



# Downtown Specific Plan

**DRAFT**

Adopted on \_\_\_\_\_  
Resolution 20012-\_\_\_\_\_



**File No.: PHG 09-0020**



## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

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Draft Downtown Specific Plan  
As Amended by the City Council

July 11, 2007.....	Resolution 2007-70 (R) ..... Effective July 11, 2007 (Southern Gateway District G.3 – Page V-42)
August 22, 2007 .....	Resolution 2007-147 ..... Effective August 22, 2007 (Southern Gateway District G.3 – Page V-42)
October 17, 2007	Resolution 2007-170 ..... Effective October 17, 2007 (Vehicle Parking District No. 1 – Page III-20 Figure III-4 Development Standards – Page III-27 Business Promotions/Special Events – Page VI-16 Community Events – 125)
August 20, 2008 .....	Resolution 2008-163 ..... Effective August 20, 2008 (Joint-Use, Daytime/Nighttime Parking Provisions – Page III-15 – III-16 Minor revisions to the design standards – Page - various)
November 12, 2008 .....	Resolution 2008-189 ..... Effective November 12, 2008 (To refine prohibited Uses Pawn Shops, etc. – Page II-3 Temporary Political/Campaign Offices – Page II-5)
July 8, 2009	Resolution 2009-84 ..... Effective July 8, 2009 (Automobile dealership conversions - Page VIII-2 Figure II-2 Permitted Use Matrix - Page II-3 - II-8)
March 10, 2010	Resolution 2010-29 ..... Effective March 10, 2010 (Amend Figure II-2 Permitted Use Matrix - assembly uses & retail furniture sales- Page II- 4 & II-7 Amend Figure II-1 Map of Districts within the SPA - Page II-2 Amend Section III.C permitted uses in existing structures - Page III-31 Amend Figure III-4 Land Use District Dev Standards & Section VI.A.4.a - to modify required setbacks for signs - Page III-27 & Page VI-12
July 13, 2011	Resolution 2011-90 ..... Effective July 13, 2011 Revised Permitted Use Matrix – Pages II-3 – II-8 Amend SP to eliminate parking space requirements in the core downtown area and modify minimum retail storefront depth in the retail core area Pages III-15 – III-21 and V-6 – V-8, V-15 & V-36
____, 2011	Resolution 2012-____ ..... Effective ____, 2011 Updated document to incorporate “Phase II” amendments that expanded the SPA boundaries (Figure II-1), increased SPA buildout to 5,275 units, added wine and beer tasting to the HD and M districts as a permitted use, identified residential densities and intensities (Figures II-4, II-5), established building heights (Figure III-6), established a traffic Level of Service “E”, and removed DRB review from the project process (Figure VIII-1), performed clean-up edits as necessary.

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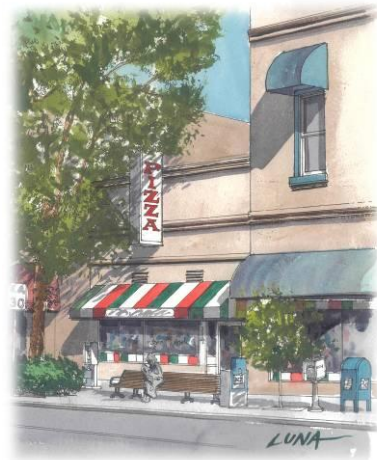
## VISION STATEMENT & GOALS

### I. VISION STATEMENT & GOALS

#### A. DOWNTOWN VISION STATEMENT

Downtown Escondido is envisioned as a dynamic, attractive, economically vital city center providing social, cultural, economic, and residential focus while respecting its historic character. The environment is pedestrian oriented, attracting local and non-local visitors to experience an atmosphere that is

entertaining and vibrant with activity occurring throughout the day, evening and weekend hours.



# Downtown Specific Plan

## VISION STATEMENT & GOALS

### B. PURPOSE

The Downtown Specific Plan document provides a comprehensive plan for land use, development regulations, development incentives, design guidelines, pedestrian and vehicular mobility, and other related actions aimed at implementing the strategic goals for Downtown Escondido as set forth in the General Plan Goals and Policies. As the City's core transitions to a more urban environment involving taller structures and buildings constructed along the street edge, focused efforts are required to ensure that the downtown's unique character is maintained and strengthened. The Vision, Goals, Principles and Guidelines promote a balance of uses, sensitive design techniques, and enhanced pedestrian opportunities.

### C. DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN STRATEGIC GOALS

1. **An economically viable Downtown with an appropriate mix of retail, office, residential, entertainment and cultural uses.**
2. **A local and regional destination for specialty shopping, dining, nightlife, employment, culture, and the arts.**
3. **A vibrant and exciting environment with land uses that foster an "18-hour" atmosphere, in addition to areas that provide mixed use, office employment and high-density residential opportunities.**
4. **Development and signage that strengthen the character of Downtown and are architecturally compatible with the existing urban fabric.**
5. **Street-level human-scale design elements in new and remodeled developments that improve the pedestrian orientation.**
6. **Preserved historically significant sites and structures that enhance the character of Downtown.**
7. **Pedestrian-oriented, ground-floor, specialty retail and restaurant uses on Grand Avenue that reinforce and expand its unique character.**



# Downtown Specific Plan

## *VISION STATEMENT & GOALS*

8. **Higher residential densities in key locations that support Downtown non-residential uses.**
9. **A pedestrian environment that provides connections, convenient access and opportunities for alternative modes of transportation.**
10. **Embellished landscaping, public art, comfortable street furniture and décor that improves walkability and pedestrian connections.**
11. **Maximized parking opportunities.**



# Downtown Specific Plan

## VISION STATEMENT & GOALS

### D. BACKGROUND

The City of Escondido was incorporated on October 8, 1888. The community grew slowly during its first 70 years as a small, agriculturally based town, with its early cycles of growth corresponding to the development of Southern California's rural economy.



Escondido's agricultural economic base began shifting to retail, professional, and industrial uses as the population grew and diversified, along with the need for more varied jobs and services after World War II.

Dramatic growth occurred in the 1960s and Escondido solidified its position as a commercial and residential center for San Diego North County. Recent city growth has been spurred by residential and commercial projects.



Historically, the City was centered on several blocks along Grand Avenue, Broadway and Escondido Boulevard. The development of regional and subregional shopping centers shifted the prominence of Escondido's Downtown retail core. However, Grand Avenue, Escondido's "main street," still provides a focus for specialty commercial activity and community events.

# Downtown Specific Plan

## VISION STATEMENT & GOALS

### E. SPA ADOPTION AND SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENTS

The Escondido City Council adopted the Downtown Specific Plan in 1992, and the plan has since undergone several revisions and updates. City staff and the Downtown Business Association co-sponsored “At Home Downtown” community workshops in August 2003, April 2004 and June 2005. The purpose of these workshops was to discuss the merits of increasing residential densities within Downtown, gauge interest in amending the Downtown Specific Plan to accommodate additional growth, and to solicit input from attendees regarding appropriate architecture and design associated with high-density development.



Support for increasing residential opportunities in Downtown was widespread, and input was gathered from the community regarding their views of desirable and un-desirable characteristics of urban architecture and design. The City Council appointed the Downtown Revitalization Committee to work with staff to update the Downtown Specific Plan in January 2005 and incorporate provisions for increased densities, more vertical-scale development and pedestrian-oriented design guidelines. Over the course of several months, staff and the committee met to discuss map and text changes to the Downtown Specific Plan that were needed to impart the vision for Downtown development and to simplify the document’s use. An Interim Downtown Specific Plan that could be addressed with minimal environmental review and analysis was approved by the City Council in 2007 to incorporate the Committee’s “Phase I” recommendations.

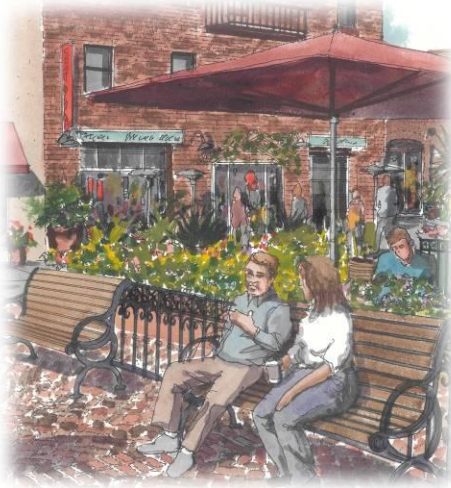
The Committee’s “Phase II” recommendations involved building heights up to 85 feet, densities up to 100 units per acre, and up to 5,275 total residential units (3,275 more units than anticipated in the original Downtown Specific Plan). The Environmental Impact Report that analyzed the City’s General Plan Update in 2012 included the Downtown Specific Plan “Phase II” recommendations in its analysis.

This document is intended to provide certainty for property owners and developers planning their projects in the Downtown Specific Planning Area. However, there may be instances where amendments are necessary to accommodate development proposals. Additional information for processing development applications and amendments are described in the General Provisions section of Chapter III.

# Downtown Specific Plan

## *VISION STATEMENT & GOALS*

### F. AUTHORITY FOR THE PLAN AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE CITY'S GENERAL PLAN



California Government Code Sections 65450 through 65457 provide authorization for the City of Escondido to prepare and adopt this Specific Plan. Its purpose is to implement the goals for Downtown as set forth in the Specific Planning Area No. 9 of the General Plan.

The Downtown Specific Plan serves as a regulatory plan and zoning law for properties located within the boundaries of the Plan as depicted in Figure II-1. All proposed development plans (or agreements), tentative or parcel maps, and any other development approvals shall be consistent with this Specific Plan and with the General Plan.

For the purposes of this document, the term "Director" shall mean the Director of Community Development or a duly appointed representative.