



## General Plan Anonymous Survey Responses



The City of Escondido is soliciting community feedback as part of the General Plan Update process. In addition to Community Workshops held in April 2009, an anonymous survey was prepared to aid the visioning phase. The survey is available [on-line](#), in the Planning Division at City Hall, and at both City Libraries. The eight survey questions presented for response are:

- 1. What do you consider to be Escondido's most important assets that should be preserved?*
- 2. What do you think represent the most significant challenges for Escondido's future?*
- 3. What do you think are the most important things that could be added to enhance Escondido's quality of life?*
- 4. Where should new housing be concentrated in Escondido?*
- 5. What about Escondido would you change?*
- 6. What about Escondido are you most proud?*
- 7. What specific types of industries and jobs should we attract to Escondido?*
- 8. How can we enhance the sense of community in Escondido?*

This document includes responses to the survey grouped under each inquiry. This information will be incorporated with other public feedback to assist staff in achieving the following goals:

- Understanding what residents appreciate and value in Escondido.
- Gaining a sense of community perspectives on the challenges and issues facing the community.
- Creating a vision for the future of Escondido.
- Exploring opportunities to address challenges in fulfilling the future vision.



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## ***1. What do you consider to be Escondido's most important assets that should be preserved?***

- a. The historic preservation of the downtown corridor and Old Escondido.
- b. Downtown / Center Arts
- c. Historic homes & buildings, open and wild spaces, the Center for the Arts, Orfilia Winery, Prop “S,” feel of downtown, the new Lake Hodges bike bridge
- d. Downtown / Old Escondido, and the urban core in general (including Grape day Park).
- e. Historic main street, historic district, Daley Ranch, & Kit Carson, Grape Day Park, Center for the Arts
- f. Undeveloped ridgelines and a comprehensive trail system that provides access to/through parks and open space preserves.
- g. Our libraries, our parks, our downtown and historic district
- h. Historic downtown, Lake Wohlford, Dixon Lake, Kit Carson Park, North County Fair, Felicita Park
- i. The quaint downtown Grand Avenue
- j. A “law and order” and “quality of life” centric City Council majority.
- k. Original downtown
- l. The surrounding hills. I don't think development should be prohibited. The occasional home and groves are fine. I think mass grading of the hills where visible from the majority of the city should be avoided. This maintains a sense of “separateness” from other adjacent areas.
- m. With respect to economic activity, I hope the City will do something about the Mall. The departure of major anchors has led to the closing of many stores, and the entry of others that are obviously cut rate and temporary. This means that lots of sales tax revenue is going elsewhere.
- n. Finally, downtown continues to need enhancing. It should be a bigger draw than it is.
- o. I think creating a downtown community in the center of town would be great. I have heard bad things regarding the city and hours of operation for this area. How is the community to thrive, if more businesses keep closing?
- p. Land for jobs and housing
- q. The people, the right of way, the roads, the water and sewer infrastructure.
- r. The historic downtown and historic “old” town. The City needs to do a better job of protecting these resources. We are so lucky to have them, but they are not much a priority.
- s. The new hospital



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- 2. What do you think represent the most significant challenges for Escondido's future?**
- a. Sprawl, fixing areas like East Valley Parkway that are an eyesore; focus on economic development (with little funding).
  - b. Over crowded living units (houses and apartments). Do not close Valley Boulevard at Palomar Hospital.
  - c. Address Climate Change
  - d. Promote stable, diversified economy
  - e. Support native habitats
  - f. This will sound funny, but I think Escondido's biggest problem is a collective "inferiority complex." People both inside and out seem to look at Escondido in a negative light. We need to start thinking big and acting like what we are – an established, wonderful city with great qualities.
  - g. Provincial, small town thinking. Short-term thinking. Insular perspective. Blaming all Hispanics for undocumented workers and gangs.
  - h. The tunnel now being built linking Riverside County with San Diego County, bringing thousands of vehicles daily through Escondido
  - i. Small town politics and racially divisive programs.
  - j. Litter, city trashcans that are not emptied, empty buildings, poor schools
  - k. Improving Escondido's appearance, improving the performance of the schools, improving Escondido's image, dealing with the 78 corridor through Escondido
  - l. The economy, filling the vacant stores on Grand Avenue
  - m. Zoning enforcement to keep all single family zoned dwellings, whether owned or rental properties, being SFR's rather than housing dozens of people in one SFR, overburdening the infrastructure.
  - n. Water and sewer
  - o. Providing a variety of housing in many different price ranges. I've only lived here since 1979, but Escondido has always struck me as having large lot agricultural/estate areas and low income apartments with little in between. I'd like to see more small lot housing for young families and/or empty nesters.
  - p. The multiple cultures that live here must be integrated into the fabric of the City. Hispanic and Asian cultures can be incorporated into our social and governmental networks. It is important for all ethnic groups to "invest" themselves in our community...to be proud of it and to feel that they have opportunity.
  - q. The breakdown within the city; poorer neighborhoods cannot keep up and more foreclosures. We should work together to build a better community as a whole.
  - r. How to attract good employers. How to offer excellent public schools with utterly ridiculous shenanigans the norm in Sacramento.



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- s. Existing demographics
- t. Constructing 8-foot bike paths on all the streets. The widening of the roads with buildings very close to the streets. Setting up a moratorium on housing because we don't have enough water and the sewer outfall is over capacity.
- u. Residents not caring about living in a clean, safe city.
- v. Maintaining or increasing property value while not upsetting the balance with lower-income housing



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### **3. What do you think are the most important things that could be added to enhance Escondido's quality of life?**

- a. Development need to have a higher percentage of landscaping requirements. The greenery through Centre City Parkway and downtown really add to the character of Escondido.
- b. More Code Enforcement, more open spaces (love Harding Street), charter schools, I like walk / bike path along creek / drain idea.
- c. More bike trails, more open space, and wild, natural areas. Expand Felicita Park, Expand Grape Day Park, and cleaner air, restore Escondido Creek.
- d. More Smart Growth (mixed commercial / retail / residential) along Grand Avenue.
- e. Larger Grape Day Park
- f. More high-tech / future-oriented jobs to attract young professionals
- g. A public, annual evaluation process for Council goals and action!
- h. Invest in the transit center and diverse public transportation choices
- i. Expand Grape Day Park and make it a real jewel
- j. More parks
- k. Improved signal timing, more bike facilities, and safer pedestrian environments.
- l. A new library, more public plantings, more trash cans, vegetable gardens in the schools, outreach into community by police so you feel welcome when you come into police station, street food vendors during Cruisin' Grand
- m. More quality retail, stricter design guidelines
- n. Transportation from sprinter to downtown for citizens
- o. Bring in a heavyweight Economic Development team and back them with a Redevelopment Authority with financing, financial incentives and condemnation powers for all the Smart growth pods. Create a new, clean high tech jobs center in the core area west of downtown adjacent to the rail/bus and highway crossroads.
- p. Enhance the sidewalk areas and intersections for pedestrians to sit and watch the world go by
- q. Improve mass transit. With the Sprinter, many routes were cut that make it impossible to get anywhere except Palomar College in any sort of reasonable time.
- r. We need a state of the art library...I think we should consider putting one at the Art Center. That would bring people in to that area constantly, and maybe improve overall use.
- s. I think a high end hotel is not going to be successful at this time...too early. A couple of small boutique hotels would be good...maybe one downtown near the Art Center and another near concentration of business?
- t. Better restaurants. What ever happened to PF Changs? You have to leave the community to get a variety of foods we should be able to find better chain restaurants in town.
- u. Changing existing demographics



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- v. The parkway behind the street curb should be set at 15 minimum so 8-foot bike lanes/pedestrian and landscaping is provided. This will alleviate the box-in feeling especially downtown.
- w. Consistently, repetitively positive and creative marketing to drown out the naysayers and inspire the participation and optimism of the majority. The City wasted a huge marketing effort a few years back - Big mistake. We can't afford to NOT market actively precisely because there are so many challenges.
- x. More parks, open spaces, better standards on store fronts and curb appeal. Street sweeping and cleaning up store fronts and signage along major corridors - a lot of it just looks tacky! Better relationship with historic district - it's part of historic downtown, too. A lot of people live there and walk to downtown, but we are forgotten! A lot of cities like Orange, Mission Hills and Pasadena are so great because of their old homes. Help make this a lovely place to live, work, eat and shop!
- y. Parks and bike paths; and great events like Crusin' Grand



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### 4. Where should new housing be concentrated in Escondido?

- a. Closer and within the downtown, but not apartments! The scale and design need to be closely managed to keep the character we are known for.
- b. Anywhere. Repeal Prop “S” – too micro management
- c. In transit corridor areas, back off the public streets, and no more than 6 stories (100 feet) for fire response. PLEASE establish minimum distances buffers between freeways / toxic emitting industries and people / schools.
- d. In and around downtown, in conjunction with new commercial, office, retail, etc. (i.e. “smart growth”
- e. Downtown, off Grand and around Westfield Mall.
- f. Reidy Creek
- g. In areas where infrastructure exists and public safety services can be delivered efficiently.
- h. In the downtown area
- i. Southern part of city, close to I-15, areas with good access to the 15 and 78
- j. Downtown condos
- k. Quality, high-rise, multifamily housing should be clustered around jobs centers and jobs centers should be clustered around regional transportation corridors and crossroads. Make neighborhoods walkable, self sustaining.
- l. East of Grape Day Park
- m. Everywhere! Escondido has opportunities for infill, for downtown condos, and for some additional estate housing.
- n. We should take advantage of all opportunities. Concentrating housing in one area usually results in either concentration of riches (more affluent people and lower crime) or of woes (putting all affordable housing in one area is NOT a good idea. Put the right kind of housing in the right areas. We need it...lets guide it and build it.
- o. Do we need any more housing? Concentrate on selling the houses we have.
- p. All over town
- q. High rise (20 stories+/-) buildings in downtown and near the transit center. Convert the old police building into an apartment complex so the City can generate some revenue.
- r. Let's identify the poorest areas (Mission Park and West of Downtown) and invest in these areas, which are our weakest link. Create incentives for property owners to wake up - both carrot and stick incentives - these people are obviously okay with making good money while leaving tons of social problems festering. I realize a lot of them are absentee. There must be something we can do to change this.
- s. Do we need new housing? Aren't there a lot of empty homes and unfinished condos currently vacant? How about finishing those up first?
- t. Downtown



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### 5. What about Escondido would you change?

- a. Extend night life in downtown. Need to attract businesses that will extend hours and increase nightlife.
- b. Reduce graffiti. Improve roads (surfaces) and traffic flow (signals)
- c. Restoring Escondido Creek to more natural status and improve more public uses of it.
- d. More business friendly policies and incentives for new businesses to start here or established businesses to move here
- e. Enmity and fear by Anglos toward Hispanics. Let's set bolder goals for our city – more superlative! Move away from our over-reliance on sales tax for city services.
- f. City council seats should be elected by district and the funding priorities should be adjusted to reduce the over-commitment to public safety and the expense of other city services.
- g. The prejudice and low opinion so many people have of their own city.
- h. Appearance of the homes in the central part of town, the 78 corridor
- i. A lot to fix up on South Escondido Blvd
- j. Sweep out the hookers, gang bangers and street gangs, and engage a PR firm to alter the regional image of this hidden valley metropolis.
- k. Cleanup the way Grape Day Park is used by the homeless
- l. More street sweeping
- m. Provide more employment opportunities...variety, variety, variety! We have lots of service jobs...low skill level and low income. What are the largest and most successful majors at San Marcos State...aim for industries that need such people and keep them here.
- n. Palomar has a huge "craft" program...art glass, ceramics, etc. Many of those artists are successful, and live here. Let's play that up.
- o. SCHOOLS. The quality neighborhoods have great schools, but since we are near an underdeveloped neighborhood we have a poor school to go to. I commute to Poway 5 days a week so my daughter can go to a good Preschool. She's 3.5 and has been doing this more than half her life.
- p. Lack of nice downtown
- q. Add more bike lanes, also make Grand in downtown a two lane 15MPH road with no curbs so is more pedestrian friendly. Add more palm trees and keep the color of the median hardscape consistent for the entire length of the roads. Add better pedestrian and bike access from the downtown to the transit center.
- r. We have to think about the whole life cycle of our residents, which means posing questions about what couples with young children need and want; what teens need and want; what young adults need and want, working adults, seniors, etc. Similarly, we have to think about the totality of people - our city will thrive if it thinks carefully about how to create a setting that attracts and supports a multitude of activities. In other





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words, we need to think about art as well as potholes; education as well as police and fire; industry AND open space. Every Escondido resident who can will exercise the option to fill his or her needs and pursue their interests somewhere, so building diversity into our own city is an investment in our own people.

- s. Once and for all, can we get rid of the assumption that we are a bedroom community?! That is the opposite of smart growth! That role for the city is about 30 years out of date, and if city and business leaders (who are aging boomers now) let that continue, Escondido will fall farther and farther behind. Yes, it will cost money to turn this around, but it's either grow or die.
- t. I hope that more economic vitality will eventually drown out the tired xenophobic rants against all Latinos.
- u. Clean up certain parts - both residential and commercial. The main Esc Blvd corridor is so junky looking. Tighter restrictions on store-fronts and types of businesses. Enforce street parking and multi-tenant properties that are overflowing. Plant trees, help out historic district.
- v. Multiple-family living - The three families living in the house next door that is smaller than our 1000 sq ft house. The property is not large enough to accommodate all those people, so they typically branch out into adjacent yards and walkways and clog the street with cars.



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### 6. What about Escondido are you most proud?

- a. Small town community feel.
- b. Sense of place / historic aspect. Smell of orange trees and avocado groves
- c. Historic Old Escondido, Daley Ranch, Queen Calafia, San Dieguito River Park, Bernardo Mountain, Felicita Park, Farmers Market
- d. Its history and genuine nature. It's a real city with a real heart – nothing else in North County can claim this.
- e. Downtown, including the historic district and the art center. The beautiful hills and open space
- f. It's the second oldest city in the county.
- g. Our diversity
- h. The large number of parks and open spaces, the downtown area, the agricultural heritage
- i. Civic Center
- j. The City Council standing tall against illegal immigration and being law enforcement oriented.
- k. Great traditional town and friendly people
- l. Escondido is a City with many residents who are solid, grounded, and full of common sense. We have rich people, poor people and everything in between. Let's keep it that way.
- m. Wild Animal Park
- n. Development along I-15
- o. The people that work at City Hall. Bear Valley Parkway from Citrus to Boyle, in front of Orange Glen High School it is the most beautiful road in town. It should be the model for all the arterial roads in town.
- p. Historic downtown, downtown events, historic district, variety of restaurants, new hospital, Stone Brewery =>
- q. The heritage and Old Escondido - nothing can ever duplicate a hundred year-old home that is restored.



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- 7. What specific types of industries and jobs should we attract to Escondido?**
- a. We should build on the arts community by bringing more jobs in the arts and music industry including possibly movie industry. Keep it in the realm of creative “soft industry” not “hard” industry (high tech, medical, research).
  - b. Retirement facilities, high tech / bio
  - c. Green jobs, good paying jobs that don’t require a lot of advanced degrees
  - d. -High tech
  - e. -Architecture / engineering
  - f. -Alternative energy
  - g. High tech, clean-tech, alternative energy and green sector jobs; blue collar jobs as well. We need a diversified economic base.
  - h. Film, English-As-A-Second-Language academies, and specialty periodicals.
  - i. Controversial ones, like stem cell research, would really put us on the map.
  - j. Non-polluting industries....green jobs. All kinds. Focusing on one, as we see now with the car sales, can be a disaster when the market changes.
  - k. Biotech, R&D
  - l. Biotech, green industries
  - m. Quality retail malls within the core and biotech, health tech, IT and electronics technology
  - n. Variety, variety, variety. We have enough low income service jobs. However, not everyone can or should go to college. We need skilled craftsmen, artisans, mechanics and a host of other quality, mid-high level income businesses. We need businesses that require college graduates in more than just high tech.
  - o. Where would you put them? Isn't Escondido already built up? Work on the businesses we have, so that no one else leaves or goes under.
  - p. Medical, technology
  - q. Clean Air industries. Escondido should continue to be a bedroom community. There is no need for more hotels.
  - r. Health care, commercial, interesting restaurants, shopping.
  - s. I would like to see more medical and engineering industries. They could support the new hospital or other on-going projects. If a medical-related engineering job was available, I would change my job location in a second - Carlsbad has sucked enough money out of me - wish I could give it to my own city.



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### 8. How can we enhance the sense of community in Escondido?

- a. Leverage transit center to get people around our town, bike paths, walking paths, etc.
- b. Continue big events, parades, 1<sup>st</sup> Night, July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks
- c. Council should stop passing divisive immigration policies and seek to expand and cherish our diverse community. Ensure that public safety personnel are helped or encouraged to live in Escondido. Pay our City employees and public safety employees well.
- d. -Summer concerts in Grape Day Park (with popular acts, like Humphreys)
- e. -Reduce Grand Avenue to one lane in each direction, then add middle lanes to a LARGE median with fire pits / large trees, sitting areas, etc. I've seen this in the Bay Area and it created a community gathering spot-VERY SUCCESSFUL
- f. Community center placed strategically around the City of Escondido
- g. Make city government lean, meaning public employees don't deserve both cake benefits / job security and super high pay
- h. Use on-line surveys more so people can participate
- i. Bring together associations of Anglos and Mexicans
- j. Stop pursuing racist policies and come to grips with the fact that the Hispanic culture should be embraced, supported, and leveraged for the benefit of all.
- k. Have a friendlier attitude at city council meetings rather than always making people feel they are about to be reprimanded. The mayor could have a time once a month when people could actually come and talk about issues with her/him on an informal basis. Take the Neighborhood Porch trailer to the Farmers Market every week so people will know about it...never saw it until I looked it up today.
- l. Good question
- m. More signage embracing Escondido
- n. Establish and develop major gateways and launch a sustained PR campaign to alter the image of Escondido.
- o. Blend the activities of the high schools with the community events like the street fair and Cruzin' Grand
- p. Continue doing what we are doing.
- q. Community Enhancement Project. Beautify Escondido. Get the kids involved as a school project.
- r. Clean up Lincoln Avenue near HWY 78. Remove eyesore buildings between Valley Parkway and Grand Avenue, West of Centre City Parkway (near the transit center) and make this area an open space park with a few new restaurants (restaurant row) and bike paths. Have a Halloween parade in down town like a Carnival.
- s. A natural gas or electric "trolley style" bus fleet that makes it easy for people to get around and enjoy the city's wonderful amenities: all the resources at Kit Carson and the



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mall on the south...the commercial hub at El Norte and Center City, the transit center, east Valley Parkway, the historic district, West Valley Parkway, Lake Hodges... Small, clean vehicles run by the city because NCTD will NEVER do it on a regular and frequent schedule, so that it is easier for people to shop, dine and stroll on the trolley than getting in their car and jetting off to every other city in the county.

- t. More publicity of events. Summer concerts, movies in the park. Cruisin Grand is great - things you are doing, just continue them and market them more effectively. It's a tough job.
- u. One word: Oktoberfest! (with beer gardens of course)