# SITE ANALYSIS, NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT MAPPING
## June, 2001

The Planning Commission and Design Review Board request that site analysis, neighborhood context maps and conceptual development plan be presented with all items submitted for review.   The following is provided to describe these type of analysis and to provide examples of this type of mapping and preliminary site plans.

Site Analysis

Preparing a development application is a exacting process that utilizes site analysis and data on the environmental characteristics and cultural influences affecting any particular site. The first step is to compile good data on the site and the surrounding area, including streets, neighborhoods and facilities, soils and geology, topography and drainage, general plan, zoning and development policies and standards, easements, vegetation, climate, views and other pertinent factors.
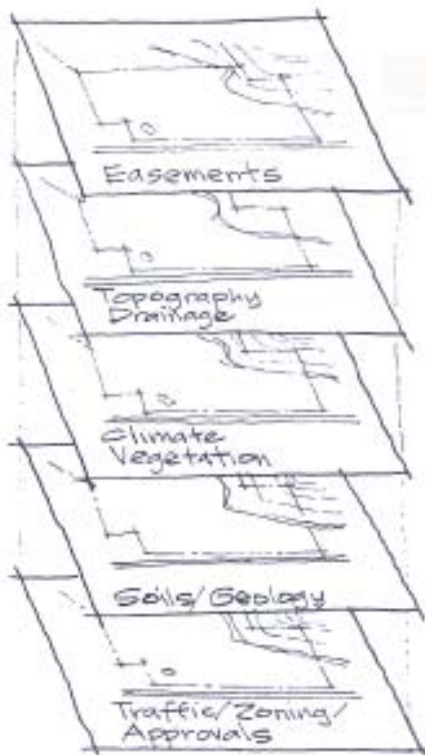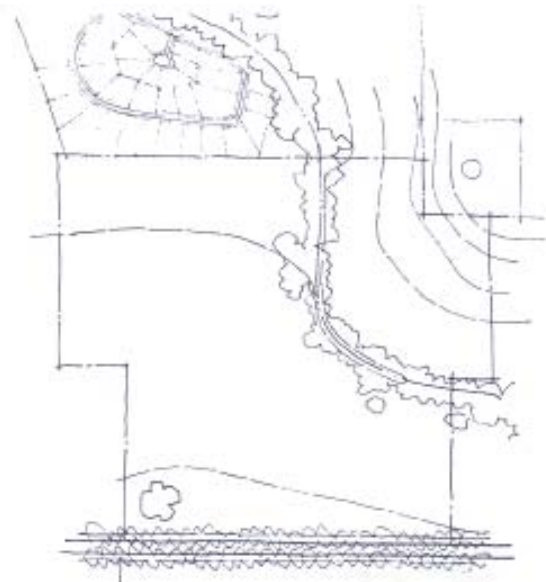

Site Topographic Survey

Basic Data

These data are then plotted, accentuating the important site constrains and design opportunities. In flat sites, access may be the most critical factor, or perhaps drainage is important on a particular site. In hillside land, there may be soil conditions or steep slopes, or views either to the parcel or from the parcel that are critical in the site analysis. It is important that each site receive careful consideration of these elements and that the most important are plotted, highlighted, characterized and eventually used in the review process by the city. The product of this work is the Site Analysis.

Site Analysis Examples

SITE ANALYSIS

FOUNTAINGROVE SQUARE

SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

SITE ANALYSIS
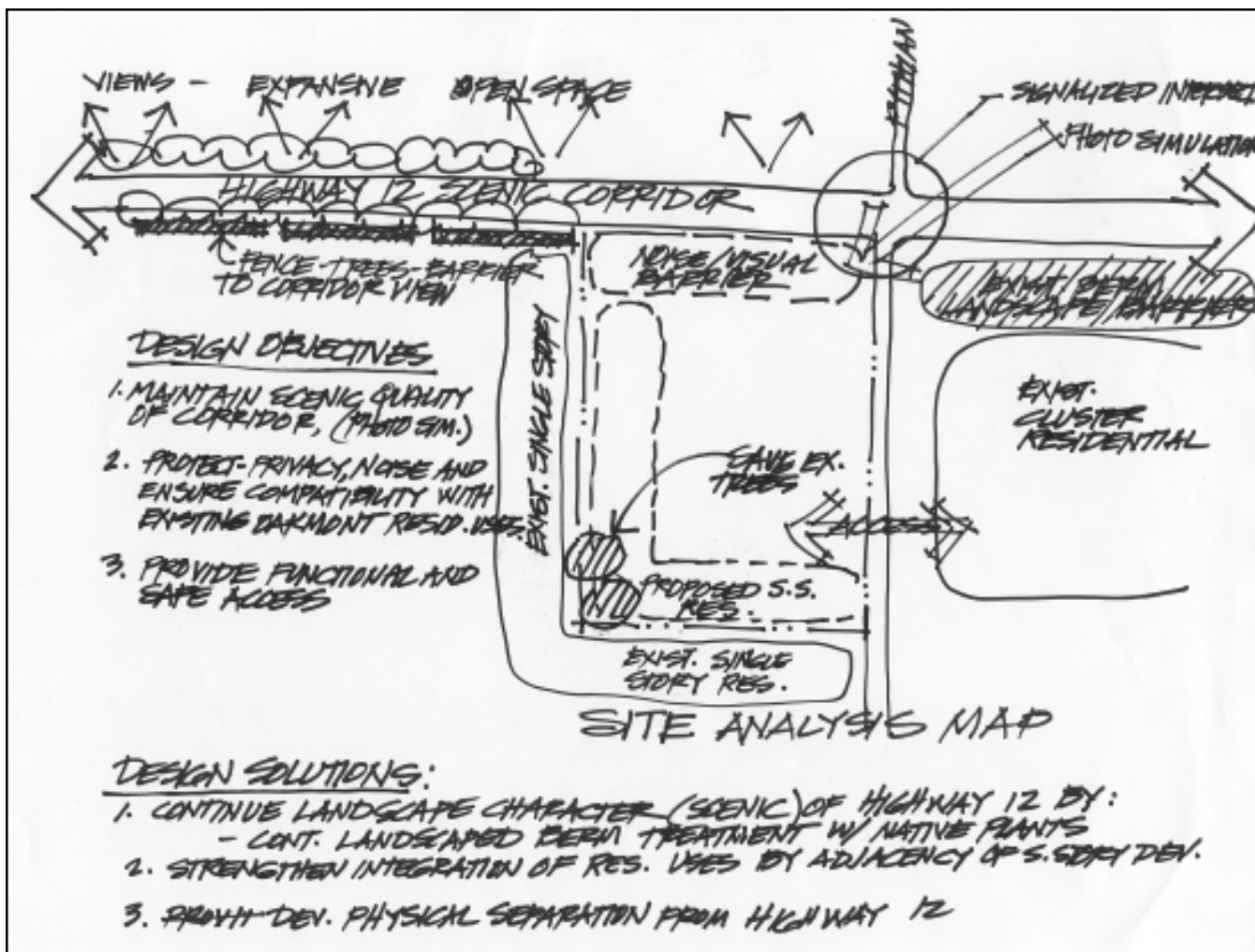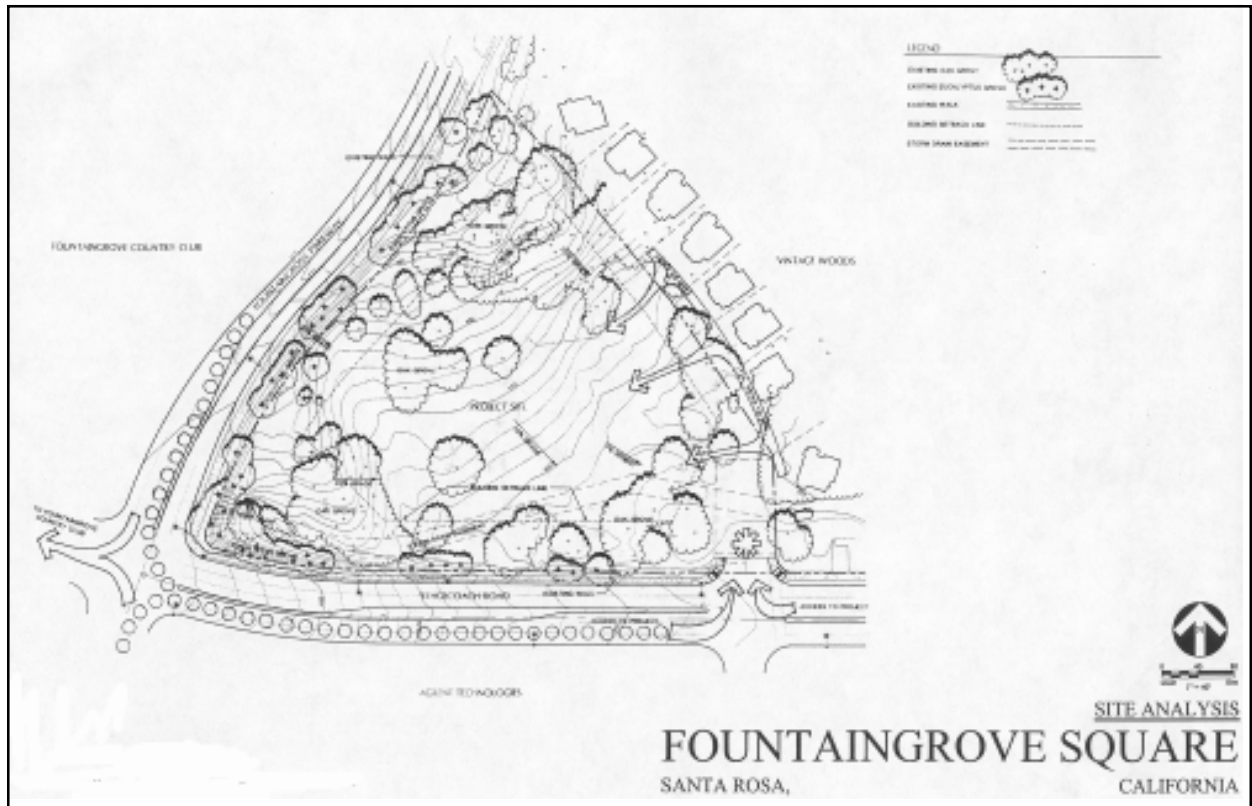
Neighborhood Context Map

The context of the proposed project is an important factor in evaluation of the site and potential development. The nearby neighborhood, the street circulation, sidewalks, street trees, parks and other public infrastructure should be analyzed and mapped. The product of this work is the Neighborhood Context Map. During completion of the Site Analysis, a preliminary Neighborhood Context Map should be drawn, reaching out beyond the project site and conveying the project's interface with the neighborhood.

As the project's Conceptual Development Plan and ultimately the Site Plan evolve, they should be placed on the neighborhood context map to truly show the relationship of the project site plan to the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Context Sample

SITE CONTEXT

FOUNTAINGROVE SQUARE

SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA
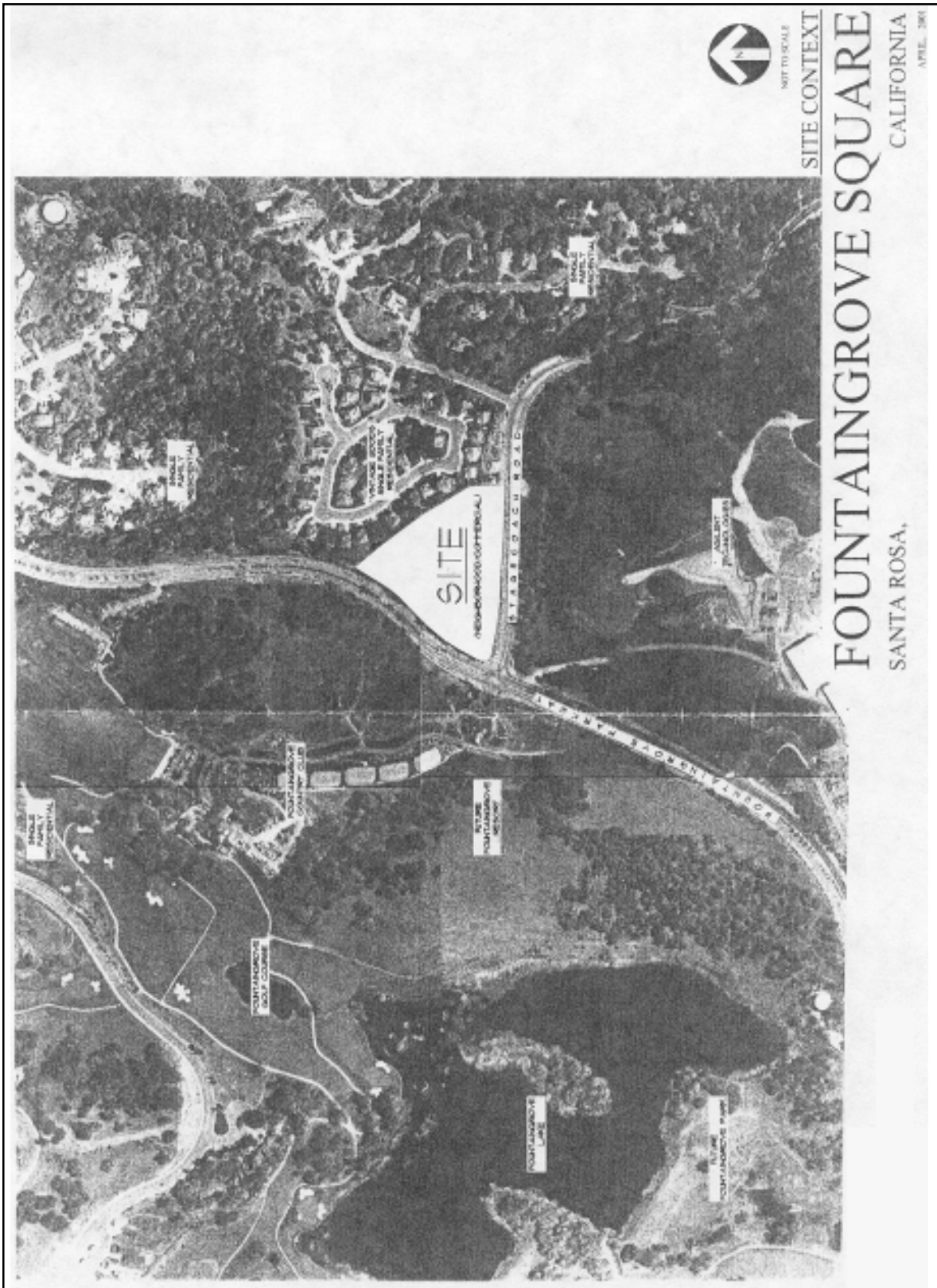
Conceptual Development Plan

The next step is to indicate the suitability for the uses intended. For this, the designer has to have in mind the market to be served, the type of unit or building intended, lot or building sizes and the type of persons to be served by this development.

Combining the above with the site analysis and neighborhood context mapping, provide the basis for the preparation of a development concept. This concept plan identifies the areas of the site best suited for development and which land has constraints. In many cases, measures such as buffers, grading, drainage or access improvements will deal with site problems, but in other areas these may be difficult or insurmountable.

 At this stage, the areas of development, parking and open space are identified. The project concept is described and includes proposed uses and building intensity. In addition, the type of facilities that might be required for recreation, open space, school or shopping are analyzed as to whether these are available on-site, adjacent to the site, or nearby the site. The type of streets, pedestrian and bike ways, and transit stops are also delineated.
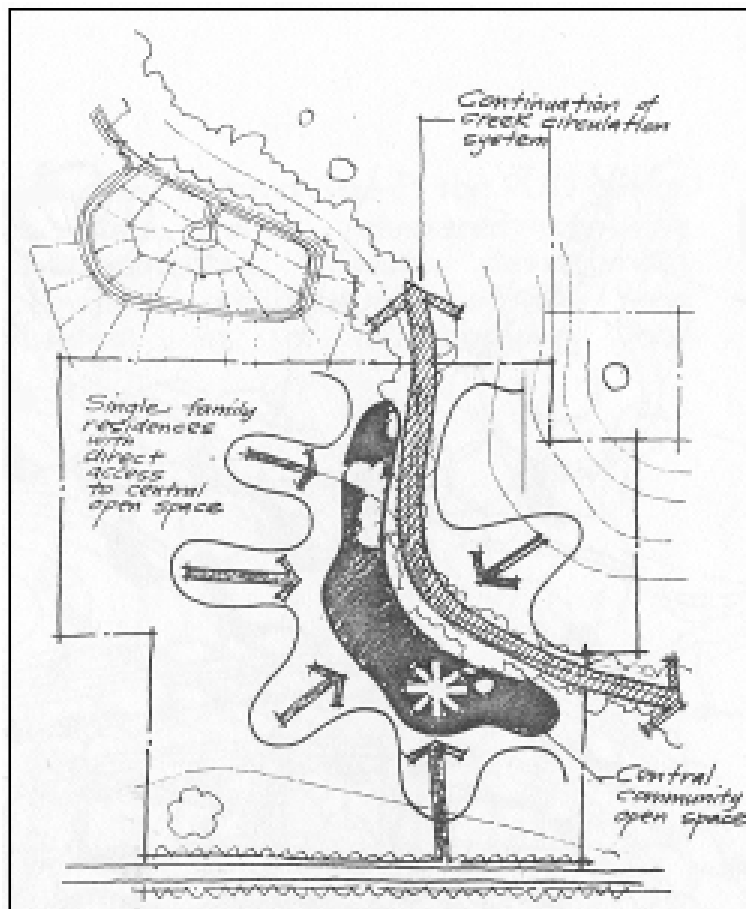
Conceptual Development Plan Example

Site Analysis and
Preliminary Neighborhood Context Maps

Check List

The items below should be considered in putting together a Site Analysis and Preliminary Neighborhood Context Map. The items highlighted and level of detail will depend on the size, type, and location of the project.

Physical conditions (environmental & built environment)
- ☐ Solar orientation, wind conditions, climate considerations
- ☐ Streetscape characteristics, street furnishings, building patterns, signage
- ☐ Roadway design, crosswalks, signalization
- ☐ Handicapped access - facilities and routes
- ☐ Street patterns, parking locations, parking design, building orientation
- ☐ Landsscaping, vegetation, vegetation massing, habitat areas
- ☐ Pedestrian routes - sidewalks, trails, pathways, 'shortcuts'
- ☐ Surface conditions, subsurface conditions, utilities
- ☐ Land uses, building types, height and massing, fenestration patterns
- ☐ Land forms, topography, drainage characteristics
- ☐ Water bodies and characteristics
- ☐ Prevalent building, surface materials, glare, heat, etc.
- ☐ View characteristics and view types
- ☐ Spatial characteristics - enclosure, etc.; connections

Operational characteristics
- ☐ Transit routes, bus stops and bus shelters or furnishings
- ☐ Defensible space considerations
- ☐ Traffic patterns, speeds, turning movements, signalization and other traffic controls
- ☐ Prevalent pedestrian and bicycle use and movements
- ☐ Noise factors, dust, odors
- ☐ Distances to destinations, adjacencies
- ☐ Wildlife

Legal constraints
- ☐ Plans, policies and guidelines
- ☐ Regulations and codes
- ☐ Special districts and designations
- ☐ Land ownership, easements

Characteristics that convey 'meaning'
- ☐ Landmarks
- ☐ Community gathering places or centers
- ☐ Favorite routes
- ☐ Parks and recreation areas
- ☐ Shopping areas
- ☐ Public and private 'zones'
- ☐ Defensible space characteristics
- ☐ Historic features

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

SITE ANALYSIS	+	NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT MAP	+	PROGRAM	=	CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Topographic Elements		Surrounding Land Uses		Proposed Use		Schematic Site Plan showing synthesis of site characteristics and proposal
Environmental Conditions		Existing Circulation Patterns		Market Target		
Geologic Constraints		Cultural Resources		Infrastructure Requirements		How will design take advantage of opportunities, react to constraints, and minimize potential conflicts/impacts
Political/Property Restrictions		Potential Conflicts		Scale of Proposal		
Physical Resources		Solar/Visual Access Requirements for Neighbors		Performance Standards		
Character Defining Elements		Zoning Restrictions				
Existing Conditions	+	**Relationship to Surroundings**	+	**Elements of Proposal & Required Support**	=	**Solution**