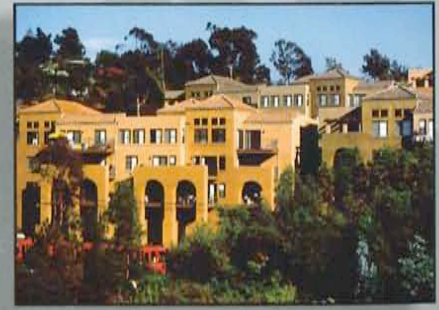




# CITY OF LA MESA

*JEWEL of the HILLS*



## *The La Mesa Economic Development Strategy*

recognizes that maintaining the quality of life in La Mesa depends on local programs to sustain economic growth and to create jobs.

It is part of the City's

General Plan where it can be found within the goals and policies of the Land Use Element. The

Economic Development

Strategy consists of the five elements listed to the right, each with its own multiple action programs that are reviewed periodically.



## **Improve the Local Economic Base**

The La Mesa Walmart store recently earned Store of the Year honors from its parent corporation for sales performance.

## **Create Professional Level and Primary Sector Jobs**

Sharp Grossmont Hospital is one of La Mesa's leading employers as well as the oldest regional hospital in the East County.



## **Emphasize the Importance of Community Character**

La Mesa's Downtown Village is more than bricks and mortar. It's the town's traditional meeting place where people gather for eating out, shopping and lots of social interaction. Annual events include the Octoberfest, Christmas in the village, a summer car show and a weekly Farmer's Market.

## **Create Public/Private Partnerships**

La Mesa has been at the forefront of smart growth and transit-oriented, mixed-use development for several years. Currently under construction and due to be completed in 2010 is the Grossmont Trolley/Fairfield Project that has won four planning awards to date.



## **Keep La Mesa Business Friendly**

La Mesa's compact city limits and plentiful transportation routes bolster retail, professional and industrial businesses serving all East County. The Grossmont Specific Plan Area represents an important focus for La Mesa's economic strategies.

## A JEWEL OF A COMMUNITY

La Mesa is known as the Jewel of the Hills with its tree-lined neighborhoods, its downtown village, and its very walkable streets set in the rolling hills of East San Diego County. The area's first residents were Native Americans known as the Kumeyaay. During Spanish colonization, the region became part of the vast lands of Mission San Diego de Alcalá. In 1868, Robert Allison purchased 4,000 acres from the Santiago Arguello estate to operate a ranch and rest stop known as Allison Springs. A land boom began as water and rail transportation came to the area in the 1880s.



*The annual Flag Day Parade is a tradition in the Downtown Village.*

In 1894, A.S. Crowder and Joseph Allison filed the La Mesa Springs subdivision map, and an artist's community began in the eastern part of town.



*Two trolley lines cover five different stations inside the city limits.*

The residential community began in 1906 when Sherman C. Grable purchased 100 acres on Date Avenue at the same time that the town became known for its citrus and avocado orchards as well as its friendly neighborhoods. La Mesa was incorporated in 1912, making it one of the oldest cities in San Diego County.

Following WWII, La Mesa became the retail hub of East County centered in a traditional downtown. Retail growth was enhanced in October 1961 with the opening of Grossmont Center, one of the first regional shopping centers in San Diego County. Today, La Mesa's Downtown Village, with its own characteristic shops and restaurants, and the million-square-foot Grossmont Center, with its 105 stores and 10 restaurants, maintain their viability as popular shopping destinations.

La Mesa is the gateway to East County. La Mesa's near-perfect climate, its wealth of community assets including 14 parks, a variety of housing, and multiple trade areas, make it a highly desirable community in which to live, work and to conduct business.

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*The City of La Mesa is a community working together toward a common goal which includes a safe & healthy environment, state-of-the-art resources & technology, unsurpassed quality of life and an efficient & effectively run government organization.*

**City of La Mesa  
Vision Statement**

## A SNAPSHOT OF LA MESA

Visit any La Mesa neighborhood, attend any summer concert or fall festival, scan the list of residents who volunteer their time, or talk to a friendly stranger at a local coffee shop, and you will find families with deep roots and a long history in La Mesa.

It was not surprising when the City of La Mesa commissioned a Resident Satisfaction Survey as part of its annual strategic planning process. Conducted by True North Research, Inc., results showed that 89 percent of La Mesa residents surveyed rated the quality of life in the City as either excellent or good. When asked if they were satisfied with the overall job the City is doing to provide municipal services, 93 percent indicated satisfaction, with more than half (53 percent) indicating very satisfied.

The community sits 15 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, directly east of the City of San Diego, and bordered



*Sundays at Six concerts enliven summers in Harry Griffen Park.*

on the northeast by the City of El Cajon, on the southwest by the City of Lemon Grove, and on the southeast by the County of San Diego.

## HEALTHY, WELL & WALKABLE

In addition to being green, sustainable and a smart growth city, La Mesa aims at being a healthy and well city. The quality of life and livability of a community often can be measured by how easy it is for residents to get around walking. La Mesa has an extensive Walkability Plan that is part of the city's overall Wellness Program that addresses Childhood Obesity as well as the overall health of its citizens.



*The city maintains 14 parks for sports, recreation and relaxing.*

### Local Educational Institutions

Grossmont High School District  
[www.guhsd.net](http://www.guhsd.net)

La Mesa-Spring Valley School District  
[www.lmsvsd.k12.ca.us](http://www.lmsvsd.k12.ca.us)

Lemon Grove School District  
[www.lgsd.k12.ca.us](http://www.lgsd.k12.ca.us)

Grossmont Community College  
[www.grossmont.edu](http://www.grossmont.edu)

San Diego State University  
[www.sdsu.edu](http://www.sdsu.edu)

University of San Diego  
[www.sandiego.edu](http://www.sandiego.edu)

University of California, San Diego  
[www.ucsd.edu](http://www.ucsd.edu)

## JEWELS AWARDED TO LA MESA

### **Helen Putnam Award:**

The City of La Mesa is a 2006 award recipient of the California League of Cities Helen Putnam Award for Excellence. The PARKS Project is a creative approach to enhancing and funding facilities and ongoing maintenance costs in a built-out community. The resources of private, public, business and volunteer partners were leveraged to build tournament-quality athletic fields and specially designed facilities to improve community health through organized and individual sports, fitness and recreation.



*Sports of all kinds are played daily at the Junior Seau Sports Complex.*

### **Appointment to Wellness Academy:**

In early 2007, the City of La Mesa, along with the La Mesa Spring Valley School District, was the winner of one of 12 appointments nationwide to the School Wellness Planning Leadership Academy. The academy is a joint program of the National League of Cities and the American Association of School Administrators.

**The County of San Diego** recently awarded the City of La Mesa the "Shaping a Healthy Future Award" for its work on Citywide walkability, the CX3

youth engagement activity (Communities of Excellence in Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention), and the approval and implementation of the La Mesa Community Wellness Program. The County has issued a Call to Action on Childhood Obesity that includes seven domains or focal areas including: county and city government, schools, media and marketing, businesses, preschools/childcare and after school activities, faith/community and youth-based organizations, and healthcare systems and providers.

### **Outstanding Planning Awards:**

La Mesa is no stranger to awards and citations for outstanding planning. The latest, from the California Chapter of the American Planning Association, cites planning for the Grossmont Trolley Station project. It is the fourth such award for the smart-growth, transit-oriented, mixed-use project currently under construction.

### **Tree City USA:**

2007 marked the 27th year in a row that the City of La Mesa has been named a Tree City USA community. The award acknowledges La Mesa's commitment to an effective, ongoing community forestry program, and is sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation, the National Association of State Foresters, and the USDA Forest Service.



*Several soccer teams call La Mesa home.*

City Flower (Bougainvillea)  
at Harry Griffen Park.



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT & CITY SERVICES

The City of La Mesa was incorporated on February 16, 1912, as a General Law city with a Council/Manager form of government. The City Council – a mayor and four council members – set policy and give direction on all matters concerning the City. The City Manager is responsible for carrying out Council policy and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the City.

The City also sponsors community summits and town hall meetings that allow the general public to share their ideas and concerns. This process has been very successful in developing an on-going dialogue between the elected officials and the citizens of La Mesa. Specific Strategic Directions constitute the basis of the annual work plan. The primary strategic directions include:

- Economic Development
- Partnerships
- Infrastructure
- Citizen Participation
- Organizational Development
- Communications
- Financial Stability



**Mayor**  
Art Madrid

**Vice Mayor**  
Ernest Ewin

**Councilmember**  
David Allan

**Councilmember**  
Mark Arapostathis

**Councilmember**  
Ruth Sterling

**City Manager**  
Sandra L. Kerl .....(619) 667-1102

**Assistant City Manager / Community Development Director**  
David E. Witt .....(619) 667-1195

**Administrative Services**  
Gary Ameling, Director.....(619) 667-1122

**Community Services**  
Yvonne Garrett, Director ..(619) 667-1311

**Fire Department**  
David Burk, Chief .....(619) 667-1467

**Police Department**  
Alan Lanning, Chief.....(619) 667-1415

**Public Works & Engineering**  
Gregory Humora, Director..(619) 667-1146

### The City of La Mesa Maintains...

- 150 miles of streets
- 156 miles of sewer lines
- 53 miles of storm drain pipe
- 15 City parks
- 37 buildings
- 200 vehicles & pieces of equipment
- 58 traffic signals
- 1,900 street lights
- 7,200 signs
- 8,150 street & park trees

## LIVING IN THE JEWEL OF THE HILLS



The Serramar development commands a vista to the ocean.

La Mesa offers a large variety of housing... from traditional single-family homes to multi-family residential to senior living.

### **Median Single Family Resale Home Value**

ZIP 91941 .....	\$510,000
ZIP 91942 .....	\$507,550

### **Occupancy by Type of Unit**

Total.....	24,872
Total Occupied .....	24,103
Single Family .....	11,363
Multiple Family.....	13,177
Mobile Home .....	332



Stately palms frame the Todd House, one of the city's historical homes.

## HOUSING PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE CITY OF LA MESA

- Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program
- Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program
- Mortgage Credit Certificate Program
- Redevelopment Housing Set-aside Funding
- Landlord-Tenant Mediation Services and Fair Housing Complaint Information



Multi-family living in the Fletcher Parkway redevelopment project area is another transit-oriented project.



The official city flower, the Bougainvillea, graces one of La Mesa's old beauties.



Aragon, a Barratt condominium project, is a short walk to the Downtown Village.

### **REDEVELOPMENT**

The City of La Mesa has a long history—over 40 years—establishing economic diversity & opportunities for reinvestment through its Community Redevelopment Agency created in 1963. To date, multiple projects have been completed using funds from the La Mesa Community Redevelopment Agency in three Redevelopment Project Areas.

The Central Redevelopment Project Area was formed in 1973 and consists of 55 acres, primarily in the downtown.

The Fletcher Parkway Redevelopment Project Area was formed in 1984 and consists of 103 acres.

The Alvarado Creek Redevelopment Project Area was formed in 1987 and consists of 200 acres.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

La Mesa enjoys a multi-faceted and successful Economic Development Strategy. It is based on maintaining the quality of life in La Mesa that is dependent on local programs to sustain economic growth and to create jobs. The strategy fosters a business-friendly climate where diverse retail, industrial and manufacturing companies are welcome. Public/private partnerships, such as the award-winning Grossmont Trolley Station / Fairfield project that includes mixed-use, transit-oriented, smart growth elements, are encouraged.

### GROSSMONT TROLLEY STATION... A SUCCESS STORY

This major public/private partnership, due for completion in 2010, combines market-rate rental units, called Alterra (1st phase) and Pravada (2nd phase), developed by Fairfield Residential, LLC, with 2,700 square feet of retail space oriented toward the trolley platform. The development will feature three and four stories over two levels of parking, one for trolley patrons and one for the residents of the new development. 527 dwelling units will be built, and 80 will be priced as affordable for very low-to-moderate income families and are indistinguishable from the other units. These 80 units were financed by \$2.7 million of La Mesa Redevelopment Agency housing set-aside funds. The buildings



*Grossmont Trolley Station/Fairfield is the city's latest transit-oriented, smart growth project.*

incorporate sustainable "green building" design features and will be built to the silver level of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification.

A number of public agencies collaborated on the Grossmont Trolley Station Project, including the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) as land owner and operator; the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) that awarded the City a \$2 million Smart Growth Demonstration Project Grant for station improvements (including elevators); and the City that initiated the feasibility and planning efforts as well as providing the affordable housing funding for the project.



*Costco is one of several national credit tenants that serve La Mesa.*

The Community Development Department oversees land development to create and maintain a healthy community that is economically viable, aesthetically pleasing and environmentally friendly. Its three divisions, Building, Planning and Zoning, and Redevelopment and Housing, provide the following services:

- Building permits
- Plan check
- Inspection services
- Planning and zoning review
- Code enforcement
- Environmental review
- Housing programs
- Redevelopment activities
- Farmers Market



## BUSINESS BY CATEGORY & COUNT

### Business Licenses

Total Active Business Licenses .....	5,130
Automotive .....	81
Contracting Services .....	937
Education .....	38
Financial .....	42
Home Based .....	840
Legal .....	80
Manufacturing .....	3
Non Profit .....	15
Professional .....	14
Retail .....	240
Other .....	2,840

Source - City Business Licensing 12/07

### Largest Employers

Sharp/Grossmont Hospital .....	3,925
LM-SV School District .....	1,600
Auto Club .....	500
Drew Ford .....	400
Wal-Mart .....	350
Costco .....	300
Grossmont Gardens Retirement Center .....	254
Target Stores .....	251
City of La Mesa .....	250
Kaiser Medical Office .....	181

Source - East County Chamber of Commerce 12/07



The Drew Ford Auto Dealership has been locally owned and operated since 1927.



Sharp Grossmont Hospital founded in 1955 in La Mesa is the largest health care facility in East San Diego County.



The Target Store is a major anchor of Grossmont Center.



La Mesa's Auto Club headquarters is a major employer.

### City Geography

- 539 feet above sea level
- 15 miles from the Pacific Ocean
- 9 square miles
- 11 miles from Downtown San Diego
- 25 miles from Mexico
- Average annual rainfall: 13 inches
- Average January high/ low: 68°/46°
- Average July high/low: 84°/62°
- 152 miles of City streets
- 13 Municipal Parking Lots
- 11 Athletic Fields
- 13 Playgrounds
- 156 Miles of Sewer Lines

## TOP 25 PRODUCERS

(Alphabetical - Second Quarter 2007)

- ARCO AM PM Mini Mart
- Barnes & Noble
- Beverages & More
- Bob Stall Chevrolet
- Burlington Coat Factory
- Carl Burger Chrysler
- Jeep World/Carl Burger Dodge
- Circuit City
- Claim Jumper
- Costco
- Dixieline Lumber
- Drew Ford
- Enterprise Rent a Car
- Guitar Center
- Innova Energy
- La Mesa Lumber
- Macys
- Ross
- Sports Authority
- Target
- Toys R Us/Babies R Us
- Vons
- WalMart



Popular and trendy stores anchor many shopping centers in the city.

## HISTORY OF ASSESSED VALUES & GROWTH per SANDAG 2007

Year	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Other	Total
2001	\$2,228,604,908	\$606,828,631	\$29,570,117	\$164,183,052	\$3,029,186,708
2002	\$2,410,818,480	\$627,358,967	\$35,627,178	\$169,966,320	\$3,243,770,945
2003	\$2,614,176,430	\$651,826,660	\$39,277,435	\$174,475,734	\$3,479,756,259
2004	\$2,867,845,480	\$695,653,248	\$40,752,206	\$180,484,805	\$3,784,735,739
2005	\$3,226,252,053	\$734,267,615	\$42,099,704	\$186,247,718	\$4,188,867,090
2006	\$3,716,104,819	\$781,950,500	\$44,918,802	\$186,421,524	\$4,729,395,645
2007	\$4,064,978,236	\$862,573,220	\$46,082,211	\$195,094,401	\$5,168,728,068



The automotive sales industry is well represented in La Mesa.



Grossmont Center

Built in 1961, Grossmont Center was one of San Diego County's first regional shopping centers. It now boasts over 1,000,000 square feet and 105 stores and 10 restaurants.

## LA MESA FACTS & FIGURES

Source: SANDAG

### Median Household Income

2006 .....	\$56,677
2000 .....	\$41,949

### Housing Characteristics (2006)

Total Housing Units 24,872 .....	100%
Occupied Housing Units 24,103 .....	97%
Vacant 769 .....	3%



*Jewel of the Hills is a fitting name for La Mesa in eastern San Diego County.*

### 2030 Regional Growth Forecast Update

Year	2000	2010	2020	2030	2000-2030
Total Population	54,749	59,520	60,686	64,522	18%
Housing Units	24,943	26,205	26,623	26,927	8%
Civilian Employment	25,424	32,097	32,952	34,444	35%

### People In La Mesa

Source: SANDAG

Population .....55,724

Median Age .....38.3 years

#### Ethnic Breakdown

White .....81%

African American.....5%

American Indian .....1%

Asian .....4%

Other .....9%

#### Education

(population 25 or older)

Total .....38,452

Less than 9th grade .....9%

9th through 12th grade.....3%

High school graduate .....21%

Some college, no degree ...32%

Associate degree .....9%

Bachelor's degree .....18%

Master's degree .....7%

Professional degree .....2%

Doctorate degree .....1%



*New single family homes, like Bougainvillea Walk, reflect the Southern California ambiance.*

# TRANSPORTATION

The City of La Mesa is centrally located in San Diego County. It is well-served by the San Diego Trolley, the Metropolitan Transit Bus System, the San Diego Airport and numerous roadways such as Interstate 8, State Route 125, and State Route 94. Two trolley lines,

the Green Line and the Orange Line, serve La Mesa, carrying passengers to five trolley stations within the city limits. Transit services for seniors and disabled individuals are offered by the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS).



Public transportation via the trolley connects La Mesa with major destinations in San Diego.



La Mesa Blvd. is well traveled through the Downtown Village.



Bus service in La Mesa connects all neighborhoods, shopping areas and trolley stations.

## **Other Valuable Business Resources:**

**San Diego Association of Governments**  
[www.sandag.org](http://www.sandag.org)

SANDAG maintains a sizeable library of demographic information for cities within San Diego County, including La Mesa.

**San Diego East County Economic Development Council**  
[www.eastcountyedc.org](http://www.eastcountyedc.org)

Founded in 1984, the East County EDC is an alliance of key representatives from business, government, and education.

**La Mesa Village Merchants Association**  
[www.lmvma.com](http://www.lmvma.com)

LMVMA was founded to promote and support the commercial area of the Downtown Village.

**East County Chamber of Commerce**  
[www.eastcountychamber.org](http://www.eastcountychamber.org)

The San Diego East County Chamber of Commerce represents the cities of La Mesa, El Cajon and Rancho San Diego.

