



2023 Elfin Forest Road
Elfin Forest, CA 92029

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Jay Petrek, Principal Planner

February 2, 2012

Escondido City Hall Planning Division
201 N. Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

SUBJECT: City Case Numbers : PHG 09-0020, PHG 10-0016

Dear Mr. Petrek,

The Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council appreciates the opportunity to comment on the GENERAL PLAN UPDATE AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN, City Case Numbers : PHG 09-0020, PHG 10-0016, in particular, regarding policies concerning unincorporated Harmony Grove (underlining added for emphasis):

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SPA 8 - "Increased building heights and intensities shall be focused along Citracado Parkway and in areas more distanced from residential uses to ensure compatibility. Primary access to non-residential areas within the Specific Plan Area south of Andreason Street shall be from Citracado Parkway and Lariat Drive. Vehicular access to nonresidential land uses from Harmony Grove Road west of Citracado Parkway shall be prohibited. Attention shall be given to buffer the semi-rural residential areas along "edges" near Harmony Grove Road (west of Citracado Parkway), Kauana Loa Drive and in the Eden Valley area by incorporating land uses, building heights, architectural materials, building orientations, setbacks, colors, screening, lighting and signage that are harmonious with adjacent lower intensity land uses."

"The drainage areas running north and south through the center of this Specific Planning Area, as well as Escondido Creek, represent a desirable visual amenity. The Specific Plan shall include provisions for the enhancement of riparian areas and for the incorporation of the Escondido Creek Trail into the ultimate development plans while minimizing impacts to these resources."

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1. Eden Valley and Harmony Grove Neighborhoods

Location / General Description: The Eden Valley and Harmony Grove neighborhoods are located in a rural valley along the western portion of Escondido, generally bounded by Hill Valley Road to the north, Escondido's General Plan boundary to the west, Escondido Creek Conservancy natural open space to the south, and Country Club Road, Kauana Loa Drive and portions of Harmony Grove Road to the east. The area generally north of Mount Whitney Road forms the boundary between the Eden Valley and Harmony Grove neighborhoods. The area includes single family residential on one-acre

and larger lots, a concrete pipe manufacturing company, agricultural uses, a historic spiritualist retreat center, and vacant property.

The Harmony Grove neighborhood is included in the County's adopted Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove San Dieguito Community Plan; a policy document created to address the issues, characteristics and vision of the two communities. Future development within Harmony Grove includes a 468-acre Specific Plan approved by the County that will involve a mixed-use rural residential village consisting of commercial uses, a fire station, open space, equestrian facilities and up to 742 units.

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Community Character Policy 1.15

Recognize Community Plans approved by the Board of Supervisors within Escondido's General Planning Area and coordinate land use and design guidelines to minimize impacts in areas where city/county lands transition. Collaborate with annexing property owners to retain desired components of their Community Plans by considering appropriate zoning overlay designations in the event of annexation.

Community Character Policy 1.16

Notify and coordinate with surrounding property owners and resident groups when conducting land use studies affecting residents of unincorporated communities to include property owners, resident groups, homeowner's associations, and / or planning advisory groups that make their presence known to the City. Utilize Neighborhood meetings to notify interested parties to gather information and solicit input for recommendation to various decision-makers.

We approve of these additions to Escondido's General Plan, and in particular the underlined portions, which recognize the concerns of the local resident groups and planning advisory groups and also the County-approved Community Plan for this rural residential valley. We hope that Escondido would realize the benefit of having an attractive neighboring rural equestrian area and will act upon these policies in a manner that will safeguard the continued existence of these historic and environmentally sensitive communities.

Toward that end, we ask that Escondido institute a durable agricultural/equestrian overlay zoning plan based on the approved Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Community Plan as part of this General Plan Update, and not wait until an individual property is proposed for annexation to "consider" this, as is stated in the draft ***Community Character Policy 1.15***.

We look forward to collaboration with the City of Escondido towards limiting urban sprawl and "industrial creep" by creating effective buffer zones between future industrial/commercial uses and rural residential areas in the Harmony Grove Community.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Arsivaud-Benjamin
Chair, Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council Board

Cc: San Diego Board of Supervisors
San Dieguito Planning Group