GRAND AVENUE VISION PLAN: SPECIFIC ALIGNMENT PLAN

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Specific Alignment Plan for the 0.4-mile segment of Grand Avenue between Escondido Boulevard and Juniper Street realizes the community’s vision for an activated, pedestrian friendly, historic downtown. Wider sidewalks and convenient diagonal parking on one side of the street are incorporated through narrowing of vehicular travel to one lane in each direction. To shorten pedestrian crossing distances and calm traffic, the project includes mini-roundabouts at three locations (Maple Street, Broadway, and Kalmia Street), installs curb bulb-outs at key locations and removes center medians. Green Street elements such as green gutters, preservation of tree canopy and additional landscaping are included where feasible. Streetscape improvements, such as colored scored concrete, ornamental street lights, festoon lighting, sidewalk etchings, public art features, and gateway features are included in the plan.

The project supports realignment of North County Transit District (NCTD) Breeze bus routes 351 and 352 with bus stop amenities. Route 351 is rerouted along South Quince Street and West 2nd Avenue, and Route 352 is rerouted along West Valley Parkway and Juniper Street. Two new bus shelters and benches are to be installed at existing bus stops within the right of way along Second Avenue and Valley Parkway to support consolidation of these existing stops and to meet NCTD amenity standards for the combined ridership.
VISION PLAN

The Vision Plan was formed through several visioning meetings with downtown stakeholders, a community survey and two public workshops. The City Council adopted the Vision Plan on February 14, 2018 and approved the Grant Agreement to complete environmental clearance and Phase I on February 13, 2019.

STREETSCAPE FEATURES

- Mini-Roundabouts
- Ornamental Street Lights
- Festoon Lighting
- Gateways
- Digital Kiosk/Wayfinding
- Public Art
- Lighting
- Fencing
- Concrete
- Sidewalk Etching
DESIGN REVIEW

The Historic Preservation Commission, Downtown Business Association and Public Art Commission provided recommendations on aesthetic components of the design, including ornamental street lighting, fencing and sidewalk treatments. After considering all feedback, the final treatments approved by the Zoning Administrator are as follows:

Concrete with two different scoring patterns and colors, include a natural grey and a tan color. The larger grey concrete scoring pattern is used within outdoor dining spaces to facilitate cleaning.

Based on the recommendation of the Historic Preservation Commission, unadorned fencing is used as appropriate for the historic downtown. This selection will also provide for easy replacement and matching for future business owners, as outdoor dining spaces evolve over time.

Acorn-style lighting in a color and style to match existing ornamental lights in Maple Plaza is used. Taller light standards (22-feet tall) will replace the existing pedestrian lights and will serve as mounting points for banner poles, hanging baskets and for the festoon lighting that will be installed across Grand Avenue.

Etchings will be incorporated into the sidewalk within the scoring pattern. The History Center has provided a list of interesting facts about Escondido’s history that will serve as the basis for these etchings.
ADDITIONAL STREETSCAPE COMPONENTS

The Vision Plan creates widened sidewalk areas that provide opportunities to install additional streetscape components, including digital kiosks for wayfinding, gateway signage and other public art opportunities. Art components will be selected by the appropriate body, such as the Public Art Commission or City Council, in advance of their installation.

PROJECT PHASING

Phase I includes wider sidewalks on one side of the street between Maple Street and Broadway to improve walkability and expand outdoor dining areas. Ornamental street lights and festoon lighting are installed between Maple St. and Kalmia St. in the first phase with median removal along these two blocks. Re-striping between Escondido Blvd. and Juniper St. is completed adding diagonal parking on one side of the street. Diagonal parking is added on both sides of the street on an interim basis between Broadway and Kalmia St., until sidewalk widening can be accomplished on this block.

Future phases include wider sidewalks on both sides of the street and completion of the three proposed mini-roundabouts. Ornamental and festoon lighting is to be added on the remaining blocks with median removal in these areas. The roundabout at Broadway is anticipated to be completed in the earlier phases of implementation, since this support elimination of the turn-lanes and median that is required to accommodate sidewalk expansion on both sides of the street. Additional pop-outs of sidewalk into parking areas could be considered to accommodate higher demands for outdoor dining or to further activate the street. Figure 1 shows completion of the first phase with the locations of future roundabouts shown in blue.

Completion of the first phase is budgeted and planned to be completed during late 2021. Future phases will be completed based on funding allocated to the project.