

## **PLANNING COMMISSION**

**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Planning Staff  
**SUBJECT:** PHG 11-0034 Modification to the ERTC Specific Plan to amend the fencing/wall requirements

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed amendment to the ERTC Specific Plan (2001-01-SPA)

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

An amendment to the ERTC Specific Plan (2001-01-SPA) to modify the landscape and fencing/wall requirements to allow certain perimeter and interior fencing to exceed the current height limitation of 42 inches; modify the design standards for Planning Area 2 to allow fences and walls up to eight-feet in height; and clarify the process for modifications to specific design features such as lighting, signage, architecture, landscape elements and fencing/walls and other design elements.

### LOCATION:

The approximately 186 acre Escondido Research and Technology Center generally is located along the eastern and western sides of Citracado Parkway, south of Auto Park Way, north of Andreasen Drive. Planning Area 2 is approximately 18 acres located on the southeastern corner of the intersection of Citracado Parkway and Harveson Place, generally addressed as 1970-1998 Citracado Parkway.

### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The proposal is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Section 15303(e) "New Construction of Accessory Structures."

### BACKGROUND:

The Escondido Research and Technology Center originally is envisioned to be developed as a comprehensively planned business park with a variety of industrial park type uses, with an open campus type feel between the individual lots and planning areas and a visual and aesthetic coherence throughout the project. The plan has been amended over the years to include a large power plant (SDG&E) and regional hospital (Palomar/Pomerado) with specific design criteria for each project and associated Specific Planning Area. The ERTC Specific Plan also includes a large brewery and restaurant (Stone). The specific plan is intended to

allow flexibility in accommodation of planning area uses in order to effectively respond to changing market and user demand to be viable in the long term. The developer for a new building within Planning Area 2 has requested to secure their approximately 5.13-acre site with perimeter fencing and entry gates up to eight feet in height, similar to the adjacent SDG&E power plant facility. However, the current Specific Plan design standards limit fencing anywhere within a project site to a maximum height of 42 inches. Therefore, an amendment to the Specific Plan is necessary. However, rather than just focus on the two parcels involved within Planning Area 2, staff has taken a more comprehensive approach to deal with any future requests for perimeter security fencing and other fencing/wall requests throughout the entire Specific Plan, which would eliminate the need to continually amend the plan for individual fencing requests.

DISCUSSION:

The zoning code allows perimeter fencing up to eight feet in height within all industrial zones, but the Specific Plan development standards restricts all fencing and walls, whether perimeter or interior, to a maximum of 42 inches in height, unless used to screen loading areas. Due to the variety of uses that could be accommodated within the project, the fencing/wall limitations may not be practical in all instances. Therefore, staff feels that security fencing up to eight feet in height would be appropriate in certain areas of the specific plan, but not in others due to potential aesthetic concerns.

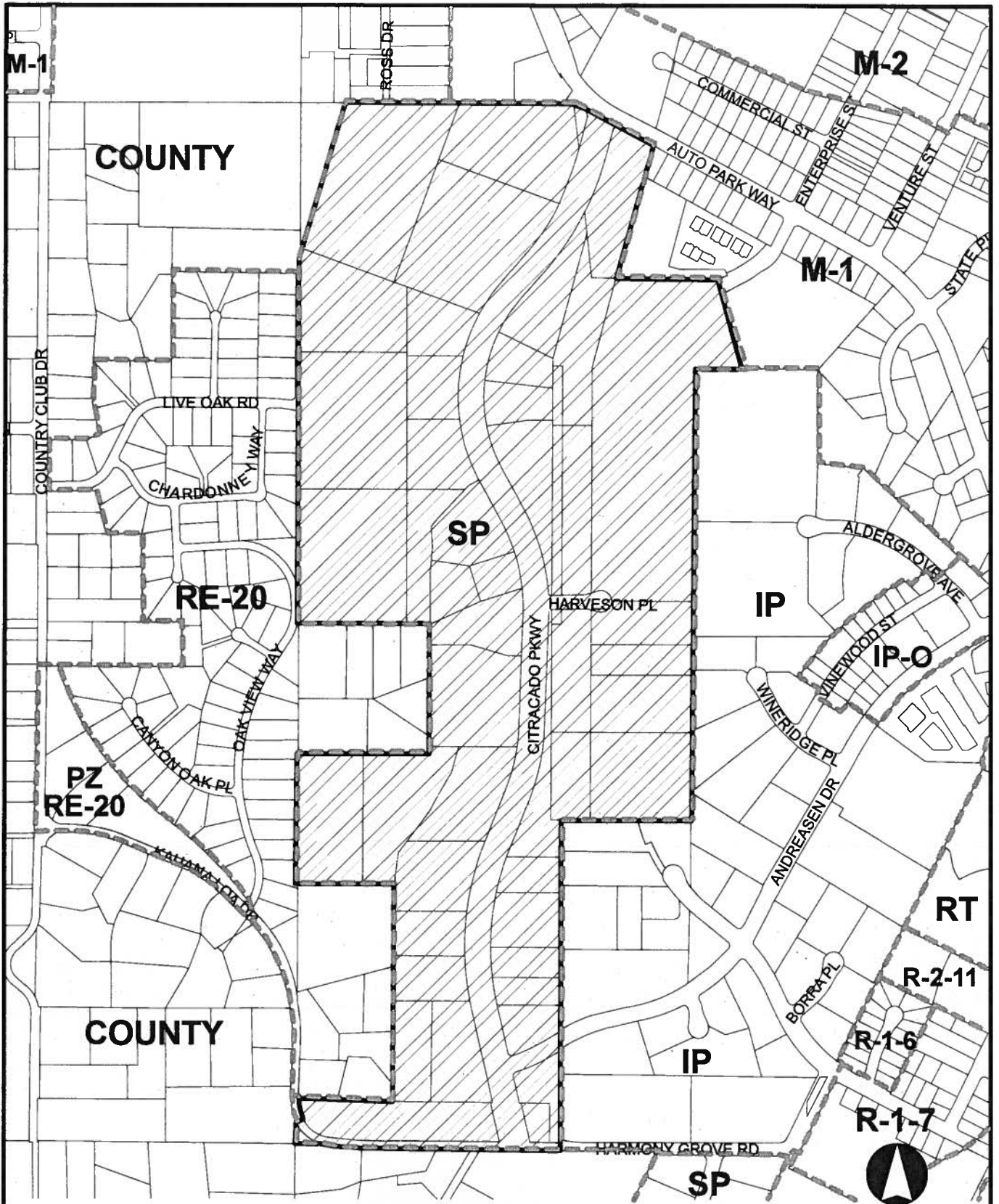
The proposed amendment to the design standards would allow perimeter fencing up to six feet in height, but not allow the taller fencing to project beyond the front facade of the buildings to maintain the open feel and aesthetics of the overall specific plan. The Director of Community Development could allow perimeter fencing up to eight feet in height, where appropriate, on a case-by-case basis. Any proposed fencing along Citracado Parkway and within a street-side yard would continue to be limited to 36 inches in height. Perimeter fencing also would continue to be limited to 42 inches in height along the top of the western landscape berm for Planning Areas 4, 6, 7 and 8 (along the western perimeter of the planning area) to maintain the open aesthetic feel adjacent to the residential developments. Taller fencing would be allowed to be installed along the bottom of the slopes/berms if necessary.

Staff also supports the applicant's request to allow fencing up to eight-feet in height on Lots 6 and 7 of Planning Area 2, which is located along the eastern perimeter of the specific plan and adjacent to industrial development. The location and design of the proposed fencing would be compatible with the eight-foot-high wrought-iron fencing installed along the perimeter of the SDG&E facility. In addition, these two lots are not adjacent to Citracado Parkway, and the fencing would be screened by perimeter and slope landscaping, and buffered from views from Citracado Parkway by larger setbacks.

Respectfully Submitted.



Jay Paul  
Associate Planner

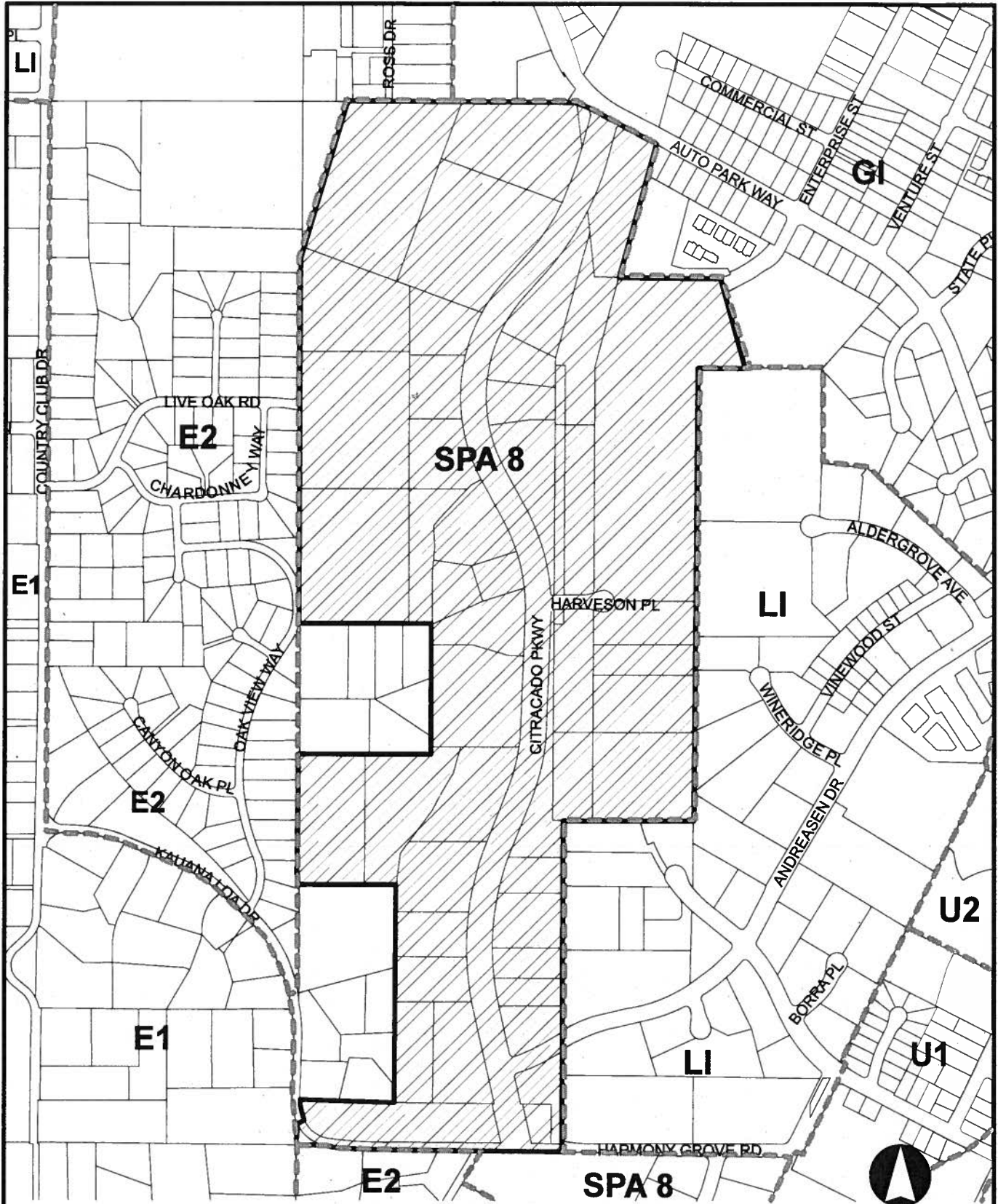


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**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 11-0034**



LOCATION/ZONING

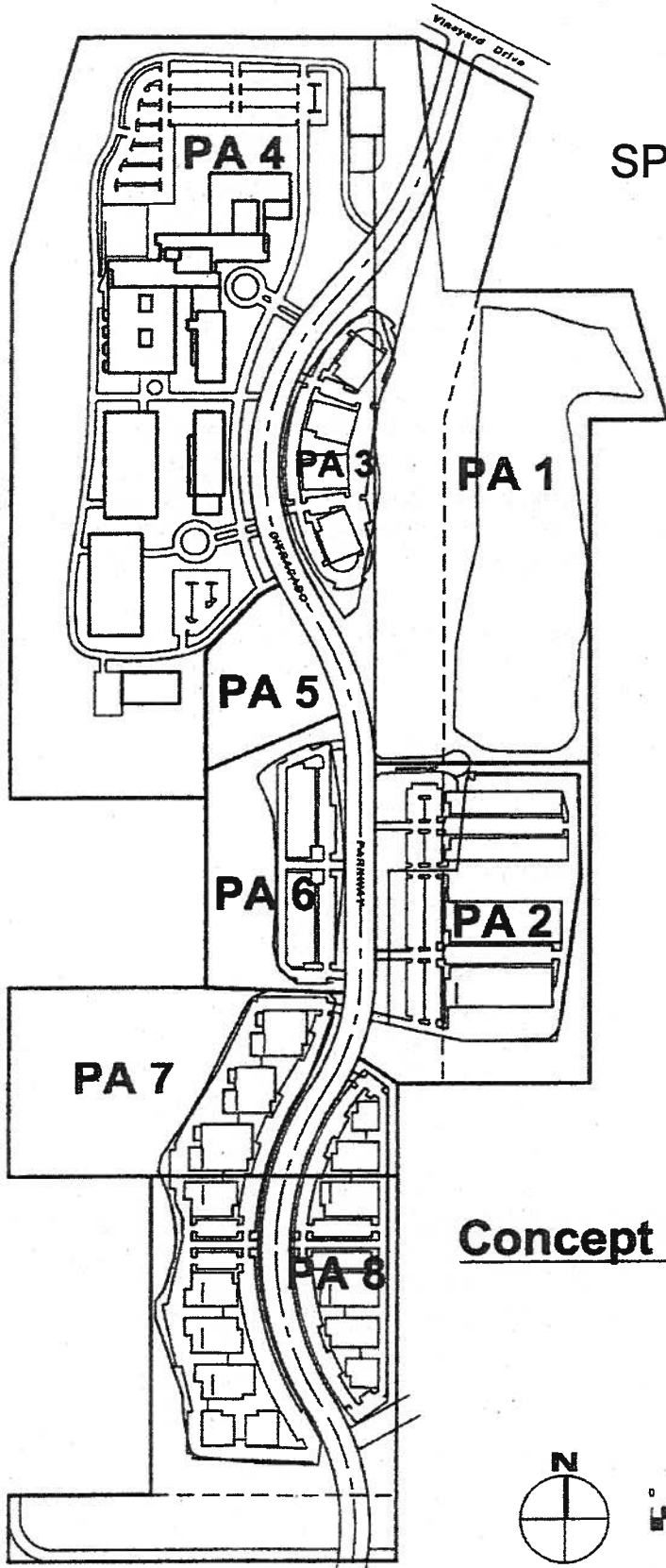


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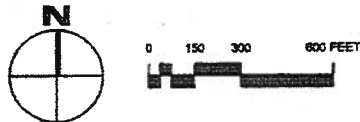
**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 11-0034**



ERTC  
SPECIFIC PLAN MAP



Concept Site Plan



**PROPOSED PROJECT  
PHG 11-0034**



SITE PLAN



## **EXHIBIT "A"**

### **FINDINGS OF FACT PHG 11-0034**

1. Granting the amendment to the Escondido Research and Technology Center Specific Plan (ERTC) to modify the landscape and fencing/wall development standards, along with the Specific Plan Conformance Section is consistent with the City's General Plan and every element thereof, and with any applicable specific plan. The General Plan designation for the subject area is Specific Planning Area 8 (SPA 8) which permits a wide variety of office, research and development, industrial uses and a hospital with a medical campus in a comprehensively planned development. The Escondido Research and Technology Center Specific Plan implements the General Plan, the City of Escondido Zoning Ordinances, and provides guidelines for development. The proposed amendment to the landscape, fencing/wall and Specific Plan Conformance Section of the document will continue to ensure a consistent, well-planned and visually coherent business park environment while allowing flexibility to meet the needs of individual projects. The proposed project would be in conformance with General Plan Economic Policies (page II-23) which encourage economic activities that are clean and nonpolluting to expand or locate in Escondido; provide additional employment opportunities; reduce the need for Escondido residents to commute out of the area; maintain the City's fiscal stability; and are aesthetically superior. The proposed amendment would not diminish the Quality-of-Life Standards of the General Plan as the proposal 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 would be provided.
2. The proposed amendment to the design standards would not result in a substantial alteration of the present or planned land use within the Specific Plan area. The proposed amendment to the design standards will continue to provide direction, purpose and opportunity for combined public and private investment which will result in benefits to the community as a whole. The project would not cause deterioration of bordering land uses or result in any adverse visual impacts since the proposed amendment to the design standards will continue to create a cohesive and unified project, while allowing additional flexibility in individual project design features to suit the needs of individual businesses. The overall design of the project will create an attractive, efficient and stable environment for business activities. The overall design of the project would be unchanged and would remain in substantial conformance with the goals and policies of the approved Specific Plan. The project will provide a first class business, medical and light industrial park to the Escondido area which will help to satisfy the city's jobs/housing balance. The proposal has been considered in relationship to its effect on the community, and the request would be in compliance with the General Plan Policies and would not result in any negative impacts to the business park or adjacent neighborhoods for the reasons stated above and detailed in the staff report.
3. The proposal is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in conformance with Section 15303(e) "New Construction of Accessory Structures." 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"

Proposed SPA Language  
PHG 11-0034

That Section III. "PLANNING AREA DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS" shall be amended to include the following language:

### 5. Landscape Requirements

- d. Planters, architectural fences and walls (not utilized for loading area screening) shall not exceed 36 inches in height along Citracado Parkway or within the street side yards, and **42 inches** up to six feet in height elsewhere on the site, **provided the fencing and any security gates do not project beyond the front facades of buildings along street frontages, as determined by the Director of Community Development. Security fencing up to eight feet in height may be allowed in certain instances, as determined by the Director of Community Development. Fencing greater than 42 inches in height along the western boundaries of Planning Areas 4, 6, 7 and 8 shall not be located at the top of the landscape berm "residential buffer."**

### 6. Walls/Fencing

Any fencing utilized shall be screened from passers-by unless designed to be an extension of the building architecture.

**All perimeter security type fencing shall incorporate an aesthetic open metal design that is visually consistent and/or complimentary in style and character with other perimeter fencing located throughout the project and specific plan.**

**For Planning Area II, the perimeter of the Planning Area for Lots 6 and 7 may be secured with aesthetic metal fencing up to eight feet in height along the northern, eastern and southern perimeters of the property. Access to the parcels also may be restricted to specific entries and gates. For the remaining lots within Planning Area II, fencing shall be limited to six feet in height, and shall not be located beyond the front facade of the building. In certain instances, fencing up eight feet in height may be allowed as provided in the Landscape Requirements.**

That Section V1. "AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFIC PLAN" shall be amended to include the following language noted in bold and underlined text:

### V1. AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFIC PLAN

#### B. SPECIFIC PLAN CONFORMANCE

4. Modifications of design features such as paving treatments, lighting, entry treatments, signage, architecture and landscape elements (**including fencing and walls**) may also be considered to be consistent with the specific plan.



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.:** Specific Plan Amendment for ERTC      **City File No.** PHG 11-0034

**Project Location - Specific:** Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC) Specific Plan, approximately 186 acres of land located within the western portion of the City of Escondido, generally located on the eastern and western sides of Citracado Parkway, south of Auto Park Way, north of Harmony Grove Road.

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

**Description of Project:** An amendment to the ERTC Specific Plan (2001-01-SPA) to modify the landscape and fencing/wall requirements to allow certain perimeter and interior fencing to exceed the current height limitation of 42 inches; modify the design standards for Planning Area 2 to allow fences and walls up to eight-feet in height; and clarify the process for modifications to specific design features such as lighting, signage, architecture, landscape elements and fencing/walls and other design elements.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** City of Escondido

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project**

Name City of Escondido and Hamann Companies (Linda Richardson, rep.) Telephone (619) 440-7424

Address 1000 Pioneer Way, El Cajon, CA 92020

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

**Exempt Status:** Categorical Exemption. Section 15303(e), Class 3 (New Construction of Accessory Structures).

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

1. The General Plan designation for the subject area is Specific Planning Area 8 (SPA 8) which permits a wide variety of office, research and development, industrial uses and a hospital with a medical campus in a comprehensively planned development. The ERTC Specific Plan implements the General Plan, the City of Escondido Zoning Ordinances, and provides guidelines for development. The proposed amendment to the landscape, fencing/wall and Specific Plan Conformance Section of the document will continue to ensure a consistent, well-planned and visually coherent business park environment while allowing flexibility to meet the needs of individual projects.
2. The site is in an area where all public services and facilities are available to allow for the proposed uses. The proposed amendment only affects the overall height of fencing and walls where the Specific Plan already allows for fencing and walls. Therefore, the project would not impact any areas that are environmentally sensitive and the project would not have any direct impacts to any sensitive or protected resources located within the project area.

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

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ Jay Paul, Associate Planner      \_\_\_\_\_ December 22, 2011

Signed by Lead Agency      **Date received for filing at OPR:** \_\_\_\_\_ N/A