ESCONDIDO
City of Choice

PLANNING COMMISSION

Agenda Item No.: _____
Date: November 24, 2009

CASE NUMBER: PHG 09-0027

APPLICANT: City of Escondido

LOCATION: The site is located on the southwestern corner of the intersection of 11th Avenue and Del Dios Road, addressed as 1517 West 11th Avenue.

TYPE OF PROJECT: Park Master Plan and Zone Change

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: A Park Master Plan for the future development of a new 3.2-acre park site on the southwestern corner of 11th Avenue and Del Dios Road. The proposed park would include a passive open play area on the southern portion of the site with a sloping grass lawn, tot lot, garden, shade structures, picnic tables, half-court basketball, and a restroom building. An approximately 18,700 SF community center building located between 11th Avenue and Fire Station 6 would include an indoor basketball court, meeting rooms and classrooms. Parking would be provided in a new parking lot with approximately 70 spaces located adjacent to 11th Avenue. Fencing will be provided along the western and southern boundaries of the site with street frontages remaining unfenced. The project also includes a zone change on the proposed park site from RE-20 (Residential Estates – 20,000 SF minimum lot size) to OS-P (Open Space – Park).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION/TIER: Suburban (up to 3.3 dwelling units per acre)
Tier 2A – Felicita Subarea

ZONING: RE-20 (Residential Estates – 20,000 SF minimum lot size)

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF ISSUES: The 3.2-acre proposed park site is part of a larger 4.47 acre property that was acquired a couple of years ago for the construction of Fire Station No. 6. Fire Station No. 6 is located on the southeastern 1.27 acres of the site leaving the balance of the property available for potential development. Since the 1994 adoption of the Parks and Trails Master Plan, the city has been seeking land on the western side of the city for the establishment of a neighborhood park. A community center site has also been sought to provide the city's second community center as called for in the General Plan.

As plans were being finalized for the fire station it became clear there would be enough vacant land left over to provide a small neighborhood park with a community center building. Once the fire station was completed, the park master plan process started and a consultant was hired to help assist staff through the community participation process and develop a park plan with appropriate facilities. Adoption of the proposed 11th Avenue Park Master Plan would allow development of the park and community center facilities to occur once funding becomes available. It is anticipated that the site would be developed in at least two phases with the outdoor park facilities and parking constructed first followed by the community center building.

Staff feels that the issues are as follow:

1. Whether the site is suitable for the development of a park and community center.

2. Appropriateness of the proposed zone change.

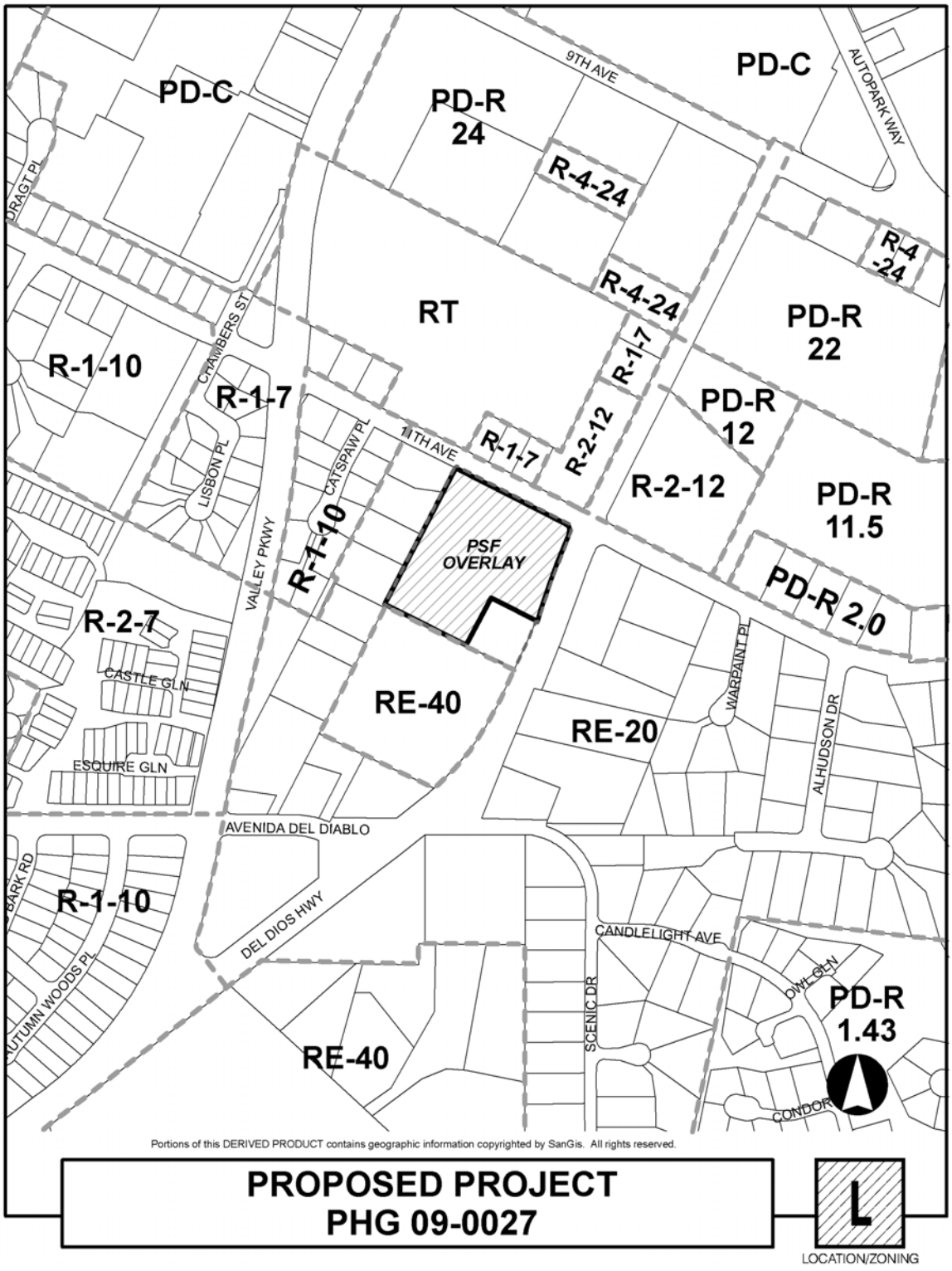
REASONS FOR STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. The proposed park would be the first city park developed west of Interstate 15. The proposed park site is surrounded on the north, east and west by residential development with vacant residentially-zoned land adjacent to the southern boundary. The site is suitable for the development of a neighborhood park because adequate parking will be provided on-site, visibility into the site from adjacent public streets will enhance security, and the location is in close proximity to the residential users of park facilities.

2 The proposed zone change from RE-20 (Residential Estates – 20,000 SF minimum lot size) to OS-P (Open Space – Park) will facilitate the development of a public park on the site and reserves the property for that purpose. The Open Space–Park (OS-P) zone is typically applied to park sites in the city to disclose to the public that active and/or passive public recreational uses will be planned or constructed on the site.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Martin
Principal Planner


PD-C
PD-C
9TH AVE
AUTOPARK WAY
PD-R 24
R-4-24
R-4-24
R-4-24
RT
PD-R 22
R-1-10
CHAMBERS ST
R-1-7
R-1-7
R-2-12
PD-R 12
11TH AVE
R-1-7
R-2-12
PD-R 11.5
LISBON PL
CATSPAW PL
VALLEY PKWY
R-1-10
PSF OVERLAY
PD-R 2.0
R-2-7
CASTLE GLN
RE-40
RE-20
WARPAINT PL
ALHUDSON DR
ESQUIRE GLN
AVENIDA DEL DIABLO
R-1-10
DEL DIOS HWY
CANDLELIGHT AVE
OWL GLN
PD-R 1.43
SCENIC DR
RE-40
CONDOR
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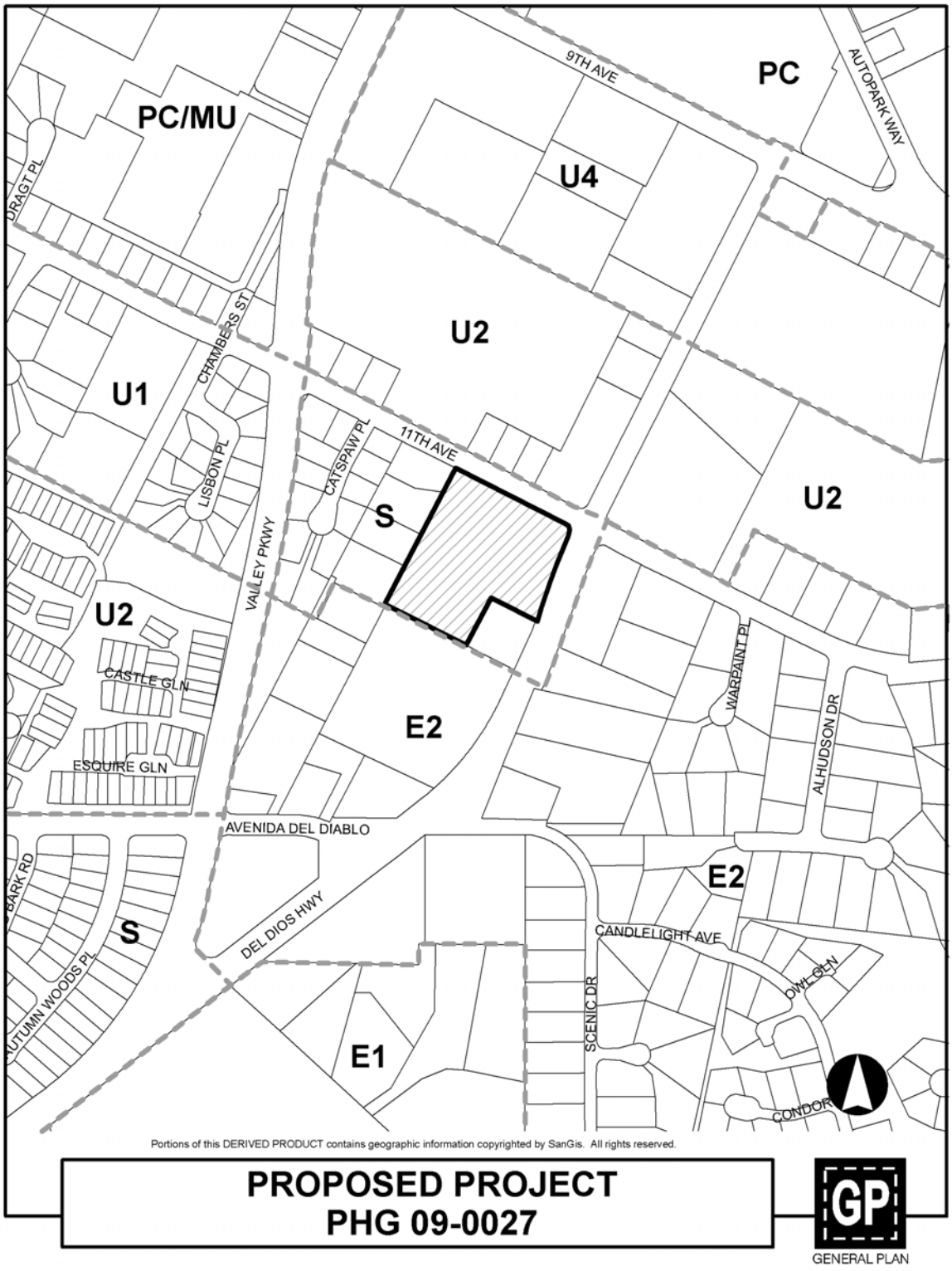
PROPOSED PROJECT
PHG 09-0027
L
LOCATION/ZONING


PC/MU
9TH AVE
PC
AUTOPARK WAY
U4
U2
U1
CHAMBERS ST
LISBON PL
CATSPAW PL
11TH AVE
S
VALLEY PKWY
U2
U2
CASTLE GLN
E2
WARPAINT PL
ALHUDSON DR
ESQUIRE GLN
AVENIDA DEL DIABLO
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CANDLELIGHT AVE
OWL GLN
SCENIC DR
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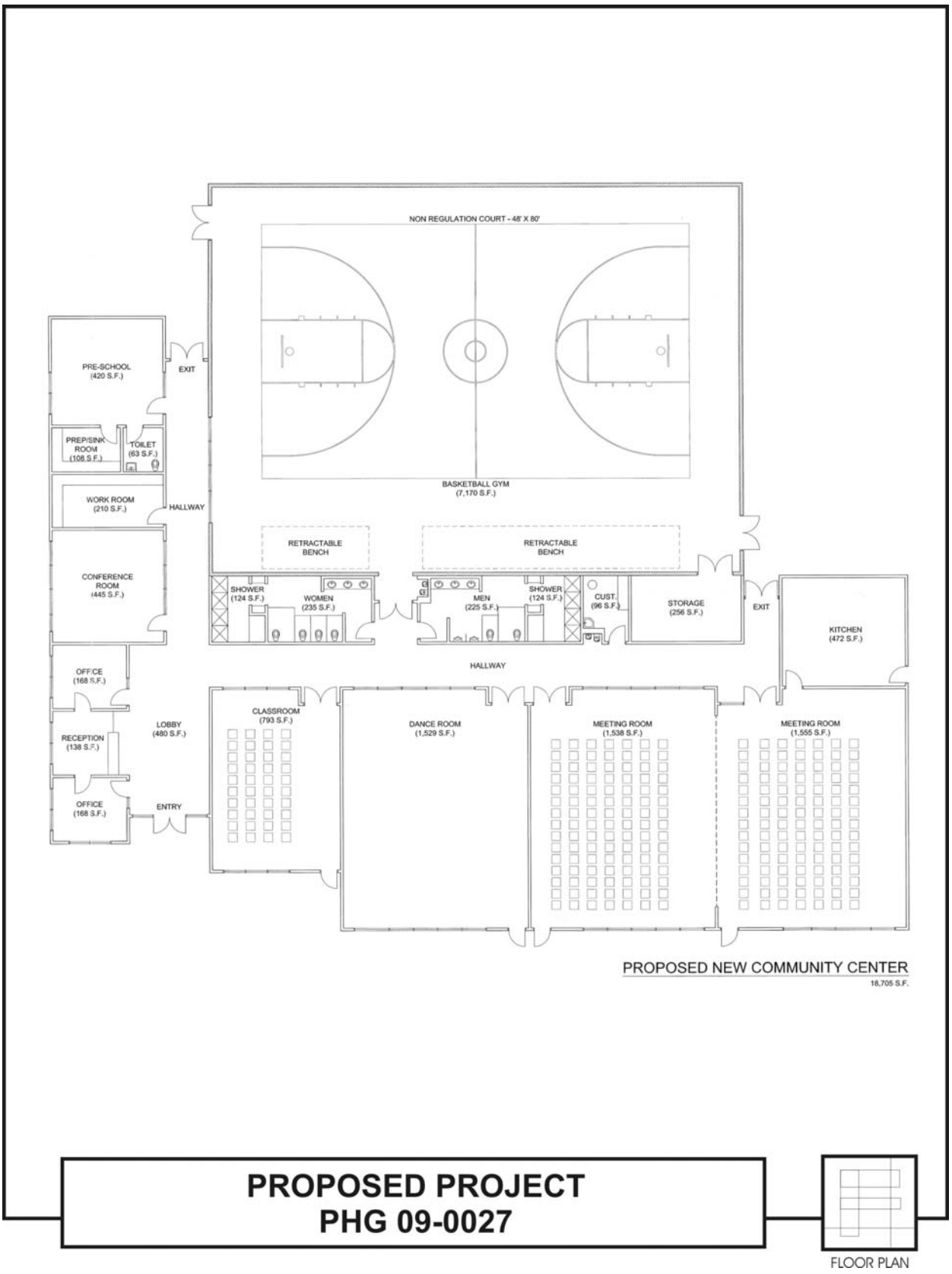
PROPOSED PROJECT
PHG 09-0027
GP
GENERAL PLAN

PROPOSED PROJECT
PHG 09-0027

S
SITE PLAN



PROPOSED PROJECT
PHG 09-0027

FLOOR PLAN

ANALYSIS

A. LAND USE COMPATIBILITY/SURROUNDING ZONING

NORTH - R-1-7 (Single-family-Residential – 7,000 SF minimum lot size) and R-2-12 (Light Multiple Residential – up to 12 dwelling units per acre) zoning/ Across 11th Avenue is a multi-family residential complex on 1.53 acres and several single-family residences on 10,400 SF lots.

SOUTH - RE-40 (Residential Estates – 40,000 SF minimum lot size) zoning/ South of the proposed park site is a vacant 4.75-acre parcel zoned for low density residential use.

EAST - RE-20 zoning/ Across Del Dios Highway are several single-family residences on lots ranging from one acre to 1.2 acres in size.

WEST - RE-20 zoning/ Single-family residences on lots approximately 0.5-acre in size.

B. AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

1. Effect on Police Service – The Police Department has expressed no concern regarding their ability to provide service to the site.

2. Effect on Fire Service – Development of the site would contribute incremental increases in demand for fire services. The Escondido Fire Department has indicated their ability to adequately serve the proposed project. The area currently is served by Fire Station No 6, located adjacent to the proposed park site at 1735 Del Dios Road.

3. Traffic – According to the Escondido 11th Avenue Park Site and Community Center Traffic Study, prepared by Kimley Horn and Associates, Inc., dated July 27, 2009, the proposed park and community center development would generate approximately 831 average daily trips (ADT) with 41 trips (23 inbound and 18 outbound) during the a.m. peak hour and 78 trips (46 inbound and 32 outbound) during the p.m. peak hour. Both 11th Avenue and Del Dios Road are designated as Local Collectors (66 feet right-of-way). Each street currently functions at a Level of Service (LOS) A based on existing improvement conditions. The nearest intersection that would be potentially affected by trips generated from the new park development is Del Dios Road/11th Avenue which currently operates at LOS A during the a.m. and p.m. peak periods.

   The traffic study provides a near-term baseline consisting of existing + cumulative traffic. Project traffic is then added to the near-term to determine existing + cumulative + project impacts. The LOS analysis for near-term conditions shows that the Del Dios Road/11th Avenue intersection operates at LOS C or better during both peak periods, both with and without the proposed project. The maximum increase in delay of 0.4 seconds when project traffic is added to the near-term baseline is below the 2-second significance threshold. Both the 11th Avenue and Del Dios Road roadway segments currently operate at LOS A and would continue to operate at LOS A under the near-term and near-term + project scenarios. The addition of project traffic to the near-term baseline on 11th Avenue would result in a 0.03 increase to the v/c ratio, but is not considered significant due to the high-functioning level of service. The project would not have a significant impact under existing + cumulative + project conditions and no mitigation is required.

   As part of the Roadway and Intersection Analysis, Kimley Horn and Associates performed a signal warrant analysis for the Del Dios Road and 11th Avenue intersection. The analyzed intersection did not meet the minimum requirements for total stopped time delay or the total traffic volume for the intersection either with or without the project. Therefore, it was determined that no signal is warranted at the Del Dios Road and 11th Avenue intersection.

4. Utilities – Water mains with sufficient capacity to serve the project are available within the adjoining street or easement. There currently is no sewer main in 11th Avenue along the project frontage. The existing sewer main in Del Dios Road along the project frontage is too high to provide service to the site. As part of the project improvements, a new sewer

main will be extended up 11th Avenue from the northwestern corner of the site to a point where the proposed park facilities can provide lateral extensions. The project does not materially degrade the levels of service of the public sewer and water system.

5. Drainage – The project site is not located within a 100-year Flood Zone as indicated on current FEMA maps. The site topography ranges from 685 feet in the south to 650 feet in the northwestern corner of the property. Historically, drainage from off-site properties to the south and east has flowed through the project site via a natural swale that entered at the southeastern corner of the fire station site and dissipated in the middle of the park site. Construction of the fire station pad disrupted the natural swale and this drainage is now picked up in a 12" storm drain on the northern side of the fire station pad and is released into a rip-rap area on the eastern side of the of the proposed open play area in the park. A new open drainage swale constructed as part of the drainage and water quality improvements for the park will direct this runoff to the northwestern corner of the park site where it will eventually enter a public storm drain inlet located in 11th Avenue near the northwestern corner of the site The project will not materially degrade the levels of service of the existing drainage facilities.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

1. A Negative Declaration was issued on October 28, 2009.

2. In staff's opinion, no significant issues remain unresolved through compliance with code requirements and the recommended conditions of approval.

3. The project will have no impact on fish and wildlife resources as no sensitive or protected habitat occurs on-site or will be impacted by the proposed development.

D. CONFORMANCE WITH CITY POLICY/ANALYSIS

General Plan

The General Plan land use designation on the site is Suburban which allows up to 3.3 dwelling units per acre. Established public parks are typically located within Public Lands/Parks designation while newer park sites have generally been developed within residential land use designations. In conjunction with the Goals and Objectives included in the Escondido General Plan, a series of Quality of Life Standards have been developed to establish minimum thresholds of service levels for various public improvements and facilities. Quality of Life Standard 6: Parks, specifies the city shall provide a minimum of 5.9 acres of developed active neighborhood and community parks per 1,000 dwelling units. The standard also notes that priority shall be given to acquiring and developing neighborhood parks in urban areas with the greatest need and that a minimum of two community centers shall be provided in the city prior to buildout. The General Plan commitment to providing adequate park and recreation facilities is set forth in the Policies Regarding Parks and Recreation in the Community Facilities and Services Element. Parks and Recreation Policy C1.10 states neighborhood parks (2-5 acres) should be developed in residential areas where there is insufficient land to accommodate a community park, and that much of the site shall be usable for active recreation. Appropriate activity areas and facilities can include a multi-purpose turf area, play equipment for children, opportunities for passive recreation and restroom facilities.

Whether the Site is Suitable for the Development of a Park and Community Center

The City of Escondido Master Plan for Parks, Trails and Open Space notes the city will provide 82.5 acres of neighborhood parkland for existing and future park needs by developing new parks and through joint-use arrangements with school districts. As of 1999, a total of 7.7 acres of neighborhood parks had been developed and an additional 29 acres were available as joint neighborhood park/school sites leaving a neighborhood park deficit of 45.8 acres to meet buildout requirements. Since that time, Grove Park (Mission/Ash) has been developed as a 4.71-acre neighborhood park leaving a citywide deficit of 41.09 acres of neighborhood parkland. The proposed 3.2-acre park when completed would further reduce the neighborhood park deficit and substantially fulfill the recommended 4.6 acres of neighborhood parkland for the Felicita Subarea.

The proposed park would include a passive open play area on the southern portion of the site with a sloping grass lawn, tot lot, garden, shade structures, picnic tables, half-court basketball, and a restroom building. An approximately 18,700 SF community center building located between 11th Avenue and Fire Station 6 would include an indoor basketball court, meeting rooms and classrooms. The driveway on 11th Avenue would provide access to a U-shaped parking area with approximately 70 parking spaces. The number of parking spaces, parking space dimensions and drive aisle widths would all be in conformance with Zoning Code requirements. Development of the park site would provide residents with the first city park located on the western side of Interstate 15 as well as the second community center required by the General Plan.

The closest homes to proposed park are located adjacent to the western boundary of the site where open play area and parking is proposed. Additional residences are located across 11th Avenue and across Del Dios Road. Neighborhood residents have been involved in the park design process from the beginning. A workshop held at the adjacent fire station and attended by 31 community members included a walking tour of the site and group exercises where park elements and features were placed on a site map by the residents. A consensus park plan that emerged from this exercise was further refined into the Park Master Plan presented in this report. Residents involved in the park design process have been supportive of the central location of the site in close proximity to homes as well as the open space and community feel generated by having a park in their neighborhood. On the other hand, concerns about potential traffic impacts and security have also been expressed. While these concerns are valid, staff feels the site is suitable for the development of a neighborhood park because adequate parking will be provided on-site, visibility into the site from adjacent public streets will enhance security, and the location is in close proximity to the residential users of park facilities. As noted in the traffic section of this report, traffic volumes are expected to be well within the capacity of the adjacent streets and the parking lot will contain an adequate number of parking spaces to minimize the potential of vehicles parking on neighborhood streets. In addition, the design of the park that gently slopes up from the street and the inclusion of the community center provides an appropriate level of security with good visibility into the site from 11th Avenue and the on-site presence of city employees in the community center building.

Appropriateness of the Proposed Zone Change

The site is zoned RE-20 (Residential Estates – 20,000 SF minimum lot size). The project includes a zone change from RE-20 to OS-P (Open Space – Parks). The OS-P zone is typically applied to park sites in the city to disclose to the public that active and/or passive public recreational uses will be planned or constructed on the site. The project is surrounded on the north, east and west by residential development with vacant residentially-zoned land adjacent to the southern boundary. From a land use perspective no adverse impacts from the proposed zone change or development of the site as a public park are anticipated because adequate parking will be provided on-site, visibility into the site from adjacent public streets will enhance security, and the location is in close proximity to the residential users of park facilities. The proposed zone change and development of the project and proposed improvements would not adversely alter or impact the existing circulation pattern throughout the surrounding neighborhood, nor preclude the development of surrounding parcels because no changes to nearby streets are proposed except for potential street widening along the project frontage, and most nearby properties are already developed with residential uses.

SUPPLEMENT TO STAFF REPORT/DETAILS OF REQUEST

A. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed park would front on both 11th Avenue and Del Dios Road. Vehicular access to the proposed parking lot would be provided from 11th Avenue. The eastern portion of the proposed park site has been rough graded in conjunction with the recent construction of the building pad for the adjacent fire station. Cut slopes currently exist along Del Dios Road and a portion of the frontage on 11th Avenue. Unused fill dirt left over from construction of the fire station is stockpiled near the center of the site. The proposed park site is physically separated from the fire station by a large fill slope up to 26-feet high constructed as part of the pad for the fire station. The park site generally slopes down from a high point in the southwestern area of the property to the low point in the northwestern corner of the site. The site has been completely disturbed by past residential and agricultural uses and more recently by the grading that occurred during construction of the adjacent fire station. Vegetation consists primarily of weedy invasive species, some remnant olive trees along the 11th Avenue frontage, and two Coast live oak trees. No significant areas of native vegetation remain on the site.

B. SUPPLEMENTAL DETAILS OF REQUEST

1.	Property Size:	3.2 acres
2.	Anticipated Building Size:	18,700 SF±
3.	Hours of Operation:	
	Outdoor Park Facilities:	7:00 AM to Sunset daily
	Community Center Building:	Program hours from 7:30 AM to 9:00 PM. Clean up completed by 10:00 PM.
4.	Building Colors/Materials:	To be determined, subject to the Design Review Board process.
5.	Landscaping:	All landscaping to be consistent with the Landscape Ordinance. It is anticipated that reclaimed water will be provided to the site for landscaping.

C. CODE COMPLIANCE ANALYSIS

1.	Setbacks:	All setbacks will meet the requirements of the OS (Open Space) Zone.
2.	Parking:	Parking will be provided as required by the OS Zone and Article 39 (Off-Street Parking).
3.	Building Height:	To be determined, subject to the Design Review Board process.

FINDINGS OF FACT/FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED
PHG 09-0027
EXHIBIT "A"

Park Master Plan

1. The proximity of the site to residential neighborhoods on the western side of the city in conjunction with the uses proposed for the neighborhood park site is consistent with the goals and policies of the Escondido General Plan which specifically state that neighborhood parks (2-5 acres) should be developed in residential areas where there is insufficient land to accommodate a community park, and that much of the site shall be usable for active recreation..

2. The location allows the proposed neighborhood park and community center to be adequately serviced by existing or proposed public facilities or services because all required utilities are in close proximity to the site and can be provided with nominal extensions.

3. The overall design of the proposed Park Master Plan will produce an attractive, efficient development that provides services and recreational opportunities needed by area residents.

4. As proposed, the neighborhood park and community center will be well integrated with its setting and the surrounding area since the outdoor recreational components are well-suited for the neighborhood and the community center design will be subject to the design review process to ensure compatibility with the adjoining residential neighborhood.

5. The proposed Park Master Plan shall have a beneficial effect by providing recreational opportunities and services needed by city residents.

6. Granting the proposed planned development would be based upon sound principles of land use since the site is physically suitable to accommodate the neighborhood park and community center with adequate on-site parking for park users.

7. The Park Master Plan will not cause a deterioration of bordering land uses or create special problems in the area since neighborhood parks are commonly located in residential neighborhoods to provide convenient recreational opportunities to nearby residents. In addition, fencing will be provided to separate the park from adjoining residential properties.

8. The proposed Park Master Plan has been considered in relationship to its effect on the neighborhood plan for the area since the proposal represents the first neighborhood park to be provided in the Felicita Subarea and reduces the overall city deficiency in neighborhood park land.

Zone Change

1. The public health, safety and welfare would not be adversely affected by the proposed Zone Change from RE-20 to OS-P since the zoning would permit the development of a neighborhood park in an area where recreational facilities are currently deficient. The site is suitable for the development of a neighborhood park because adequate parking will be provided on-site, visibility into the site from adjacent public streets will enhance security, and the location is in close proximity to the residential users of park facilities

2. The site is physically suitable for the uses permitted by the proposed zone, since the pad for the community center building has already been rough graded and the slightly sloping park site can be developed within the allowable slope height limits specified in the Grading Ordinance.

3. The uses permitted by the proposed zone would not be detrimental to surrounding properties because neighborhood parks are commonly located in residential neighborhoods to provide convenient recreational opportunities to nearby residents. In addition, fencing will be provided to separate the park from adjoining residential properties.

4. The proposed Zone Change would not conflict with any specific plans because there are no specific plans affecting this property.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
PHG 09-0027
EXHIBIT "B"

Planning Division Conditions

1. All construction and grading shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Escondido Zoning Code and requirements of the Planning Division, Engineering Division, Building Division, and Fire Department.

2. All exterior lighting shall conform to the requirements of Article 35 (Outdoor Lighting) of the Escondido Zoning Code. All outdoor lighting shall be provided with appropriate shields to prevent light from adversely affecting adjacent properties.

3. The number of parking spaces provided for the park shall be based on the ultimate size and function of the community center building. Said parking spaces shall be double-striped and dimensioned per City standards. The striping shall be drawn on the plan or a note shall be included on the plan indicating the intent to double-stripe per City standards

4. Parking for disabled persons shall be provided (including "Van Accessible" spaces) in full compliance with Section 1129B (Accessible Parking Required) of the California Building Code, including signage. All parking stalls shall be provided with six-inch curbing or concrete wheel stops in areas where a vehicle could reduce minimum required planter, driveway or sidewalk widths.

5. An inspection by the Planning Division will be required prior to operation of the project. Items subject to inspection include, but are not limited to parking layout and striping (double-stripe), identification of handicap parking stalls and required tow-away signs, lighting, landscaping, as well as any outstanding condition(s) of approval. Everything should be installed prior to calling for an inspection, although preliminary inspections may be requested. Contact the project planner at (760) 839-4671 to arrange a final inspection.

6. Trash enclosures must be designed and built per City standards, and permanently maintained. All trash enclosures (including existing trash enclosures) shall meet current engineering requirements for storm water quality, which includes the installation of a decorative roof structure. Solid metal doors shall be incorporated into the trash enclosure. A decorative exterior finish shall be used. All trash enclosures must be screened by landscaping as specified in the Landscape Ordinance. All trash enclosures shall be of sufficient size to allow for the appropriate number of trash and recyclable receptacles as determined by the Planning Division and Escondido Disposal, Inc.

7. All new utilities shall be underground.

8. All project generated noise shall comply with the City's Noise Ordinance (Ord. 90-08) to the satisfaction of the Planning Division.

9. No exemptions from the Grading Ordinance are approved as part of this project. All project grading shall conform with Grading Ordinance standards.

Landscaping Conditions

1. Prior to occupancy, all perimeter, slope and parking lot landscaping shall be installed. All vegetation (including existing vegetation required as part of previous project approvals) shall be maintained in a flourishing manner, and kept free of all foreign matter, weeds and plant materials not approved as part of the landscape plan. All irrigation shall be maintained in fully operational condition.

2. Five copies of a detailed landscape and irrigation plan(s) shall be submitted prior to issuance of grading or building permits. The required landscape and irrigation plans(s) shall comply with the provisions, requirements and standards

outlined in Article 62 (Landscape Standards) of the Escondido Zoning Code. The plans shall be prepared by, or under the supervision of a licensed landscape architect.

3. Street trees shall be provided along each of the site's street frontages, in conformance with the Landscape Ordinance and the City of Escondido Street Tree List. Trees within five feet of the pavement shall be provided with root barriers.

4. Details of project fencing and walls, including materials and colors, shall be provided on the landscape plans.

Engineering Division Conditions

STREET IMPROVEMENTS AND TRAFFIC

1. Frontage street improvements shall be constructed along project frontages on Del Dios Hwy and 11th Avenue in accordance with the design standards and the requirements of the City Engineer.

GRADING

1. A site grading and erosion control plan shall be approved by the Engineering Department prior to issuance of building permits.

DRAINAGE

1. Final on-site and off-site storm drain improvements shall be determined to the satisfaction of the City Engineer and shall be based on a drainage study to be prepared by the engineer of work. The drainage study shall be in conformance with the City of Escondido Design Standards.

WATER SUPPLY

1. A public water main extension is required to provide water service and/or fire protection. Construction of the water main shall be in accordance with the Standards and Specifications of the City of Escondido.

2. Fire hydrants together with an adequate water supply shall be installed at locations approved by the Fire Marshal.

RECYCLED WATER

1. A public recycled water main extension is required to provide recycled water service and/or fire protection. Construction of the recycled water main shall be in accordance with the Standards and Specifications of the City of Escondido.

SEWER

1. A public sewer main extension will be required to provide sewer service. Construction of the sewer main shall be in accordance with the Standards and Specifications of the City of Escondido.