



CITY of ESCONDIDO

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

August 11, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Council Chambers: 201 North Broadway, Escondido, CA 92025

WELCOME TO YOUR COMMISSION MEETING

We welcome your interest and involvement in the legislative process of Escondido. This agenda includes information about topics coming before the Commission.

CHAIR

Barry Speer

VICE CHAIR

Dustin Steeve

COMMISSIONERS

Marc Correll

Corey Gustafson

Jeff Jester

Carrie Mecaro

Stan Weiler

MINUTES CLERK

Angel Estrada

HOW TO WATCH

The City of Escondido provides one way to watch the Planning Commission meeting:

In Person



201 N. Broadway, Escondido, CA 92025



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MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE: Chair Speer.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Barry Speer, Chair; Stan Weiler, Commissioner; Corey Gustafson, Commissioner; Jeff Jester, Commissioner.

Commissioners Absent: Dustin Steeve, Vice-Chair; Carrie Mecaro, Commissioner; Marc Correll, Commissioner.

City Staff Present: Garrett Smith, City Planner; Owen Tunnell, Assistant City Engineer; Dare DeLano, Assistant City Attorney; Joel Cvetko, Senior Planner; Sally Schiffman, Principal Planner; Ivan Flores, Principal Planner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. **June 9, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

Motion to Approve.

Motion: Stan Weiler, Commissioner; Second: Jeff Jester, Commissioner.

Motion carried 4-0 to approve the meeting minutes.

Ayes: Speer, Weiler, Gustafson, Jester.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2. **PL26-0140 – Senate Bill 79 Implementation Ordinance**

REQUEST: Recommend approval to the City Council of a Zone Text Amendment, establishing Article 81 Transit-Oriented Development Overlay Zone, in Chapter 33 (Zoning) of the Escondido Municipal Code, for the purpose of implementing Senate Bill 79 as codified in Government Code sections 65912.155 through 65912.162, inclusive. The amendment includes adoption of the related TOD Overlay Zone Map and parcel



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inventories identifying sites subject to the statute, excluded sites, exempt sites that may become eligible through a development agreement, and sites subject to phased implementation.

APPLICANT: City of Escondido.

CEQA RECOMMENDATION: Adoption of the implementing ordinance is not a project under CEQA pursuant to Government Code Section 65912.160(c)(2).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Recommend approval to City Council.

CITY COUNCIL HEARING REQUIRED: YES.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Wall Pelton, Escondido resident, submitted their position in opposition of the proposed ordinance.

Thomas Selden, on behalf of the California Housing Defense Fund (CalHDF) and Californians for Homeownership, submitted a public comment regarding the proposed SB 79 ordinance, including comments related to walking path exemptions and parcel eligibility.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Commissioners discussed the purpose of the proposed implementation ordinance and its relationship to Senate Bill 79. Questions were raised regarding the City's authority in implementing the legislation, the applicability of state law, and the role of the ordinance in identifying exempt properties and establishing objective local standards. Staff and the Deputy City Attorney explained that SB 79 is state law and that the ordinance would provide a local framework for implementation, including provisions related to walking path exemptions. Commissioners discussed the benefits of adopting objective standards to provide clarity and predictability for staff, property owners, and applicants.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-07

Motion: Jeff Jester, Commissioner; Second: Stan Weiler, Commissioner

Motion carried 4-0 to approve the meeting minutes.

Ayes: Speer, Weiler, Gustafson, Jester.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.



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3. **PL23-0273/PL23-0274/PL23-0275/PL23-0276/PL25-0275/PL26-0010/PL26-0219 – 855 Brotherton Road – The Alexan and Bethel Baptist Church**

REQUEST: Recommend approval of a development project to the City Council consisting of the following actions;

- 1) a General Plan Amendment to change the existing land use designation from Planned Office (PO) to Urban V (U5: 30 dwelling units per acre [du/acre]), including ancillary text amendments to the Felicita Corporate Office Target Area;
- 2) Zone Map Amendment to create consistency with the proposed General Plan Amendment by changing the zoning for the subject property from Residential Estates (RE-20: 20,000 square-foot minimum lot sizes) to Very High Multiple Residential (R-5-30);
- 3) Major Plot Plan and Design Review Permit for construction of 258 multi-family units with a total gross building area of 365,859 square-foot (sq. ft.), inclusive of 13 (5%) very low-income units allowing for a Density Bonus Request consisting of incentives/concessions and waivers as permitted by State Density Bonus Law (SDBL) and Article 67 (Density Bonus and Residential Incentives) (“The Alexan”);
- 4) Conditional Use Permit Modification (CUP) for the existing religious/school facilities on-site, and a Design Review Permit for demolition of an existing 24,395 sq. ft. sanctuary building, and construction of 24,627 sq. ft. religious facility building area with a sanctuary seating approximately 600, an entryway/foyer, offices, meeting rooms, kitchen, storage, and with a maximum capacity of 200 students (“Bethel Baptist Church”). The religious facility development also includes construction of two dwelling units to be used as temporary housing for traveling missionaries (“Project”).
- 5) The Project also includes a Grading Exemption to permit fill slopes and retaining walls up to 12’-0” in height, and Adjustment Plat to adjust the properties boundaries to facilitate development of The Alexan. The Project also includes standard on-site improvements including but not limited to off-street parking, landscaping, drainage, and utilities and frontage improvements along Felicita Road and Brotherton Road; and off-site improvements including, but not limited to mitigation measures for Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT) as detailed in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”).
- 6) Certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report (“FEIR”).

APPLICANT: Trammell Crow Residential.

CEQA RECOMMENDATION: Recommend certification of a Final Environmental Impact Report (“FEIR”).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Recommend approval.



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CITY COUNCIL HEARING REQUIRED: YES.

DISCLOSURES:

Commissioner Weiler disclosed having driven past the site to become familiar with the project and surrounding area, and having brief communications with the applicant and members of the public regarding the project.

Commissioner Jester disclosed having formerly owned property associated with the development and stated that no financial interest in the project currently exists.

Commissioner Speer disclosed having met with the applicant in a manner similar to how Commissioner Weiler previously described.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ron Sabin, Escondido resident, spoke in opposition to the project.

Meg Powers, Escondido resident, spoke in opposition to the project.

Mike Hunton, Escondido resident, spoke in opposition to the project.

Nick Testa, Escondido resident, spoke in opposition to the project.

Joshua Jones, Escondido resident, spoke in opposition to the project.

Barry Click, Escondido resident, spoke in favor of the project.

Don Romo, Escondido resident, spoke in favor of the project.

Eric Danell, Escondido resident, spoke in opposition to the project.

Gary Cass, Escondido resident and pastor of Bethel Church, spoke in favor of the project.

Nancee Hanson, Escondido resident, spoke in opposition to the project.

Ray Owens, Escondido resident and pastor of Bethel Church, spoke in favor of the project.

Mark Cohen, Escondido resident, spoke in favor of the project.

Lawrence Werner, Escondido resident, spoke with no stated position on the project.



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Jeff Weber, Escondido resident, spoke in opposition to the project.

Tedi Jackson, on behalf of Protect Rural Escondido, spoke in opposition of the project and submitted a letter to the Commission for consideration.

Amy Maggard Jones, Escondido resident, spoke with no stated position on the project and raised concerns regarding the project.

Eric Lopez, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition to the project.

William Comstock, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition to the project.

Lorraine Herschleb, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Arie Troyce, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Klasser Digids, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Chase Willingham, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Lilibeth Aboy, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Rockyleo Aboy, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Robert Balfour, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Toni Ellingen, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Isabella Owens, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Lynn Kelly Balfour, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Aaron Stoner, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Sarah Owens, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

James Schafer, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Linda Schafer, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Vickie Everly, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.



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Tehara Tweed, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Steve Tweed, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Phillipa Burnes, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Lisa Merrill, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Jonathan Burnes, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Todd Merrill, Escondido resident, registered their position in opposition of the project.

Michael Martin, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Holly Cohen, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Richard Baugn, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Terry Hunry, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Andrea Martin, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

John Whitlock, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Ecra Aboy, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Kim Whitlock, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Anthony Cohen, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

David Wright, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Amanda Cohen, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Binham Wright, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Scott Herschleb, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Michael Welch, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Ray Register, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.



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David Lawlor, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Penny Lawlor, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Jim Uhland, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Patty Uhland, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Bill Henry, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Gordon Prithard, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

Larry Filchard, Escondido resident, registered their position in favor of the project.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Commissioners discussed the project's traffic, parking, neighborhood compatibility, housing type, and roadway improvement impacts. Questions were raised regarding right-of-way dedications, roadway widening, parking restrictions, traffic analysis, and mitigation measures. Commissioners expressed differing viewpoints regarding the project's suitability for the surrounding neighborhood, with some citing concerns related to traffic congestion, density, and community character, while others noted the project's consistency with existing land use designations, housing needs, and the benefits of improvements proposed by the applicant. Discussion also included a proposed condition prohibiting on-street parking along the project frontage on Brotherton Road.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-08R with proposed modifications made by the Commission.

Motion: Stan Weiler, Commissioner; Second: Barry Speer, Chair.

Motion failed 2-2 due to a tie vote.

Ayes: Speer, Weiler.

Nays: Gustafson, Jester.

Abstain: None.

CURRENT BUSINESS:

None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.



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None.

CITY PLANNER'S REPORT:

Garrett Smith, City Planner, reported on upcoming Planning Commission agenda items and planning initiatives. Mr. Smith noted forthcoming private development projects, including a Certificate of Appropriateness for modifications to a historic property and a Conditional Use Permit modification for a religious facility. He also informed the Commission of upcoming policy initiatives, including the Escondido 2040 planning effort, updates to the General Plan and master plans, the El Caballo Park Master Plan, objective design standards, and sign code updates.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Speer adjourned the meeting at 9:54 p.m.

Signed by:

Garrett Smith

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Garrett Smith, Secretary to the Escondido
Planning Commission

Signed by:

Angel Estrada

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Angel Estrada, Minutes Clerk