



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING**  
**Housing and Community Investment Study Program Environmental Impact Report**  
**City Project Number: PHG 20-0028; PHG 20-0029; PHG 20-0030**

In implementing its duties under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City of Escondido (City), serving as lead agency, intends to prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the proposed Housing and Community Investment Study (Housing Study or project), which would identify the City's housing needs and establish clear goals and objectives to inform future housing decisions. In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide responsible and trustee agencies with sufficient information describing the proposed project and its potential environmental effects.

As specified by the CEQA Guidelines, the NOP will be circulated for a 30-day review period from **February 11, 2021, to March 12, 2021**. The City is interested in the input and/or comments of public agencies regarding the scope and content of the environmental information that will be studied in connection with the proposed project. Public agencies may need to use the PEIR prepared by the City when considering applicable permits or other approvals for the proposed project. The general public is also encouraged to provide input on the environmental issues that will be evaluated.

Please note that, due to the time limits mandated by state law, your response regarding the NOP for the project must be sent at the earliest possible date but **no later than 5:00 p.m. PST on March 12, 2021**. Please send your response to the Escondido Planning Division, c/o Darren Parker at the City of Escondido, Planning Division, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California 92025, or by email at [dparker@escondido.org](mailto:dparker@escondido.org). As part of the NOP process, the City is also holding a public scoping meeting to receive comments, as further described in this NOP.

**Lead Agency:** City of Escondido, Planning Division of the Community Development Department

**Project Title and Project Applicant:** Housing and Community Investment Study (Housing Study), City of Escondido

**Project Location:** The City is in northern San Diego County, approximately 30 miles north of Downtown San Diego and 18 miles east of the Pacific Ocean (Figure 1, Regional Location). The City is bounded to the north by the unincorporated San Diego County communities of Valley Center and Hidden Meadows, to the west by the City of San Marcos, to the south by Hodges Reservoir and the City of San Diego, and to the east by unincorporated San Diego County. Interstate 15 bisects the City in a north-south direction, and State Route 78 transitions from freeway to surface streets in an east-west direction through the City. Two geographic areas, the City's corporate limits and its sphere of influence, are within the planning area covered by the proposed project, which are depicted on Figure 1.

The proposed East Valley Specific Plan Area is in central Escondido, immediately adjacent to and east of downtown, and generally bounded by Escondido Creek to the north; Harding Street to the east; Grand Avenue and East 2nd Street to the south; and North Hickory, South Hickory, and North Fig Streets to the west. It is just east of the former Palomar Health Downtown Campus. The

East Valley Specific Plan Area is adjacent to a variety of neighborhoods: Downtown Escondido to the west, residential neighborhoods to the north and south, and large commercial shopping centers to the east.

Signature:   
Mike Strong, Director of Community Development,  
City of Escondido

**Description of Project:** The Housing Study would identify the City's housing needs and establish clear goals and objectives to inform future housing decisions. The Housing Study would be made up of the following three components: Housing Element Update, Sector Feasibility Study, and East Valley Specific Plan.

### **Housing Element Update**

The Housing Element is one element of the City of Escondido General Plan. The City is required to ensure the availability of residential sites at adequate densities and appropriate development standards to accommodate its fair share of the regional housing need, also known as the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation. The San Diego Association of Governments is responsible for oversight of the RHNA process in the San Diego region. The City's RHNA allocation for the 2021–2029 planning period is approximately 9,600 housing units, which is broken down by income category to accommodate the estimated growth need at various income levels. Upon adoption of the RHNA plan, cities and the County of San Diego are required to update their General Plans, Housing Elements, and Zoning Codes to accommodate the housing unit allocation.

The Housing Element Update would allow the City to assess current conditions; plan for future conditions; and advance a set of programs to develop, conserve, and maintain fair housing choices for current and future residents. The Housing Element Update would also include an Adequate Sites Inventory that would demonstrate that there are enough sites within the City boundaries to accommodate the RHNA allocation.

### **Sector Feasibility Study**

A Sector Feasibility Study is a residential sector housing market study that offers a general framework for defining realistic goals for the preferred housing market outcomes. The Sector Feasibility Study would identify information and assess if, and to what degree, housing development is financially/economically feasible under rising construction, land, and regulatory costs. The analysis of different development types and densities would enable the City to consider its various regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to accommodating the marketplace and how to treat programmed Housing Element Update implementation.

### **East Valley Specific Plan**

As a part of the Housing Element Update, the City will implement a rezoning program. The City is preparing a new East Valley Specific Plan, which would focus growth and increase density in the new East Valley Specific Plan Area.

The goal of the proposed East Valley Specific Plan is to encourage new housing opportunities, improve economic vibrancy, and allow for flexibility in use and implementation as the East Valley Specific Plan Area changes over time. The proposed land uses are shown on Figure 2, East Valley Specific Plan Proposed Land Use Plan. The land use plan would focus on maintaining existing uses, such as general commercial, while clustering them into different areas to create a

more cohesive pattern and design. It would also allow for a variety of residential uses by designating areas for Mixed Use and Urban Residential IV/V (21–30 dwelling units per acre) uses. The proposed East Valley Specific Plan would incorporate a dynamic mix of land uses, ensuring a variety of residential options, linked together through safe streets and a business corridor. The proposed East Valley Specific Plan would address the following topics: Land Use, Parks and Public Realm, Mobility, Public Service and Infrastructure and Development Standards, and Design Guidelines.

**City Staff Contact:** Darren Parker, City of Escondido, Planning Division, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California 92025. Email: [dparker@escondido.org](mailto:dparker@escondido.org). Phone: (760) 839-4553.

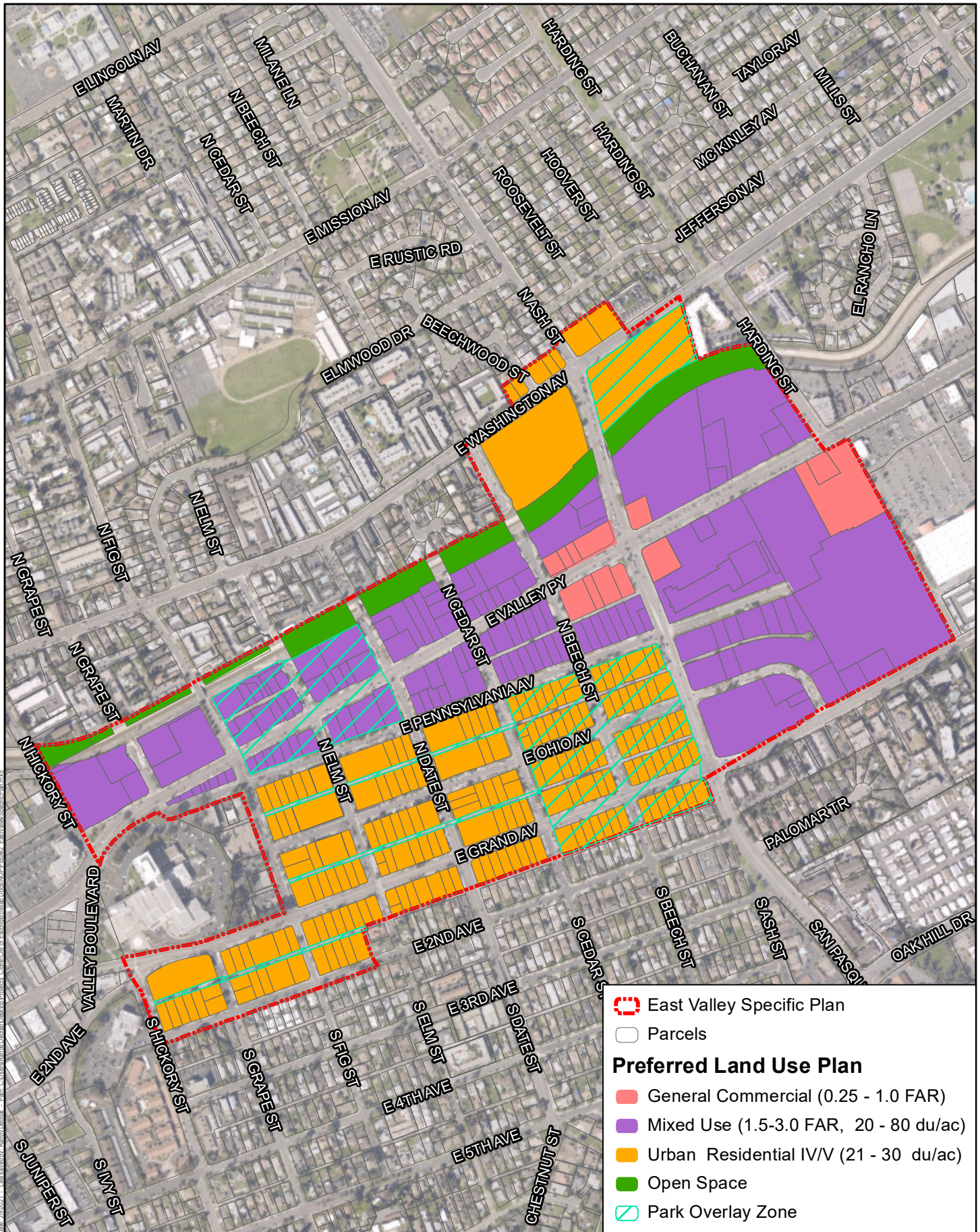
**Project Website:** <https://www.escondido.org/hcis.aspx>.

**Environmental Impact Report:** An Environmental Impact Report has been identified as the environmental document to be prepared in accordance with Section 15060(d) of the CEQA Guidelines. The City has determined that a Program EIR (PEIR) will be prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15168, to address potential direct and cumulative impacts associated with air quality, biological resources, cultural resources/tribal cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and transportation.

**NOP Public Scoping Meeting:** A virtual public scoping meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 2, 2021, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** The meeting will be accessible via the Jitsi platform at <https://meet.escondido.org/HCIS>. To register for the scoping meeting, please visit the website for meeting instructions. Any verbal comments received at this meeting should also be submitted in writing before the close of the NOP comment period (see mailing and email addresses above). All written comments will be considered in the preparation of the PEIR and become part of the record.

THE CITY OF ESCONDIDO IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PUBLIC ENTITY AND DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, RELIGION, AGE, OR DISABILITY IN EMPLOYMENT OR THE PROVISION OF SERVICE. IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT/SECTION 504 REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, IF YOU NEED SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COORDINATOR AT (760) 839-4643 AT LEAST 48 HOURS BEFORE THE MEETING IF DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS ARE NEEDED.





Source: Rick Engineering 2021; SanGIS Imagery 2017.



**Harris & Associates**



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**Figure 2**

East Valley Specific Plan Proposed Land Use Plan

The Housing and Community Investment Study