

LAND USE/COMMUNITY CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

NOVEMBER 13, 2023



SETTING

REGIONAL SETTING

The City of Norco is located in the western portion of Riverside County, approximately 45 miles east of Los Angeles, and about 12 miles from Ontario Airport. Norco shares boundaries with the cities of Corona, Riverside, Eastvale, and Jurupa Valley, and unincorporated Riverside County.

LOCAL SETTING

The city is approximately 9,800 acres or 14.5 square miles in area, with approximately 56 acres located outside the city limit within its “sphere of influence.” The City has initiated the process of annexing these parcels. The bluffs overlooking the Santa Ana River define the northeastern to southwestern physical edge of the city and the north-south running Norco Hills define the city’s eastern physical edge.

Primary features of the built environment include the I-15 Freeway that splits the city roughly into two halves, and two major federal and state institutions, the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) and the California Rehabilitation Center (CRC). The CRC is a major physical element to be considered in planning for future development in Norco, especially since the site includes the former Norconian Hotel, a historic Spanish/Mediterranean style building that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Other

defining features within Norco include Beacon Hill in the north central portion of the city and Lake Norconian, a man-made reservoir that was completed in 1929 as part of the Norconian Hotel and Lake Norconian Club resort.

Residential development in Norco has primarily been on lots that are 20,000 square feet in area or greater, comprising almost half of the incorporated land area in Norco (46 percent). The remaining residential lots comprise approximately 20 percent of the land area. Much of the hillside area has been developed with residential housing.

Currently, over 13 percent of the city’s land area is used for commercial and industrial activities and for public institutions such as schools and parks. Commercial businesses are generally clustered along Hamner Avenue, which has the largest volume of through traffic in the city, and along Sixth Street, which has a heavy emphasis on animal-keeping related businesses.

A large undeveloped area within the southeast part of the city is the 429-acre Wyle Laboratories site, a 429-acre aerospace rocket testing facility that operated from 1957 to 2003.

FIG. 1. REGIONAL SETTING

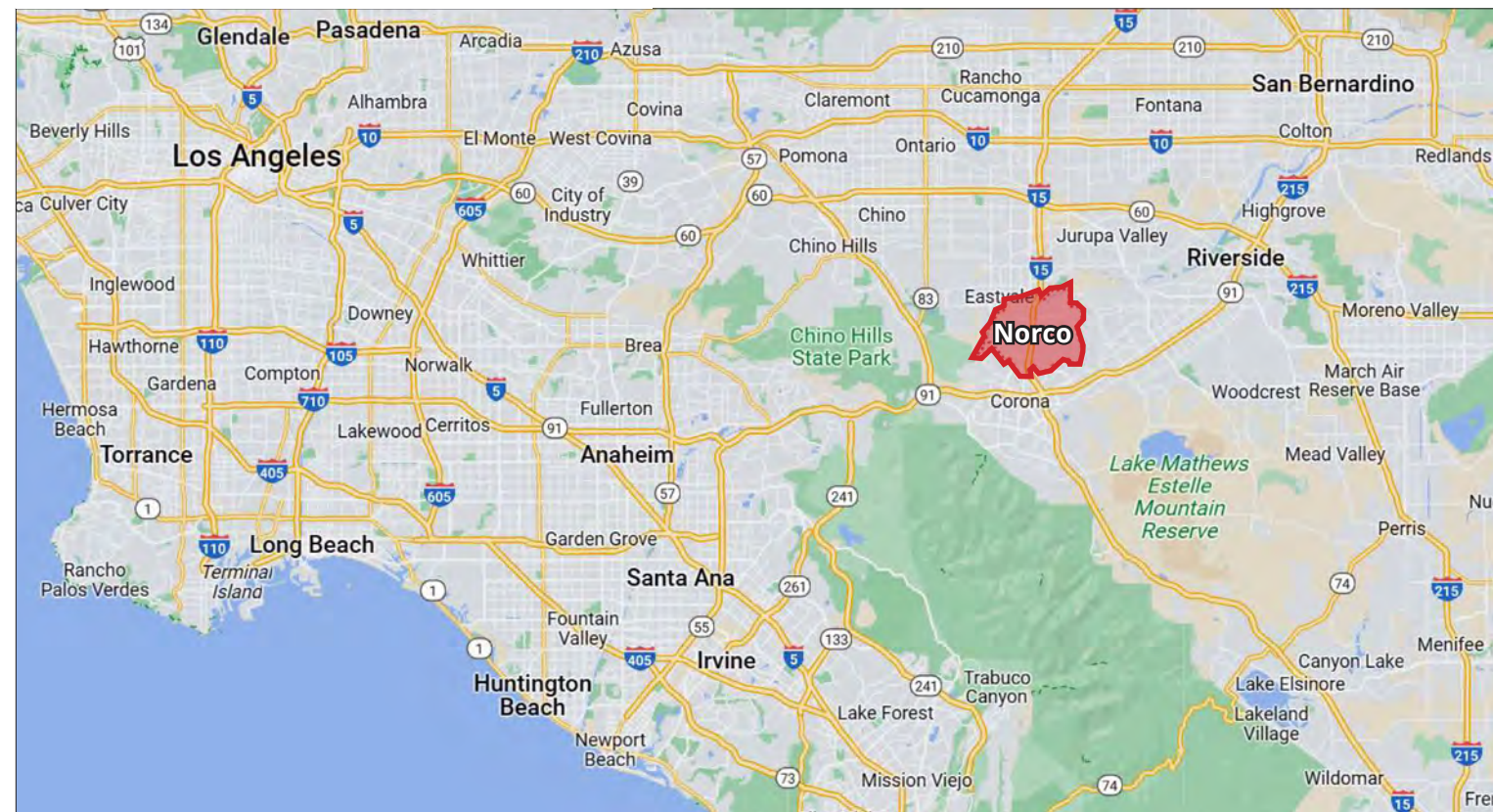
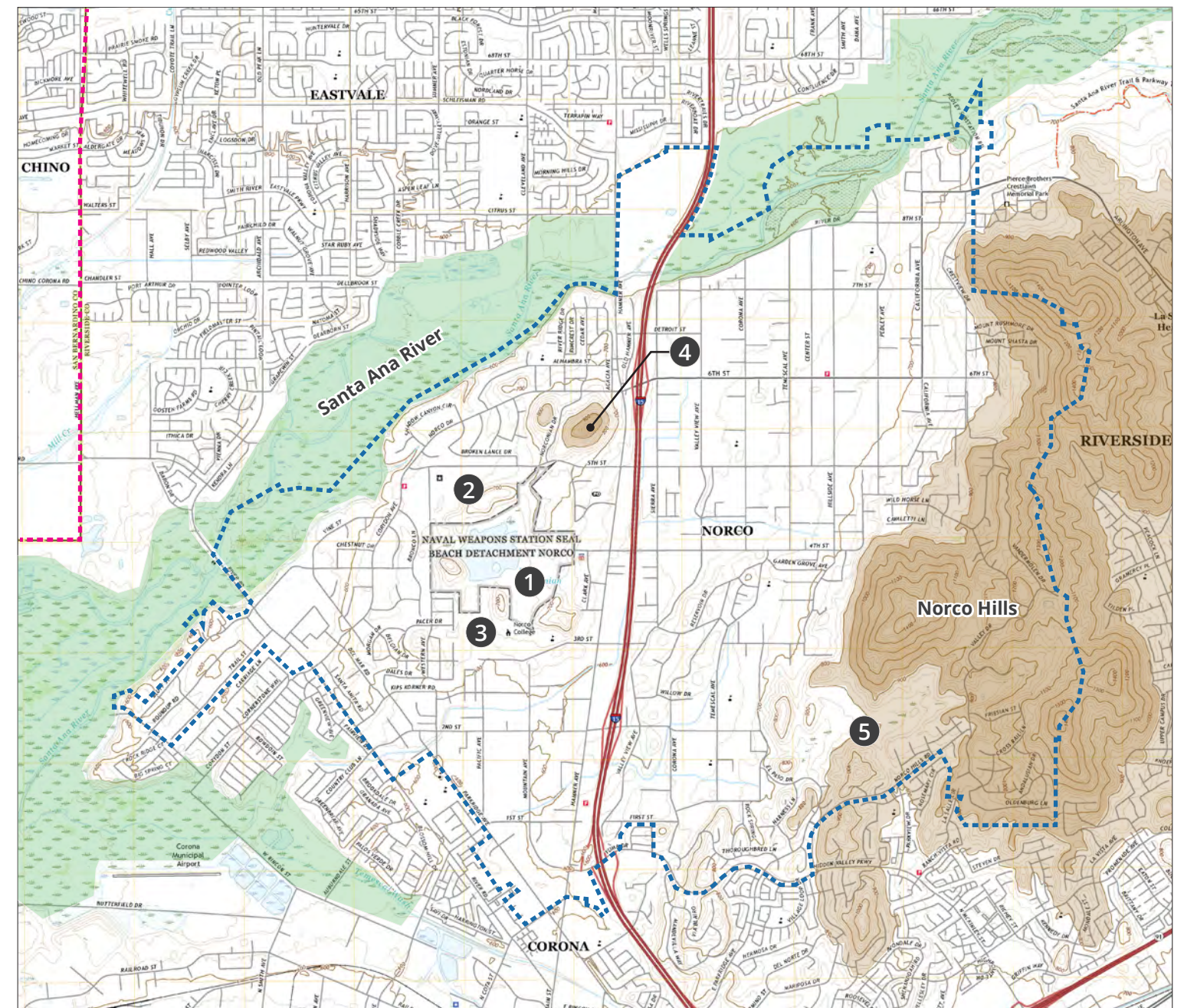


FIG. 2. LOCAL SETTING



- 1 Naval Surface Warfare Center
- 2 California Rehabilitation Center
- 3 Norco College
- 4 Beacon Hill
- 5 Former Wyle Labs Site

- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Santa Ana River
- Hills

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

EXISTING LAND USES

Most land in Norco is designated and zoned for low- density agricultural-oriented residential uses. A central component of the large lot zoning is the open areas reserved for large animal keeping and small plot agricultural uses and – for newer development – a recorded Primary Animal Keeping Area (PAKA), which governs the minimum area of a site that must be devoted to animal keeping and/or agricultural uses and kept clear of structures, except for structures that facilitate animal

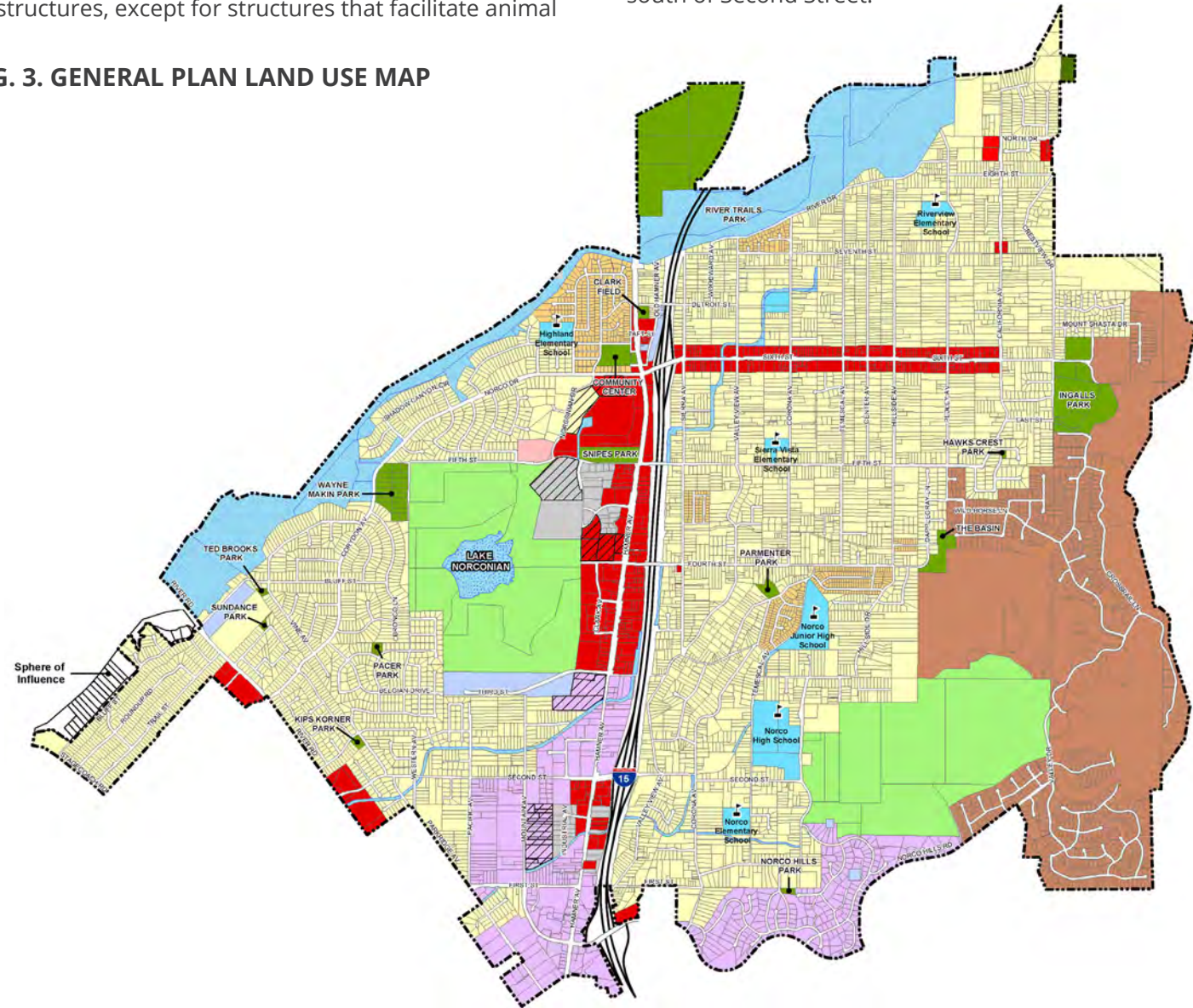
keeping and agricultural uses, provided they do not cover more than 40 percent of the PAKA.

Commercial uses are concentrated along Sixth Street, Hamner Avenue, and River Road, with pockets along California Avenue and North Drive. Industrial uses are accommodated in the area south of Fifth Street along Horseless Carriage Drive and Town and Country Drive and south of Second Street.

The Norconian Site and the former Wyle Labs site are designated and zoned Preservation and Development, which provide for the coordinated development of planned commercial projects in a manner that preserves significant natural landscape features, open lands, and historical buildings.

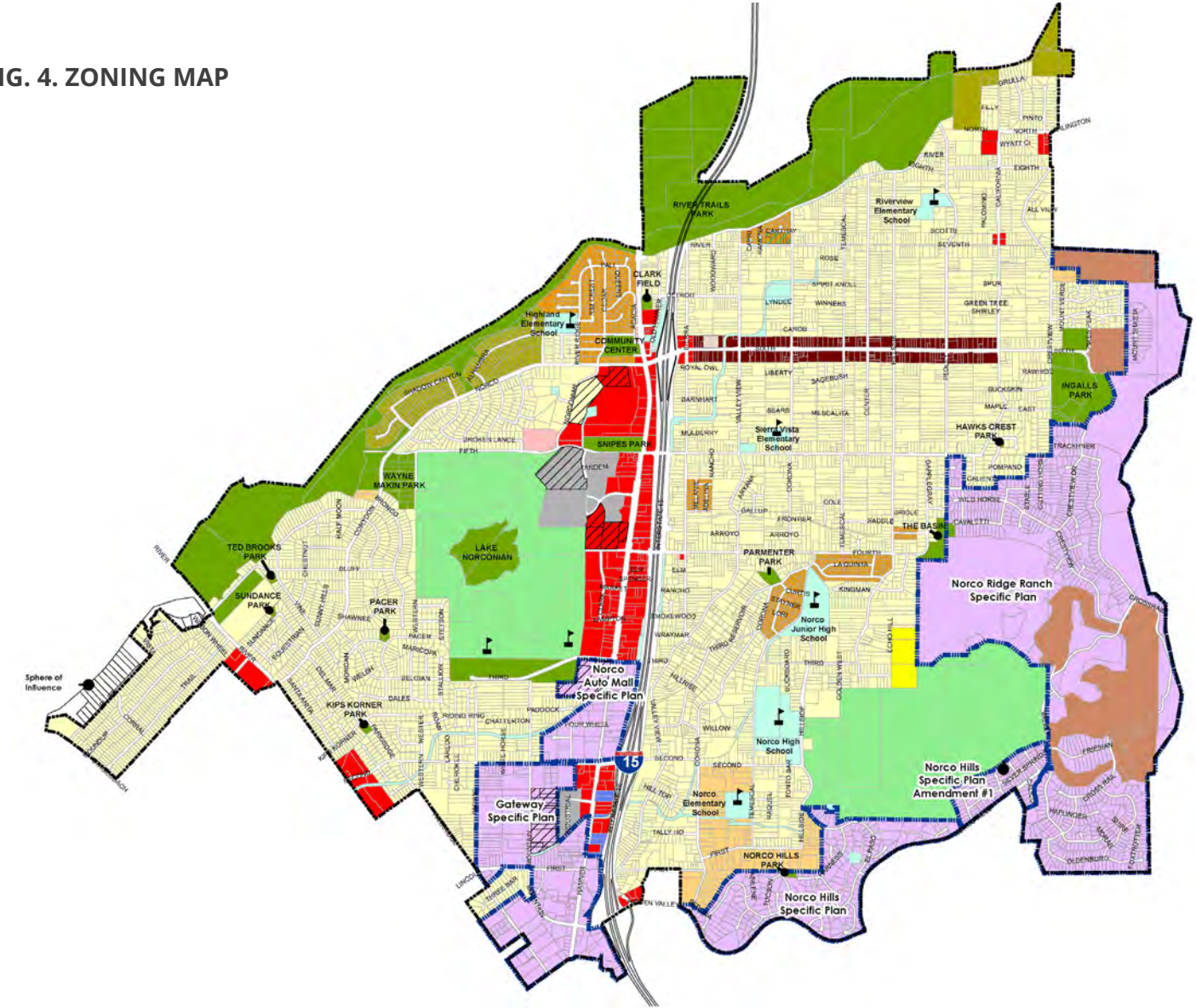
Active specific plans within the City of Norco include the *Gateway Specific Plan*, the *Auto Mall Specific Plan*, the *Norco Hills Specific Plan*, and the *Norco Ridge Ranch Specific Plan*. A developer-prepared specific plan for the former Wyle Labs site – the *Hidden Valley Tech Campus Specific Plan* – is currently under consideration.

FIG. 3. GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP



- RA (Residential Agricultural)
- PAD (Preservation and Development)
- PL (Public Lands)
- RL (Residential Low)
- A (Agricultural)
- SP (Specific Plan)
- IN (Institutional)
- S (Existing Schools)
- Sphere of Influence
- CO (Commercial Office)
- P (Parks)
- HDO (Housing Development Overlay)
- CC (Commercial Community)
- HS (Hillside Areas)
- City Boundaries
- I (Industrial)
- WR (Water Related)

FIG. 4. ZONING MAP



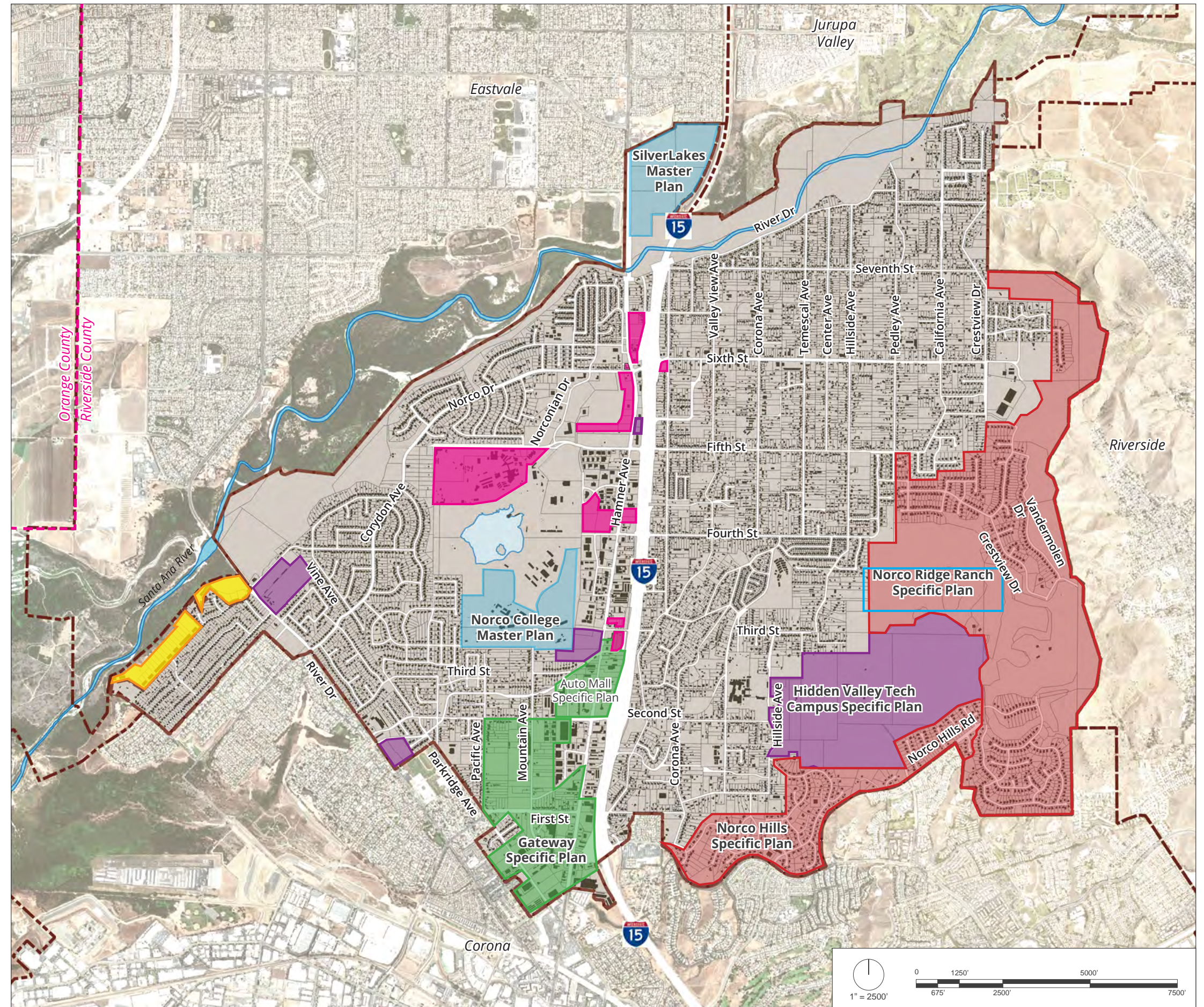
- HS (Hillside Agricultural - Low Density)
- C-O (Commercial Office)
- R-1-10 (AKO)
Animal-Keeping Overlay
- OS (Open Space)
- C-G (Commercial General)
- HDO (Housing Development Overlay)
- LD (Limited Development)
- C-4 (Commercial)
- PAD (Preservation and Development)
- A-E (Agricultural Estate)
- M-1 (Heavy Commercial/light Manufacturing)
- Hospitality Development
- A-1-10 (Agricultural - Low Density 10 ac.)
- M-2 (General Manufacturing)
- Sphere of Influence
- A-1-20 (Agricultural - Low Density 20,000 sq. ft.)
- SP (Specific Plan)
- Specific Plan Boundaries
- A-1-40 (Agricultural - Low Density 40,000 sq. ft.)
- M-1 (CTO-1)
Commercial Transition Overlay
- City Boundaries
- R-1-10 (Residential - Single Family 10,000 sq. ft.)

LAND USE ASSUMPTIONS

The General Plan will take into consideration the following land use assumptions and opportunities:

- Existing Specific Plans to be adjusted/repealed by the 2050 General Plan.** This 2050 General Plan process will consider either reevaluating the boundaries of the *Gateway* and *Auto Mall* specific plans, or repealing them altogether. Development guidance for these areas will be per new development and streetscape standards within the Citywide Zoning Code.
- Existing Specific Plans to be accommodated by the 2050 General Plan.** The *Norco Hills* and *Norco Ridge* specific plans are not anticipated to change and will continue to be supported by the 2050 General Plan.
- Existing Master Plans.** Existing master plans include the *Norco College Master Plan* and the *Silverlakes Master Plan*. Concurrent with this General Plan process, the City's Community Services Department is preparing a *Parks Facilities Master Plan*. The 2050 General Plan will accommodate the growth and changes identified by these master plans.
- Identified Annexation Areas.** The City has identified 21 parcels along Bluff St. between Stagecoach Dr. and River Rd., currently located within Riverside County, to be annexed into the City of Norco. Annexation of these parcels will completely fill in the city's "Area of Influence."
- Pipeline Projects.** Projects that are currently in the entitlement process or have recently completed the entitlement process (pipeline projects) as of October 2023 include Norco Valley Square, the Dutch Brothers/Freddy's Frozen Custard & Steakburgers site, the Norco TRU Hotel, a 455 unit multi-family development at the south corner of Second St. and River Rd., and the entitlement of the *Hidden Valley Tech Campus Specific Plan*. If construction is completed before adoption of the 2050 General Plan in 2025, these sites will be considered existing conditions.
- Key Infill Sites.** Potential vacant, underutilized parcels or sites anticipated to become available for future development include parcels located along Hamner Avenue between Detroit St. and Fourth St. and the historic Norconian Hotel site.

FIG. 5. LAND USE ASSUMPTIONS



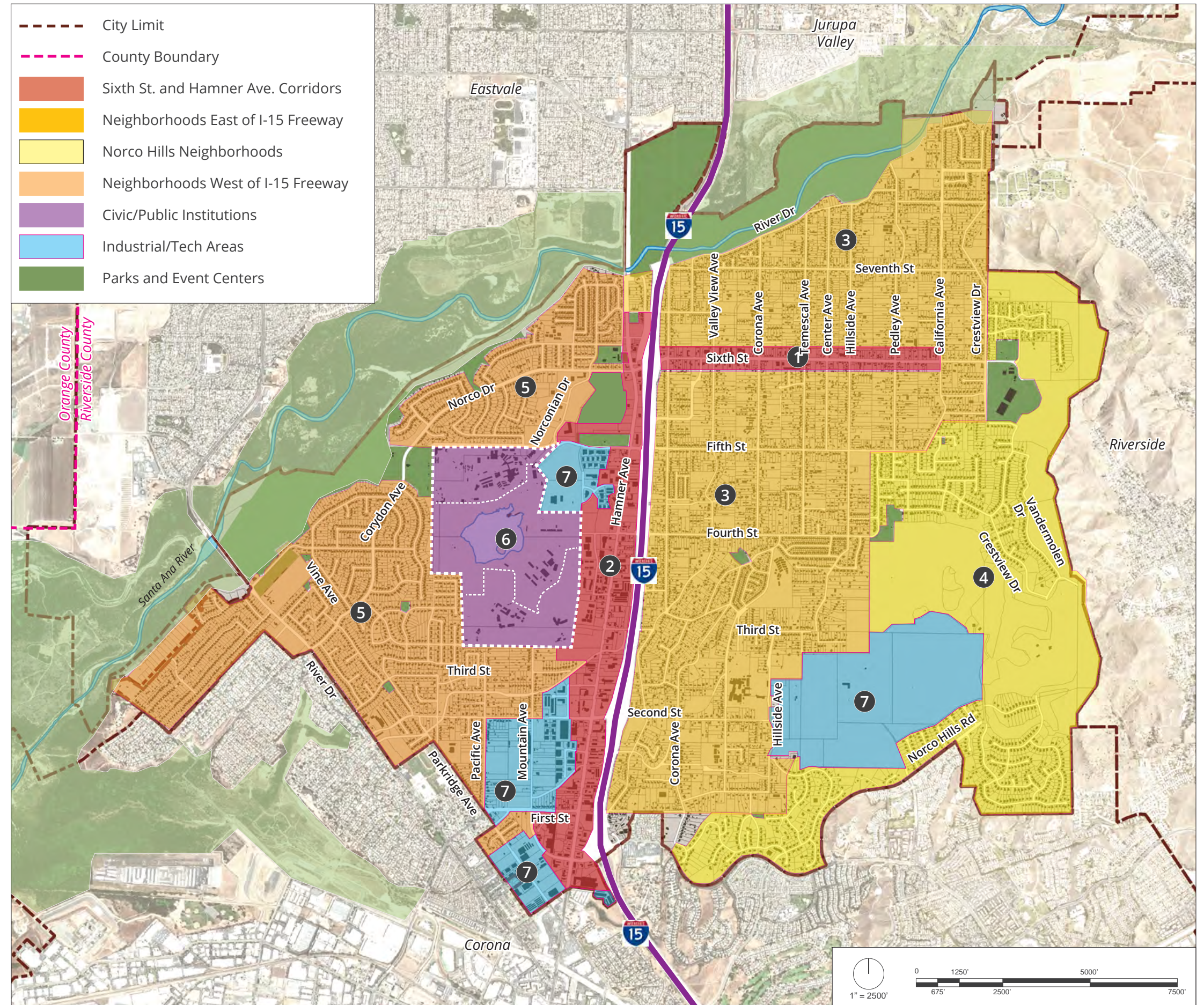
EXISTING COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Norco has a unique all-American ambiance and rural character that differentiates it from surrounding communities. Key features include the hills to the east, Beacon Hill, and the Santa Ana River; large residential lots that accommodate animal-keeping and agricultural activities and occupations; streets lined by trails, including along its iconic commercial corridor, Sixth Street; plentiful parks; community venues such as the historic Norco Community Center and the Ingalls Event Center; trails along the Santa Ana River and up to Pumpkin Rock; and the historic Norconian Hotel.

Existing community character can be categorized according to seven primary character areas:

- 1 **Sixth Street Corridor.** Comprised of the commercial and civic properties along Sixth St. between Hamner Ave. and California Ave. and is one of Norco's unique, character-defining attributes.
- 2 **Hamner Avenue Corridor.** Comprised of commercial properties along Hamner Ave. between Detroit St. and the southerly city limit. Due to the general placement of buildings behind parking lots and lack of streetscape, Hamner Ave. is one of the areas in Norco that lacks a genuine character-defining sense of place.
- 3 **Neighborhoods East of I-15 Freeway.** Original, large-lot neighborhoods located on flatter topography and on the lower slopes of the Norco Hills. These neighborhoods are bounded by the I-15 Freeway to the west, River Drive and the Santa Ana River bluff to the north, and Hillside Drive and the Norco Hills to the east and south.
- 4 **Norco Hills Neighborhoods.** Large lot neighborhoods located on the steeper slopes of the Norco Hills within the *Norco Hills* and *Norco Ridge Ranch* specific plan areas.
- 5 **Neighborhoods West of I-15 Freeway.** Newer neighborhoods located west of the I-15 Freeway and Hamner Ave.
- 6 **Civic/Public Institutions.** Grouping of three character-defining (and employment generating) institutions: Norco College, Naval Sea Systems Command, and the California Rehabilitation Center. Important place-making elements include the historic Norconian Hotel and Lake Norconian.
- 7 **Commercial/Office/Light Industrial/Tech Areas.** Areas currently devoted to light-industrial, warehouse, distribution, and self-storage buildings and uses include the South Gateway Area and the area located east of Hamner Ave. between Fourth and Fifth Streets. The Hidden Valley area in the Norco Hills is planned to accommodate future office, commercial, or tech uses.

FIG. 6. EXISTING COMMUNITY CHARACTER



COMMUNITY CHARACTER EAST OF I-15 FREEWAY

Neighborhoods East of I-15 Freeway. Laid out when Norco was established in the 1920s, the street and block network is generally an interconnected grid that provides multiple options and more direct routes to destinations. Most streets are lined by dirt and/or decomposed granite shoulders, except for locations where the Public Works Department has installed – and will continue to install – curb and gutter to mitigate localized flooding. Most streets are also lined along one side by decomposed granite trails that are generally separated from the street by white split-rail fences. Consistent with Norco’s rural character, sidewalks are absent from virtually all streets located east of the I-15 Freeway.



Large lots, initially laid out in the 1920s are the most important contribution to Norco’s rural character.



A typical street with dirt shoulders along both sides of the street and a trail along one side. A one-story ranch-style house faces the street. (California Ave.)

Residential lots are large – most over 20,000 square feet (sf) in area – and rural in character. Houses tend to be low-slung and one-story in height and are set back from the street with front yards often enclosed by low fences (split rail, chain link, picket fences), walls, or low hedges. Front yard landscaping ranges from lawns, to shrubs and bushes, to dirt, to gravel. Some houses utilize the front yard for animal keeping.

Norco Hills Neighborhoods. The hillside street network consists of neighborhood streets and cul-de-sacs. Rolled curbs are present on most streets and curb and gutter on some. Decomposed granite trails are located on one side of most streets and along both sides of many streets. Lots are 20,000 sf in area or less with one- and two-story houses located behind front yards, typically landscaped with lawns and shrubs.



Riverside Drive runs along the bluff above the Santa Ana River with houses along one side of the street. A trail, separated from the street by a white fence runs along the bluff.



Neighborhood Street in Norco Hills with rolled curb on both sides and a trail along one side of street. One- and two-story houses are located behind landscaped front yards.

Sixth Street Corridor. Commercial buildings along Sixth Street are set back from the street, typically behind or next to parking lots. A number of original single-family houses remain, particularly east of Corona Avenue, some of which have been converted to businesses. The trails, adjacent white split-rail fencing, and trees screen the parking lots and are a vital component of Norco’s unique sense of place.



Sixth Street’s character-defining eucalyptus trees, white fence-lined trails, and red, white, and blue lane striping.

Hidden Valley Tech Specific Plan Area. The area was formerly used as a Department of Defense (DOD) test facility and commonly known as the Wyle Labs site, later transitioning into consumer and computer electronics testing. Today, the property is vacant and all that remains are concrete pads and roads connecting them. Access to the area is via Hillside Ave. to the west and Norco Hills Rd. to the south.



Hillside Ave. at access road to Hidden Valley area.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER WEST OF I-15 FREEWAY

Neighborhoods West of I-15 Freeway. The street network west of the freeway consists of arterial streets (Hamner Ave. and River Rd.), collector streets (Norco Dr., Corydon Ave., Fifth St., Third St., First St., Parkridge Ave., and Mountain Ave.), local streets, and cul-de-sacs. Decomposed granite trails, separated from the street by white rail fences, are located along most streets, with the notable exception of Hamner Ave. Residential lots west of the freeway are 20,000 sf in area and residences face and are accessed directly from most streets, except along Fifth Street and along River Road between Kips Korner Rd. and Bluff St., where residential lots back up to the street behind concrete masonry walls. Front yards are generally landscaped with lawns and shrubs.

Hamner Ave. Buildings are generally set back from the street behind parking lots and tend to be located farther apart than those along Sixth St. Sidewalks, located right next to on-street parking or travel lanes, are present along most of the length of Hamner Ave., except adjacent to vacant parcels or along the frontages of a number of strip malls where on-site parking extends to the curb. The general lack of streetscape along Hamner Avenue is one of the key contributors to its lack of sense of place.

Civic/Public Institutions. Key features of the areas west of the freeway include the Norco College and John F. Kennedy Middle College High School campuses; the Naval Sea Systems Command (NSSC) campus, which also includes Lake Norconian; and the California Rehabilitation Center (CRC) complex, which also contains the historic Norconian Hotel. The NSSC and CRC campuses are closed to the general public.

Industrial Areas. Industrial areas west of the freeway are located in the *Gateway Specific Plan* area and just west of Hamner Ave. between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Existing development consists of large light-industrial, warehouse, distribution, and self-storage buildings that are set back from the street with surface parking in front of and/or next to buildings. In some locations, buildings are located immediately next to residential neighborhoods, such as along Second St. and the neighborhood pocket just south of First St. at Parkridge Ave.



Typical neighborhood street (Broken Arrow St.) with rolled curbs and trail with white fence along one side of the street. Houses are located behind front yards.



River Road is fronted by the Norco Village shopping center located behind parking lots and a fence-lined trail and single-family residences located behind concrete masonry walls.



Buildings along Hamner Ave. are typically set back from the street and located behind parking lots. The absence of streetscape contributes to the lack of sense of place along Hamner Ave.



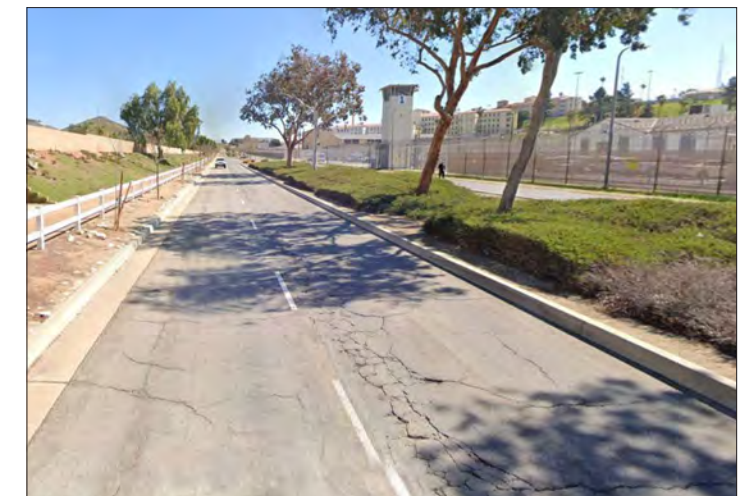
Recently-built Palomino Business Park along Second Street is located across the street from a single-family neighborhood.



Lake Norconian and the historic Norconian Hotel.



The Student Services building on the Norco College campus.



Fifth St. in front of the California Rehabilitation Center.

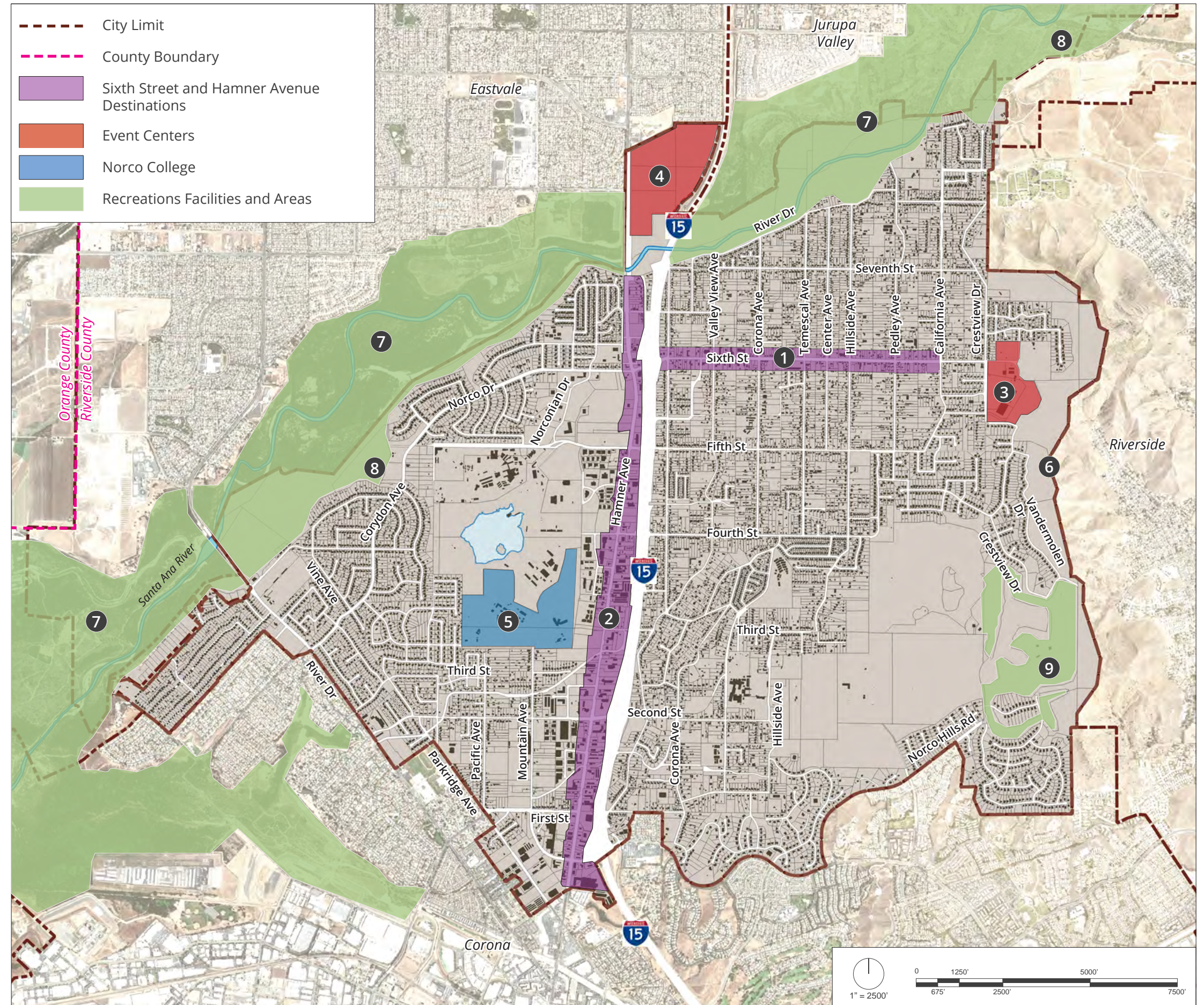
KEY DESTINATIONS

Key destinations within Norco for both locals and visitors include:

- 1 **Sixth Street Businesses.** An eclectic mix of retail, services, and civic uses, including feed stores, veterinary offices, grocery and convenience stores, restaurants, a pharmacy, medical offices, construction supply vendors, churches, and CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Station #47. Sixth Street also accommodates annual parades.
- 2 **Hamner Avenue Businesses.** Norco's principal commercial corridor is lined by single-family residences along its north end (to Alhambra St.) and by a mix of retail, services, hospitality, auto and RV dealerships along the remainder of its length.
- 3 **Ingalls Event Center.** A City-owned and operated event center with four versatile venues that host a variety of special events, including equestrian and agricultural events; weddings and celebrations; corporate conferences; trade shows and expositions; and open-air concerts and festivals.
- 4 **SilverLakes Sports Park.** A city-owned, privately-operated, 130-acre event venue that hosts athletic tournaments, and concerts.
- 5 **Norco College.** Part of the California Community Colleges System, Norco College currently educates around 11,000 students (2023-2024).
- 6 **Pumpkin Rock and Norco Hills Trails.** Located atop the Norco Hills behind the Ingalls Event Center, Pumpkin Rock attracts locals and visitors alike.
- 7 **Santa Ana River.** The Santa Ana River provides an array of equestrian, pedestrian, and bicycle trails, as well as the City's River Trails Park.
- 8 **Equestrian Staging Areas.** A publicly accessible equestrian staging area is located just outside the city limits in the Hidden Valley Wildlife Area. A second staging area is located on Corydon Ave. just south of Fifth St.
- 9 **Hidden Valley Golf Club.** The Hidden Valley Golf Club provides a public 18-hole course, a pro shop, a practice range, and restaurant

Equestrian/Agricultural Businesses and Non-profit Organizations (not shown on map). Norco is home to a variety of equestrian and agricultural businesses and non-profit organizations that serve the local community and surrounding region. These range from horse-riding lessons, to pediatric therapy, to farmers, to florists.

FIG. 7. KEY DESTINATIONS



KEY GATEWAYS AND CONNECTIONS

Key to generating a genuine sense of place is creating memorable gateways into the city and improving the character of the connections between these gateways and Norco's important destinations.

In the case of gateways, a monument sign alone does not necessarily make a memorable gateway. Buildings and landscape that reflect Norco's character, especially along Hamner Avenue and Sixth Street can be more effective at announcing that one has arrived in Norco.

The quality of the character of the connections to Norco's destinations is also key to generating a memorable place that people enjoy visiting. Sixth St., with its eucalyptus trees, trails, and white split fences, is a prime example. Similarly, the sense of place along streets such as Hamner Ave. can be improved with streetscape and how new buildings relate to the street.

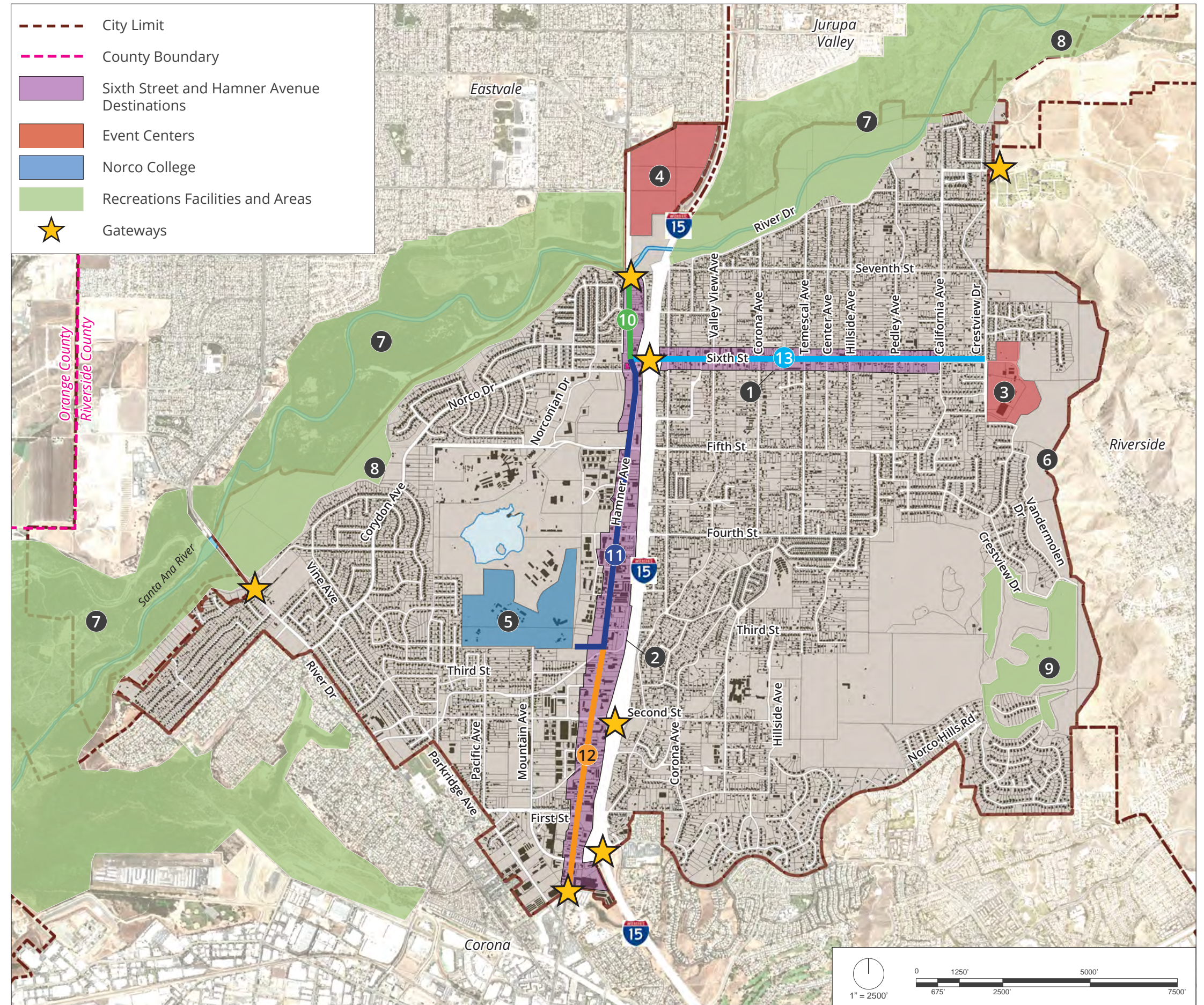
DESTINATIONS

- 1 Sixth Street Businesses
 - 2 Hamner Avenue Businesses
 - 3 Ingalls Event Center
 - 4 SilverLakes Sports Park
 - 5 Norco College
 - 6 Pumpkin Rock and Norco Hills Trails
 - 7 Santa Ana River
 - 8 Equestrian Staging Areas
 - 9 Hidden Valley Golf Club
- Equestrian/Agricultural Businesses and Non-profit Organizations (not shown on map).

CONNECTIONS

- 10 Hamner Ave.: Santa Ana River to Sixth St.
- 11 Hamner Ave.: Sixth St. to Third St.
- 12 Hamner Ave.: Third St. to Southern City Limit
- 13 Sixth St.

FIG. 8. KEY GATEWAYS AND CONNECTIONS



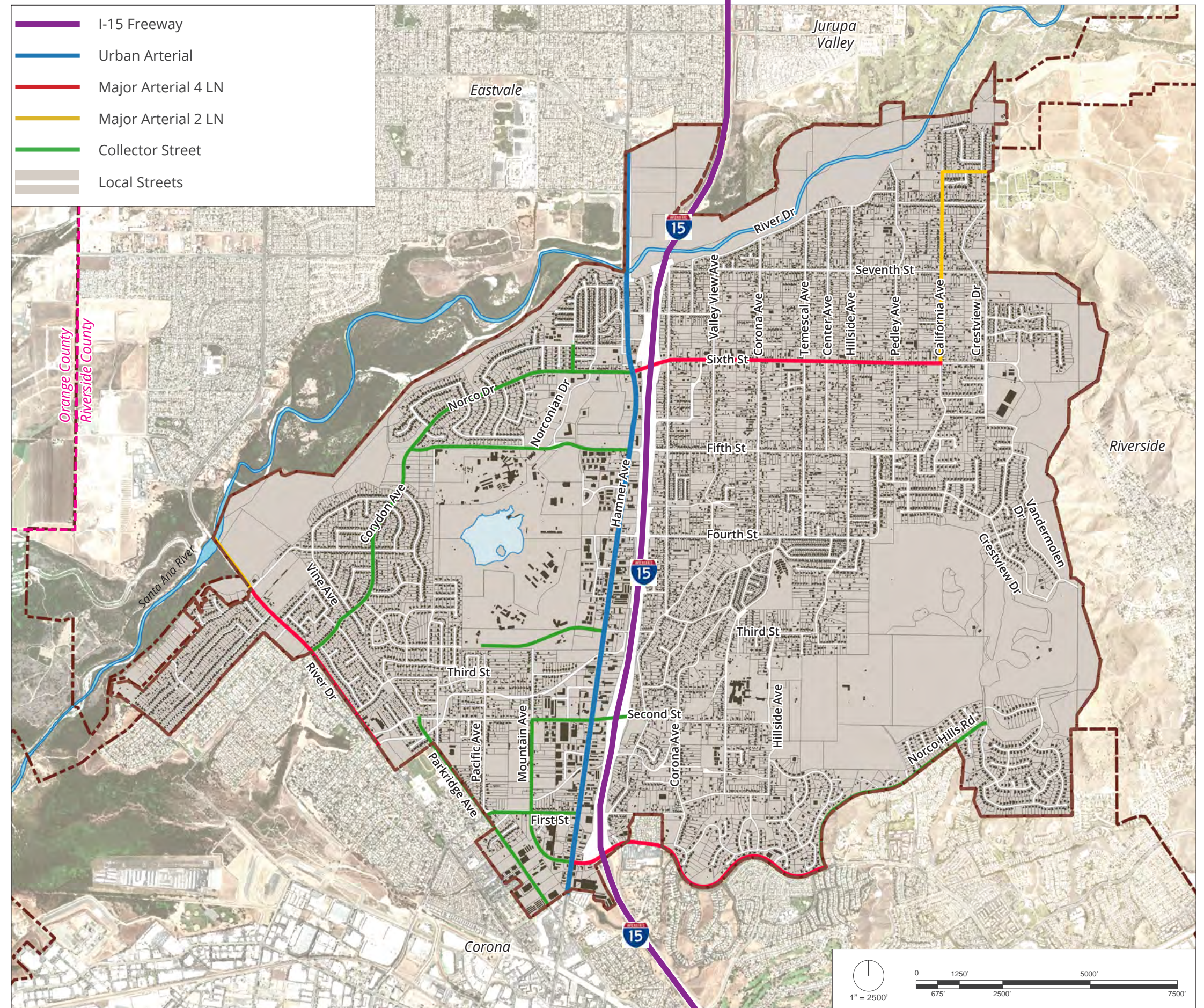
PUBLIC AND CIVIC REALM

EXISTING STREET NETWORK

Laid out when Norco was established in the 1920s, the street and block network east of the I-15 freeway is interconnected, providing multiple route options and shorter distances to destinations. The street and block network west of the I-15 and in the Norco Hills consists of collector streets, local streets, and cul-de-sacs.

Please see the *Circulation and Mobility Analysis* for a detailed description of Norco's circulation and mobility network.

FIG. 9. EXISTING STREET NETWORK



EXISTING TRAIL NETWORK

Norco's comprehensive system of nearly 104 miles of trails (as of 2018) is a fundamental contributor to Norco's rural atmosphere and equestrian lifestyle. The majority of Norco's streets are lined with trails, providing most residential lots with direct access to the trail system and the opportunity to ride through the community and into natural areas such as the Norco Hills and the Santa Ana River. Trails are designed for equestrian, pedestrian, and bicycle use and are not meant to serve motorized vehicles such as golf carts, e-bikes, or all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

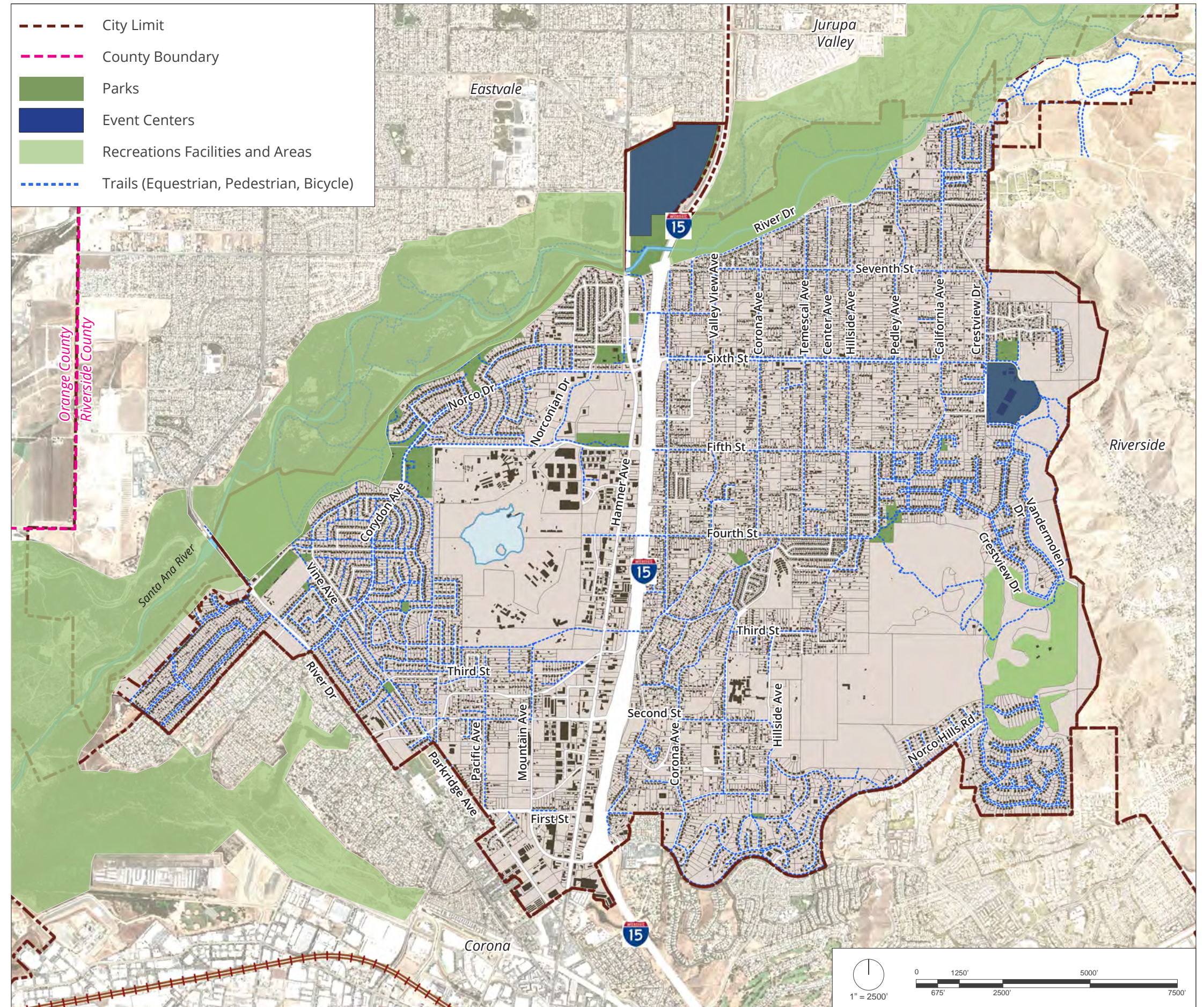
The typical engineered trail is twelve feet wide, is paved with decomposed granite, and is located along one side of the street, although along certain streets, such as Sixth St., Norco Dr., and streets within the *Norco Ridge Ranch Specific Plan* area, trails are located on both sides of the public right-of-way. Trail improvements along most streets include fencing and a wide parkway that together serves as a buffer between vehicular traffic and the trail. Where fences are not present, the City has installed "No Parking in Trail" signs – placed, at a minimum, at each end of the block – to prevent and prohibit vehicles from parking on trails. Ramps are provided at most intersections and driveway aprons typically do not cross the trail, although paving between the apron and the driveway or parking lot is installed on some residential properties and most commercial businesses along Sixth St. Paving across the trail, however, is prohibited on new residential development.

The parkways between the fence and the street provide an opportunity to introduce street trees to provide shade and contribute further to Norco's unique community character. This would require the installation and maintenance of irrigation for watering trees when first planted.

Maintenance of trails and fencing is funded by Measure R, except in newer neighborhoods with Landscape Maintenance Districts (LMD's) that pre-date Measure R, where they are funded by the assessment districts.

The 2018 [Comprehensive Trail Master Plan](#) provides further detail regarding trail classes (primary, secondary, tertiary, natural), maintenance, design standards, and encroachment policies. The City's [Trail Standards](#) provide engineered details and design requirements.

FIG 10. EXISTING TRAIL NETWORK

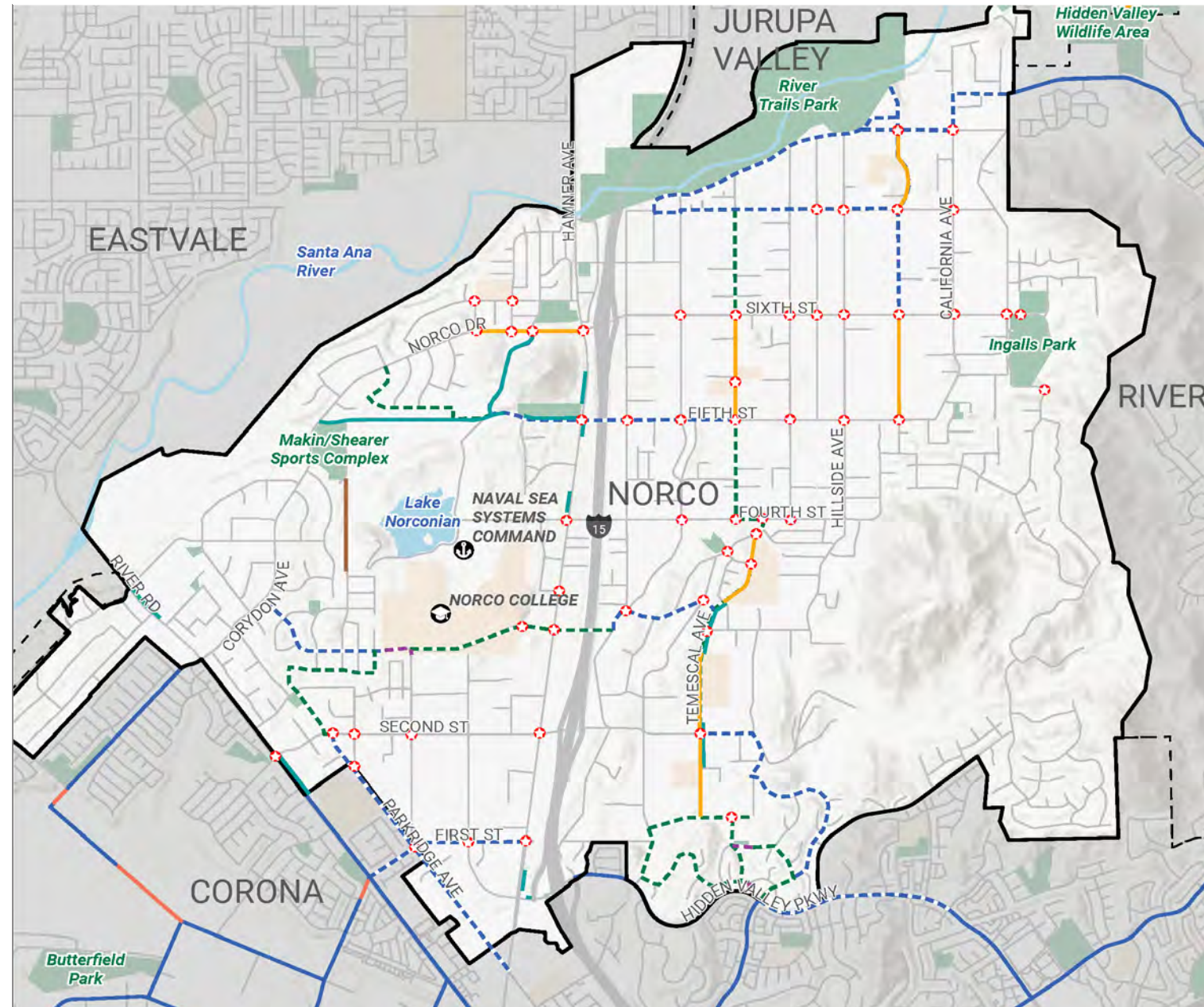


PEDESTRIAN BICYCLE NETWORK

The City is in the midst of preparing a *Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan* that recommends the introduction of bicycle and pedestrian improvements as shown in Figure 11. Recommended trial alignments from the *Santa Ana River Trail Master Plan* are shown in Figure 12.

This 2050 General Plan will incorporate the pedestrian and bicycle recommendations from the final *Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan*, once it is adopted.

FIG. 11. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN RECOMMENDATIONS PER DRAFT PED. AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN



- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| EXISTING BIKEWAYS | BICYCLE RECOMMENDATIONS | PEDESTRIAN RECOMMENDATIONS |
| Class II Bike Lane | Class 1 | Spot Improvements |
| Class III Bike Route | Class 2 | Multi-use Path |
| | Class 2b | Sidewalk |
| | Class 3 | Street Lighting |

FIG. 12. RECOMMENDED SANTA ANA RIVER TRAIL ALIGNMENTS PER SANTA ANA RIVER TRAIL MASTER PLAN



- Legend**
- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Reach Extent Lines | Existing, Soft Surface Trail | Recommended, Multi-use - Spur |
| City Boundary | Recommended, Class II Bike Lanes | Existing, Class I - Spur |
| Recommended, Class I Bikeway | Recommended, Multi-use Trail | Existing, Soft Surface Trail - Spur |
| Recommended, Soft Surface Trail | Recommended, Class I Bikeway - Spur | Future, Class I Bikeway |
| Recommended, Class Ib - On-Road | Recommended, Class Ib - On-Road - Spur | Future, Soft Surface Trail |
| | Recommended, Soft Surface Trail - Spur | Future, Multi-use Trail |

EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

There are over 400 acres of park and open space in Norco with the City owning and maintaining 17 neighborhood and community parks, sports fields, recreational facilities, equestrian staging areas, equestrian arenas, and the Ingalls Event Center. Norco's parks provide a range of amenities including, play structures, hitching posts, horse corals, equestrian arenas, horseshoe pits, basketball courts, pickleball courts, ball fields, fitness tracks, and picnic shelters. There also are a number of facilities that are owned and operated by Riverside County or that are privately owned.

Park, open space, and recreational amenities are listed below and shown at right.

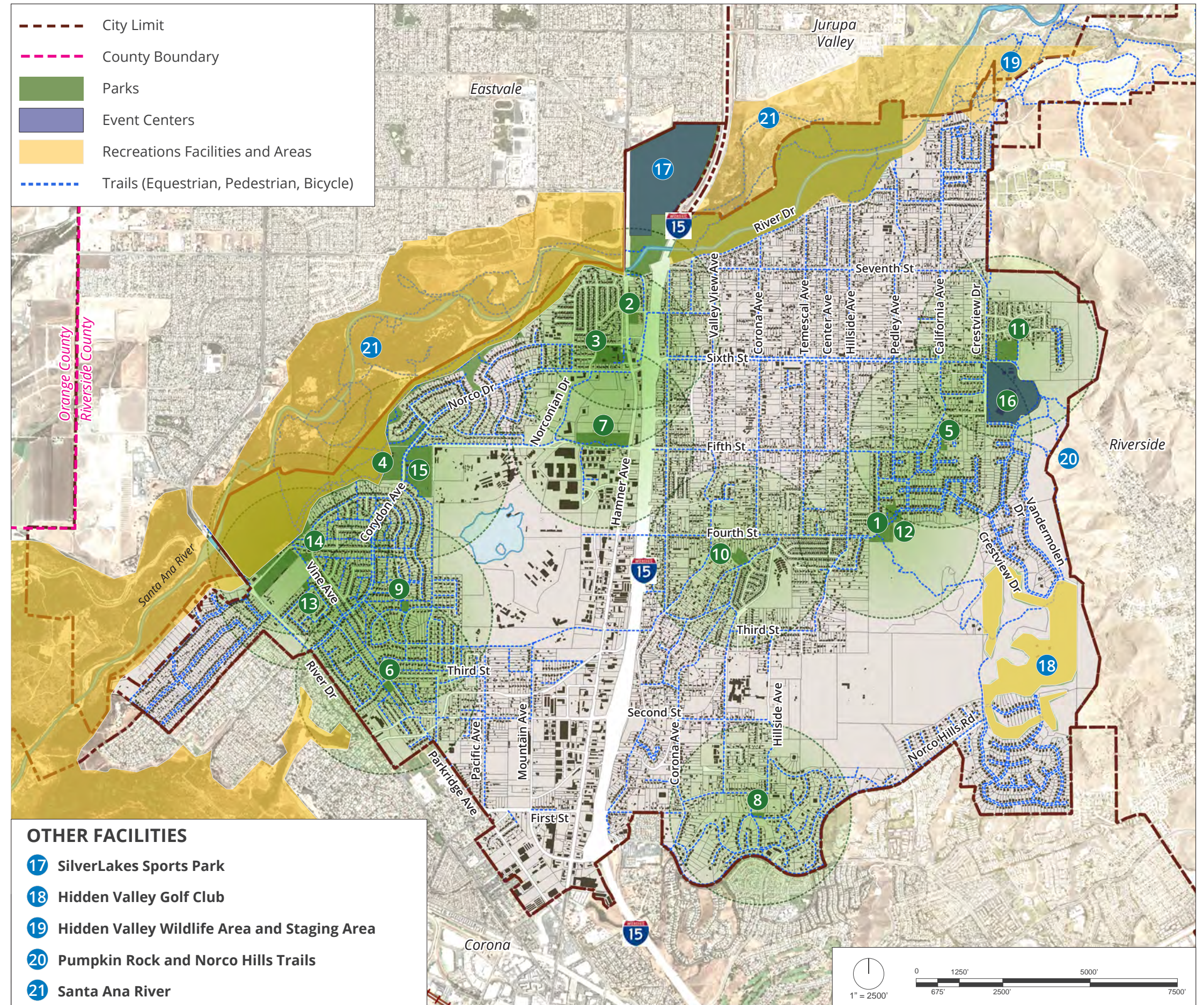
There are some neighborhoods that are located further than a 1/2-mile walking distance of these parks – particularly the neighborhood areas located north of Fifth St. and west of Pedley Ave. – although, open space access limitations are mitigated by access to nearby school fields and playgrounds. Parks are well connected by Norco's extensive trail network.

The *Parks Facilities Master Plan*, which is being prepared concurrently with this General Plan, will assess existing facilities and propose community-based improvements.

CITY-OWNED AND OPERATED FACILITIES

- 1 Basin Park Arena
- 2 Clark Field
- 3 Community Center Park, Field, and Riley Gymnasium
- 4 Corydon Staging Area
- 5 Hawks Crest Park and Arena
- 6 Kips Korner Park
- 7 Neal Snipes Park
- 8 Norco Hills Park and Arena
- 9 Pacer Park and Arena
- 10 Parmenter Park and Field
- 11 Pikes Peak Park
- 12 Ridge Ranch Park and Arena
- 13 Sundance Park
- 14 Ted Brooks Park and Arena
- 15 Wayne Makin Shearer Sports Complex
- 16 Ingalls Event Center

FIG. 13. EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



EXISTING SCHOOLS

Norco's seven public schools are administered by the Corona-Norco Unified School District (CNUSD), which serves the cities of Corona, Norco, Eastvale and Temescal Valley. The District's offices are located within Norco, adjacent to City Hall.

In addition, Norco is home to three independent Christian schools and Norco College. Norco College is part of the Riverside Community College District (RCCD), which in turn is part of the larger California Community Colleges System.

PUBLIC K-12 SCHOOLS

- 1 Highland Elementary school
- 2 Riverview Elementary School
- 3 Sierra Vista Elementary School
- 4 Norco Elementary School
- 5 Norco Intermediate School
- 6 John F. Kennedy Middle School and Hybrid School of Innovation
- 7 Norco High School

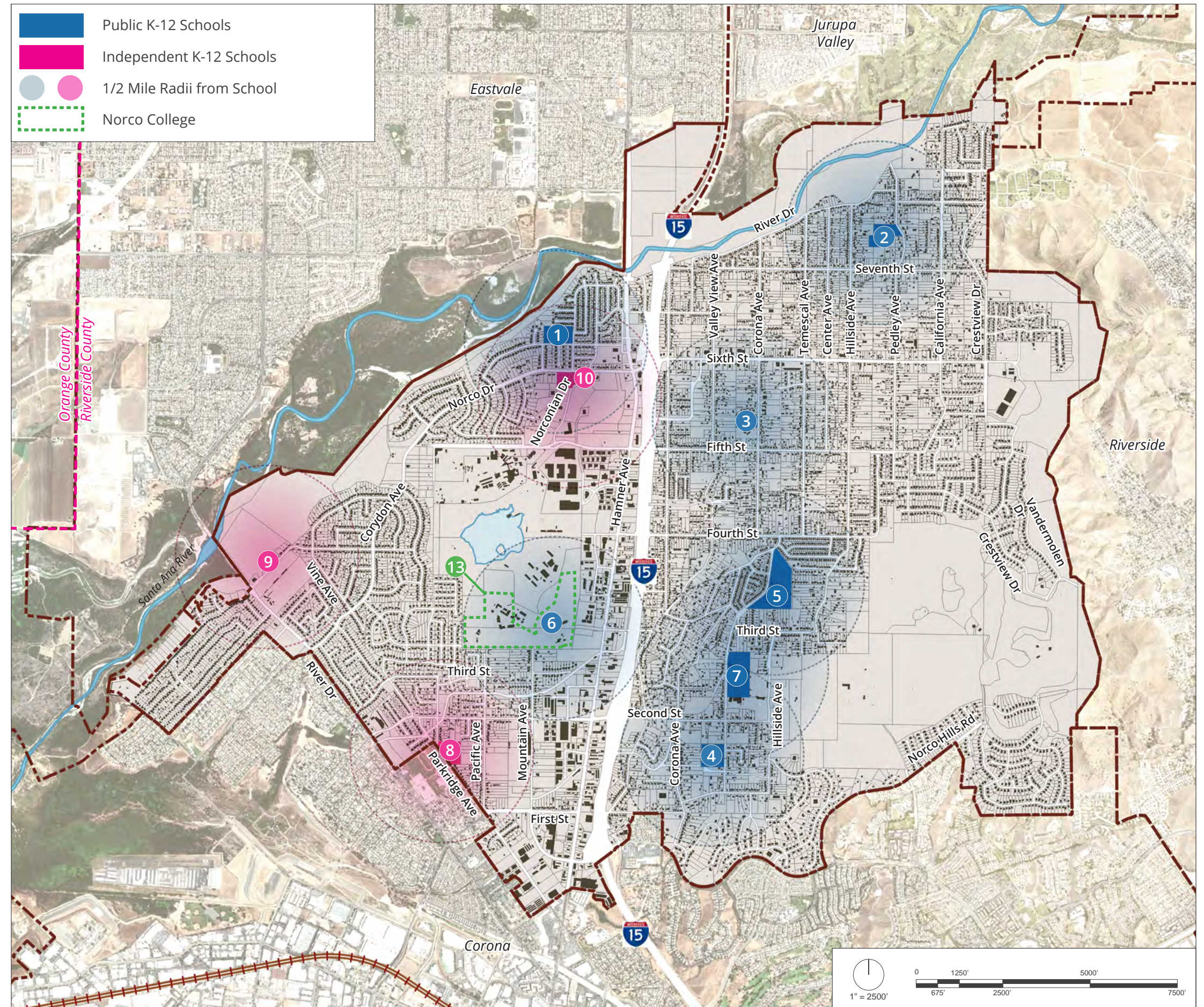
INDEPENDENT K-12 SCHOOLS

- 8 Bright Beginnings Christian Academy
- 9 Stonebridge Christian Academy
- 10 Turning Point Christian School

STATE COLLEGE

- 11 Norco College

FIG. 14. EXISTING SCHOOLS



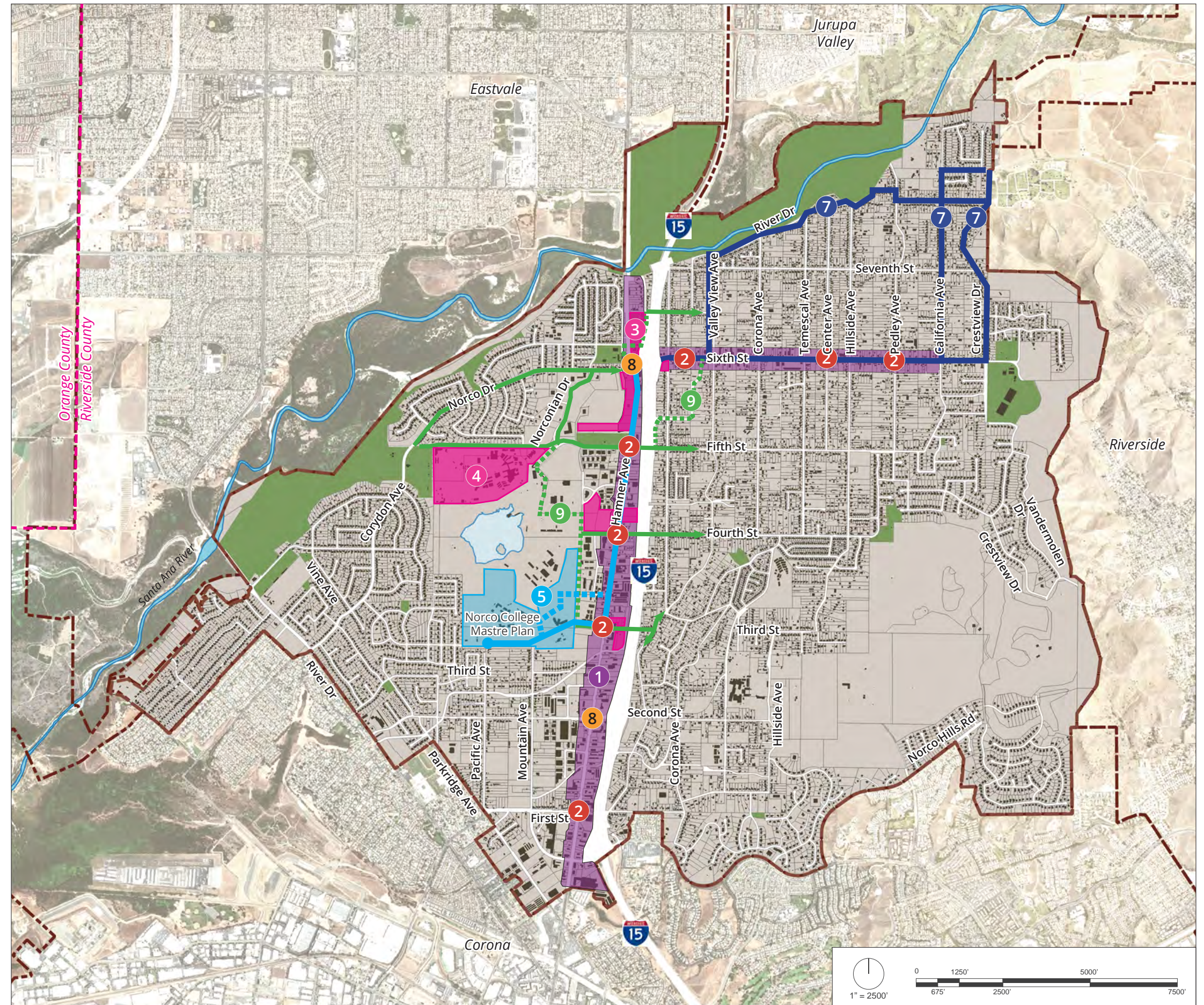
POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

A central focus of this General Plan will be to identify strategies for the City to generate revenue to fund the maintenance and upkeep of Norco's street, trail, park, utilities network, and other necessary city services. This will be achieved by 1) supporting and attracting businesses that generate sales, property, and hotel tax revenue; 2) attracting visitors and event-goers to shop, dine, and stay the night at these businesses and venues; 3) reinforcing a strong, unique sense of place to help achieve these goals; and 4) improving street and trail connections that serve residents and visitors alike. Shown here are potential improvements for fulfilling this very important function of the General Plan.

- 1 Improve the sense of place along Hamner Ave. and Sixth St.** by introducing land use and development standards that ensure that new development reflects Norco's unique character. Introduce/augment streetscape that attracts businesses and visitors and does not interfere with business signage.
- 2 Introduce activity centers at key intersections along Sixth St. and Hamner Ave.** Introduce retail, restaurant, and neighborhood-serving businesses at key intersections along Hamner Ave. and Sixth St. Design new buildings to reflect Norco's unique character.
- 3 Introduce north gateway development on block bounded by Hamner Ave., Detroit St., and Old Hamner Rd.** Vacant and underutilized lots can be infilled with retail and restaurant buildings that form a walkable destination that attracts locals and visitors, including attendees of events at SilverLakes and the Ingalls Event Center.
- 4 Plan for the future reuse of the Norconian site.** Determine potential land uses and the character and scale of any new buildings that are built on the Norconian site in the event the California Rehabilitation Center is closed.
- 5 Introduce second vehicular access route to Norco College.** Support Norco College's planned growth with the introduction of a second vehicular route to the College.
- 7 Discourage and calm cut-through traffic along Sixth St., Seventh St., River Dr., California Ave., and Crestview Dr.** Potential strategies include narrowing, but retaining, vehicular lanes, introducing on-street parking, and introducing roundabouts at certain intersections.
- 8 Reduce traffic back-ups at I-15 freeway crossings, especially Second St. and Sixth St.**
- 9 Construct missing trail connections and improve connections across freeway.** Improve the east-west trail routes between the neighborhoods located west of the freeway and east of the freeway.

FIG. 15. POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



HAMNER AVENUE

Hamner Avenue is currently the primary part of Norco that lacks Norco's unique, rural, small-town character. This is mainly due to its width, adjacent buildings that are located far apart from one another and that are set back from the street behind surface parking lots, and the general absence of streetscape.

Building on components of Hamner Ave. that do provide some sense of place (Beacon Hill, Neal Snipes Park, some original houses that have been converted to businesses, and some streetscape), opportunities for improving Hamner Ave.'s aesthetic character include planting trees and landscaping in existing parking lots, introducing streetscape along Hamner Ave.'s sidewalks, and constructing new buildings that complement Norco's existing character.

STRENGTHS



Original single-family houses converted to business uses.



Neal Snipes Park and Beacon Hill



Streetscape in the median in front of the Gateway Town Center shopping center.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



Missing streetscape and parking lots between the street and building.



Vacant and underutilized parcels.

POTENTIAL ACTIVATION AND INFILL STRATEGIES



Street trees in center median.



Landscaped pedestrian walkway through parking lot.



Walkable environment with street-facing retail and restaurant uses, street trees, and sidewalk dining.



Shopping center with agriculture-inspired buildings, and pedestrian-scaled features such as trellis over walkway.



Agricultural-inspired building with outdoor seating and water feature.



Ground floor retail located next to and accessed directly from the sidewalk.

NORTH HAMNER GATEWAY

The Gateway Area is located less than a mile South of the SilverLakes Sports Park and across the street from the historic Norco Community Center building. It is approximately 24 acres in size and made up of 26 parcels, six of which are vacant. Key occupants include the Norco Chamber of Commerce; the Ecological Agriculture Training (EAT) Cultural Center; American Legion Bar Post No. 328; the Maverick Saloon; Clark's Field, and six single-family houses. Additionally, there is a tertiary, or backyard, trail that runs through the north Gateway Area, just west of the freeway.

The area offers the opportunity to introduce a walkable retail and restaurant destination that attracts locals and visitors, including attendees of events at the SilverLakes Sports Park and Ingalls Event Center. New buildings would complement the adaptive reuse of existing historic buildings.

STRENGTHS



Historic Buildings.



Maverick's Saloon.



Historic Norco Community Center.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



Vacant and underutilized parcels at North Hamner Gateway.



Gateway into Norco

POTENTIAL INFILL AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES



Retail in mixed-use building.



Signage visible from SilverLakes Sports Park and I-15 Freeway.



Agricultural showcase and market.



Street-facing retail.



Family-friendly open space.



Outdoor dining in market setting.

SIXTH STREET ACTIVATION

Stakeholder and community input identified the desire for a more active, “Main Street” environment along Sixth Street. Such activation can occur in two stages:

- Simple use of outdoor areas, especially parking lots, for simple, inexpensive ancillary uses such as seating that is shaded with umbrellas and separated from the parking lot by rows of simple and relatively inexpensive objects such as used wine barrels.
- New buildings, especially at key cross streets, that provide retail, restaurant, neighborhood-serving, and hospitality use (such as a boutique hotel) and that reflect Norco’s small-town character. Buildings could be one-story commercial buildings or two-story mixed-use buildings with office or even residential on upper floors.

STRENGTHS



Entry sign and equestrian, pedestrian, and bicycle trail.



Historic character buildings.



Indoor activity spills outside of the store.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



Parking lots between street and building.

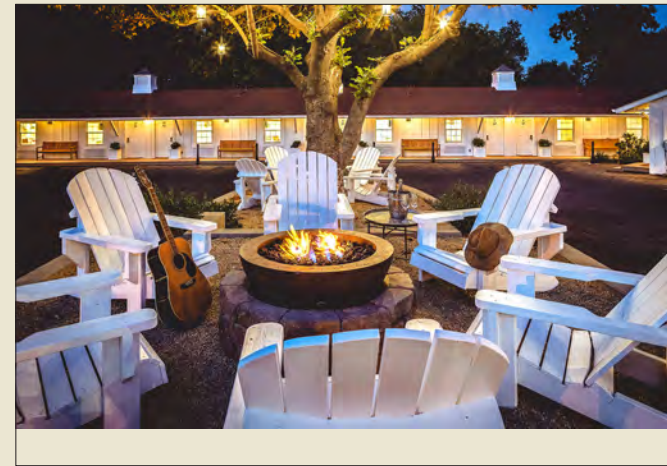


Vacant and underutilized parcels

POTENTIAL ACTIVATION AND INFILL STRATEGIES



Outdoor dining enclosed by used wine barrels



A boutique hotel's outdoor seating area.



Creative use of simple materials to enclose this outdoor dining area



An outdoor dining area comprised of picnic tables and string lights.



A two-story hotel with balconies that face the street.



Potential mixed-use infill.

NORCONIAN SITE

The historic Norconian Hotel Site currently is being used by the California Rehabilitation Center (CRC) as a State prison. The Norconian hotel is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but the main hotel building has been identified as not meeting current State of California earthquake construction standards. The Norconian Site is currently designated and zoned Preservation and Development, which provide for the coordinated development of planned commercial projects in a manner that preserves significant natural landscape features, open lands, and historical buildings. This General Plan will identify uses and activities that could potentially be accommodated on the site should it be vacated.

STRENGTHS



Birdseye view of historic Norconian Hotel complex.



Inspiration for potential future uses – the Norconian Hotel's historic dining room . . .

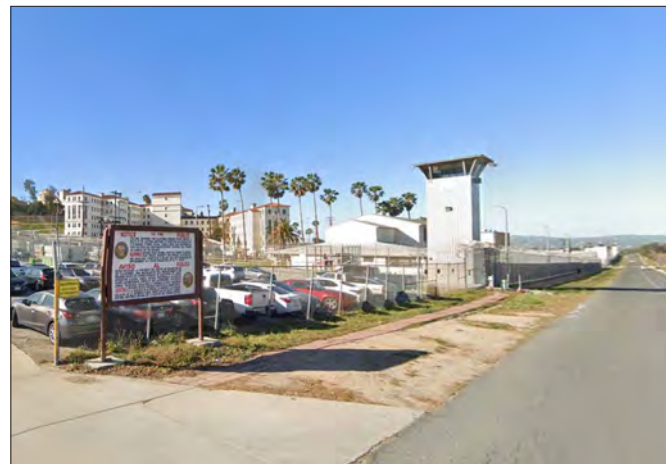


. . . and swimming pool.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



The Norconian hotel is currently vacant and in need of renovation.



The frontage along Fifth St. consists of a chain link fence topped with razor wire.

POTENTIAL USES AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE NORCONIAN SITE



Walkable restaurant and retail environment.



Walkable restaurant and retail environment.



Use of historic dining room for weddings, banquets, and other events.



Use of Norconian Hotel's 3,000 seat auditorium (not pictured).



Reuse of historic swimming pool



Camping (closer to the River).

HOUSING

Norco’s most prominent residential type and the principle contributor to Norco’s rural character is its large-lots that enable on-site animal keeping and small-plot agriculture. However, these housing types may not be affordable for young or older members of the community who wish to purchase their first home or downsize their home of many years. In addition, there is a shortage of senior housing in Norco. To meet these needs – as well as State law mandates – new multi-family housing need not look like the “default” housing that is being built in surrounding communities. To the contrary, housing that is consistent with Norco’s rural character and provides equestrian and agricultural offerings can be introduced in Norco. These can include cottage courts, rowhouses, and courtyards, that can also provide community equestrian and agricultural facilities.

STRENGTHS



Existing large lot housing.



Existing large lot housing.



Existing senior housing

DEFAULT HOUSING TYPES (not for Norco)



Large multi-family housing complex.



large multi-family housing.

POTENTIAL NEW HOUSING TYPES FOR NORCO



Cottage court.



Courtyard housing – street-facing units.



Courtyard housing –interior court.



Rowhouses with street-facing entries and upper floor balconies.



Senior housing.



Equestrian community with shared stables, arenas, and horse-trailer parking.