

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Agenda Item No.: G.2  
Date: September 28, 2010

**CASE NUMBER:** PHG 10-0022

**APPLICANT:** Dick's Sporting Goods

**LOCATION:** Escondido Promenade Shopping Center generally located on the northern side of Ninth Avenue, west of Interstate 15, addresses as 1200 Auto Park Way.

**TYPE OF PROJECT:** Modification to a Master and Precise Development Plan

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

A Modification to the Master and Precise Development Plan for the Promenade Shopping Center to amend the previously adopted Comprehensive Sign Program to allow individual letters on the proposed new wall signs up to six feet in height for the proposed Dick's Sporting Goods store (formerly Mervyn's), and to allow the individual building signage to exceed the current limitation of 540 SF.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION/TIER:** Planned Commercial (PC), Central Neighborhood, Tier 1

**ZONING:** Planned Development Commercial (PD-C)

**BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF ISSUES:**

Dick's Sporting Goods has submitted a request to modify the Comprehensive Sign Program for the Promenade Shopping Center to allow an increase in allowable signage for the former 75,675 SF Mervyn's Building. The Mervyn's building recently has been divided into two separate leasable spaces with Dick's taking approximately 45,556 SF of the building. The exterior of the building currently is being remodeled to accommodate Dick's new entry/tower features and color scheme. As part of the original Master and Precise Plan approval for the shopping center, a Comprehensive Sign Program was adopted, which contains specific requirements for the major tenants, in-line shops and the outpad buildings. The three major tenant buildings (Target, Toys R Us, and Mervyn's) are allowed additional wall signage above the other smaller tenant buildings/spaces, which includes maximum letter heights (6'-8" for Target and 4' for Mervyn's and Toys R Us). The Mervyn's building also is allowed a cumulative total of up to 540 SF of building signage, with no individual sign to exceed 180 SF.

The proposed request is to allow for individual channel letters for Dick's up to six feet in height (2 signs of approx. 162 SF each for a total of 324 SF) in order for the signage to be compatible with their new facade improvements and be in proportion with the two tower/entry features. The new building tower/entry features also include interior glass-walled display areas for product display and seasonal graphic packages. Since the building no longer would accommodate a single tenant, the request also includes an increase in the cumulative signage for the building (up to 624 SF) in order to provide sufficient wall signage for the remaining tenant space.

Staff feels the issues are as follows:

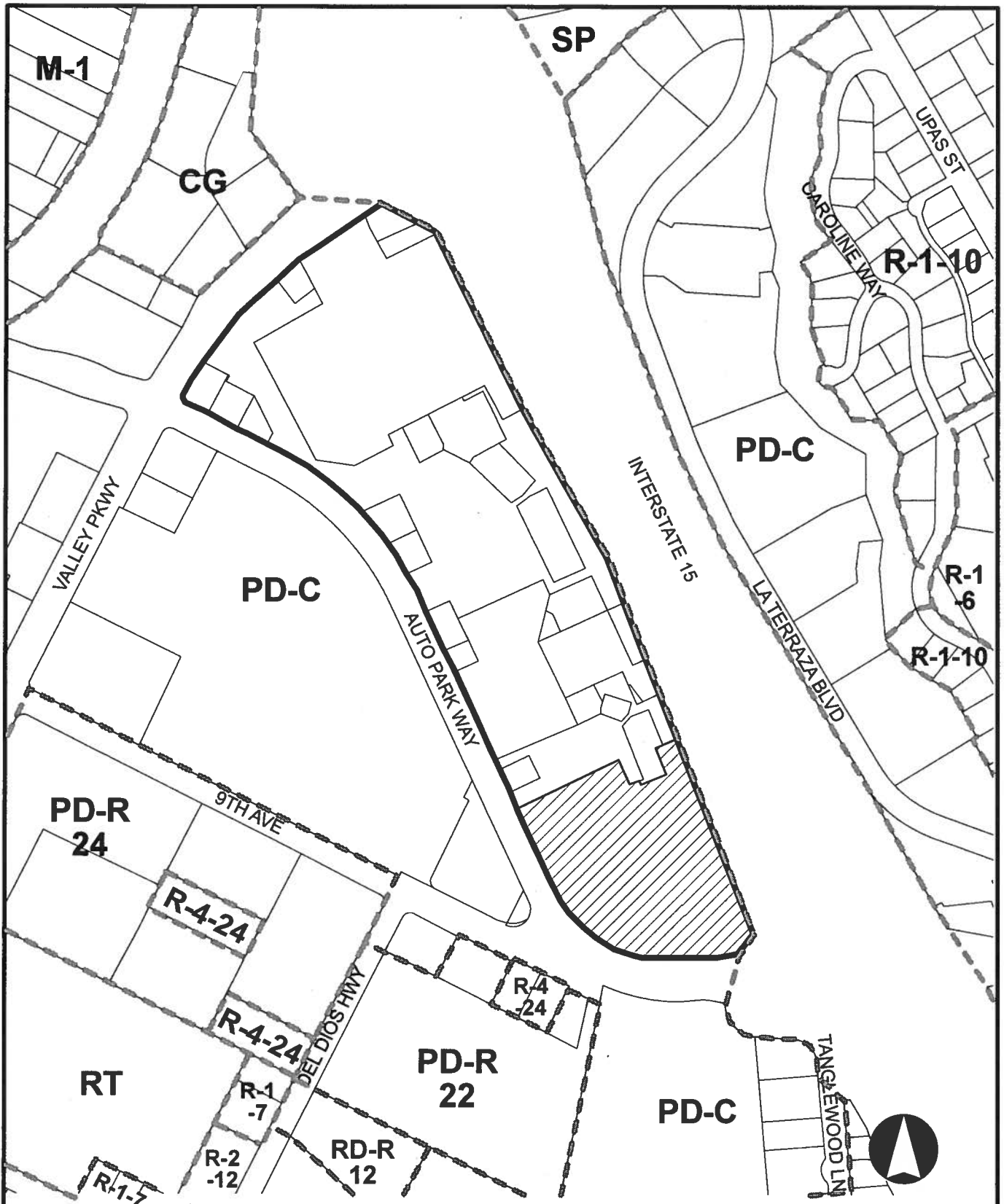
1. Whether the proposed increase in signage is appropriate for the building.

**REASONS FOR STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Staff feels the proposed increase in the size of letters for Dick's would be appropriate for the mass and scale of the building and in proportion with the new entry features, and would not conflict with other major tenant signage. The proposed increase in cumulative sign area for the building is due to the increase number of tenants that would occupy the building.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Jay Paul  
Associate Planner

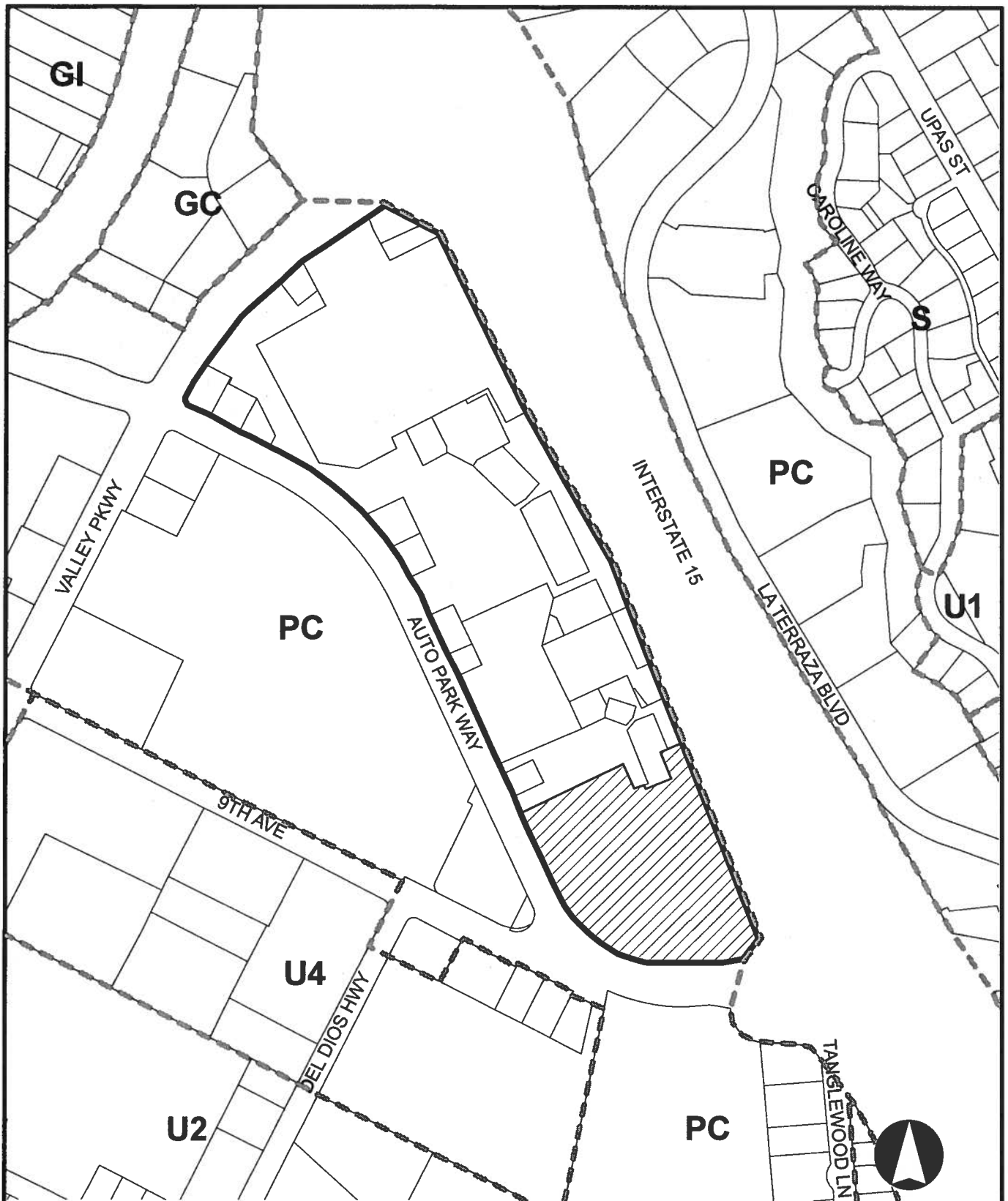


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**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 10-0022**



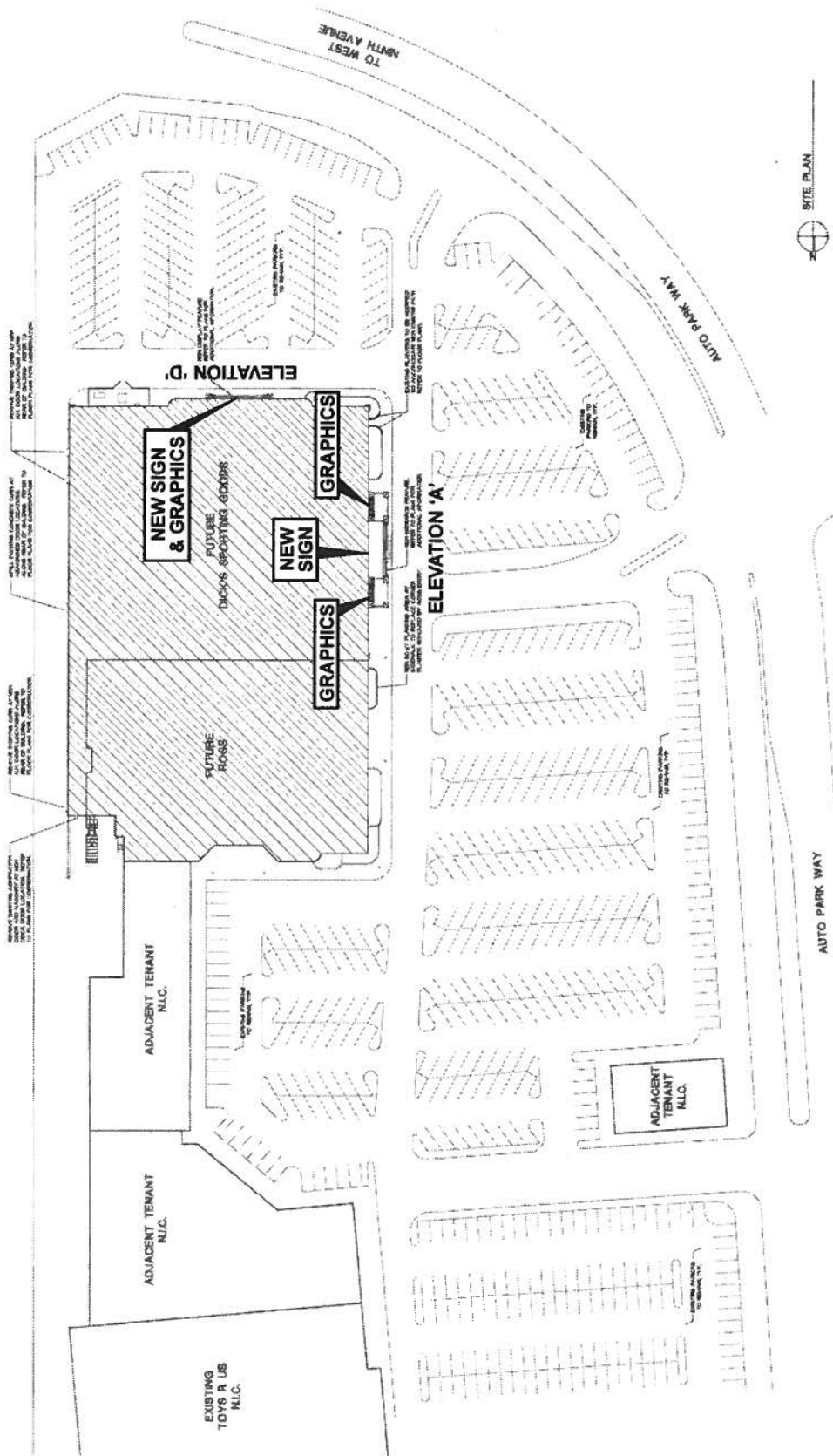
LOCATION/ZONING



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**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 10-0022**

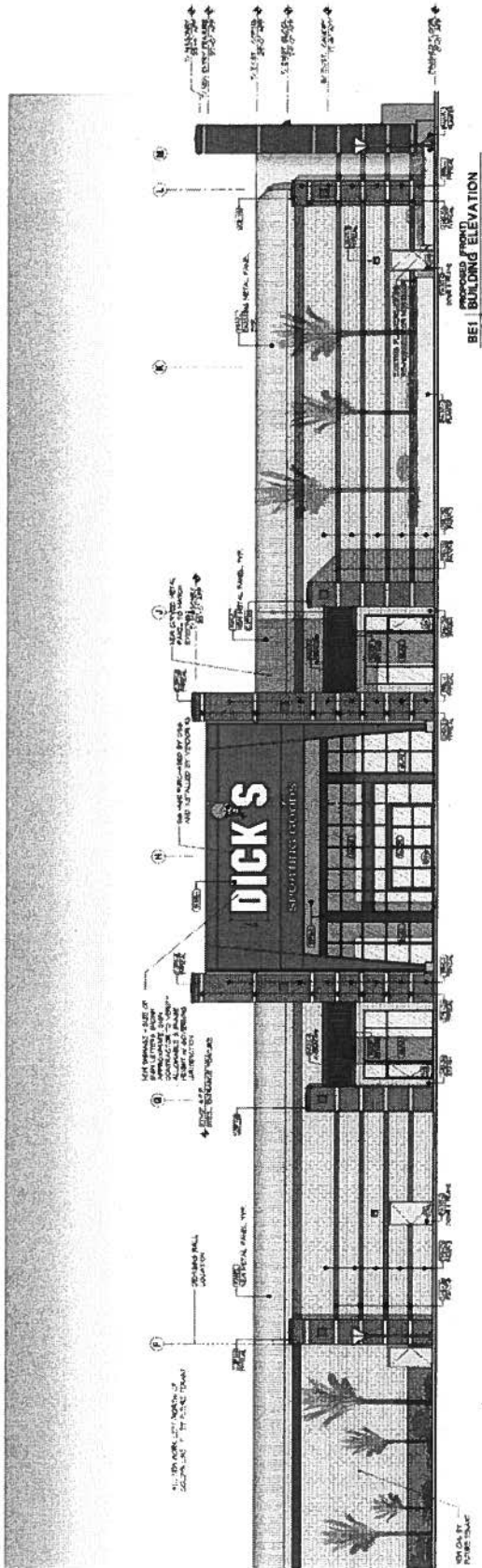




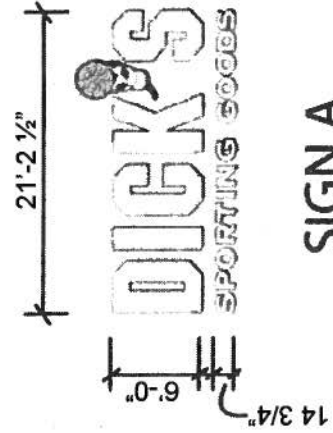
**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 10-0022**



SITE PLAN



FACING AUTO PARK WAY



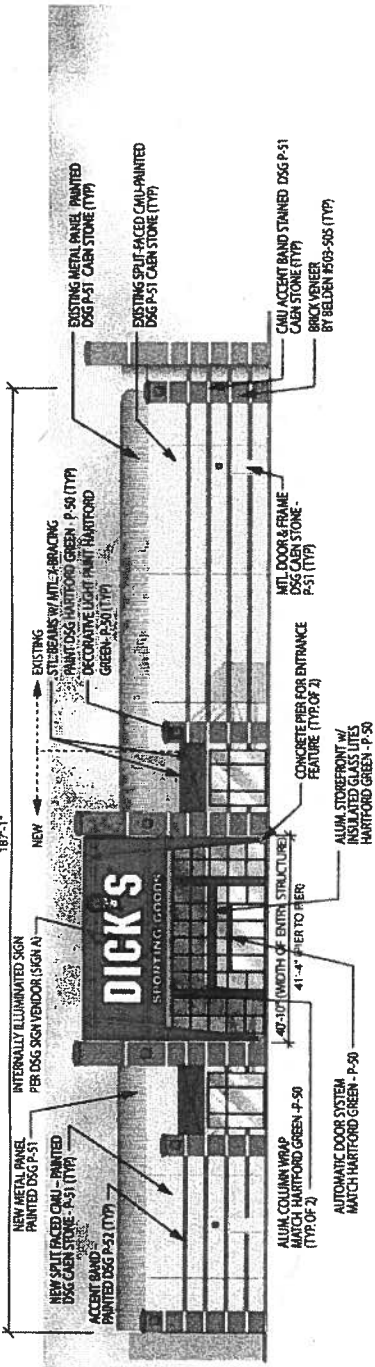
SIGN A

PROPOSED 6' LETTERS

PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 10-0022

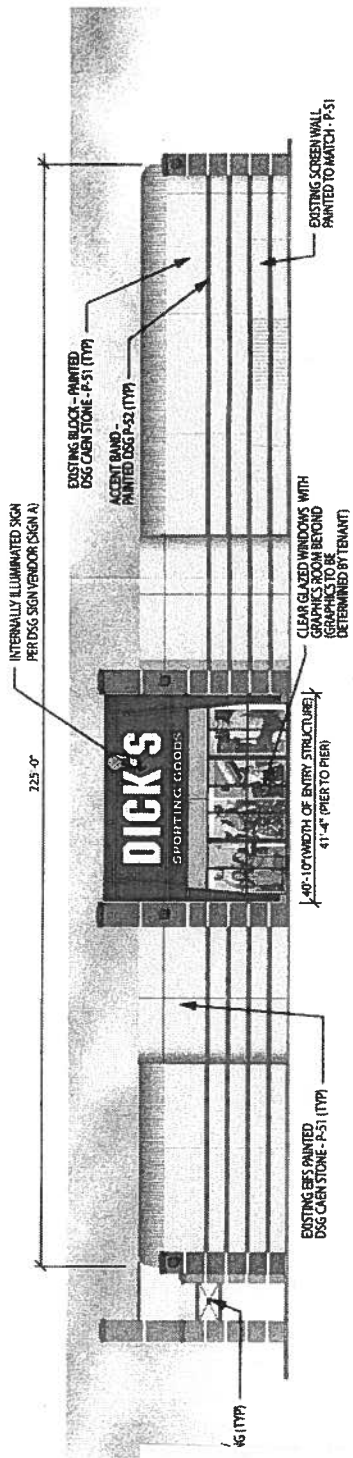


PROPOSED 6' LETTERS



- ◆ ELEV. 38'-4" T.O. MASONRY
- ◆ ELEV. 37'-0" T.O. ENTRY FEATURE
- ◆ ELEV. 29'-0" T.O. METAL PANEL
- ◆ ELEV. 24'-0" T.O. PARAPET
- ◆ ELEV. 20'-0" MASONRY PLASTER
- ◆ ELEV. 0'-0" T.O. FINISH FLOOR

**FACING AUTO PARK WAY**



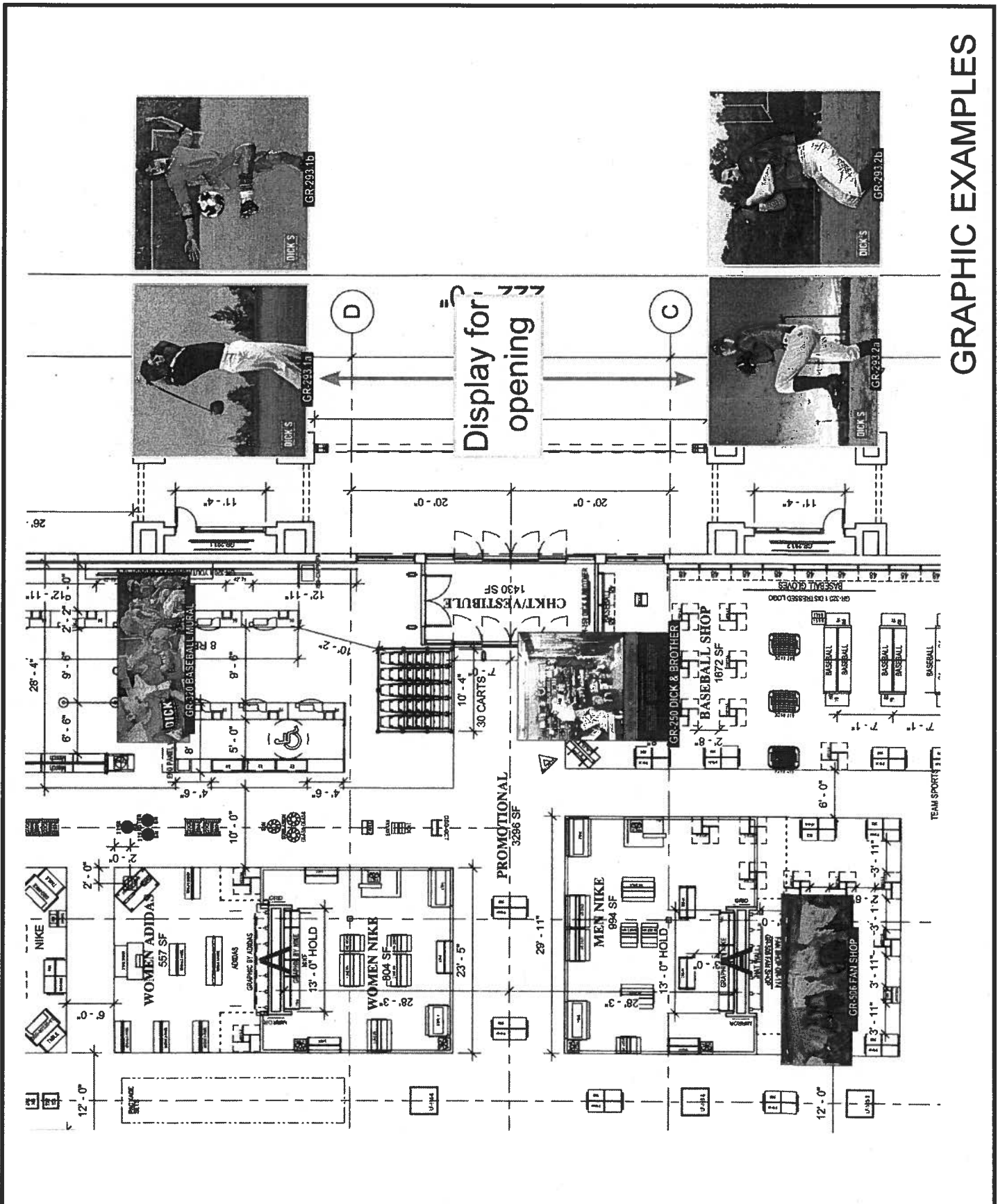
**FACING 9TH AVE**

**SIGN LOCATIONS AND GRAPHICS EXAMPLE**

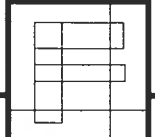
**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 10-0022**



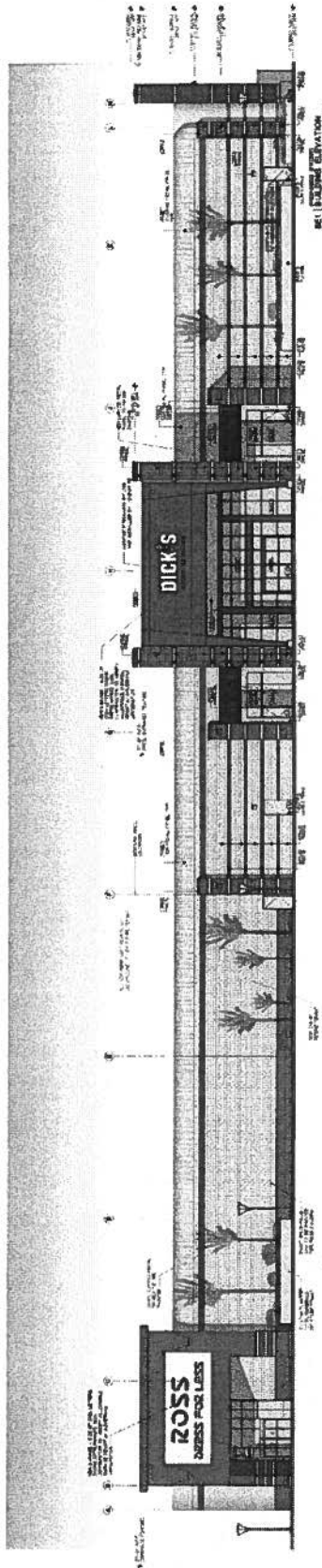
# GRAPHIC EXAMPLES



**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 10-0022**

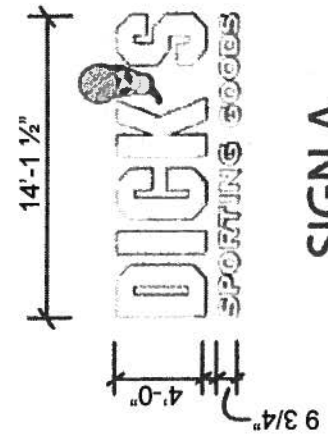


FLOOR PLAN



FACING AUTO PARK WAY

4' LETTER EXAMPLE



4' LETTERS

PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 10-0022





## ANALYSIS

### A. LAND USE COMPATIBILITY/SURROUNDING ZONING

NORTH: CG (General Commercial) / A variety of commercial uses are located north of the shopping center across West Valley Parkway.

SOUTH: PD-C and PD-R-22 (Planned Development Commercial and Planned Development Residential, 22 du/ac) / The Escondido Lexus dealership is located south of the site across Auto Park Way/Ninth Street. A few single-family residences and an apartment complex also are located south across Auto Park Way.

EAST: PD-C (Planned Development Commercial) / Interstate 15 is located immediately to the east of the shopping center at a higher elevation. Commercial office buildings are located along the eastern side of Interstate 15.

WEST: PD-C (Planned Development Commercial) / Del Dios Middle School is located west of the shopping center across Auto Park Way.

### B. ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

The proposed project is categorically exempt from environmental review in conformance with CEQA Section 15301(e), Class 1, "Existing Facilities." In staff's opinion, the proposed project would not have a significant impact to the environment. All project related issues remain resolved through compliance with code requirements, project design and the recommended conditions of approval.

### C. CONFORMANCE WITH CITY POLICY

#### General Plan

General Plan Policy B4.1(b)(9) identifies the Escondido Promenade as a comprehensively planned commercial development with architectural features consistently designed and maintained to ensure a high quality, single theme commercial area. The Master and Precise Plan also includes provisions to allow design flexibility to achieve a superior design. Dick's Sporting Goods is consistent with the Planned Development zoning and list of permitted uses established for the shopping center. The proposed project would be in conformance with General Plan Economic Policies (page II-23) which encourage economic activities to expand or locate in Escondido that are clean and nonpolluting; provide additional employment opportunities; reduce the need for Escondido residents to commute out of the area; will maintain the City's fiscal stability; and are aesthetically superior. The proposed project would not diminish the Quality-of-Life Standards of the General Plan as the project would not materially degrade the level of service on adjacent streets or public facilities, create excessive noise, and adequate on-site parking, circulation and public services are provided to the site.

### D. PROJECT ANALYSIS

**Appropriateness of the Proposed Signage** – The Comprehensive Sign Program for the Promenade Shopping Center contains specific signage requirements for each of the major tenants (located in buildings A, H and L) which includes Target (105,300 SF building area – Building A); Toys R Us (45,556 SF building area – Building H) and Mervyn's (75,675 SF building area – Building L). The letter height for each building was restricted to allow up to 6'-8" for Target and 4' for Mervyn's and Toys R Us. The Mervyn's building also is allowed a cumulative total of up to 540 SF of building signage, with no individual sign to exceed 180 SF. All other non-major tenants in the center are subject to reduced letter heights and ratios, and cannot exceed 300 SF in total building sign area or 100 SF per individual sign, which is similar to the City's signage regulations.

As part of the design review process for the exterior remodel of the building, Dick's presented visual studies for several sign options ranging from four feet in height to nine feet in height. Both the applicant and staff felt the smaller four-foot sign was out of scale with the entry features. Ultimately six-foot-high letters were proposed as the smallest letter height that maintained scale with the new architectural features. The Design Review Board considered the request on September 9, 2010, and felt six-foot-high letters and the overall sign plan and

graphics was appropriate for the building and in proportion with the exterior wall dimensions, and recommended approval (vote 6-0). The representative of the shopping center also supports the requested six-foot-high letters since they would not exceed signage allowed for the largest tenant space (Target) and would not conflict with other signage installed throughout the center.

Other than the proposed increase in letter height, the two Dick's wall signs would be in conformance with the allowable individual wall sign restrictions of 180 SF per sign and cumulative signage allowed for the building. However, since the building no longer would accommodate a single tenant, the request also includes an increase in cumulative signage for the building in order to provide sufficient wall signage for the future tenant. Since Dick's would use approximately 324 SF of the allowable 540 SF for the building, only 216 SF of sign area would be left for the remaining tenant space. The proposed increase to allow up to 300 SF in signage for the future tenant would be consistent with the allowable signage for other tenants within the in-line shops of similar square footage, and also consistent with the City's Sign Ordinance. Individual letter height for the future tenant space would remain at a maximum of four feet. Staff feels the requested increase in the size of the Dick's signage and increase in overall building signage would be appropriate since the amount of signage that could be installed for each tenant still would be in scale with the building and compatible with other signage throughout the shopping center.

## SUPPLEMENT TO STAFF REPORT/DETAILS OF REQUEST

### A. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The 33.41-acre shopping center is comprised of 24 parcels and developed with an approximately 413,310 SF, single-story commercial shopping center, parking lots and landscaping. The shopping center is comprised of three major tenant spaces located within the in-line shops, and various freestanding buildings consisting of a combination of various retail and services uses and restaurants. The center is bounded by West Valley Parkway on the north, Auto Park Way on the west, Ninth Avenue on the south and Interstate 15 on the east.

### B. SUPPLEMENTAL DETAILS OF REQUEST

1. Center Size: 33.41 acres, 24 parcels
2. Building Area: 413,310 SF total area of all buildings
3. Building Height: Buildings in the center range from approximately 17' to 37'
4. Building "L" formerly Mervyns 75,675 SF building on a 6.52-acre parcel
5. Dick's Lease Area: 45,556 SF (building split into two suites of 45,556 SF and 30,119 SF) Dick's to occupy 60% of building with other major tenant to occupy remaining space.

|  | <u>Proposed Signage</u>  | <u>Approved Sign Program</u>  |
|--|--|---|
| <i>(Dick's Tenant Space Building 'L')</i>    |  |   |
| 6. Wall Signs:                               |  |   |
| Letter Height:                               | 6 feet high  | 4 feet high   |
| Individual Sign Area:                        | 162 SF each (2 signs proposed)   | 180 SF max each sign  |
| Total Building Signage:                      | Up to 324 SF for Dick's  | 540 SF max total building signage   |
| <i>(Remaining Tenant Space Building 'L')</i> |  |   |
| 7. Requested Bldg. Increase:                 | Allow max 300 SF for remaining tenant for total cumulative bldg. signage of 624 SF Bldg. 'L' | 540 SF max total bldg. signage  |
| Letter Height:                               | 4 feet high  | 4 feet high   |
| Individual Sign Area:                        | 180 SF max each sign   | 180 SF max each sign  |
| 8. Freestanding Signs:                       | No change, replace existing Mervyn's sign faces with new Dick's sign faces around center     | Total 445 SF total freestanding sign area allowed for the center with max. height of 30'. |
| 9. Previous Mervyn's Signage:                | 2 individual channel letter signs of 176 SF each (4' high x 44' long) for a total of 352 SF. |   |

### **Project History**

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 86-61-CZ/PD<br>86-62-SP | City Council approved a zone change from CG and CT to PD-C and the Preliminary and Master Plan, as well as a Specific Plan to realign and widen Auto Park Way.   |
| 86-135-PD               | Precise Development Plan for a portion of the center to approved the exterior designs for Target, Mervyn's and the proposed in-line shops, along with additional architectural treatments and modifications to the center. The building square footage also was increased from 403,360 SF to 413,310 SF. |

**EXHIBIT "A"**  
**FINDINGS OF FACT**  
**PHG 10-0022**

Master and Precise Development Plan Modification – Comprehensive Sign Program

1. General Plan Policy B4.1(b)(9) identifies the Escondido Promenade as a comprehensively planned commercial development with architectural features that are consistently designed and maintained to ensure a high quality, single theme commercial area. The Master and Precise Plan also includes provisions to allow design flexibility to achieve a superior design. The proposed increase in signage for the building would not result in signage that was out of scale with the building exterior, or be incompatible with other signage throughout the center. The proposed project would be in conformance with General Plan Economic Policies (page II-23) which encourage economic activities to expand or locate in Escondido that are clean and nonpolluting; provide additional employment opportunities; reduce the need for Escondido residents to commute out of the area; will maintain the City's fiscal stability; and are aesthetically superior. The proposed project would not diminish the Quality-of-Life Standards of the General Plan as the project would not materially degrade the level of service on adjacent streets or public facilities, create excessive noise, and adequate on-site parking, circulation and public services could be provided to the site.
2. The approval of the proposed modification to the Promenade Shopping Center Comprehensive Sign Program would be based on sound principles of land use since the design, and mass and scale of the proposed signs would be compatible with the overall center and exterior design of the subject building. The proposed Dick's exterior improvements and signage would not conflict with the design of the existing shopping center since it would continue to incorporate existing elements used throughout the in-line shops. The Design Review Board considered the request on September 9, 2010, and felt six-foot-high letters and the overall sign plan and graphics was appropriate for the building and in proportion with the exterior wall dimensions and entry/tower features, and recommended approval (vote 6-0).
3. The proposed Precise Development Plan would not cause deterioration of bordering land uses since the site is zoned for commercial development and is developed with an approximately 413,310 SF of commercial building space. The proposed modification to the sign program to allow additional signage for Building 'L' would be compatible with the general design theme of the complex and surrounding commercial development, and would not conflict adjacent commercial spaces and signage. The proposed development is well-integrated with the surrounding properties since the design would be consistent with surrounding commercial structures. The overall design of the proposed project would produce an attractive commercial facility due to the quality of the architectural features provided and retention of design elements used throughout the center.
4. The proposal is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in conformance with Section 15301, "Existing Facilities" and a Notice of Exemption was prepared for the proposed project. In staff's opinion, the request does not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

## **EXHIBIT "B"**

### **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL PHG 10-0022**

#### **General**

1. All relevant conditions of the previous Master and Precise Development Plans approved and/or amended for the Promenade Shopping Center shall remain in effect, except as modified by this amendment to the Comprehensive Sign Program.
2. As proposed, the proposed signage shall be in accordance with the Design Review Board recommendations, staff report, exhibits and the project's Details of Request, to the satisfaction of the Planning Division.
3. A separate sign permit will be required for project signage at the time of building permits for the installation of the signs. All signage must be approved by the center landlord in conformance with the Comprehensive Sign Program.
4. The legal description attached to the application has been provided by the applicant and neither the City of Escondido nor any of its employees assume responsibility for the accuracy of said legal description.
5. All exterior lighting shall conform to the requirements of Article 1072, Outdoor Lighting (Ordinance No. 86-75) and be consistent with the lighting design for the shopping center. A copy of the lighting plan shall be included as part of the building plans, to the satisfaction of the Planning Division.
6. All proposed signage associated with the project must comply with the City of Escondido Sign Ordinance (Ord. 92-47), unless otherwise allowed per the Comprehensive Sign Program.
7. The City of Escondido hereby notifies the applicant that the County Clerk's Office requires a documentary handling fee of \$50.00 in order to file a Notice of Exemption for the project (environmental determination for the project). The applicant shall remit to the City of Escondido Planning Division, within two working days of the final approval of the project (the final approval being the hearing date of the Planning Commission or City Council, if applicable) a check payable to the "San Diego County Clerk" in the amount of \$50.00. In accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) section 15062, the filing of a Notice of Exemption and the posting with the County Clerk starts a 35 day statute of limitations period on legal challenges to the agency's decision that the project is exempt from CEQA. Failure to submit the required fee within the specified time noted above will result in the Notice of Exemption not being filed with the County Clerk, and a 180 day statute of limitations will apply.



CITY OF ESCONDIDO
PLANNING DIVISION
201 NORTH BROADWAY
ESCONDIDO, CA 92025-2798
(760) 839-4671

Notice of Exemption

To: San Diego County Recorder's Office
Attn: Linda Kesian
P.O. Box 121750
San Diego, CA 92112-1750

From: City of Escondido
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

Project Title/Case No.: PHG 10-0022

Project Location - Specific: Escondido Promenade Shopping Center generally located on the northern side of Ninth Avenue, west of Interstate 15, addresses as 1200 Auto Park Way.

Project Location - City: Escondido, Project Location - County: San Diego

Description of Project: A Modification to the Master and Precise Development Plan for the Promenade Shopping Center to amend the previously adopted Comprehensive Sign Program to allow individual sign letters up to six feet in height for the proposed Dick's Sporting Goods store (formerly Mervyn's), and to allow the individual building signage to exceed the current limitation of 540 SF.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Escondido

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

Name Inland Western Retail Real Estate Telephone (630) 645-5163
Address 2901 Butterfield Road, Oak Brook, IL 60523

Private entity School district Local public agency State agency Other special district

Exempt Status: Categorical Exemption. Section 15301 "Existing Facilities."

Reasons why project is exempt:

- 1. The project only involves a modification to the existing comprehensive sign program for the existing shopping center. The commercial center is developed with a variety of commercial uses, including retail, service use and restaurants. No physical expansion of the site or buildings are proposed.
2. The site is in an area where all public services and facilities are available to allow for the proposed use.
3. The project site is not in an area that is environmentally sensitive, and would have no impact to fish and wildlife.
4. The project would not create any significant increase in vehicle trips, nor impact vehicular circulation on or around the site. Appropriate parking is provided on the site to accommodate all uses. The project is located within a commercial zone and is surrounded by a variety of commercial uses. The project would not generate any significant noise impacts to adjacent uses through the project design and compliance with the project Conditions of Approval. The project would not result in the destruction of desirable natural features, nor be visibly obtrusive or disharmonious with surrounding areas.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Jay Paul, Planning Division Area Code/Telephone/Extension (760) 839-4537

Signature: Jay Paul, Associate Planner Date September 13, 2010

Signed by Lead Agency

Date received for filing at OPR: N/A