

# “ESCONDIDO SUSTAINABILITY”

**Sustainable development...** *"meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."*  
- United Nations Brundtland Commission Report, 1987

During the next 25 years, The San Diego Association of Governments has forecasted that our region will add more than one million new residents. Escondido can expect to receive a portion of this anticipated growth. A major appeal is our region's quality of life including safe and livable communities, affordable housing, competitive job opportunities, a healthy environment, good schools and community facilities, and a transportation system that provides easy access to work, school, and other activities.

Growth and change will continue in the region over the next several decades, and Escondido can make positive contributions toward preparing for that change. The purpose of this document is to provide a broad-based strategy aimed at improving Escondido's energy efficiency, conserving natural resources and promoting sustainable design. In order to ensure that Escondido's Quality of Life is maintained, and to address recent legislation, actions must be taken to curb greenhouse gasses and reduce the community's carbon footprint. This document takes a first step towards ensuring Escondido's sustainability.

Conserving natural resources is fundamental to Escondido's sustainability. This document addresses the goal of using natural resources wisely and promoting sustainable growth and development. Escondido recognizes that conservation and preservation of natural resources is fundamental to the City's efforts to protect and enhance the environment. Development should be balanced with the need to preserve and conserve natural resources in order to ensure that current and future generations are able to enjoy the benefits of this region.

## **1) ENERGY CONSERVATION**

Most of the energy that we generate is derived from burning fossil fuels, a non-renewable resource. When energy is produced from non-renewable fuels, to heat our homes or power our cars for example, pollutants are released into the air contaminating the air we breathe and water we drink. When we conserve energy, we help keep the environment clean, we save money, and we save these important resources. Energy conservation is a comprehensive process, involving efficient use of appliances, new technologies, building design and construction, and Escondido will continue to regard it as a major policy goal.

**GOAL 1.1:**

*Continue in energy conservation programs, practices and community outreach.*

**Policies:**

- 1) Continue to maintain and update energy conservation programs and information provided on the City's website.
- 2) Work with SDG&E to coordinate and facilitate conservation and recycling efforts.
- 3) Examine current codes and development standards to ensure that barriers do not exist to providing efficient, renewable energy sources.
- 4) Streamline the permitting process for public and private installation of energy conservation features in new and retrofitted construction applications.
- 5) Develop incentives to encourage the incorporation of renewable energy systems in new development and remodels.
- 6) Ensure sufficient technical resources exist to assist homeowners and business in the provision of renewable energy.
- 7) Pursue available grants and other available resources that would further the provision of renewable energy sources.
- 8) Consider programs where new development would contribute funds to offset their impacts that could be used to retrofit existing development.

**GOAL 1.2:**

*Encourage site design practices that reduce and conserve energy.*

**Policies:**

- 1) Encourage increased use of passive and active solar design, wind technology, and other energy conservation/generation practices in existing and new development (e.g., orienting buildings to maximize exposure to cooling effects of prevailing winds and locating landscaping and landscape structures to shade buildings).
- 2) Encourage energy-efficient retrofitting of existing buildings.
- 3) Replace incandescent traffic and crosswalk lights with energy-efficient light-emitting diodes (LEDs).
- 4) Replace incandescent and mercury vapor street and parking lot lights with energy efficient alternatives.

**2) WATER and WASTEWATER SYSTEMS**

Escondido operates its own water treatment facilities and distribution system to insure that high-quality water is delivered at the most economical cost. The City's two lakes (Dixon and Wohlford) provide water storage as well as recreational opportunities. Residential, commercial, and industrial wastewater is treated at the Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility (HARRF). The City takes an active role in water conservation through its operations at the HARRF where waste water is recycled and distributed to a variety of users.

**GOAL 2.1:**

*Effectively reduce energy use in water, irrigation and waste water systems.*

Policies:

- 1) Develop and implement a motor/pump efficiency cycling schedule to use the most efficient water and wastewater motor/pumps first and least efficient ones last.
- 2) Replace inefficient water/wastewater motors and pumps with more efficient units.
- 3) Implement methane capture for energy production at the HARRF.

**GOAL 2.2:**

*Continue Escondido's water conservation efforts to ensure that all City facilities are water efficient.*

Policies:

- 1) Continue to inspect, maintain and enhance City facilities relative to their water use.
- 2) Continue inter-departmental coordination of water use and conservation policies to improve City-facility water use.
- 3) Specify and install water-conserving plumbing fixtures and fittings (i.e. waterless urinals, low flow showers, etc.) in public facilities such as parks, community centers, and government buildings.
- 4) Continue and expand Escondido's water recycling operations and distribution system as well as increase the clients who use recycled water in their businesses.

**GOAL 2.4:**

*Expand Escondido's educational outreach and incentives programs aimed at water conservation.*

Policies:

- 1) Continue to educate the public on the importance of water conservation through its web site and during the annual Water Awareness Month Campaign.
- 2) Continue to offer all Escondido public and private schools the opportunity to participate in the Water Conservation Poster Contest.
- 3) Continue to encourage landscape projects employing water efficient irrigation.
- 4) Maximize opportunities to install local or regional groundwater recharge facilities.

**GOAL 2.3:**

*Reduce urban run-off from new and existing development.*

Policies:

- 1) Ensure compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act requirements for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, including developing and requiring the preparation of Water Quality Management Plans for all new projects and significant redevelopment in the City.
- 2) Continue to implement an urban runoff reduction program consistent with regional and federal requirements that includes requiring and encouraging the following:
  - Increasing permeable areas and installing filtration controls (including grass lined swales and gravel beds) and diverting flow to these permeable areas to allow more percolation of runoff into the ground;
  - Using natural drainage, detention ponds, infiltration pits or other collection devices to collect runoff for future use; and,
  - Preventing rainfall from entering material-and-waste storage areas and pollution-laden surfaces.
- 3) Cooperate with surrounding jurisdictions to provide adequate storm drainage facilities.
- 4) Require new development and significant redevelopment to utilize site preparation, grading and best management practices that provide erosion and sediment control to prevent construction-related contaminants from leaving the site and polluting waterways.
- 5) Coordinate with appropriate Federal, State, and local resource agencies on development projects and construction activities affecting waterways and drainages.
- 6) Provide public education information and outreach materials regarding proper materials handling practices to assist residents and businesses in complying with surface water quality regulations and to increase awareness of potential impacts to the environment resulting from improper containment or disposal practices.

**3) WASTE REDUCTION and RECYCLING**

On average, Americans produce over four pounds of trash per day. As available sites for landfills becomes more rare, and remaining space in existing landfills to deposit our trash is depleted, cities have been mandated to manage waste more efficiently. The City contracts with Escondido Disposal Inc., (EDI) who is responsible for the collection and disposal of waste and recyclables from homes and business in the community. The program consists of automated trash collection along with a broader recycling and yard waste collection system. Escondido is committed to encouraging recycling and waste reduction. A variety of programs are offered to assist Escondido residents in their conservation efforts.

**GOAL 3.1:**

*Continue to monitor and improve the Escondido Recycle program.*

*Policies:*

- 1) Continue educational outreach programs for Escondido's households, businesses, and schools on the need for recycling solid waste.
- 2) Coordinate with the City's waste disposal agency to ensure adequate solid waste collection and recycling facilities remain available for its residents and businesses.
- 3) Support feasible programs that involve recycled materials for asphalt pavement in streets and parking lots.

**4) AIR QUALITY**

As one of the largest cities in the County, Escondido has an important role to play in promoting clean air. Escondido is traversed by two freeways and dozens of regional arterials that generate major vehicular traffic flows. Since the largest single source of air pollution is from motor vehicles, efforts to control emissions from cars and trucks would go a long way towards cleaner air. This approach is multi-faceted: adopting clean-burning fuels; improving traffic flows; and encouraging mass transit. Efficient land use planning can also reduce air pollution by reducing vehicle trips. Promoting mixed use and multi-use development, providing accessible retail centers, and improving pedestrian links to commercial and recreation areas can help reduce dependence on automobiles.

**GOAL 4.1:**

*Reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips*

*Policies:*

- 1) Encourage alternative work schedules for public and private sector workers.
- 2) Encourage development of new commercial and industrial projects that provide on-site amenities that help to lesson vehicle trips such as on-site day care facilities, cafeterias, automated teller machines and bicycle storage facilities.
- 3) Encourage use of vanpools and carpools by providing priority parking through the project design process.
- 4) Encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel by improving the City's trail and bikeway master plan and by providing convenient links between the trail system and desired destinations.
- 5) Encourage the development of commercial, office and residential uses in appropriate mixed-use and multiple use settings.

**GOAL 4.2:**

*Improve the efficiency and ridership of public transit within the City.*

Policies:

- 1) Work with the North County Transit District (NCTD) to continue to expand the convenience and quality of local transit service.
- 2) Coordinate with NCTD convenient connections and shuttle services from commuter rail stations to employment centers and entertainment venues.
- 3) Work with NCTD to ensure that transit stops are safe, comfortable and convenient.
- 4) Continue multi-faceted efforts to inform the public about transit opportunities, scheduling and benefits.

**GOAL 4.3:**

*Improve the efficiency of City vehicles*

Policies:

- 1) Continue and expand the program to convert City vehicle fleets to alternative fuel and/or electric power.
- 2) Ensure all conventional vehicles remain properly tuned and serviced for maximum efficiency.
- 3) Work with the U.S. Department of Energy to achieve a Clean City designation for the City of Escondido.

**GOAL 4.4;**

*Reduce locally generated emissions through improved traffic flows and construction management practices.*

Policies:

- 1) Reduce vehicle emissions through traffic flow improvements, such as traffic signal synchronization and Intelligent Transportation Systems,
- 2) Regulate construction practices, including grading, dust suppression, chemical management, and encourage pre-determined construction routes that minimize dust and particulate matter pollution.

**5) SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PLANNING**

An important way to improve air quality, promote nighttime activity, and enhance the urban atmosphere is to bring different types of land uses together in mixed-use or multi-use developments. Rather than single-use areas separating housing from retail and office uses, the City has targeted key areas for a concentration of different uses that bring people closer to shopping, recreation, entertainment and employment all within comfortable walking distances can keep people from using their cars.

**GOAL 5.1:**

*Encourage land planning and urban design that support alternatives to the private automobile such as mixed-use, provision of pedestrian amenities, and transit-oriented development.*

Policies:

- 1) Encourage mixed-use development in accordance with the Land Use Element.
- 2) Encourage higher densities and mixed-use development in the vicinity of major rail and transit stops.
- 3) Promote a diverse mix of retail uses within commercial centers to encourage one-stop shopping.
- 4) Locate new public facilities with access to mass transit service and other alternative transportation services, including rail, bus, bicycles and pedestrian use.

**6) PUBLIC LANDSCAPING and STREET TREES**

Escondido devotes major funding to public landscaping, including public parks, medians, parkways and street trees. Public landscaping not only enhances community appearance and creates pleasant pedestrian-friendly environments; it also improves environmental quality, and reduces energy costs by cooling the surrounding area. The City has attained the status of “Tree City USA by the national Arbor Day Fund and maintains over 60,000 public trees. In addition there are over 200 acres of public parkland, medians, and parkways.

**GOAL 6.1**

*Continue to improve and expand the City’s comprehensive public landscaping and street tree programs.*

Policies:

- 1) Preserve mature street trees where practical.
- 2) Evaluate and potentially modify parkway standards where appropriate.
- 3) Evaluate current standards to provide larger openings and wells, where practical, for tree placement to accommodate future growth and to mitigate potential damage to sidewalks and infrastructure.
- 4) Continue to pursue a variety of funding sources for the acquisition, accelerated maintenance and possible replacement of street trees.
- 5) Continue to strengthen neighborhood and community identity by using tree species consistent with the City’s Official Tree Species List.
- 6) Continue to identify neighborhoods in need of additional parkway trees and plant them as funding becomes available.

**GOAL 6.2**

Complete the City’s comprehensive Parks Master Plan and corridor landscaping, to strengthen the identity of major thoroughfares and the City as a whole.

Policies:

- 1) Identify, implement and maintain a comprehensive landscape program for corridors in need of landscaping improvements.

- 2) Adopt landscape themes that give special identity to reinforce the City's overall image.
- 3) Develop specialized landscape and design treatment for key entryways, intersections.
- 4) Develop guiding policies for accommodating drought-tolerant landscaping (xeriscaping) where it is considered appropriate.
- 4) Maximize the use of reclaimed water for irrigating public landscaping and street trees.
- 5) Evaluate and implement eco-friendly cost saving maintenance schedules for trimming / fertilizing landscaping.