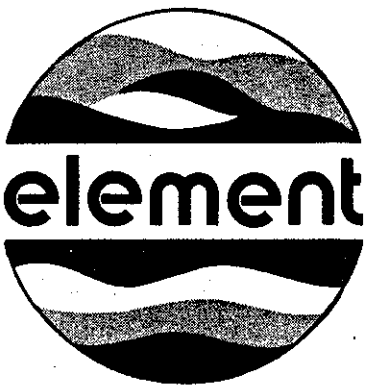
conservation element



CONSERVATION ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION:

The importance of conserving our environment is becoming increasingly clear to all of us. We experience increasing time available for leisure and recreation. Because of this, many of us are taking note of the conditions of the environment and are desiring to preserve and enhance this environment for our present and future benefits. As close as Montebello is to the metropolis of Los Angeles, it has a considerable amount of open space that has been preserved because of oil production in the Montebello Hills and the spreading basin of the Rio Hondo Channel Area.

The Montebello Hills are considered by many residents to be the most important physical feature in the city. Physiographically, the hills are a part of a discontinuous range which spans Los Angeles County from the Puente Hills on the east to the Santa Monica mountains on the west. One-third of the city encompasses hills that are being used for oil extraction and cattle grazing. The oil operations are now in the last phases of secondary recovery operations and production may end in the next ten to fifteen years. By that time, approximately 800 acres will be available for development and open space uses.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this conservation element is to comply with California law (Government Code, Section 65302(d)) by adopting goals and policies relating to conservation, identifying resources to be conserved and formulating an action program for implementation of the conservation plan.

DEFINITION:

Conservation is the planned management, preparation and wise utilization of natural resources. The objective of conservation is to prevent the wasteful exploitation, destruction or neglect of these resources. The local conservation planning process and program should acknowledge and detail the environmental processes relevant to the jurisdiction.

Adopted MCC May 27, 1975

Conservation factors applicable to Montebello are:

Geology and Soils

Land Features

Mineral and Natural Resources

Energy

Water Resources

Plant and Animal Life

Noise and Air Quality

Historical Landmarks

GOALS:

1. Preserve and protect natural, environmental and man-made resources.

2. Practice sound management in the utilization of the resources for the long-term benefit of the community.

3. Promote the reclamation of wastes and the recycling of materials to the maximum feasible extent.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Maintain underground water supplies free of all pollution which would prevent the use of such water for domestic purposes without treatment.

2. Preserve outstanding land features.

3. Reclaim and utilize wastewater wherever possible.

4. Encourage conservation of energy through use of environmental impact assessment to propose mitigating measures.

Adopted MCC May 27, 1975

OBJECTIVES: (Continued)

5. Preserve outstanding and unique plant life in the community.

6. Preserve habitats for desirable or non-objectionable birds and mammals in the area.

7. Encourage area-wide, regional and national solutions to air pollution.

8. Seek to reduce emissions from stationary and mobile sources within the City of Montebello to the lowest feasible level.

9. Preserve and display the history and cultural background of the community in order to foster community identity, pride and an appreciation of its cultural heritage.

CONSTRAINTS AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS:

Geology and Soil

1. The southerly two-thirds of Montebello is flat and the remaining one-third is hilly. The hills are dominated by a major east-west trending anticline. It is this uplifted structure that is responsible for the topography of the hills, for the accumulation of oil and gas and for the exposures of older rock.

2. The soil consists primarily of poorly bedded, gray siltstone with beds of cobble conglomerate and sandstone in the upper part of the section. The lower siltstone is exposed in the central part of the hills while the conglomerate beds "rim" the hills on the north, west and south. The upper siltstone unit (i.e., above the conglomerate) is exposed along the southeast flank of the structure near Lincoln Ave and San Gabriel Boulevard, and in a limited area on the north flank near the sanitary fill. The southern part of Montebello's flat land once was very fertile and was considered to be one of the best agricultural areas. At this time, all of the land has been developed. (See Figure 1.)

3. *There are no known major or active faults located in the city. The primary earthquake hazard in the study area is ground shaking from earthquakes originating on the Sierra

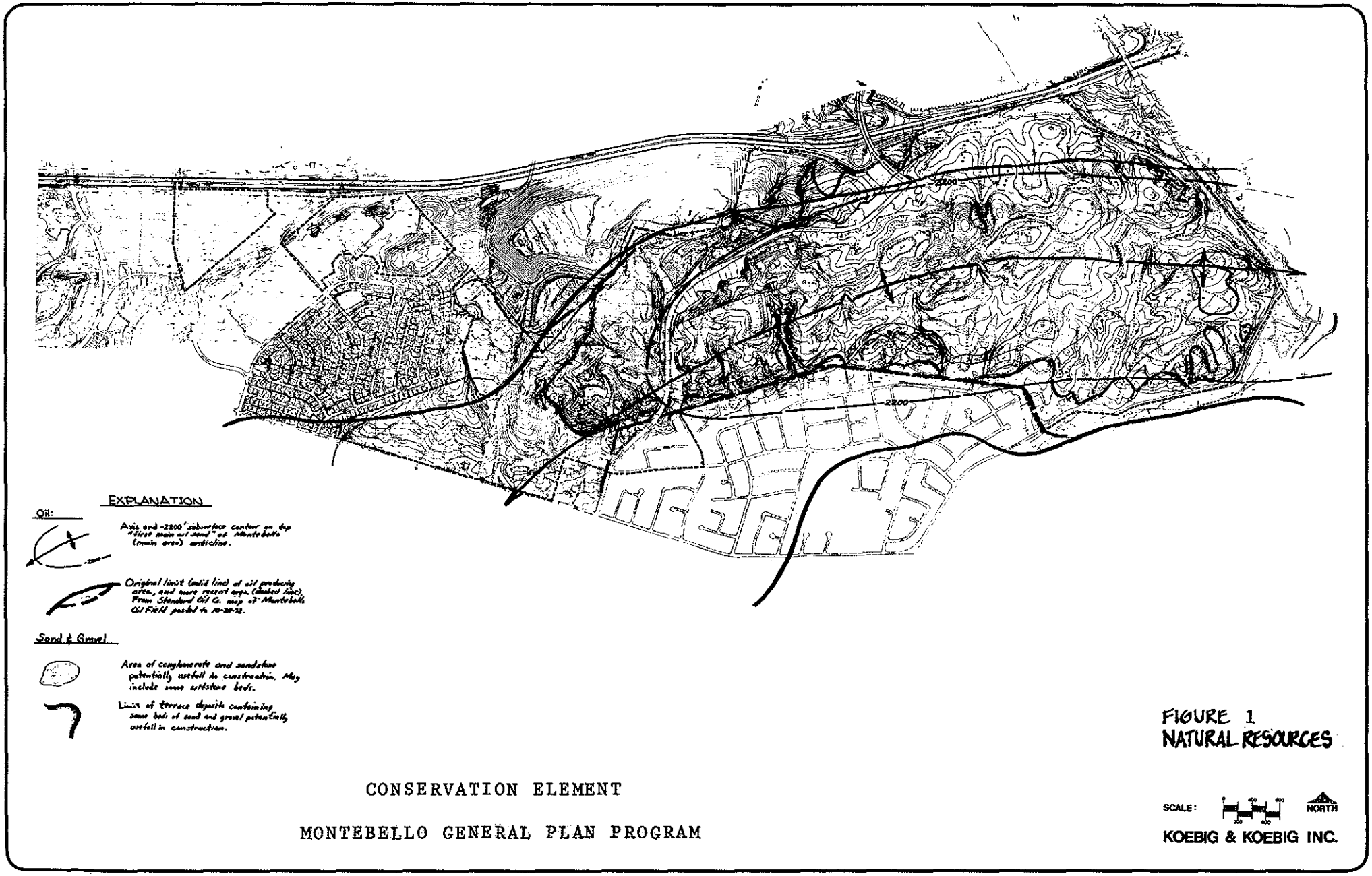


FIGURE 1
NATURAL RESOURCES

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

MONTEBELLO GENERAL PLAN PROGRAM

SCALE: 0 200 400 NORTH

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Madre and San Andreas faults, ten and twenty-one miles, respectively, to the north. The Newport-Inglewood fault is fifteen miles to the southwest, and shaking from earthquakes on this fault should be less severe than the shaking expected from the Sierra Madre fault.

4. *Potential subsidence in northern Montebello, as a result of fluid withdrawal from the oil fields, was investigated, and it was found that is related to groundwater withdrawal rather than fluid withdrawal at the oil field.

5. *Natural erosion is active to varying degrees on the slopes of the Montebello Hills. It is most active on the steeper slopes in the siltstone.

Natural Resources:

1. There are two significant natural resources in Montebello, agriculture and the oil fields. Most agricultured land has been developed and the oil fields are fast being depleted. Oil production from 1917 (when the first of three areas was found) through 1973 totaled 183,942,688 barrels. The production has been declining from 1,229,000 barrels in 1960 to 627,365 barrels in 1973. This represents a decrease of almost half in the production rate in thirteen years, despite the implementation of a water injection program during this period. Water injection has been relatively unsuccessful in stimulating production. Based upon the past trends, the life expectancy of the fields is estimated at ten to fifteen years, depending upon the price of crude oil.

2. A natural resource of lesser importance is the sand and gravel content of the siltstone and conglomerate beds in the Montebello Hills. Sand and gravel material has been used as base material for oil field roads, and as topping around some well sites. Terrace deposits also contain sand and gravel, but the clay content is higher. These materials are of sufficient quality to be considered for use in development of the area, but may not be suitable for export. (See Figure 1 for Oil and Gravel Locations.)

*Source: *Montebello Hills Redevelopment Project, Draft Environmental Impact Report, Koebig & Koebig, Inc., 1975.*

Water:

1. The City of Montebello is served by five water companies and agencies. Imported water from the Metropolitan Water District is the city's primary source. Portions of the city's water is obtained from private companies and from local wells. There are six wells within the city, two for the northside area and three for the south-side area, and one for the golf course.

2. The city stores its water in a 200,000 gallon reservoir for the golf course and in a two million gallon reservoir for the south part of the city. Two 4½ m.g. additional reservoirs will be constructed for the development of the hills.

3. The City is regulated by the Central Basin Water District for its natural storage and it is allocated to purchase 369.5 acre foot per year. The water that the City pumps from the underground water basin is more pure than imported water and is monitored by the State Health Department.

4. Flooding has generally been limited to the southern area of the City. Adequate storm drains have been furnished to meet present and future needs in most areas.

5. Recharge areas include the golf course and park areas located in both the south and north sections of Montebello, and terrace deposits along the south, west and northwest sides of the Montebello Hills. The most significant areas are the San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo Channel areas east of the Montebello Hills. Most of the hills of Montebello are considered watershed areas. (See Figure 2.)

6. A contamination problem exists in the southern areas where septic tanks are still in use and water from the tanks infiltrate into the underground water table.

7. *There is a potential contamination problem from the sanitary landfill site because of inadequate facilities to control flood and storm waters. No facilities were constructed for leachate control and/or retention of carbondioxide gas.

*Source: *Letter from State Water Resources Control Board, Bill B. Dendy, Executive Officer, April 15, 1975.*

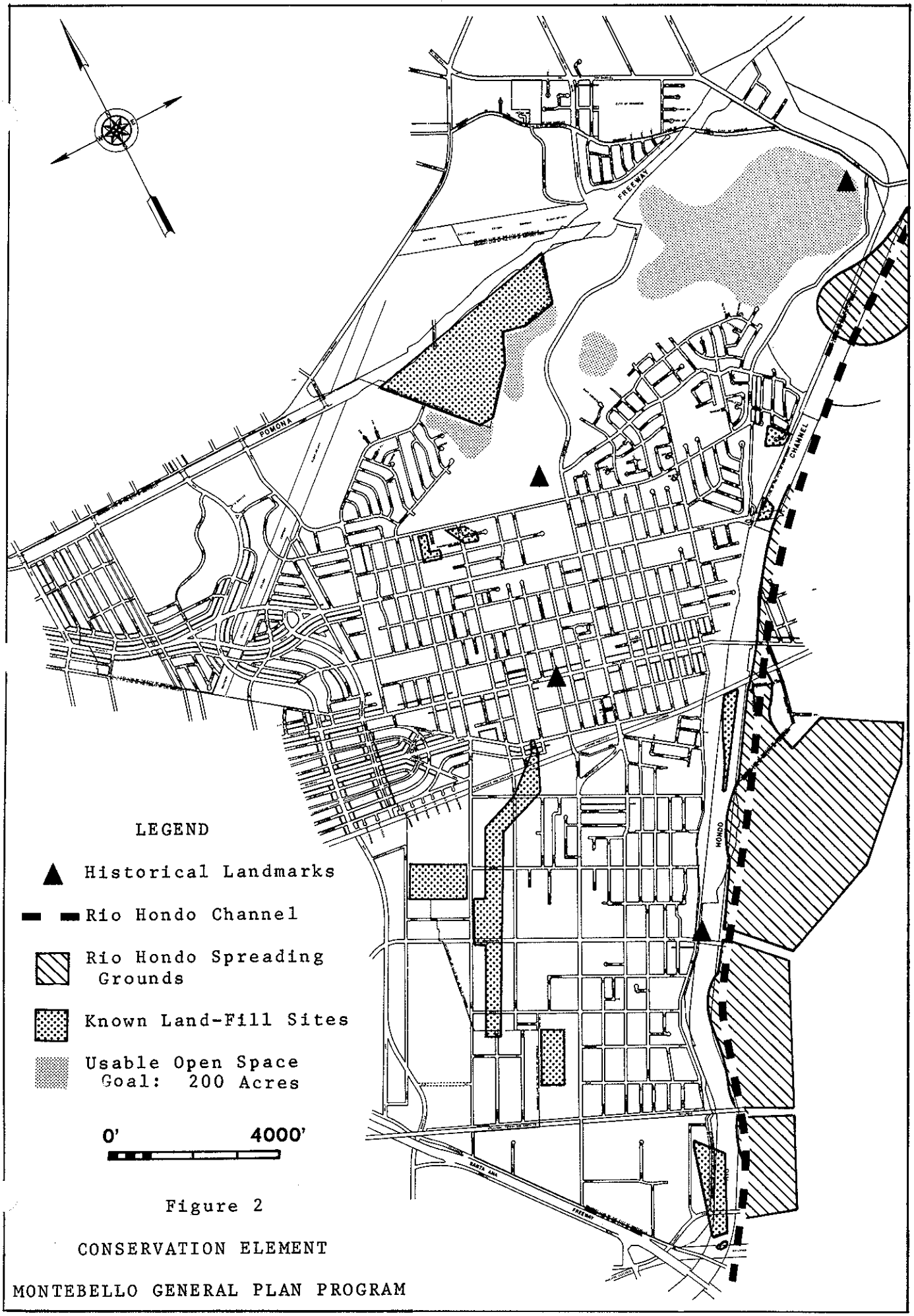


Figure 2

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

MONTEBELLO GENERAL PLAN PROGRAM

Plant and Animal Life:

1. In the northeast corner of the City, facing San Gabriel Boulevard, is a sparse Oak Woodland with Englemann Oak, Toyon, Elderberry, Eucalyptus, Poison Oak, Grape and an annual weed understory. Some of these oaks near the top of the hills are quite large. Other large trees include Sycamore, Eucalyptus, and Pepper trees. The variety of plant species, open land, brush and trees attract a number of birds, including those species not commonly found in the urban surroundings.

2. The type of mammals found in the Montebello Hills are coyote, raccoon, skunk and cottontail rabbit. Other mammals (i.e., opossum, rats, mice, bats and several species of burrowing rodents) that range on the hills may also be found in certain urban and suburban areas nearby.

3. A strong attraction for rodents is the active sanitary landfill in the northwestern portion of the hills. (See Figure 3.)

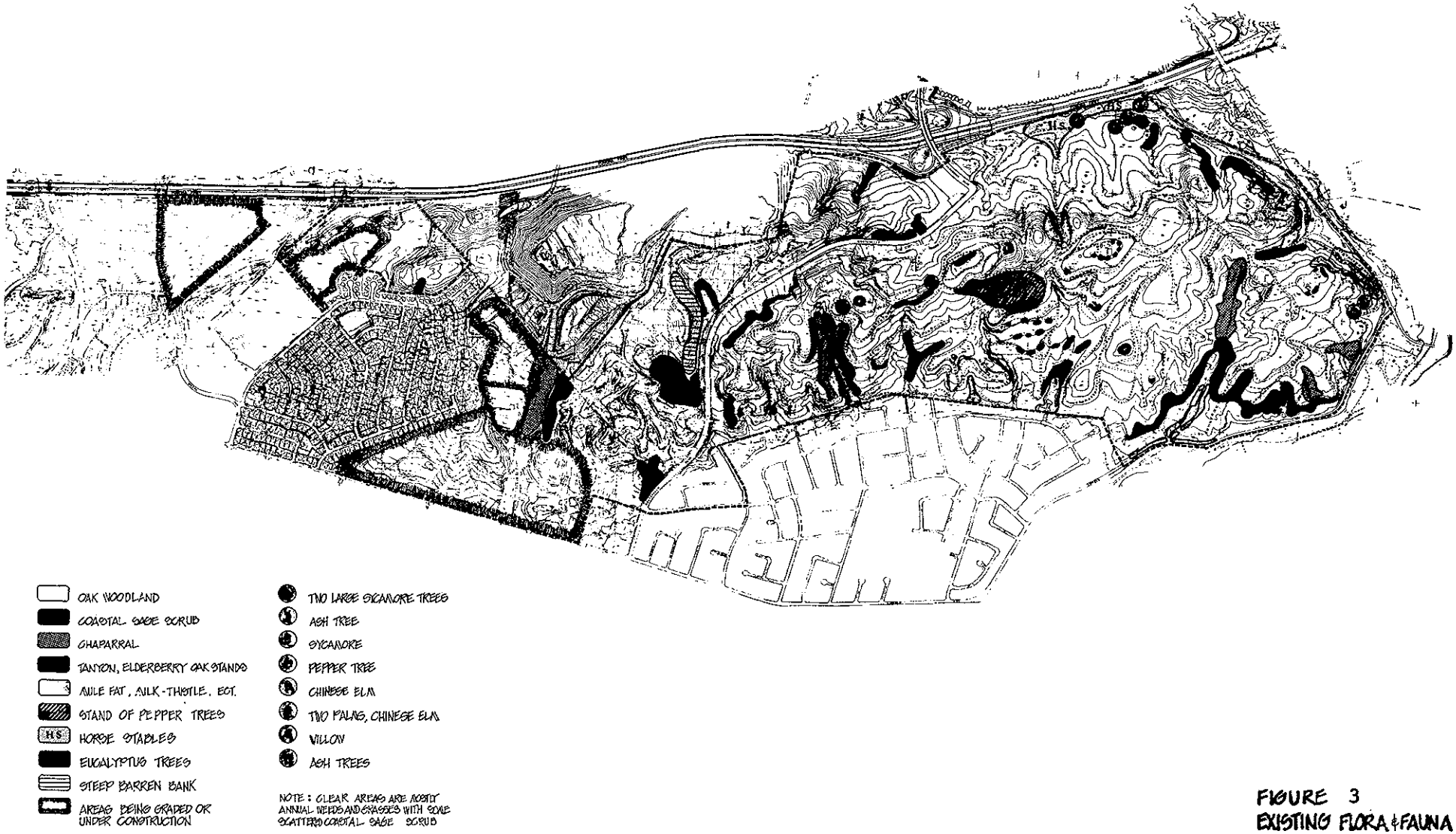
Noise and Air Quality:

1. The City's main noise problem comes from the Santa Ana and the Pomona Freeways. Major roads that create noise problems in the City are Garfield Avenue, Beverly Boulevard, Wilcox Avenue, Whittier Boulevard, Mines Avenue, Washington Avenue, and Telegraph Road.

2. There are many truck companies in the southern part of Montebello that create a noise level higher than that of the northern section of Montebello.

3. Montebello lies in the middle of the south coastal air basin. The average daily emission of air pollutants in Los Angeles County during 1970 was 13 tons, 88 percent of which is attributable to motor vehicles.

4. The main contributors of air pollution are the Pomona Freeway which runs the northerly boundary of Montebello, the Santa Ana Freeway and the trucking companies in the southern part of Montebello and everyday traffic on surface streets.


OAK WOODLAND
COASTAL SAGE SCRUB
CHAPARRAL
CANYON, ELDERBERRY OAK STANDS
MULE FAT, MILK-THISTLE, ECT.
STAND OF PEPPER TREES
HS HORSE STABLES
EUCALYPTUS TREES
STEEP BARREN BANK
AREAS BEING GRADED OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION
TWO LARGE SYCAMORE TREES
ASH TREE
SYCAMORE
PEPPER TREE
CHINESE ELM
TWO PALMS, CHINESE ELM
WILLOW
ASH TREES
NOTE: CLEAR AREAS ARE MOSTLY ANNUAL WEEDS AND GRASSES WITH SOME SCATTERED COASTAL SAGE SCRUB
FIGURE 3
EXISTING FLORA & FAUNA
CONSERVATION ELEMENT
MONTEBELLO GENERAL PLAN PROGRAM
SCALE:
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5. *In the Montebello area, eye irritation occurs on 30 percent of summer working days and 1 percent of winter working days. There has been an average of four smog alerts per year, between 1955 and 1970. Such alerts are called when one or more of the following levels is exceeded:

Carbon Monoxide	- 100 ppm
Nitrogen Oxides	- 3 ppm
Sulfur Oxides	- 3 ppm
Ozone	- 0.5 ppm

Historical:

1. The City of Montebello's historical background starts more than two hundred years ago. Franciscan friars from Spain pushed their way north, out of Mexico, and founded a series of missions from San Diego to San Francisco. The trail connecting these missions was named the El Camino Real. A portion of that trail is known today as Whittier Boulevard. One of the earliest missions was Mission Viejo, built in 1771, on a site near the San Gabriel River that is now located in the northeast corner of Montebello.

2. The first house in what has become Montebello was built by Dona Casilda Soto de Lobo. The house still stands and is called the Juan Matias Sanchez Adobe. Its owner recently restored the building and donated it to the City as an historical monument, museum, and a community meeting center. The City contains the location site where California's fate as a member of the United States was sealed in a decisive battle on the banks of the Rio Hondo on August 17, 1847. This struggle led to the independence of California . . . a step preceeding its admission to the Union. (See Figure 2.)

3. One of the earliest significant ranches established in the Montebello area was known as the Taylor Ranch of which one of the buildings is still standing today.

*Source: *Montebello Hills Redevelopment Project, Draft Environmental Impact Report, Koebig & Koebig, Inc., 1975.*

POLICIES:

1. The land use element goal of 200 acres of recreation and open space in Montebello should be implemented to preserve unique land features and sufficient open space for recreation, natural plant and animal life. (See Figure 4.)

2. Trees and vegetation should be preserved and provided to serve as animal habitats within parks, schools, cemetaries and other landscaped open spaces.

3. Disposal of liquid wastes should be through the sewer system or by transport to approved disposal sites and not by direct discharge on or under the ground surface. Existing private disposal operations should be carefully regulated.

4. Promote wastewater treatment and utilization for purposes such as irrigation, tooling and groundwater recharge where feasible.

5. Utilize environmental impact report process to focus on energy conservation measures.

6. Strict, yet reasonable, legislation and enforcement should be provided regarding emission and air quality standards.

7. Use of public transportation systems should be encouraged.

8. The Juan Matias Sanchez Adobe, the Rio Hondo monument, the Viejo Mission, Taylor Ranch, and El Camino Real should be preserved and restored as necessary.

PROGRAMS:

1. The following plans should be investigated and considered in proposals to the present landowners, in order to acquire the 200 acres of open space the City has planned in the Montebello Hills prior to development:

   (a) Allocate tax benefits to owners who will keep their land as open space;

   (b) Use the power of eminent domain to acquire property;

   (c) Dedication of open space for subdivision;

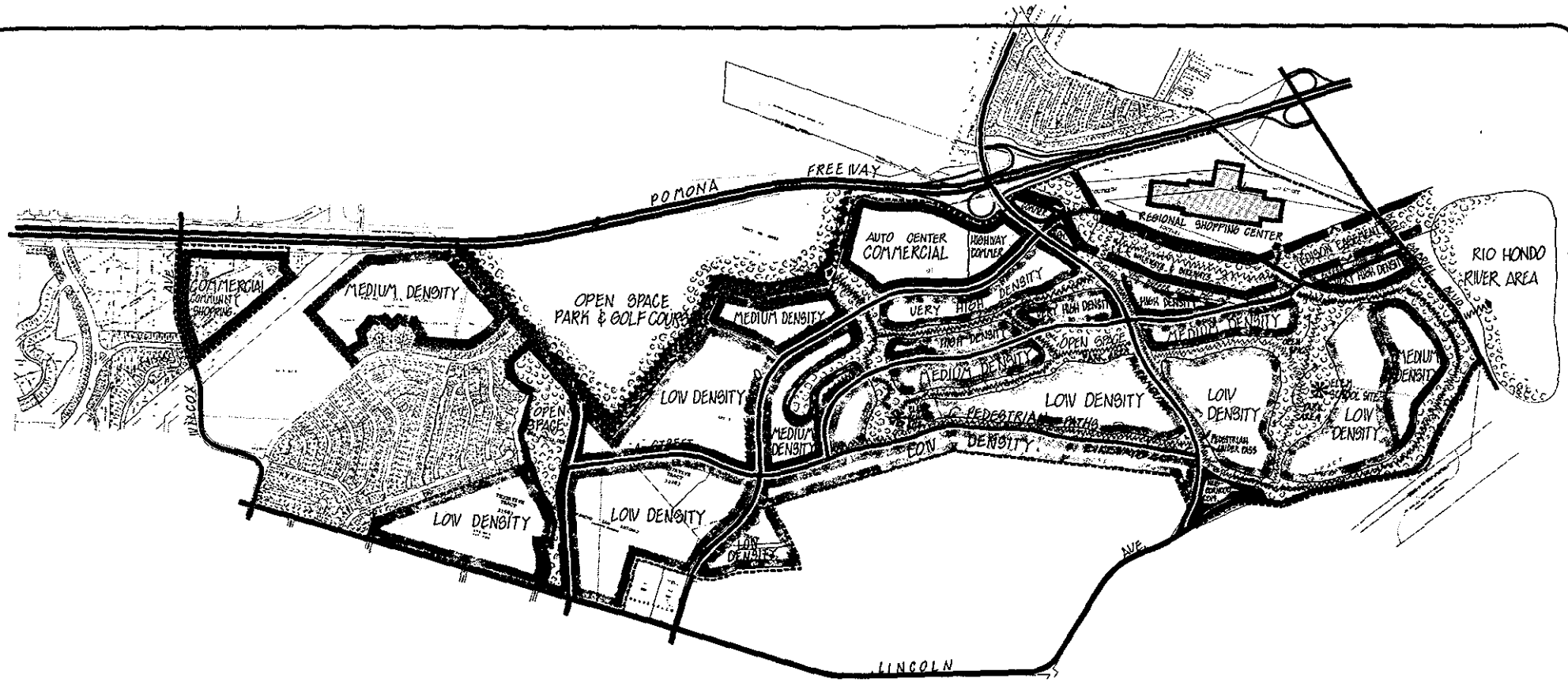

Figure 4
Land Use Plan

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

MONTEBELLO GENERAL PLAN PROGRAM

SCALE: NORTH

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(d) City purchase of open space and recreation land;

(e) Acquisition of property through tax sales;

(f) City acquisition of easement rights/development rights on the land to keep it open and undeveloped; and

(g) Donation by the landowner to the City.

2. Investigate park, school and private landscaping programs to provide plant life and animal habitats in the Montebello Hills and other areas.

3. Assist in the reduction of motor vehicle emissions through such measures as:

(a) Designing highways and intersections and timing traffic signals for the smooth flow of traffic, thus reducing excess emissions caused by acceleration and deceleration;

(b) Equip city vehicles for use of clean burning fuel, such as natural gas, to the extent practical, and purchase vehicles from among those models known to have lower than average emissions; and

(c) Explore the possibilities of providing parking areas near freeway access points as a means of encouraging car pooling.

4. Consider waste disposal aspects of land use in establishing and applying zoning regulations.

5. Encourage settlement of industries with the least air pollution potential.

6. Support additional research and publication concerning the history of Montebello.

7. The Conservation Element should be implemented in close coordination with the Open Space Element and other applicable elements.

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