



City Council Meeting
Public Comments
May 17, 2023

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(760) 966-6500
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GoNCTD.com

May 15, 2023

Ms. Joanna Axelrod
Deputy City Manager
City of Escondido
201 N Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025
Sent Via Electronic Mail: jaxelrod@escondido.org

Re: Grape Day Park Master Plan

Dear Ms. Axelrod:

The North County Transit District (NCTD) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Grape Day Park Master Plan (Project), pursuant to the City of Escondido's ("City") notice of public hearing published on March 30, 2023. NCTD's comments are provided below:

Bus Stop at Project Site:

NCTD has determined that there is a BREEZE (Routes 351, 358, 359, and 651) bus stop (ID: 21286, Broadway and Sherman Pl.) at the Project site. NCTD recommends the construction of one (1) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant bus stop pad for passenger boarding. The design should be consistent with NCTD standards and include the following:

- A clear sidewalk area that is eight (8)-foot-deep by five (5)-foot-wide concrete boarding and alighting area that meets standards set forth by the ADA and that is connected to the curb, sidewalk, and street. This clear area cannot have any street furniture or impediments in the eight (8)-foot by five (5)-foot pace.
- Level access to the bus stop that has no barriers that would prevent passengers with a mobility device from accessing the stop. The path to the bus stop is currently not ADA accessible due to a narrow, raised curb that separates the bike lane and sidewalk.
- A safe separation from the bike lane for the waiting area at the bus stop, such as a side-boarding island stop. This will help prevent passengers from colliding with bicyclists while waiting for the bus.
- Improvement for pedestrian and lighting at the bus stop site for visibility and overall safety.
- The installation of shelter, seating, and trash receptacles is highly desirable.

Detours at Project:

NCTD has determined that the construction may take place in the right-of-way of NCTD BREEZE Routes (351, 358, 359, and 651). NCTD requests that you or your contractor provide notice two (2) weeks prior to starting work so that we may send a supervisor to meet with your construction crew to determine if your traffic control methods affect NCTD's stops. Notice should be provided via e-mail to detours@nctd.org.

Transit-Oriented Development/Pedestrian:

NCTD highly recommends that the Project design allow for sufficient ADA paths for connecting pedestrians to access nearby bus stops, sidewalks, and crosswalks. To make your development pedestrian and bike friendly, NCTD highly encourages the City to provide shading from trees or structures, lighting, bike racks, and seating. Potential improvements in transit access at this site would include pedestrian egress to access the adjacent bus stops, and better pedestrian lighting along crosswalks at the traffic signal and the sidewalk. This will support the connectivity of the pedestrian network to the transit system.

City of Escondido:

Supporting transit elements is essential for the City to meet its goals and objectives described in the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP). Set forth below are excerpts citing transit and new developments:

- "The CAP prioritizes investment, enforceable goals, and specific actions related to energy efficiency, clean energy, restoration, urban greening, community gardens, shade trees, transit, etc. to promote neighborhood improvement, social equity, and environmental justice" (pg. 3-2)
- "To reduce VMT, this strategy aims to increase the use of alternative transportation modes (e.g., transit, bicycling); reduce vehicle trips associated with new developments through transportation demand management ("TDM") programs and transit-oriented and/or supportive policies and programs; and increase connectivity between major commercial, retail, and residential areas in the City" (pg. 3-9)

Thank you for allowing NCTD to review and comment on this Project. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (760) 966-6683 or via e-mail at kpersons@nctd.org.

Sincerely,



Katie Persons
Director of Service Planning

cc: Chris Orlando, Chief Planning and Communications Officer, NCTD
Derrick Wojcik-Damers, Interim Chief Operations Officer - Bus, NCTD
James Jones, Quality Control Supervisor - Bus Operations, NCTD
Mary Balderrama, Transit Planner, NCTD



May 15, 2023

Hon. Mayor and City Councilmembers
City of Escondido

RE: Comments on the Grape Day Park Master Plan

Dear Hon. Mayor and Councilmembers,

We understand the city is updating its master plan for Grape Day Park to add a new pool. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the plan update.

The Escondido Creek Conservancy (Conservancy) was founded in 1991 with a mission to preserve and restore the Escondido Creek watershed, including that portion of Escondido Creek which runs in a concrete ditch through the center of the city of Escondido. Multiple studies, including the *Escondido Creek Watershed Opportunities Analysis (2015)* identified creek channelization and loss of wetland habitat as leading to degradation of water quality, wildlife habitat, and loss of a park and recreation for residents and visitors.

Cities all over the world have used creek and river restoration projects to drive economic development and housing as, when creeks and rivers are restored, and new park space is created, neighborhoods become more inviting and welcoming, and developers more eager to invest. Over the past decades, a new and broader view of parks has emerged that goes well beyond the traditional value of parks as places of recreation and as visual assets to communities, and focuses on how policymakers, practitioners, and the public can begin to think about parks as valuable contributors to larger urban policy objectives: job opportunities, youth development, public health, and community building. (Urban Institute 2004).

More green space is especially needed in Escondido where urban residents are park-poor compared with other cities. For example, Escondido's parks per 1,000 people score is .62; Vista is 1.52, Los Angeles is 1.88. (California State Parks, Community Fact Finder)

To enhance the quality of water and life for people in Escondido, the Conservancy worked with city staff and other stakeholders to develop the *Grape Day Park Water Quality Improvement & Green Space Enhancement Project (June 2021)*. The city of Escondido has a tremendous opportunity with the updating of the Grape Day Park Master Plan to implement improvements suggested in this document and the associated economic study to create a water quality improvement and urban green space enhancement project to both reduce and treat water pollution into Escondido Creek while also creating a new park for Escondido's residents and visitors. The Maple Plaza entry area would be an excellent focal point to draw pedestrians to an enhanced Grape Day Park. The Conservancy has provided both documents to the city for your consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

5/15/2023

Ann Van Leer
Executive Director

DocuSigned by:

Ann Van Leer

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