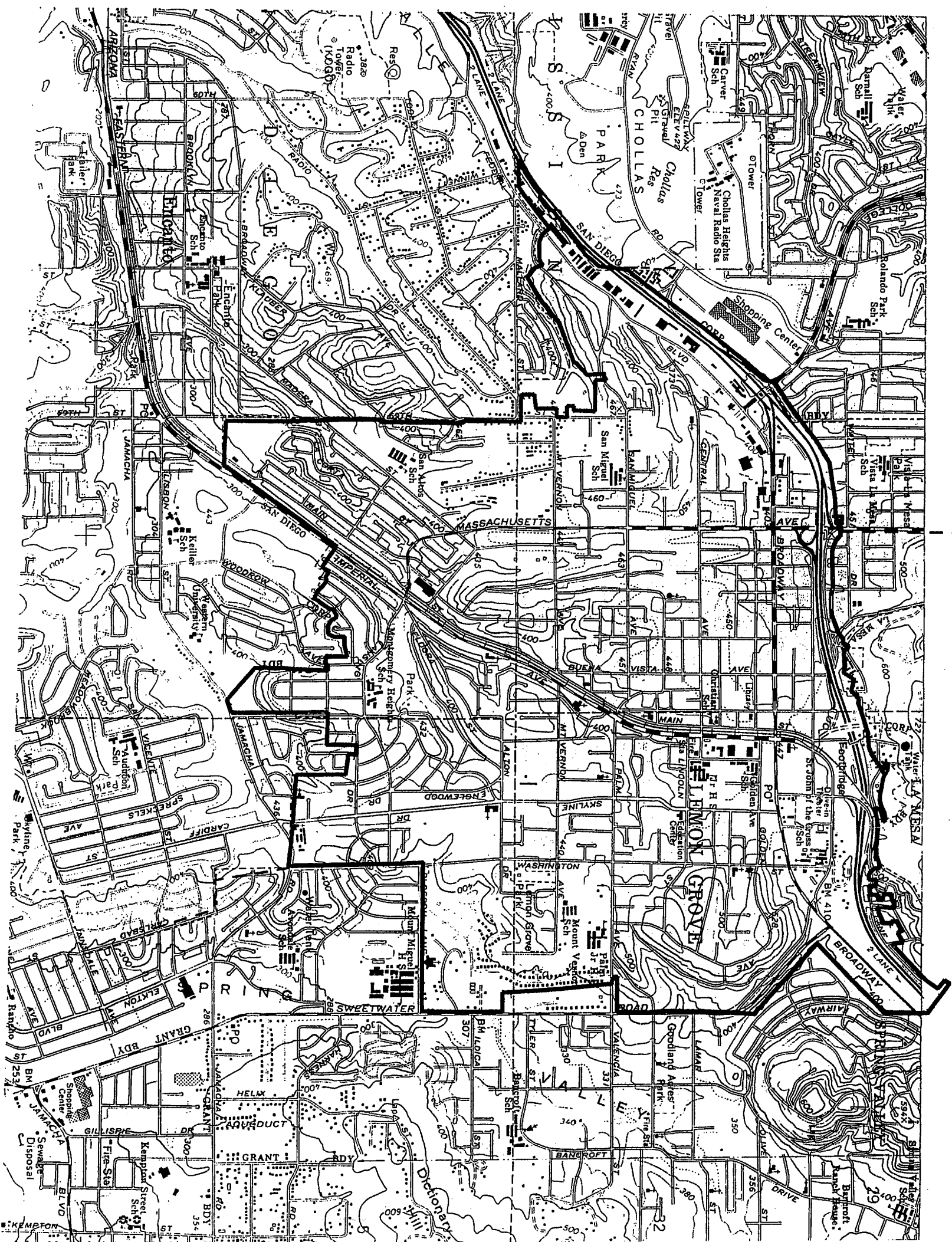
According to the California Department of Finance, the City's estimated population in January 1995 was 25,175. While the City's population is predominantly White, the percentage declined from 85.7 to 76.6 percent between 1980 and 1990 according to the U.S. Census. Other races and ethnic groups comprise significant portions of the population and are integral components of the community. About 20 percent of the population claimed Hispanic origin in the 1990 U.S. Census. The U.S. Census indicates that Blacks constituted 8.0 percent and Asians constituted 5.6 percent of the Lemon Grove community in 1990. American Indians and other races, respectively, constituted 0.9 and 8.9 percent of the population in 1990.

Lemon Grove's population is projected to age in accordance with regional and national trends. U.S. Census data for the age distribution of the City support those projections. The median age increased from 29.1 years in 1970, to 30.9 years in 1980, and 32.0 years in 1990 (City of Lemon Grove, 1992a).



Source: Aerial Photo Bank, flown 2/19/95

Figure 2.1-3
Aerial Photo of the City of Lemon Grove



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Legend

— City of Lemon Grove Boundary

Source: USGS 7.5 minute series topographic map, National City quadrangle

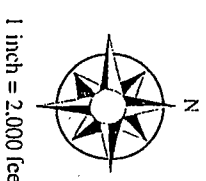


Figure 2.1-4
Existing Topography