





# CITY of ESCONDIDO

## STAFF REPORT

### BACKGROUND

In April 2021, the Planning Commission directed staff to initiate the preparation of an annual “Planning Commission Workplan”. The workplan provided a list of policy-related tasks to be undertaken by Planning Division staff that require action by the Planning Commission, typically in an advisory role to City Council. The Planning Division adopted the first workplan in May 2021, and subsequently adopted the 2022/2023 workplan in July 2022.

In May 2023, the Planning Commission received and filed the 2023/2024 “Planning Division Workplan”. The 2023/2024 workplan entailed retooling of the workplan so that it aligns with the Planning Division’s anticipated workload in alignment with City Council priorities. The Planning Division Workplan more accurately reflects the fact that the tasks identified are being undertaken by Planning Division staff for presentation to, and consideration by, the Planning Commission rather than the Planning Commission being tasked with completing the work. No action on the workplan itself is being requested of the Planning Commission; however, action will be requested on the various tasks at future dates.

The change in title of the workplan from “Planning Commission Workplan” to “Planning Division Workplan” was brought about by a misconstrued understanding that the tasks on it are to be undertaken by the Planning Commission. Instead, the tasks are actually undertaken by Planning Division staff and presented to the Planning Commission for input and/or consideration. As such, beginning with the 2023/2024 workplan, City staff changed the name of the workplan (“Planning Division Workplan”) in an effort to provide clarity on the roles and responsibilities of both the Planning Commission and Planning Division staff. (Actions required by the Planning Commission are identified in the “Planning Commission Role” column at the right side of the Workplan table.) Staff views the workplan as a valuable tool to inform the Planning Commission and the general public of the current status of policy-related work efforts.

### SUMMARY OF REQUEST

The 2024/2025 workplan is intended to identify expectations on timeline, interim milestones, budget resources, and specific deliverables over the coming two years (i.e., 2024 and 2025) related to policy work within the Planning Commission’s purview. City staff prepared the 2024/2025 workplan utilizing last year’s workplan and known City Council priorities as data sources.

### SUPPLEMENTAL DETAILS OF REQUEST

Escondido Municipal Code section 20-1 establishes the Escondido Planning Commission, which serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council on land use policy planning matters in order to guide the future development of the City. The Planning Commission maintains final approval authority on certain cases and recommends action to the City Council on others. Among other responsibilities, the Planning Commission assists the City Council in the creation of policies and ordinances that implement the General Plan, such as amendments to the Zoning Code, the adoption of new Zoning Code sections, and changes to the existing zoning text and maps.

The 2024/2025 workplan continues to build off the prior year workplan (2023/2024), and includes new items, changes to existing items (either shown in red/underlined text or ~~striketrough~~), as well as updates on current policy work underway, and identification of recurring and potential future projects.



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Staff utilized estimated completion dates found in the *Status and Program Timeline* column to prioritize the tasks listed. This workplan is based on a best-case scenario assumption and serves as a guidance document. Staff's goal is to complete the workplan tasks as scheduled; however, significant staffing capacity along with responsiveness to changing priorities makes this unlikely.

### PROJECT ANALYSIS

The workplan provides an opportunity for the decision makers to evaluate and ensure continuous improvement to the City's land use and regulatory framework. To this end, it is relevant and important to identify the progress made over the preceding 12 months, in addition to updating the Workplan to address changes in circumstances, priorities, and statutory requirements.

#### 1. Workplan Elements

The 2024/2025 workplan contains six sections. Section 1 provides a general explanation of workplan components, such as education the Planning Commission may seek during their tenure and identification of the Director's report conducted each commission meeting. Sections 2 through 6 are outlined below.

##### Section 2 – Current Workplan Elements

The 2024/2025 Workplan identifies 14 specific policy-related tasks intended to be undertaken by Planning Division staff over the next two years. Several are currently underway and carryovers from past workplan reports, while others have not yet commenced. Two (items no. 1 and 2) listed within Section 2 are new. Line-item no. 1 continues the policy work required by the adoption of the East Valley Specific Plan (EVSP), which entails updating the City's adopted Land Use and Community Form Element of the General Plan for consistency purposes, and clean up of the East Valley Area Plan which previously governed the area now under the regulatory purview of the EVSP. Line-item no. 2 reflects the direction from City Council to pursue completion of environmental clearance for the draft El Caballo Park Master Plan, which is underway. This item would allow for formal adoption of the draft El Caballo Park Master Plan (2014) and allow for future buildout of the park area. Due to current staffing capacity and resourcing issues, there are several items listed within Section 2 that staff began and subsequently placed on hold due to such issues. These items are noted as "deferred" and would be picked back up should capacity and resourcing issues change.

##### Sections 3 and 4 – Recurring Workplan Elements and Ongoing Workplan Elements

Two tasks recur (Annual Omnibus Code Clean-Up and Annual Progress Reports) annually and will remain on the workplan for the foreseeable future. Two other tasks are ongoing (Climate Action Plan and Housing Element implementation), and you will note that several of the tasks shown throughout the workplan may also be placed under these two umbrella tasks. Both the Climate Action Plan and Housing Element are adopted policy documents that various City divisions, including the Planning Division, are responsible for implementing. Such implementing actions may entail sizable programmatic efforts, such as adoption of a Special Needs Housing Ordinance and a Net Zero Energy Reach Ordinance, or smaller "bite-sized" actions that may be brought before the Planning Commission. Current elements depicted under Section 2 of the workplan will denote whether they are affiliated with these ongoing efforts.



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### Section 5 – Potential Future Work Plan Elements

Section 5 identifies those efforts which may be activated at a future time for various reasons. Section 5 consists of items previously identified under “current workplan elements” on prior years’ workplans but are now unlikely to receive kick-off over the two-year horizon for the workplan. However, these items may be introduced into Section 2 of the workplan in future years. For example, staff relocated an item identified under Section 5 in last year’s (2023/2024) workplan to Section 2 based on department-wide changes. At this time, only two items are listed for potential future workplan items.

### Section 6 – Completed 2023/2024 Workplan Elements

The Planning Commission fully addressed the following tasks from the 2023/2024 Workplan:

- East Valley Specific Plan adoption
- Annual Omnibus Code Cleanup
- Annual Progress Reports (General Plan, Housing, Climate Action Plan)

Additionally, the Planning Division received notification from the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in December 2023 of formal certification of the City’s adopted sixth cycle housing element.

### **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

There are no direct fiscal impacts associated with this item. Many of the workplan tasks are intended to be completed by Planning Division staff, with funding incorporated into the existing Development Services Department budget. Implementation of other workplan tasks requires additional resources, much of which has been allocated. Potential funding sources have been identified for the remaining Workplan tasks for which funding has not yet been allocated. City Council authorization will be needed for those tasks item.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

The primary purpose of this agenda item is to prepare an annual workplan. The content of this agenda report is provided for informational purposes only, and is “not a project” under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5), which excludes from the definition of “project” “[o]rganizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.”

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

None

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2024/2025 Planning Division Workplan