

CHAPTER 1



Ms. Guajardo's Class - Central Elementary

INTRODUCTION

1.1 SETTING

South Centre City is a linear corridor south of Downtown Escondido paralleling Centre City Parkway and South Escondido Boulevard extending from the southern edge of the Downtown Escondido Specific Plan, south to the entrance to the Interstate 15 Freeway (I-15). Major east-west roadways in South Centre City include 5th Avenue, 9th Avenue, 13th Avenue, Felicita Avenue, Brotherton Avenue, and Citracado Parkway. In addition to Centre City Parkway and South Escondido Boulevard, major north-south roadways include Redwood and Quince Streets west of Centre City Parkway, and Orange Street between Centre City Parkway and South Escondido Boulevard.

For over 100 years, this area has played a central role in Escondido's economy and community. South Escondido Boulevard was formerly named Nutmeg Street. During Escondido's early years, this roadway served as the City's primary north-south access through Escondido and south to San Diego. With its rich mix of commercial, industrial, and residential uses, the area around South Escondido Boulevard was a thriving neighborhood that offered diverse employment and housing opportunities. Over the years, many factors, such as the construction of Centre City Parkway, which divided the area, and changes in land use patterns to more auto-oriented development, caused the focus of development to move away from Escondido Boulevard. Although rich in history, an updated and tailored approach to planning and growth for this important area of the City could deliver a more dynamic, attractive community-based setting with greater choices and opportunities for current and future residents, as well as the business community.

The planning area, as it currently exists, is a function of past decisions and policies. Through this overall effort, the City desires to promote redevelopment patterns that are functional and livable. The South Centre City offers unique opportunities to improve community health, safety, sustainability, and economic prosperity.



This 1925 automobile touring map shows South Escondido Boulevard, then called Nutmeg Street, as the main route connecting Escondido to cities to the north and south.



Google Earth Simulation

1.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

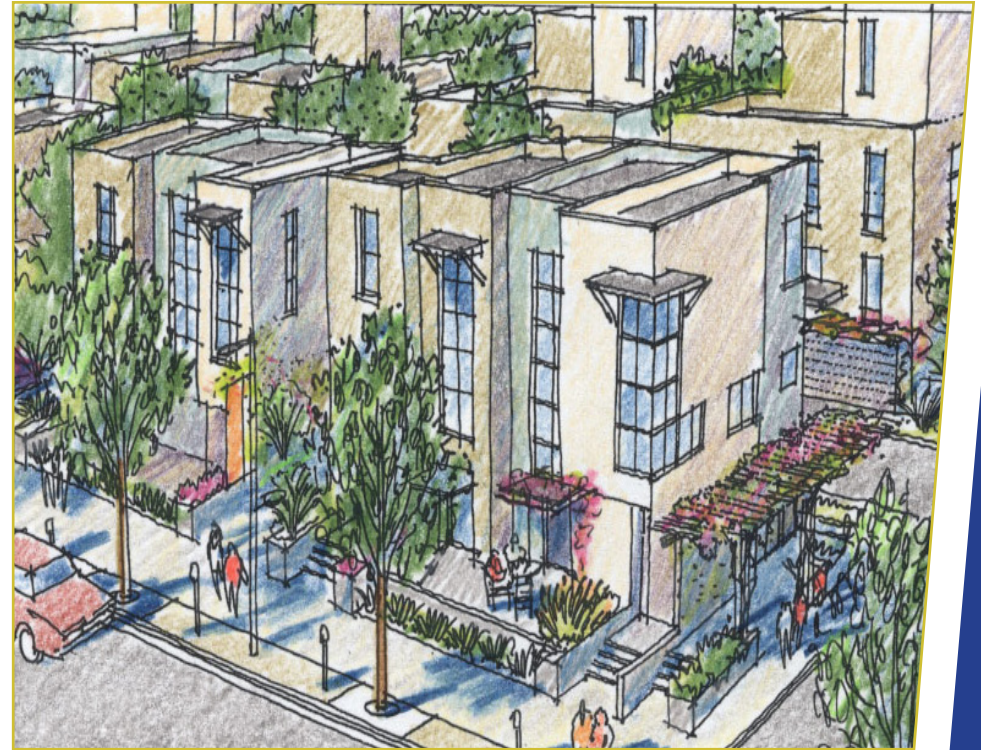
Escondido's 2012 General Plan identified 14 Opportunity Areas, including three Specific Planning Areas and 11 Target Areas, where land use changes are anticipated and encouraged to implement the General Plan's core themes of providing:

- a) Opportunities to live, work, shop and recreate.
- b) Protection, preservation, and revitalization of neighborhoods.
- c) Conservation and sustainability of resources.

The General Plan proposes to accomplish this by developing and implementing tailored plans that:

- Incorporate smart growth principles which promote compact, walkable development patterns in close proximity to transit and strong multi-modal connections;
- Focus infrastructure improvements to promote development and redevelopment;
- Enhance employment growth;
- Increase housing options; and
- Revitalize the community.

Four contiguous General Plan Target Areas were combined for the South Centre City Specific Plan, including the South Quince Street Target Area, the South Escondido Boulevard/Centre City Parkway Target Area, the South Escondido Boulevard/Felicita Avenue Target Area, and the Centre City Parkway/Brotherton Road Target Area. These four Target Areas have a variety of existing land uses, including older single- and multi-family housing stock; new mixed-use commercial/residential development and stand-alone residential development; small scale retail, office, and service uses; low intensity suburban-style general commercial development; and older small scale industrial and manufacturing uses. In spite of the differences, the four Target Areas are physically connected and share many common features, challenges, and opportunities, which makes combining them into one Specific Plan the most effective and comprehensive way to achieve the desired vision for the area.



An Opportunities and Constraints Report was prepared for the South Centre City Specific Plan that provides additional background information, an expanded planning context, and an overview of the extensive public outreach that was conducted. A narrative demonstrating the Specific Plan's consistency with the City's General Plan is also found in the Opportunities and Constraints Report. It should be used in conjunction with the Specific Plan when additional direction or clarification is needed.

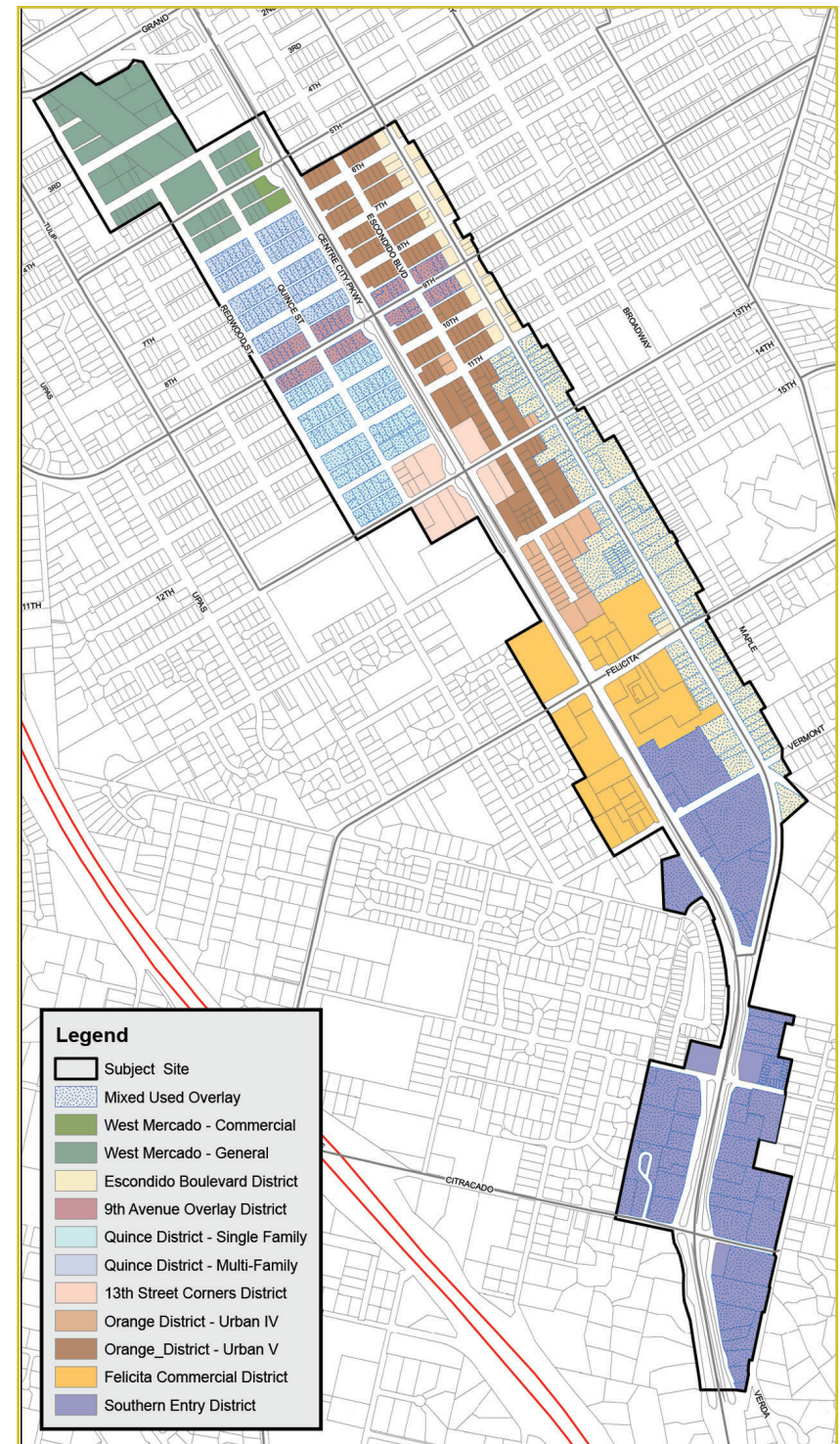
1.3 SPECIFIC PLAN OVERVIEW

The South Centre City Specific Plan serves as the document that will guide future development and land uses within South Centre City. It provides a vision, goals, concepts, and recommendations that are tailored to South Centre City and will preserve and enhance the area's positive characteristics while encouraging constructive changes in concert with the General Plan themes, goals, and Guiding Principles for the four Target Areas.

Community input was gathered during the public outreach phase of the Specific Plan development and is included in the Opportunities and Constraints Report. In addition, the Specific Plan provides the regulatory framework for future development, including a land use matrix, urban design guidelines, and development standards. Economic development strategies, mobility policies, and recommendations for infrastructure improvements are included to support revitalization and transformation. This Specific Plan also incorporates safety, health, and sustainability strategies to create an exciting, walkable, community where residents can live, work, shop and recreate.

In recognition of the distinct character and development patterns of the various parts of South Centre City, the overall planning area has been divided into eight districts. Each district has unique aspects—therefore, the design, regulations, permitted land uses, and other strategies vary from district to district, while incorporating the key area-wide concepts to provide continuity. The districts are listed below and discussed more extensively in Chapter 3.

- Escondido Boulevard District
- 9th Avenue Overlay District
- Quince Street District
- Orange Street District
- 13th Avenue Corners District
- Felicita Commercial District
- Southern Entry District
- West Mercado District





1.4 AUTHORITY FOR THE PLAN AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE CITY'S GENERAL PLAN

California Government Code Sections 65450 – 65457 provide authorization for the City to adopt, implement and amend Specific Plans. The South Centre City Specific Plan is expected to be adopted by ordinance because of its regulatory nature. Escondido adopted an updated General Plan in 2012. The purpose of the South Centre City Specific Plan is to implement the goals of the General Plan, including the goals for the four Target Areas (South Quince Street, South Escondido Boulevard/Centre City Parkway, South Escondido Boulevard/Felicita Avenue, and Centre City Parkway/Brotherton Road) which were combined to make up this plan.

1.5 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

1.5.1 Escondido Zoning Code (EZC) and Applicable Regulations and City Policies.

Unless otherwise stated, all development within the South Centre City Area shall comply with applicable provisions of the City's Subdivision, Municipal, and Zoning Ordinances; Uniform Building Code and the various related mechanical, electrical and plumbing codes; any adopted Federal, State or local housing laws and regulations that apply; and/or other City requirements and policies, as determined by the Director of Community Development.

1.5.2 Escondido Complete Streets Report.

As part of the General Plan Update, a Complete Streets Assessment was completed for the City. The Specific Plan incorporates multi-modal street design to accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and personal vehicles.



1.5.3 Escondido Bicycle Facilities Master Plan.

The City's Bicycle Facilities Master Plan was updated as part of the 2012 General Plan Update, and is incorporated into this Specific Plan where appropriate. The Bicycle Master Plan is a policy document intended to guide the development and maintenance of bicycle facilities citywide as part of its complete streets network. The Master Plan focuses on providing an interconnected network of bicycle facilities that serve the entire City of Escondido. Within South Centre City, the Master Plan proposes Class II bike lanes on Quince Street, 5th Avenue, and 9th Avenue and a Class III bike route on Escondido Boulevard. This Specific Plan implements the goals and objectives of the Bicycle Master Plan in the South Centre City area.

1.5.4 Escondido Creek Trail Master Plan.

The Escondido Creek Trail Master Plan identifies a trail, linear park, and other pedestrian improvements along Escondido Creek. The Creek Trail connects the Escondido Transit Center, downtown Escondido, several City parks, and neighborhoods along a route that parallels Escondido Creek, and extends to the east to the entrance to Daley Ranch, approximately five miles. The Pine Street Pathway presented in this plan connects South Centre City to the City's Transit Center. The convergence of these two trails at the Transit Center greatly enhances mobility options for residents, particularly those who enjoy the improved sense of security that separated trails provide the user.



Inland Rail Trail

This document will serve as the primary guide for all future development and uses within the South Centre City Specific Plan. Projects will be reviewed for consistency with the goals, vision, and development standards and regulations in this plan.



Escondido Creek Trail Master Plan - Existing Asphalt Trail



1.6 PLAN CONTENTS

The South Centre City Specific Plan is organized into the chapters listed below, which follow this Introduction:

- Chapter 2: Vision and Goals
- Chapter 3: District Plans
- Chapter 4: Land Use
- Chapter 5: Development Standards and Design Guidelines
- Chapter 6: Mobility
- Chapter 7: Parks, Recreation and Open Space
- Chapter 8: Sustainability
- Chapter 9: Implementation and Administration
- Appendices



1.7 HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The South Centre City Specific Plan serves as a regulatory plan and guidance document for properties located within the plan boundaries.

Property owners and developers that build, redevelop, or otherwise use property within the Specific Plan area must use this Plan. Projects will be reviewed for consistency with the Plan's goals, vision, and development standards, and design guidelines. The development standards and design guidelines will be utilized during the City development review process to achieve the highest level of design quality, while at the same time providing flexibility and opportunities to be creative. All discretionary projects are evaluated and analyzed through a "findings" process, administered and considered by the appropriate review authority.

The Plan's goals, vision, development standards and design guidelines work together to promote development that is compatible with the city at large, while ensuring that new development complements building scales to the street type and to the land uses that surround it. Wherever a conflict exists between this Specific Plan and the Escondido Municipal Code or Zoning Code, the intent, provisions, and requirements of this Specific Plan controls.

